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AN EXPLORATION OF THE USE OF GRAPHIC FACILITATIVE
METHODS WITHIN THE STRATEGIC CHANGE PROCESS

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within the Strategic Change Process*

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Abstract

The strategy and change management fields have developed new perspectives in recent years. Studies show that a high percentage of strategic change efforts fail and it was argued that one problem was the unsuccessful communication of the vision and strategy to employees. This exploratory research studied the use of graphic facilitative methods within the context of an organisation's strategic change process.

Phase one of the explorative study was carried out using the combination of interview data, workshops and literature to identify emerging themes and to develop a conceptual model. Phase two of the study was again exploratory but more focused on the themes that had emerged from the preliminary study. Data was collected through interviews, observational methods, survey and a more focused literature review.

Through the combined findings of the preliminary and focused study and from the literature, the author established an understanding and theory of how the methods contribute to improved strategy communication. The research has re-enforced the view in literature that the strategy communication process will be more successful by ensuring the strategy is driven by the right people and the strategy development is realistic. The use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue, in combination, can help to improve the strategy communication process by conveying a clear strategic message, by facilitating an interactive strategy communication process, by encouraging communication in an open and safe environment, and because they are new, innovative and different.

Acknowledgements

The metaphor that comes to mind when I reflect on my Ph.D. process is that of an adventure, one which is very unpredictable and highly challenging. The successful completion of this particular journey depended on the help and support of many people, some who were there from the very beginning and others who joined the trek along the way, but who have all been instrumental in inspiring and motivating me to the end.

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A final thanks to my family and friends, who have lived with me through the adventure and shown great understanding, support and love, especially when it was needed.

Author Profile

The author completed a BA Honours degree in English and Social and Industrial Studies at Swansea Institute of Higher Education in 1996. After completion the author travelled for a year and on her return joined a management programme for graduates in a clothing manufacturing company, Dewhirst Ladieswear Ltd. There she worked as an Industrial Engineer for 12 months and a line manager for six months.

In 1999 Karen joined a year long MSc programme in Enterprise Integration, at the School of Industrial and Manufacturing Science, Cranfield University. The course objective was to provide skills, methodologies, and competencies to apply change initiatives and technologies for business integration (using team innovation). Following the MSc Karen was employed by the Department as a research student on a European Union sponsored project, New Use and Innovation Management Measurement Methodology for Research and Development (NIMCube). The project objective was to develop a reference methodology for new-use and innovation management and measurement for European R&D industries. As part of the project the Cranfield team developed a workshop based assessment methodology, a web version of the assessment tool, and a NIMCube project implementation guide. The project was successfully completed in July 2002. The NIMCube project re-enforced the author's interest in group and team behaviour and instigated the Ph.D. research in the area of graphic facilitative methods.

In April 2003 the author, along with two colleagues in the International Ecotechnology Research Centre, was granted funding from the UK Innovative Manufacturing Research Centres (IMRC) body for a two year research project. The project is run in association with the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) and aims to facilitate collaboration and knowledge transfer between clustered organisations within the region. The project was initiated in October 2003.

Publications

Refereed Conference Papers

1. Young K and Lettice F. 2002. The Impact of Graphic and Metaphor Tools on Organisational Dynamics, British Academy of Management Annual Conference: Fast Tracking Performance Through Partnerships, London, September.
2. Lettice F, Young K and Ziv A. 2002. Big Picture Thinking in New Product Development. 9th ISPE International Conference on Concurrent Engineering: Research and Applications, Cranfield, UK, edited by Jardim-Goncalves, R., Roy, R. and Stieger-Garcao, A., July 2002, A. A. Balkema Publishers, pp 1013 – 1009.
3. Roth N, Prieto J, Lettice F, Dvir R, Penev I, Tsanev M, Evans S, Young K and Schulte T. 2001. An integrated Performance Management System from a reuse and invention perspective for new product development. In: E-work and E-commerce: Novel solutions and practices for a global networked economy, edited by B. Stanford-Smith and E. Chiozza, October 2001, IOS press, Amsterdam, pp 86-93 (*awarded in top 3 papers of the conference, which had 190 papers presented from all over the European Union*).
4. Lettice, F., Young, K. and Wickes, M. 2003. A Visual Approach to Transform Information into Knowledge. In: eChallenges: Building the Knowledge Economy: Issues, Applications, Case Studies, edited by P. Cunningham, M. Cunningham and P. Fatelnig, October 2003, IOS press, Amsterdam, ISBN 1-58603-379-4, pp 877-884. (*awarded in top 3 papers of the conference, which had 210 papers presented from all over the European Union*).

Book Sections

1. Lettice F and Young K. 2002. The NIMCube Methodology, pp 71-76, In From Knowledge to Value: Unfolding the Innovation Cube, Eds Pasher, E; Dvir R and Roth N., Israel: Edna Pasher Ph.D & Associates, ISBN 965-90454-0-9

2. Young K, Fessl K, Lettice F and Roth N. 2002. A Light Starter: The Fast Assessment Survey, pp 77-82, In From Knowledge to Value: Unfolding the Innovation Cube, Eds Pasher, E; Dvir R and Roth N., Israel: Edna Pasher Ph.D & Associates, ISBN 965-90454-0-9
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1. Young K, Ziv A and Lettice F. 2001. The Big Picture, 6th National Conference of the Israel Society for Quality, November, Tel-Aviv Israel, pp 417-420.
2. Lettice, F. and Young, K. 2003. Facilitating Communities – A Visual Approach. Online Information Conference, London, December 2003.

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List of Terms

Facilitating Companies – the four graphic facilitative companies.

Methods – the four graphic tools.

Client companies – the clients of the facilitating companies.

Practitioner – people who use the methods as facilitators or consultants.

User – people who have been through the methods' process.

FS – Focused Study.

ES – Exploratory study.

U – User of method(s).

P – Practitioner of method(s).

EI – Expert Interview.

1 Introduction

This Chapter outlines the background to the research and explains the focus of the thesis, detailing the relevance of the research to the current body of literature. The research aim and objectives are outlined, along with the research approach taken and the overall research deliverables. The methods that are the focus of the investigation will then be described. Finally the structure of the thesis will be presented.

1.1 Background

The research is concerned with the investigation of four graphic facilitative methods, which are described in section 1.6. These methods are sold as consultancy tools for use within an organisation's strategic change process. The methods chosen for this study have never been the focus of academic research, despite being used by large multinational organisations, for example, Hewlett-Packard, General Motors, Barclays, MacDonald's, The Post Office and British Telecommunications.

The research was initiated based on experiencing the graphic facilitative methods of the Grove Consultants International and RootLearning Inc. The researcher was introduced to the methods by a co-member of a European Union project, New-use and Innovation Management Measurement Methodology (NIMCube, 2000). The individual was employed by Skandia Insurance and, as an employee of Skandia, had been a user of the US based Grove and RootLearning methods. Skandia had been a client company of the Grove and RootLearning for approximately two years and had used the methods as part of their company wide strategic change programmes. On further investigation, it was found that the methods used were practitioner based and no research had been conducted on them. This initiated a short period of background investigation to establish some research questions and a plan of how to carry out the research study.

1.2 Focus of Thesis

There is a growing consensus amongst theorists and practitioners that organisations have experienced and are still experiencing a change in the business environment, from a period of reasonable stability and growth (the 1950s to the 1980s) to a period from the 1980s onwards, where there is increasing uncertainty and lack of confidence in the business markets (Beinhocker, 1999; Gadiesh and Gilbert, 2001; Feurer et. al., 1995 and Clampitt et. al., 2002). The 1980s saw a large increase in job losses, downsizing, redundancies, business collapse, moves to offshore ventures, which has carried through into the 1990s and 2000s. This increase in uncertainty and turbulence has effectively brought about a growing field of new management perspectives on strategy and change management (Stacey, 2000, 1996; Chaffee, 1985; Hart, 1992 and Mintzberg et. al, 1998). This is because there has been recognition that the strategy development policies adopted in the 1950s to the 1980s were based on organisations operating in a stable and growing business environment. These theories have become less applicable as the business environment changed and as, just as importantly, the attitudes, expectations and assumptions of the employees within those organisations also changed (Stacey, 2000, 1996 and Allen-Meyer, 2001).

The research has shown that there has been a shift in management perspectives from, as described in this thesis, a traditional perspective to a new management perspective. In the literature it is evident that from the early 1990s, theorists and practitioners started to view organisations from a new perspective. Prior to this, the dominant view was of organisations as systems that could be controlled by external agents, for example senior managers (Stacey, 2000). The assumption was that an organisation would always adapt to its environment, from one stable, pre-determined state, to another in a linear causality fashion, controlled by its most powerful members (Stacey, 2000). The dominant premises of the traditional perspective are a focus on structured planning and control mechanisms, a view that authority and power is the way in which to control the actions of individuals, from the top down, a competitive business environment where the fittest survive, a linear method of planning, where future plans are based on extrapolating data from the past and predictions are made from trends, and a view that there is one right answer to a problem, based on objective reasoning (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998).

These perspectives on strategic management are accepted theories but what has also been noted is the fact that these perspectives are becoming less relevant to today's organisations and that new perspectives are needed for managing (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998). What has changed, since the 20 or so years of the publication of some of these theories, are the assumptions that they were based on. Firstly, the view of organisational members as autonomous individuals, who respond positively to top down, authoritative direction, has changed (Stacey, 2000) and the premise of control of human behaviour is deemed less acceptable. There has also been a societal shift where individuals do not willingly accept authoritative orders without question, whereas in the past this may not have been the case (Maslow, 1954). Employees today also expect an increased level of involvement and access to information compared to past generations (Allen-Meyer, 2001). Secondly the assumption that the organisation is operating in a stable and predictable business environment has increasingly been challenged by theorists (Stacey, 2000; Stacey, 1996; Beinhocker, 1999; Gadiesh and Gilbert, 2001 and Clampitt et. al.,

2002). Long term planning is seen as problematic, extrapolation of future plans based on past trends is too linear and possibly futile, and basing future strategies simply on increased market share is too narrow a perspective, due to the growing unpredictability of the markets and competition (Stacey, 2000; Mintzberg et. al, 1998 and Hart, 1992). Thirdly, the view that an organisation can be controlled by external agents, through control and causal feedback, has been challenged, especially by management complexity theorists who believe that this is a limited view of how organisations operate and that managers are actually part of the same system and cannot stand outside as an objective observer (Stacey, 2000).

The increasing dissatisfaction with the traditional theories on strategy and change led to the development of new perspectives that attempted to address the shortfalls of the previous theories. In the early 1990s, an increasing amount of literature was being published looking at alternative ways of viewing strategy and change management. Prior to this there was some work published (for example, Mintzberg and Waters, 1985; Quinn, 1980; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Maslow, 1954; Lewin 1947a, 1947b; Schein 1987; Pettigrew, 1985; Kanter, 1985; Agyris and Schon, 1978 and Belbin, 1981) that took into consideration the social issues relating to strategic change within the organisation, for example, politics, group behaviour, personality and emotion, that the traditional view had predominantly overlooked (Collins, 1998). The popularity of the new perspective grew with the advancements in the theory of organisational learning (for example, Senge, 1990; Agyris, 1990; Pedlar et. al, 1991, and Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995) where emphasis was placed on the enhancement of the human factor for organisation success through, learning, knowledge, systemic thinking and the possibility of emergent strategy. This has grown into a field where the importance of such things as relationships and processes, collaboration, shared meaning and understanding, teamwork, complex interactions, unpredictability, holistic and systemic thinking are emphasised (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998).

The new theories emphasised the need for new management practices as well as new strategic development processes for the changing organisations. In terms of strategic change, theories developed that emphasised the importance of people within the whole organisational change context and viewed strategic success as dependent on obtaining employee commitment and buy in to the new strategy (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000; Sterling, 2003 and Corboy and O'Corrbui, 1999). The theories recognised that employees were not likely to respond to directive approaches, as they had done in the past (Allen-Meyer, 2001), and that more interactive and facilitative methods would better enhance employee understanding and commitment to the organisation and its strategy. Great emphasis was placed on the communication aspect of strategy and the need to deliver a strategic message to all employees in a format that allowed them to understand, firstly why there was a need for a new strategy and secondly what their role was within the new strategy (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000; Sterling, 2003 and Corboy and O'Corrbui, 1999). However, little research has been conducted into how to deliver this strategic message to employees.

At a practitioner level new methods and new facilitative forms of communication have been developed, within the context of this study the methods researched have been developed as facilitative tools for organisational change purposes. The uniqueness of these methods is that they are visual based forms of communicating using graphics and

metaphors and involve an interactive, rather than directive, process that encourages dialogue and participation from employees. These methods are new to the market place and on first evaluation appear to have been successfully used by many United States and United Kingdom based organisations. To date no academic research has been done on using these methods within the strategic change process.

In summary, from the literature, it is seen that there is currently a view that strategic change programmes are difficult to implement and that the communication element of the process is an important element to changing this trend. It will also be shown that current thinking in organisation theory stipulates that successful strategic organisational change has never been more pertinent in today's global, competitive economy and unpredictable business environment. It will be theorised that the emergence of these methods and their increasing use is due to the organisation's increasing need to communicate better to employees. There is a realisation in the literature that fundamental to strategic change is its people, this is not a new realisation; the problem has always been finding effective ways of doing this.

This thesis draws together existing literature on strategy and change management, to understand the currently theorised process, and the results from the exploration of these practitioner based methods, to build a theory as to how these methods can contribute to the improvement of the strategy communication process.

1.3 Research Aim, Objectives and Question

1.3.1 Research Aim

The overall aim of the research was to provide an understanding, at a practitioner and theoretical level, of the use of the graphic facilitative methods in the strategic communication process within large UK based hierarchical organisations.

1.3.2 Research Objectives

Having defined the aim of the research, a preliminary phase was conducted to help the researcher better understand the context of the research and to develop clear research objectives to focus the research.

It is often traditional to develop the research objectives based on the gap within the literature. In this case it was difficult for the researcher to do this as there was very little previous research on the graphic facilitative methods under investigation. As an alternative, the researcher developed high level research questions to guide a preliminary study that used grounded theory to help develop a conceptual model of the research area and focused the remainder of the research. The research questions to guide the preliminary study were:

1. Why do these methods appear to work?
2. What do they add to an organisation's change programme?
3. What do they add to a group situation?
4. What are the limitations and drawbacks of the methods?

These questions were used as a basis for the preliminary study. From the data gathered and results generated in the preliminary study, a conceptual model was developed and it was then possible to develop more fixed research objectives to focus the literature review and the next stage of the research – the focused study. The research objectives were:

1. To explore and understand how graphic facilitative methods are being used by organisations.
2. To develop a conceptual model that describes the attributes of the graphic facilitative methods.
3. To critically review the literatures and other secondary sources in relation to; strategy, change management, complexity theory, strategy communication and current perspectives on the use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue as organisational communication techniques.
4. To identify how the methods can improve the process of strategy communication within the strategic change process.

1.4 The Research Approach

The research adopts a grounded theory approach which involves an exploratory study adopting the collection of qualitative data from a variety of sources. This approach was chosen as there is, to date, little research in the investigation of these graphic facilitative methods. It was therefore considered appropriate to adopt an exploratory study where the theory development could be grounded in the initial data collection. A preliminary study resulted in the emergence of key concepts, related to the graphic methods, which were then developed into a conceptual model. This stage of the research helped to focus further investigation and a more comprehensive literature review. The focused study was again explorative in nature but adopted a case study approach, which involved the collection of multiple sources of data from three different cases. The results were used to refine the conceptual model and build a theory for improved strategy communication.

1.5 Deliverables

This thesis presents three deliverables:

- A conceptual model was developed from the preliminary study to help focus the research objectives for further study. Following the focused study, the conceptual model was reviewed and refinements were made based on new data and understanding gathered from stage two of the study.
- Theory building – the conceptual model was then built upon to incorporate recommendations for practitioners and theorists for improved strategy communication based on the findings of the research.
- A contribution to knowledge based on the development of new concept and theory in the area of strategy communication, established through research on the use of new, un-researched methods and practices within the field.

1.6 Methods

This study involved the investigation of four graphic facilitative methods, as practiced by two US based companies and two UK based companies. The four methods are described below and further description of the methods and their processes is offered in Appendix I.

1.6.1 *RootLearning Inc.*

Learning maps are graphic and metaphor charts designed for use by small groups of people gathered round a table. The learning map is developed jointly with senior executives from the client company and RootLearning personnel (artists and strategists). The graphic map is then used to communicate the organisations strategy using graphics, metaphors, story telling, card exercises and Socratic dialogue. The learning map session involves 6 - 10 people, runs for 60 – 90 minutes, and is led by a facilitator. The sessions are communicated to all organisational members; this normally entails the running of hundreds of concurrent sessions over several days. The method is said to allow users to make key connections, and enables the group to learn from one another by encouraging conversation about key issues and challenging them to analyse these issues further. This technique predominantly uses metaphors and dialogue within its process.



Figure 1-1: Learning map

1.6.2 *The Grove International Consultants*

The Grove International Consultants use graphic facilitation combined with large wall charts (eight feet by four feet), for use in a workshop or small group structured process. Graphic facilitation involves recording and organising a group's ideas with graphics, icons and metaphors on large sheets of paper. The templates can be both loose and free flowing or relatively tightly structured. The method is said to aid organisational planning and change management processes, with the aim of achieving maximum

alignment on mission, vision, values and strategies. This technique predominantly uses graphics and some metaphors within its process.



Figure 1-2: Graphic gameplan template

1.6.3 Don Braisby Associates

This method (graphic recording) involves the use of recording a workshop, meeting or any other form of gathering, using words and pictures. The graphic recorder uses large wall charts to record the information. The method is said to stimulate the creativity, productivity and understanding of the group as well as providing the group with a ‘group memory’ that is easy to share with others. This technique predominantly uses graphics and some metaphors within its process.



Figure 1-3: Graphic facilitation

1.6.4 Delta7

This method (visual metaphor elicitation) is similar to the RootLearning method but is done on a smaller and more personal basis with the client. The practitioner draws on a number of techniques (Socratic dialogue, clean language, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Gestalt theory) to distil information from meetings and present the

Chapter 3: Stage One – Preliminary Study

This Chapter will outline the initial phases of the explorative research. The approach taken by the researcher for data collection and analysis will be detailed and the findings will be presented in the form of the conceptual model developed. This study helped decide the research focus and objectives for stage two of the research.

Chapter 4: Literature Review

The literature review Chapter describes the context of the research in relation to the relevant fields of literature and identifies the novelty of the work through its contribution to this existing body of knowledge. Based on the conceptual model developed in the preliminary study literature in the areas of strategy, change, communication, complexity, dialogue, metaphors, stories, and graphics was reviewed. The Chapter concludes by identifying the importance of using these methods in relation to current strategic change perspectives.

Chapter 5: Stage Two – Focused Study

This Chapter presents stage two of the research – the focused study. This is an preliminary study involving the collection of qualitative data for the purpose of validating the conceptual model and theory building. The Chapter presents the research method taken in this study, detailing the data collection that was undertaken, giving a description of the companies involved in the research, and presenting a high level view of the findings of the data analysis.

Chapter 6: Findings of Focused Study

The Chapter outlines the findings from the main study, presenting the data from a thematic perspective.

Chapter 7: Refinement of Model and Discussion

In this Chapter the conceptual model is refined in line with the findings from the focused study and the findings from the whole study are utilised to develop a theory based on the research of graphic facilitative methods in the strategic change process. The theory builds on the refined conceptual model and focuses on the strategy communication aspect of the process.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

This Chapter presents the conclusions of the study. It showed that the research aims and objectives were met and reflects upon the research process undertaken. The contribution to knowledge made by this study is shown and areas for future research are identified.

1.8 Conclusion

This Chapter has introduced the thesis to the reader and helped identify the focus of the thesis, the background to the research and introduced the methods to be researched in

the study. The Chapter also outlined the aims and objectives of the research and offered the reader an overview of the structure of the thesis.

2 Research Methodology

This Chapter outlines the different research approaches available for a social inquiry and describes the research design chosen for this research.

2.1 Introduction

Jankowicz (2000) states that people undertake research in order to find things out in a systematic way with the aim of increasing their level of knowledge. The inquiry approach adopted by a researcher should therefore be well planned and based on the development of logical relationships and meaningful results rather than on an ad hoc presentation of results and assumptions.

A research study will often begin with an interest in a subject or area and a development of a research question(s) that initiates and drives an inquiry of the chosen area (Janesick, 1994, in: Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Once this question has been established the researcher goes about developing a research design for the study, focussing on the purpose of the research and the strategy that is to be undertaken (Robson, 1993).

There are many choices and decisions one has to make in choosing an appropriate research design for a social inquiry. There is no one right way to conduct such an inquiry and there are many options available to the researcher (Figure 2-1).

This Chapter outlines some of the research strategies available to researchers involved in a social inquiry and the discussions surrounding the various options. The particular research strategy chosen for this study will then be presented and the rationale behind the choice explained.

2.2 Research Perspectives

Before elaborating further on the methodological options available in a social research study it is deemed appropriate to discuss the more philosophical debates surrounding the

world of social inquiry. In designing a research inquiry, Patton (1990) states that it is important to know about the methodological paradigms debate in the field of a social inquiry in order to appreciate the choice of methods and perspectives (worldviews or paradigms) available to a researcher. There are two major and opposing perspectives on which research into social inquiry is based, the Positivist paradigm and the Phenomenology paradigm. There are a number of other research perspectives available to a researcher (see Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p. 13), but for the purpose of this inquiry the more traditional perspective of Positivism is outlined and contrasted to the alternate perspective of Phenomenology.

2.2.1 Positivism versus Phenomenology

“There is a long-standing debate about the most appropriate philosophical position from which methods should be derived. In the red-corner is phenomenology, in the blue- corner is positivism” (Zikmund, 1988).

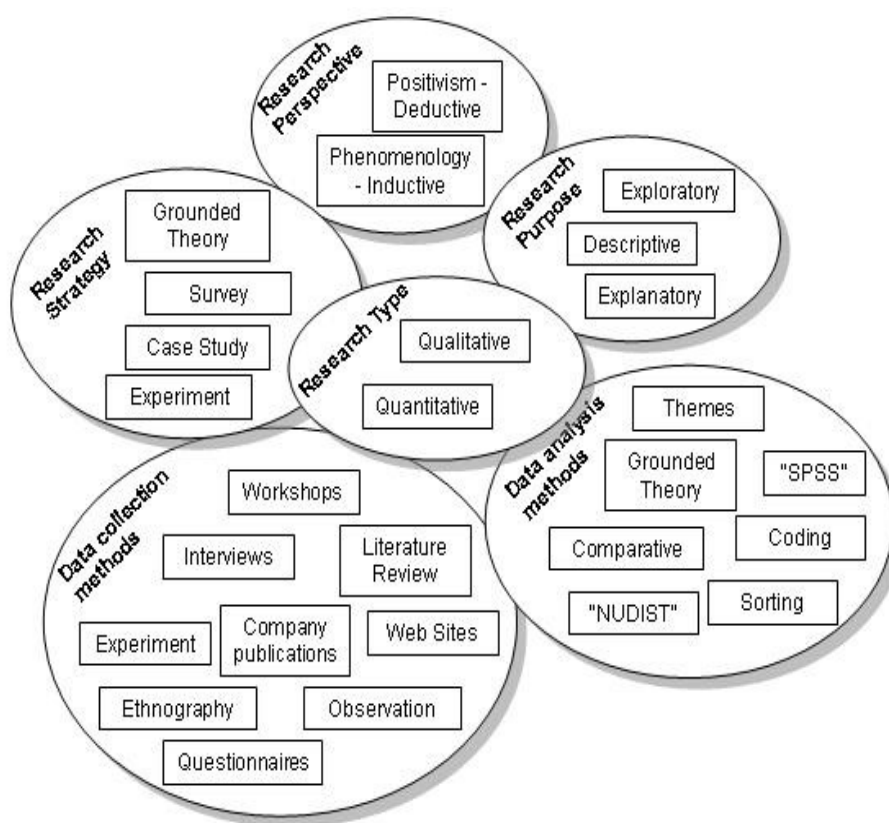


Figure 2-1: Research approaches, techniques and tools

Social scientists of a Positivist influence advocate that the social world exists externally and it can be measured through a scientific approach, for example through objective methods involving meticulous testing and observation. Theory is deduced through rigorous testing and observation, and seeks to explain causal relationships between variables i.e. through experimental, quasi-experimental, survey and rigorously defined methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

The alternative view of the Phenomenology approach states that reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. The focus here is on understanding what is happening and why, and collecting data from social interactions in the natural world using a naturalistic set of methodological procedures i.e. case studies, ethnography, observation and interviews (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Phenomenology is often referred to in a variety of terms e.g. Constructivism, Interpretivism, Naturalistic Inquiry, Qualitative Enquiry, Ethnographic, Post Positivism, Hermeneutics and Humanism (Robson, 1983 and Easterby-Smith et. al., 1991). Table 2-1 summarises the key differences between the two perspectives.

Table 2-1 Comparison of positivism and phenomenology research philosophy (adapted from Gill and Johnson (1991) and Easterby – Smith et. al., (1991)).

	Positivism – Deduction	Phenomenology - Induction
Basic beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explanation via analysis of causal relationships and fundamental laws. ▪ World is external and objective. ▪ Observer is independent. ▪ Science is value free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explanation of subjective meaning held by subjects through understanding. ▪ World is socially constructed and subjective. ▪ Observer is part of what is observed. ▪ Human interests drive Science.
Researcher should	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use various controls, physical or statistical, to allow the testing of hypotheses. ▪ Use highly structured research methodology to ensure above. ▪ Formulate hypotheses and test them. ▪ Reduce phenomena to simplest of elements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be committed to research everyday settings, to allow access to, and to minimise reactivity among the research subjects. ▪ Use minimum structure in research methodology to ensure above. ▪ Develop ideas through induction from data. ▪ Look at the totality of each situation.
Preferred Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generation and use of quantitative data. ▪ Operationalisation and measurement. ▪ Large samples. ▪ Generalisation. ▪ Rigour and Validity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generation and use of qualitative data. ▪ Multiple methods / viewpoints. ▪ Small in depth samples. ▪ Context-bound understanding. ▪ Trustworthiness, utility and triangulation.

2.2.2 Deductive and Inductive

As presented in Table 2-1, the Positivist and Phenomenological perspectives use, respectively, a Deductive research approach and an Inductive research approach.

The deductive research involves beginning a study with a theory or a hypothesis that needs to be tested using gathered data, leading to acceptance or rejection of the theory. Robson (1993) describes this deductive (Positivist) approach as having five sequential steps:

1. Deducing a hypothesis from theory.
2. Expressing the hypothesis in operational terms that propose a relationship between two specific variables.
3. Testing the operational hypothesis by experiment or some other form of empirical inquiry.

4. Examining the outcome (to confirm or indicate the need for modifying the theory).
5. If necessary, modifying the theory in the light of the findings and repeating the cycle so as to verify the revised theory.

In contrast the inductive research approach develops theories and hypothesis as the result of the inquiry. The theories and hypothesis tend to come after data collection rather than before it and are therefore often referred to as hypothesis generating (as opposed to hypothesis testing) research (Robson, 1993).

Patton (1990) states that “*the hypothetical-deductive approach of experimental designs ... requires the specification of main variables and the statement of specific research hypotheses before data collection begins.*” He goes on to add that “*The strategy of inductive designs is to allow the important analysis dimensions to emerge from patterns found in the cases under study without presupposing in advance what the important dimensions will be*” (p. 44).

The research study outlined in this thesis adopted a Phenomenological – Inductive research perspective.

2.3 Research Purpose

Having identified the most appropriate research perspective to adopt for one’s research inquiry the next consideration is establishing the reason for carrying out a research study. Robson (1993) states that in addition to the desire to make a contribution to knowledge the reason may be to either explore, to explain or to describe a particular event or situation.

He describes exploratory research as an inquiry to find out what is happening by asking questions and seeking new insights and assessing an occurrence in a new light. This can be qualitative or quantitative inquiry but as it is concerned with new subject areas a qualitative approach is often adopted here (Robson, 1993).

Descriptive research is described as a portrayal of events, situations or people in an accurate manner. This method requires an extensive previous knowledge of the situation that is to be researched to be sure that information gathered is accurate (Zikmund, 1988). This enquiry can be either qualitative or quantitative in nature.

The explanatory enquiry seeks to explain a situation or problem usually in the form of causal relationships and asks the question “*what are the precise relationships that exist between a set of variables?*” (Easterby-Smith et. al., 1991). The research can again be qualitative or quantitative.

Identifying the correct research purpose is largely influenced by the initial research aim developed. For this inquiry the research aim developed early on was to provide an understanding, at a practitioner and theoretical level, of the use and utility of the graphic facilitative methods in an organisational change context. This drove the research down an exploratory route. The main reason for developing an aim that was exploratory in nature was due to the lack of previous research in the area under study. The methods that were being investigated are recent developments to the business domain and the

companies responsible for their development are all under 10 years old. This meant that the methods have been applied in a practical business environment but not previously researched in a scientific or academic way. It was therefore appropriate to adopt an exploratory research study, to seek new insights, to ask questions, to find out what is happening and to generate a theory inductively based on the data collected.

The research study outlined in this thesis adopted an exploratory research purpose.

2.4 Research Strategy

The next stage in the research design was to select an appropriate research strategy as a framework to guide the researcher in carrying out the research. Robson (1993) describes a research strategy as the “*general approach taken in an enquiry*” (Robson, 1993). He states that it is satisfactory to consider three main research strategies; Case Study, Experiment, and Survey.

Experiments entail the testing of theories and hypotheses systematically. The researcher is able to control and fix all possible variables within a controlled environment (usually laboratory). The researcher is then able to manipulate the variables and measure the effect of the change. Experiments occur through the direct intervention of the researcher under laboratory conditions (Gill and Johnson, 1991).

Surveys entail gathering information from a segment of the larger population to understand something about that population. This method usually employs the use of a standardised questionnaire or / and a structured interview, with standard questions (Robson, 1993).

Case studies, as defined by Robson (1993), are empirical investigations “*of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence.*” The case studied can be virtually anything, involving one person, a group of people, an institution, or an innovation. The purpose is to develop detailed information and understanding about a single ‘case’ or of a small number of related ‘cases’ (Yin, 1989). The method of data collection is via a number of techniques for example, interviews, observation, and workshops.

For the purpose of this inquiry a fourth research strategy is outlined, Grounded Theory. Grounded Theory is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Strauss and Corbin (1990) state that a researcher does not begin with a theory and then prove it but rather begins with an area of study and the themes of relevance within the studied area will emerge.

Research Questions

Robson (1993) states that the research questions can help determine what type of research strategy is chosen. Other factors that will influence the choice of research strategy are the amount of control a researcher has over events and whether the focus is on current or past events. Table 2-2 relates each of these to Robson’s (1993) three strategies.

Table 2-2 Appropriate uses of different research strategies (Robson, 1993)

Strategy	Type of research question	Control over events	Focus on current events
Experiment (Appropriate for explanatory studies)	How and Why	Yes	Yes
Survey (Appropriate for descriptive studies)	Who, What ¹ , Where, How Many and How Much	No	Yes
Case Study (Appropriate for exploratory studies)	How and Why	No	Usually but not necessarily

2.4.1 Research Strategy Selection

This study began as an exploratory investigation of four visual and graphic management methods with the aim of establishing a conceptual framework, hypothesising key concepts of the methods and the relationships between them, with the ultimate goal of forming a body of theoretical knowledge.

The use of the experiment as a research strategy was quickly ruled out as the study of this nature required the development of concepts using a qualitative driven approach which was flexible and not as scientifically demanding as the experimental positivistic approach. It was also thought that the Survey strategy was not appropriate to this study as it involved having access to a reasonably large population of people. At the initial phase of the research this was a problem. It also required adequate prior knowledge about the subject area under investigation (Robson, 1993) and at the time there was little previous research in the use of graphic methods for business practices.

As the research inquiry was of an exploratory nature, based on Robson's (1993) selection criteria a case study research strategy was considered. However, in addition to this strategy the Grounded Theory approach also proved applicable, therefore a combined strategy was selected. The justification for this selection is outlined in the sections below.

A multiple research strategy was chosen. A Grounded Theory approach was selected for Stage One of the research - the Preliminary Study and a multiple cases approach was followed for Stage Two of the research - the Focused Study.

2.5 Data Collection

There are two distinct models for data collection and analysis. The first states that the data is collected and then analysed and the second model states that data collection and analysis can happen concurrently (Robson, 1993). The two approaches are shown in Table 2-3, the first as a positivist, quantitative approach and the second as a phenomenologist, qualitative approach.

¹ Some 'what' questions are exploratory, therefore any of the strategies would be relevant (Robson, 1993)

The quantitative approach is deemed as the ‘scientific’ approach (Robson, 1993). The research starts with the development of a hypothesis, from the theory, that requires testing. Testing the hypothesis involves experiments or other forms of empirical inquiry. This approach is very much involved with facts and figures and the use of measurable data and quantities.

The qualitative approach differs in that theory and concepts tend to arise from the inquiry, coming after data collection rather than before (Robson, 1993). In general, qualitative studies can be defined as any kind of research that produces findings that has not been arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The research often deals with human issues, and is conducted through contact with field or life situations. This can be reflecting on the life of individuals, groups, societies, and organisations (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The researcher may often start with a research question or concept alone, and then allow an initial period of research to assist in developing hypotheses (Robson, 1993). Table 2-3 summarises the differences between qualitative and quantitative research.

Table 2-3 Comparison of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995)

Aspect of Research	Quantitative	Qualitative
Relationship between researcher and subject	▪ Distant	▪ Close
Research strategy	▪ Structured	▪ Unstructured
Nature of data	▪ Hard ▪ Reliable	▪ Rich ▪ Deep
Relationship between theory and research	▪ Confirmation	▪ Emergent

2.5.1 Qualitative Data Collection Techniques

Several data collection techniques appropriate to a qualitative inquiry were considered for this research study. These are outlined below and the chosen techniques for the preliminary and focused study are identified in the relevant sections.

Interviews

Robson (1993) describes interviews as a form of conversation with a purpose. There are several types of interviews, which are based on the degree of structure and formality. They vary from being highly structured to free range conversations using closed and open-ended questions respectively (Yin, 1989).

The fully structured interview has predetermined questions and responses in a predetermined order. The interviewer will ask the respondent a series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories. This is similar to an interview administered questionnaire (Fontana and Frey, 1994: in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). All respondents receive the same set of questions, asked in the same order, with little room for variation in responses. This method benefits from being highly reliable in terms of a standardised set of responses which are easy to compare. A disadvantage is that it does not allow for an investigative conversation to develop which limits the amount of rich data that can emerge.

A semi-structured interview is where the researcher has prepared a number of interview questions in advance, when and where the questions are used in the interview is determined by the interviewer and he/she has the ability to adapt these depending on the responses of the interviewee (Wengraf, 2001). The ability to improvise in an interview is very difficult and the researcher needs to be well prepared, as predicting the interviewees' responses to a question is virtually impossible. Wengraff (2001) states that "*most of the informant's responses can't be predicted in advance and you as interviewer therefore have to improvise probably half – and maybe 80% or more – of your responses to what they say in response to your initial prepared question*" (p. 5). He goes on to add that the ability to improvise requires a high degree of training and mental preparation. To be successful, he believes semi structured interviews require:

- As much preparation as structured interviews before the session.
- More discipline and creativity than structured interviews.
- More time for analysis and interpretation after the session than structured interviews.

The unstructured interview requires the researcher to go into the interview without a predetermined set of questions or an interview schedule. It provides a greater breadth than other types as it is qualitative in nature (Fontana and Frey, 1994: in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994) and the content of the interview is usually guided by the responses of the previous question. The benefit of an unstructured interview is that the data collected is usually rich and authentic containing revealing information (Eysenck, 1998). It is also a good way of establishing a relationship with the respondent. Robson (1993) states that a disadvantage of the method is the difficulty of comparing interviews and responses with each other as each interview will have been slightly different. Another disadvantage is that the lack of structure could lead to a collection of irrelevant information for the interviewer. It is recommended that this type of interview be used if there is an opportunity to hold more interviews with the respondent. An initial unstructured interview is then a good way to establish a good relationship with the interviewee (it can act as an ice breaking exercise). The remaining interview(s) should then be more structured.

Workshops / Focus Groups

Workshops, sometimes described as focus groups, are a method of discussing issues around a particular subject with a specific group of participants. It is a means by which a group can work on or explore specific issues and problems in order to learn or acquire more information (Gilgeous, 1995). Krueger and Casey (2000) state that the purpose of a focus group "*is to listen and gather information*" and that it is a "*way to understand how people feel or think about an issue, product, or service*" (p. 4). In an academic setting the workshop can provide a primary or secondary data collection source for the researcher. In this situation the goal is to collect data that is of interest to the researcher and gain further insights around a research area (Krueger and Casey, 2000). For the purpose of a data collection technique it is necessary to plan and develop questions around the subject area to prompt discussions and to ensure that the relevant data is collected. Krueger and Casey (2000) state that focus groups have distinctive characteristics, these are:

1. They involve homogenous people in a social interaction.

2. Their purpose is to collect qualitative data from a focused discussion.
3. They are a qualitative approach to gathering information that is both inductive and naturalistic.

The actual workshop process can be designed in various ways but in general it involves a small group of people (6-10) in an informal setting. The aim is to achieve common intellectual goals through active participation in the discussion of a certain subject or concept. The workshop should be designed in advance establishing a clear agenda and defining the desired outcomes of the event. Data is collected through various workshop techniques, for example through group brainstorming and on post it[©] notes. The workshop process is active and encourages participation from all members. Ideally there should be a group facilitator who guides the conversation and structure of the process so that the data gathered is applicable to the research subject.

Using workshops as a method to generate data and information has several advantages. In comparison to a standard interviewing process the workshop tends to provide a more informal setting for participants as well as offering more excitement and stimulation with regards to interaction with other people (Lettice, 1996). This in turn encourages debate and discussion, resulting in new ideas and rich data from multiple perspectives. The process allows the researcher to gain a good understanding of the research area and the ability to explore, with experts, issues of interest that arise during the workshop.

However there are some drawbacks that the researcher needs to be aware of when using workshops, so that they can be minimised. Workshops are time consuming and it is not uncommon to run a workshop for a day or two. It is difficult for participants to justify taking this time out from their regular working day. As a compromise it often means shortening the workshop and thus covering fewer questions or covering the issues in less detail. The workshops run a risk of producing high level information, this problem can be minimised by having clear and focused questions, a facilitator who understands what the important issues are, enough time to develop deep discussions and having participants knowledgeable in the research area. A skilled facilitator is often needed to run a workshop to deal with issues such as a difficult participant influencing the running of the workshop, or one or two dominant participants influencing the opinions of weaker group members. The facilitator's role also means ensuring that all questions are covered and that interesting issues are picked up on and discussed thoroughly. This is a difficult, all encompassing role and it is recommended that the researcher is trained in facilitation, or that a trained facilitator is brought in. Ultimately the goal is to ensure a high quality output workshop session.

Literature Review

For a research inquiry, a literature review is sometimes considered as the logical starting point (Hart, 1998). The purpose is to gather information on the area under investigation so that the researcher can gain knowledge about the subject area. It is also important in narrowing down the scope of the research by identifying the gaps in current knowledge thus helping to focus the research questions for the inquiry (Robson, 1993). Hart (1998) defines a literature review as *“The selection of available documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfil certain aims or express certain views on the nature*

of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being processed" (p. 13). Robson (1993) states that the academic tradition of conducting a literature review as the foundation for the inquiry and at the beginning of the study may not always apply to real world studies. He argues that research literature can provide a "*background resource*" (p. 23) to the researcher rather than the essential starting point for the research designs. This view places more emphasis on the client group and the additional information available at a practitioner level that could help guide the research design. Robson (1993) states that a "*good understanding about what is already known, or established, does not then have the absolutely central role in applied real world enquiry that it does in fundamental, discipline-developing research*" (p. 23) but he believes that it is still very important. It is necessary therefore to have a strategy for collecting and recording the information gathered from the various literature sources available in the inquiry and a clear understanding of why one should do this. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 50 – 53) suggest that existing literature can be used for five purposes in qualitative research:

1. *To stimulate theoretical sensitivity* – by providing concepts and relationships that can be compared to the actual data collected.
2. *To provide secondary sources of data* – to be used perhaps as initial hypotheses testing of the researchers' concepts and ideas.
3. To stimulate questions during data gathering and data analysis.
4. *To direct theoretical sampling* – to guide the researcher as to where to go to uncover phenomena that are important for theory development.
5. *To be used as supplementary validation* – to explain why the findings support or differ from the existing literature.

There is a danger for researchers to treat the literature review as a separate entity in their research thesis and that it is done simply to show that the researcher knows the area (Silverman, 2000). Wolcott (1990) states that "*I expect my students to know the relevant literature, but I do not want them to lump it all into one chapter that remains unconnected to the rest of the study. I want them to draw upon the literature selectively and appropriately as needed in the telling of their story*" (p. 17). Silverman (2000) stipulates that the literature review should combine knowledge with critical thought and should be written mainly after the data analysis is completed. He argues that until the researcher has conducted the data analysis he/she will not know what literature is relevant. This does not mean that no literature review should be conducted at the early stages, as it is necessary to gain an understanding of the field, but that the bulk of the reading and documentation is best done concurrently with data collection and analysis.

Observational Methods

The actions and behaviour of people is an important aspect in social inquiry therefore a technique that observes what people do in their real life setting and then recording this in some descriptive way for analysis is naturally appealing (Robson, 1993). However, this technique is highly subjective as it involves describing somebody else's actions using one's own perceptions and biases. Patton (1990) states that "*scientific inquiry using observational methods requires disciplined training and rigorous preparation*"

(p. 200). Robson (1993) describes two very different types of observational methods; participant observation (described as a qualitative style, with roots in anthropology studies) and structured observation (which is a quantitative style used in a variety of disciplines). Robson (1993) states that observation can take on a variety of forms and be used for several purposes in a study; these are outlined in Table 2-4.

Table 2-4: Purpose and use of observation in an inquiry (Robson, 1993)

Observation use	Observation purpose
Exploratory phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To find out what is going on in a situation. ▪ Unstructured form. ▪ A precursor to subsequent testing of insights.
Supportive or Supplementary data collection technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To complement or set in perspective data obtained by other means. ▪ Validate or corroborate insights obtained by other techniques i.e. interviews. ▪ Can be used as a primary method particularly in a research study of descriptive purpose.
Experimental research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Used within the context of a controlled experiment as direct observation of laboratory experiment or in field research.

The driving force for the observational data collection method is what the researcher is trying to find out from the situation, this is guided by the research questions. The researcher also needs to decide what type of information to collect during the observation period. Robson (1993) outlines two types of information; these are narrative accounts and coded schedules. The narrative accounts involve informal information gathering, in an unstructured qualitative manner, where the researcher has considerable freedom. The coded schedules are more formal and structured where the researcher has a clear direction of what is to be observed and is only concerned with pre-specified subjects and all other occurrences are irrelevant (Robson, 1993).

The role of the observer in an inquiry can vary greatly; the two extremes are that of the participant observer – a researcher who participates fully with the intention of becoming a fully accepted member of the group, and the pure observer – who seeks to be unnoticed and in the background. The different roles within participation observation are described in Table 2-5.

The actual observation task itself of collecting the data should be planned in advance, depending on the purpose of the observation inquiry (Table 2-4). For example if it is an exploratory inquiry then the researcher's intention may be to gain a descriptive account (descriptive observation) of, amongst other things, the events, actors and activities taking place. On the other hand if the researcher is using the observational method for the purpose of supplementary or supportive data then he/she will have a defined objective of what is being looked for in the observation and use the research questions as the focus (focused observation) (Robson, 1993). Robson (1993) states that in the focused observation the process involved can be regarded as an example of analytical induction, summarised in Figure 2-2.

1. Formulate a rough definition of the phenomenon of interest.
2. Put forward an initial hypothetical explanation of this phenomenon.
3. Study a situation in the light of this hypothesis, to determine whether or not the hypothesis fits.
4. If the hypothesis does not fit the evidence, then *either* the hypothesis must be reformulated, or the phenomenon to be explained must be redefined so that the phenomenon is excluded.
5. Repeat with a second situation. Confidence in your hypothesis increases with the number of situations fitting the evidence. Each negative one requires either a redefinition or a reformulation.

Figure 2-2: The process of analytic induction (Robson, 1993)

Arguably the most difficult element of participant observation is the recording of the phenomenon observed. Even with the most unstructured observation Robson (1993) argues that the researcher needs to have a system that allows one “*to capture information unambiguously and as faithfully and fully as possible*” (p. 203). He offers some guidance to researchers for the collection of information, some of which are described below:

- Where possible the researcher should make on the spot observations – which can be condensed using abbreviations. The main purpose is to remind the researcher of what happened.
- The record should be revised soon after to add detail and substance and to ensure comprehensibility.
- Materials to be included in the recording are; running descriptions, recalls of forgotten information, interpretive ideas of the researcher, personal impressions and feelings, reminder to check for additional information.
- The researcher should prepare the detailed report within twenty-four hours.

Table 2-5: The role of the observer in a participant inquiry (adapted from Robson, 1993)

Role of Observer	Description	Comments
The complete participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conceals that they are an observer. ▪ Seeking to become a full member of the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliberate and planned deceit of group members. ▪ Unethical. ▪ Used within undercover police/government operations.
The participant as observer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The group is told from the start that they are being observed. ▪ Observer seeks to gain the trust from the group and build relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not easy to maintain dual role of observer and group member. ▪ Dependent on many variables i.e. cultural, gender etc.
The marginal participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lower degree of participation. ▪ Largely a passive member but striving for complete acceptance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some marginal roles can be undistinguishable from the complete participant observer.
The observer-as-participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The group know that the researcher is there to observe them. ▪ The observer takes no part in the group activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The observer’s presence is still affecting the group dynamics, therefore to claim no participation in group activity is arguable.

It is possible to take a more structured approach to observation which sees the researcher as taking a detached, pure observer position and using a quantitative systematic observation method which involves the development of coding schemes as a way of quantifying behaviour. This is in contrast to the described participant observer technique which uses primarily qualitative techniques and is somewhat unstructured and has a narrative form of recording human behaviour.

In conclusion, the participant observation method can be said to be appropriate for real life situations, as it is a technique that allows the researcher to become directly involved in the phenomenon under investigation. This overcomes the artificiality issue of interviews and questionnaires where respondents could be ticking boxes and tailoring their response to make themselves look good or to please the interviewer (Robson, 1993). Conversely the approach has been criticised as it is difficult to ascertain as to what degree an observer affects the situation and the technique is often time consuming. The biggest debate surrounds the subjectivity of the method. Once it is accepted that the observer can only observe the situation through his/her own interpretations then measures can be taken to limit personal bias and the subjectivity of the data (Robson, 1993).

The data collection methods adopted in this research inquiry are qualitative: a combination of interviews, workshops, literature and observational methods were used.

2.6 Research Strategy for the Preliminary Study

The aim of the preliminary study was to try and establish some answers to the research questions (Chapter 1). As little was known about the four methods; it was therefore a very exploratory phase with no pre-established theory or hypotheses. By conducting an exploratory study, a conceptual model could be developed advancing into a set of key themes to be taken forward for evaluation in a focused study. It was decided that a Grounded Theory research strategy best suited this aim to develop themes for future development and hypotheses building.

2.6.1 Approaching the Companies

The research was not conducted in collaboration with the facilitating companies in terms of funding or sponsorship. It was therefore necessary to approach each company individually and ask for their co-operation to the research. The process that was taken at this stage is outlined in detail in Chapter 4.

2.6.2 Grounded Theory

The research was an exploration, rather than a testing of a hypothesis, therefore Grounded Theory was selected as a qualitative method as it allowed the researcher to explore and analyse the data collected, allowing the theory to emerge.

Grounded Theory was developed in the 1960's by sociologists Glaser and Strauss (1967). Put simply, it is the "*discovery of theory from data*" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The development of this inquiry will follow a design similar to Grounded Theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Grounded Theory emerged when

positivistic research methods were the most prominent. Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued that sociological research methods at that time were concentrated on measurement and the rigorous testing of theory. They felt that the step of discovering what ideas and theories might be appropriate for the area under investigation was being neglected. Their solution was to generate theory from data by a process they described as inductive (Blaikie, 1993). The research begins by focusing on an area of study and gathering data from a variety of different methods, for example interviews and observation. The data is then analysed using coding and theoretical sampling procedures. The theory is then generated from the data analysis with the help of interpretative procedures, and then written up and presented (Haig, 1995). The grounded theory techniques, adopted in this study, involve data collection, coding, memoing, and sorting.

2.6.3 Data Collection

Interviews

Semi structured interviews were the primary source of data collection for the preliminary study. As detailed in the section above, the type of interview conducted can vary from a highly structured approach to an unstructured one. For the preliminary study, a semi-structured interview approach was taken, with some open exploratory questions. As little was known about methods being researched, the questions developed offered the interviewee scope to go into great detail about the subject. The questions also varied slightly in accordance to who was being interviewed, for example, facilitating companies or clients of these companies. Some example questions used for the preliminary study are shown in Figure 2-3. A full list is shown in Appendix II.

Can you explain a little bit about the tools that you use?
 In what context do you use the tools? (Strategy, business planning, projects plan, communication).
 How and why did you start using these tools?
 What do you think it is about the methods that make them successful?
 Do you think there are any down sides / limitations to using these methods?
 Can you outline your first impressions of the methods / tools?
 Did you find the tools beneficial?
 If so, what were some of the benefits? (Short term and long term).

Figure 2-3 Example semi-structured questions

For the preliminary study, 13 data collection interviews were carried out with practitioners of the tools and users of the tools. In total 12 and ½ hours of interview data were collected (Table 2-6). All the interviews were transcribed fully. This was necessary as a Grounded Theory approach stresses the importance of analysing each word from the interviews. It was also necessary to analyse the data in this fashion as the study was not based on any assumptions about the tools and methods. It was therefore completely open to all sets of themes, so covering the whole data set was necessary.

Once the themes were identified, they were coded and a table (Table 2-7) set up for each interview to assist data analysis and make the interviews easier to compare.

Table 2-6: Details of data collection

Number of interviews conducted	13
Hours of interviews	12.5
Pages of transcript	113

Literature Review

At the initial phase of the research, a literature review was carried out to establish some background information regarding the research area. This proved difficult to begin with as very little was known about the methods. To overcome this difficulty and to guide the literature focus the researcher took several actions: An Internet based information search (including practitioner company websites), observing the methods and tools in practice, a review of company documentation and literature and initial informal talks with users of the methods. Further details of these methods are provided in Chapter 4.

The information and understanding gathered through these actions led to an initial literature search in the areas of strategy, learning organisation theory, cognitive theory (specifically graphics related) and learning styles.

Graphic Facilitation Forum (GF²) Workshop

The GF² was established by the researcher and an employee of the facilitating company, Persona. Persona was, at the time, the UK partner company to the US based Grove Consultants International. The purpose of GF² was to bring together UK practitioners and users of the graphic methods to share ideas, experience and common interests. Appendix II outlines the notes from the meeting and Appendix III outlines the table of themes developed from the data.

Workshop Observations

As very little was known and formally documented about the methods prior to the study, the opportunity was taken to observe the use of one of the methods in a workshop process. This observation opportunity arose very early on in the study and as the researcher was not completely familiar with the methods it was felt that attempting to observe the process to gather formal data for the research was too ambitious at this stage. The decision was therefore made to use the workshops as an opportunity to become more familiar with the method and to orient the researcher in terms of research design and in particular the formation of research questions.

2.6.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis strategy adopted for the preliminary study was based on the Grounded Theory methods outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967). It is worth noting that Yin (1994) and Miles and Huberman (1994) have also outlined some qualitative data analysis techniques.

Yin (1994) offered four dominant analytical techniques these are; pattern-matching, explanation-building, time-series, and program-logic. Miles and Huberman (1994) outline a collection of analytical techniques based on a variety of sources, they are:

1. Putting data into different arrays.
2. A matrix of categories.
3. Data displays (flowcharts).
4. Tabulating the frequency of different events.
5. Examining the complexity of such tabulations.
6. Categorising information into chronological order.

The data collected was analysed on an ongoing basis. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that a researcher should be “*interweaving data collection and analysis from the start*”. They state that it helps the researcher go back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new and sometimes better data. They add that this approach enables the possibility of collecting new data to fill in the gaps that may emerge in the data or to test any hypotheses that may emerge.

Throughout the preliminary study qualitative data analysis techniques were not limited to the approach offered by Glaser and Strauss (1967) but were adopted from a variety of sources and reference was made, on an ongoing basis, to Miles and Huberman (1994) and Yin (1994).

Coding

The analysis of the interview data adopted the Grounded Theory method of developing the theoretical concepts from data through coding. Once initial interview data was collected, the researcher began *open coding* of the data by looking for patterns and themes. Coding involves analysing the data line-by-line and sorting the data into concepts and categories. All field notes, transcripts and other material should be coded and the coding system should be refined as the data collection proceeds (Strauss and Corbin, 1997). Strauss and Corbin (1997) state that out of this coding process, additional questions that need to be asked evolve and also additional data which needs to be examined. The next step was to code the data involving procedures for connecting categories found in open coding. Strauss and Corbin (1997) refer to this process as axial coding. The process concerns matching “*conditions, context, action / interactional strategies and consequences*” (Strauss and Corbin, 1997). The core categories identified in the analysis are then selected and related, in a systematic way, to the other categories uncovered in the research. This *selective coding* process also uncovers any missing categories, which leads to additional data collection.

As well as coding the data, Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to *memoing* the data this involves “*the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding*”. Memos are written as the study progresses and reflect the constant comparison across categories and codes. Finally the researcher should sort the data. *Sorting* the data and memos is done through differentiating and segmenting. It forces comparison and clarification of codes and sparks new memos on interrelated

codes and categories (Fischer, 1997). Table 2-7 shows an excerpt from the results of the data analysis from the interview (a complete table can be found in Appendix III). The interview transcript was analysed for key themes and then coded. The code in the table (i.e. 2.1) indicates that it is interview number 2 and the theme number 1 of the interview. The codes have then been sorted by themes. The text in the third column indicates important memos for reference to the researcher or actual quotes, both in relation to the corresponding theme.

Table 2-7 Example of tabularised analysed data from preliminary study interview

CODE	THEME	TEXT FROM INTERVIEWS
2.4 2.5 2.20 2.27	<i>Visual</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visualisation really brings to life complex systems. ▪ It transcends language, so to speak, and words. It is very natural. ▪ Our process is such that we don't place undue importance on the visual, we keep it in context of an overall learning process. ▪ So the visual is powerful but lacks the capability for long term learning, for sustained learning.
2.13 2.14	<i>Memory</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Claus really talked about how the brain works and how visuals are a key piece of remembering information. ▪ It's amazing, we are continually stunned by how in about a thirty minute experience people can have that much of a lasting memory.
2.15	<i>Language / culture barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It has been very positive in transcending cultural issues where words are difficult. Visuals are powerful.
2.21 2.22	<i>Metaphor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Others we influence a lot, for instance a road is a very powerful metaphor. ▪ People naturally look for a beginning and end in a picture.
2.23 2.26 2.29 2.31 2.34	<i>Dialogue</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where the dialogue becomes critical in guiding them through the visual. ▪ The dialogue is critical because it de-mystifies it all. ▪ The dialogue becomes the driver of learning. ▪ Once they are engaged in the dialogue the visual takes on a secondary importance. ▪ Taking that data and visualising it in a way that is meaningful and then explaining it, creating a dialogue around it that helps people understand what are the key issues that this data points to.

2.6.5 Conceptual Model Developed from Preliminary Study

Miles and Huberman (1994) recommend that in qualitative studies a conceptual model is developed as soon as possible. They state this is an important exercise as it forces the researcher to make decisions regarding what the key factors to be studied are and the relationships between them.

Following the data collection and analysis phase it was possible to develop a conceptual model and some initial concepts to focus the focused study.

The research strategy for the Preliminary Study followed a Grounded Theory approach using interviews to collect the data and the techniques of coding, memoing and sorting to analyse the data.

2.7 Research Strategy for Focused Study

The aim of the focused study was to investigate further the conceptual model developed in the preliminary study process. From the preliminary study some key concepts were developed and a further exploratory study was needed, in the form of the focused study, to validate these concepts and, if necessary, add to or amend the conceptual model.

2.7.1 The Case Study as a Research Strategy

The focused study followed a Case Study research strategy. A definition given by Yin (1994) states that a “*case study inquiry is an empirical study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context*”. Like other research strategies, the case study is a way of investigating an empirical subject by following a set of prescribed principals. Yin (1994) states that a case study, as a research strategy, benefits from an “*all encompassing method.*” Stating that the logic of design incorporates specific approaches to data collection and analysis. Robson (1993) defines the case study approach as “*a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence*” (p. 52). Yin (1994) outlines five components of a case study research design that are important. They are:

- The case study’s questions.
- Its propositions, if any.
- Its unit(s) of analysis – What the case to be studied is.
- The logic linking the data to the propositions.
- The criteria for interpreting the findings.

Table 2-8 describes the key characteristics of a case study as stated by Robson (1993).

Table 2-8: Key characteristics of a case study (Robson, 1993)

Focus	Developing an in-depth analysis of a single or multiple cases.
Discipline Origin	Political science, sociology, evaluation, organisation studies etc.
Data Collection	Multiple sources – documents, archival records, artifacts, observation, interviews etc.
Narrative Form	In-depth study of case or cases.

The data collection methods for case studies are numerous. Yin (1994) outlines six sources for data collection; documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts. He believes that one of the strengths of case study research is the opportunity to use multiple sources of evidence. The most important advantage of using multiple lines of enquiry is the development of “*converging lines of inquiry,*” also referred to as a “*process of triangulation.*” Choosing to use data triangulation in the inquiry increases the chances of the findings or conclusions being much more convincing and accurate, as it is based on several different sources of information with the aim of corroborating the same phenomenon (Yin, 1994).

When selecting to carry out a case study strategy it is important to define the boundaries of the cases to be studied. Within the context of management research, the cases studied tend to be organisations but, Robson (1993) argues that almost any real world phenomenon can be a valid case, he states that “*The CASE is the situation, individual, group, organisation or whatever it is that we are interested in*” (p. 51). A danger for the researcher is that of data overload. The case study offers the researcher a method of collecting rich and interesting data but the researcher must limit the desire to understand everything about the phenomena (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that the best way of ensuring that the data collected is within the boundaries of the specified case is to investigate based on the conceptual model that underlies the research and to keep focused on the research questions.

For the purposes of this research the case study strategy was adopted after the development of a conceptual model, which was developed using a grounded theory strategy. This ensures that the investigation using the case study strategy is focused specifically on gathering information that will investigate and validate the conceptual model.

2.7.2 Company Selection

It was decided to narrow the scope in the focused study on two of the four methods that were explored in the preliminary study. It was decided that for the validation of the conceptual model and the theory building phase, the methods of RootLearning and the Grove Consultants International would be used. The decision was based on several factors which are detailed in Chapter 5. Three companies were chosen as cases for the focused study, one a user of the Grove methods and two as users of the RootLearning methods.

2.7.3 Data Collection

Interviews

As in the preliminary study the primary sources of data for the focused study was through the process of semi-structured interviews. The interview questions for the focused study were changed in order to focus on the concepts derived from the preliminary study. The interview was still designed to be semi-structured – allowing for the exploration and the emergence of themes. From the experience gained in the preliminary study interview, the researcher found that a dialogue style interview was highly beneficial for discovering themes from the interviewees, and thus did not want to constrain the interviewees’ thoughts in any way during the focused study interviews. Despite this fact it was acknowledged that the researcher had to guide the interview questioning process a lot more than that of the preliminary study. The questions again varied slightly in accordance to who was being interviewed, for example, facilitating companies or clients of these companies. Some example questions are detailed in Figure 2-4. A full list is available in Appendix IV.

1. What changes have you seen in the business environment in the last three years?
2. How has it affected your products / toolkit?
3. What made you choose the methodologies you have chosen?
4. How much is change directed rather than emergent?
5. Some authors in the literature that I have been reviewing believe that change occurs through people interacting and talking, by having a dialogue? What do you think?

Figure 2-4: Example question for the focused study

For the focused study, 12 data collection interviews were carried out with practitioners of the methods, users of the methods and experts. In total 15 hours of interview data were collected. All the interviews were transcribed fully. Once transcribed, all interviews were again analysed and coded. For the focused study the selection of themes was based on the findings of the preliminary study and focused on the themes that were related to the conceptual model. The themes were coded and tabularised (Table 2-10).

Table 2-9: Details of data collection

Number of Interviews conducted	12
Hours of interviews	15
Pages of transcript	232

Chapter 5 outlines, in detail, the interview approach of the focused study.

Literature Review

During the preliminary study data analysis phase, it was possible to discern the emerging themes and tailor the literature review accordingly. Thus the literature review changed slightly in accordance to the themes emerging from the data and from narrowing down the initial wide scope taken during the preliminary study phase. As a result the areas focused on were strategic change literature, which included the change management domain and touched upon aspects of complexity theory in relation to the business environment, and specifically the literature surrounding metaphor, dialogue, graphics and storytelling.

Observation

As part of the focused study a workshop was observed in an automotive manufacturing company. This was not the primary source of data for the focused study and was used as supporting data (Table 2-4) for the inquiry. The type of observation was that of a participant observation where the researcher took on the observer-as-participant role, outlined above. The details of the observation that took place is outlined in Chapter 5.

Survey

The multiple methods case study approach taken in the focused study included the collection of survey results from one of the selected user companies. The researcher did

not carry out the survey herself but obtained results from a survey carried out by the user company, details of which are outlined in Chapter 5.

Company Information

The data collection also encompassed reviewing documents and narrative accounts of the two company cases which added to the understanding of the context in which the methods were used and helped inform the conceptual model.

2.7.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis strategy adopted for the focused study was the same as that adopted for the preliminary study and based on the methods of Glaser and Strauss (1967); Yin (1994) and Miles and Huberman (1994), outlined above. The interview transcripts were analysed in depth and tabularised and categorised according to the themes that emerged from the preliminary study (Table 2-10). A full table can be found in Appendix V.

The workshop data was analysed in a similar fashion and themes pertaining to the conceptual model tabularised and categorised.

The research strategy for the Focused Study followed a Case Study approach using multiple methods of inquiry to collect the data (interview, observation, survey and documentation) and the techniques of coding, memoing and sorting to analyse the data.

Table 2-10: Example of tabularised analysed data from focused study interview

CODE	THEME	TEXT FROM INTERVIEWS
15.3	<i>Engaged</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have statistics that show that as much as 75% of our nations' workforce is disengaged.
15.114	<i>Change (assumptions)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think we've seen behaviour change dramatically at times just because assumptions are just totally wrong, when you think about the assumptions you have in life a lot of them have never been checked.
15.39	<i>Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> But what would happen was that we'd put it in the binder and take it back to organisations and it would be stillborn and the binders sat on the desks.
15.76	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> But the fact that the matter is what we find is that people are very authentic and if it's relevant and real and authentic it really picks up momentum if it's fabricated and not totally true then it doesn't stick.
15.54	<i>Dialogue</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you really allow people to discover and uncover the issues on their own which is through the dialogue.
15.68	<i>Metaphor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A picture is better than words and a metaphor is a lot better than pictures because it's just better on the speed factor.
15.78	<i>Graphics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's the same thing with the images and the metaphor and the dialogue and the data somehow you're curious about it, there's somehow you've experienced it, there's somehow it connects to you.

Figure 2-5 outlines the research strategy and activities adopted for the overall study.

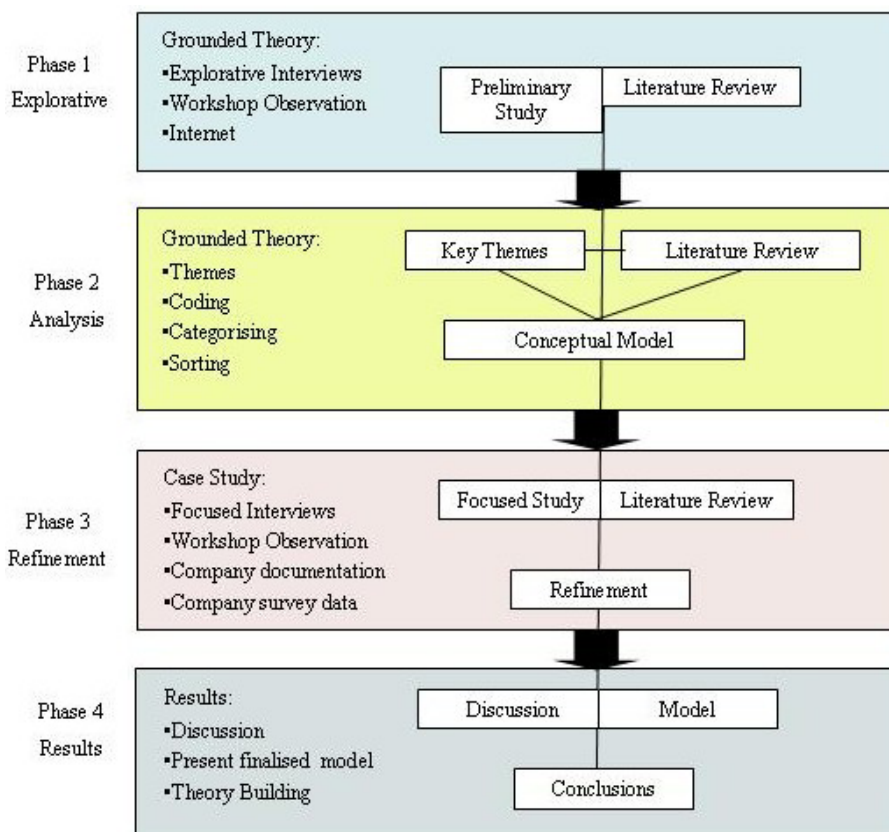


Figure 2-5: The chosen research approach

2.8 Research Quality

Silverman (2000) states that crucial to a social inquiry are the researcher's ability to show that the methods used were reliable and that the conclusions are valid. Yin (1994) identifies three forms of validity relevant to exploratory research – construct validity, external validity and reliability. Construct validity is described as the degree of certainty one has that the phenomenon has been appropriately measured and studied. External validity concerns the extent of confidence one has that the findings can be generalised beyond the immediate case. Reliability concerns the researcher's conviction that the research and its findings are repeatable.

Table 2-11 provides a useful framework as to the actions a researcher can take to ensure that his/her research is reliable and valid. From Table 2-11 it is also possible to observe the actions taken by the researcher to ensure the reliability and validity of the preliminary and focused study. For example, the researcher established a group called the Graphic Facilitation Forum (GFF). This forum was made up of a mixture of practitioners who used graphic methods to people who had used the methods within their companies and were interested in learning more about them. Throughout the study the researcher maintained contact with the Forum members and helped arrange regular meetings. The researcher developed a regular dialogue with the members of the Forum and the group provided a rich source of knowledge against which the validity of the research questions, theories and findings and conclusions could be discussed.

Table 2-11: Methods for achieving research design quality (Based on Yin (1994), Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1998)).

Requirement for research design quality	Method utilised
<p>Construct Validity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. Enhanced by using multiple sources of evidence, establishment of a chain of evidence and use of multiple informants for the review of data collected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used second researcher to analyse the preliminary and focused study data. Use of interviews, literature, observation, workshops to get multiple sources of evidence. Perspective of facilitating companies (four viewpoints) and clients (across different industries).
<p>External Validity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalised. Enhanced by using replication in the deployment methods, adopting an analytical rather than statistical basis of generalisation and searching for disconfirmatory evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replication of interview questions for the preliminary study - the same questions were used for each interview participant. Replication of interview questions for the focused study - similar questions were used for each interview participant. Multiple industry sectors suggest validity for many types of organisations, but company size tends to be medium to large. The sample was taken from a wide client list. The facilitating companies have implemented their methods in a variety of organisations in many industry sectors.
<p>Reliability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrating that the operation of a study such as the data collection procedures can be repeated, with the same results. Enhanced by ensuring the transparency of the methods and analysis so that they can be operationalised and repeated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent data analysis coding, memoing and sorting. Semi-structured interview questions recorded and transcribed. Researcher documented all methods used and comments on use.

2.9 Conclusions

The purpose of this Chapter was to outline the different research approaches available for a social inquiry and describe the research design chosen for this study. In summary, the purpose of this research was to carry out a preliminary study in order to provide new insights into the use of graphic methods in a business context. A preliminary study was conducted to establish a conceptual model of the subject and some initial key concepts regarding the methods. A Grounded Theory research strategy was chosen for the preliminary study using qualitative data collection techniques in the form of interviews, observation, literature review and company publications. Following the preliminary study, a focused study was conducted to validate the conceptual model and concepts. For the focused study a multiple case study strategy was adopted again using qualitative data collection methods in the form of semi-structured interviews and observational methods. Both sets of data were analysed using the data analysis methods of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Miles and Huberman (1994). Figure 2-6 represents the overall approach chosen for the study, including data collection and analysis methods.

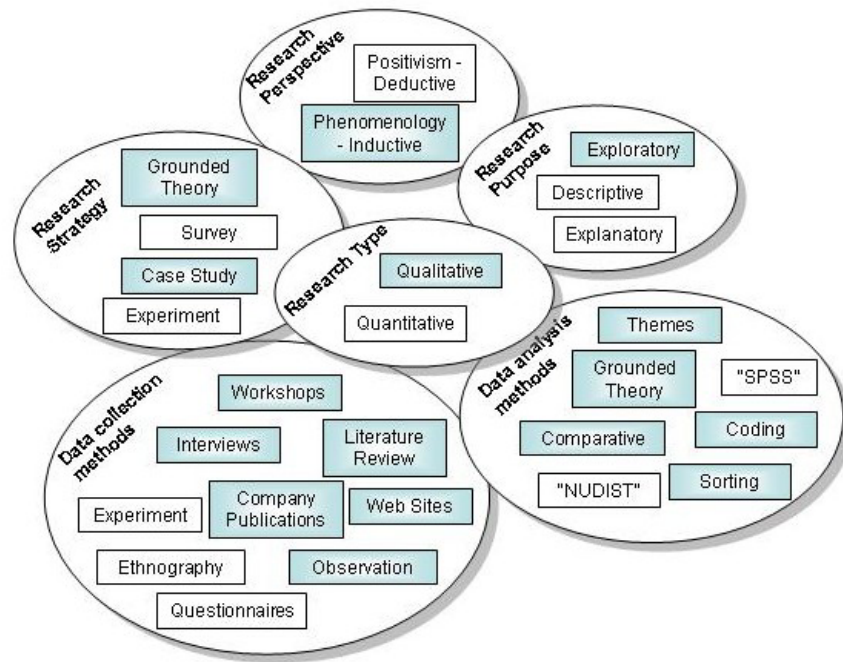


Figure 2-6: Selected components of preliminary and focused study research method

3 Stage One – Preliminary Study

This Chapter will outline the preliminary phases of the explorative research. The approach taken by the researcher for data collection and analysis will be detailed and the findings will be presented in the form of the conceptual model developed.

3.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of the preliminary study was to develop a deeper understanding of the four methods by collecting data and literature on the subject area. From the analysis of this information, the aim was then to develop an initial conceptual model to take forward for validation.

The researcher was introduced to the methods by a co-member of a European Union project, New-use and Innovation Management Measurement Methodology (NIMCube, 2000). The individual was employed by Skandia Insurance and, as an employee of Skandia, had been a user of the US based Grove and RootLearning methods. Skandia had been a client company of The Grove and RootLearning for approximately two years and had used the methods as part of their Company wide strategic change programmes. On further investigation it was found that the methods used were practitioner based and no academic research had been conducted on them. This initiated a short period of background investigation to establish some research questions and a plan of how to carry out the research study.

3.2 Background Investigation

The aim of conducting an initial investigation was to understand more about the Grove and RootLearning methods and to gather information to help inform research design decisions.

3.2.1 Internet Search

An information resource available to the researcher at the early stages was the web sites of the practitioner companies. The information available consisted of: client information, product information, an explanation of the methods, case study information, and historical information regarding the company. The result was a better understanding of the companies as a whole, the methods they used and how they used them.

3.2.2 Workshop Observation

As part of the European project (NIMCube, 2000), workshops were developed, using the Grove methods, for data gathering and information sharing and it was possible to attend and observe four of these workshops. Table 3-1 outlines the workshops observed as part of the NIMCube project. Each workshop was one working day in length. Notes were taken during the observation but were not used as part of the formal data collection for the preliminary study. At this early stage of the research the opportunity was taken by the researcher to experience the methods being used in a workshop environment. The methods were adapted out of the strategy context they were designed for and used to facilitate a group to a common view of their new-use and invention capabilities and opportunities.

Table 3-1: NIMCube workshops

Workshop Location	Company Information	Workshop Format
ECI Telecom, Israel	ECI Telecom Ltd. is a provider of integrated network solutions for digital communications and data transmission systems. ECI Telecom's equipment supports traffic in more than 500 service networks in over 145 countries.	30th May 2001. Ten company employees. Facilitator – Professor Steve Evans, Cranfield University. Recorder – Dr. Fiona Lettice, Cranfield University. Observer – Karen Young, Cranfield University .
Israeli Aircraft Industry, Israel	Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) is Israel's largest industrial interest and a world leader in the conception and manufacturing of aeronautics, aerospace, and electronics. IAI has a turnover of €2.5 billion and a workforce of 14,400 in more than 40 nations worldwide.	31st May 2001 Fifteen company employees. Facilitator – Professor Steve Evans, Cranfield University. Recorder – Dr. Fiona Lettice, Cranfield University. Observer – Karen Young, Cranfield University.
CDN, Barcelona	Competitive Design Network (CDN), was founded in 1989 and has evolved into a SME with 44 employees divided over its three divisions in France, Spain and Portugal with a total turnover of €3.1 million in 1999.	10th July 2001 - Seven company employees. 11th July 2001 - Eight company employees. Facilitator – Professor Steve Evans, Cranfield University. Recorder – Dr. Fiona Lettice, Cranfield University. Observer – Karen Young, Cranfield University.

The aim of observing the workshops was therefore not to collect formal data that could be used in the preliminary study, but to familiarise the researcher with the methods and to experience the methods being practiced in a real life situation.

3.2.3 *Informal Interview*

The purpose of holding informal talks with a user of the methods was to gain deeper understanding about the methods and learn more about how they were used in a company setting. The interviewee was the aforementioned Skandia employee who had experience as a user of the Grove and RootLearning methods. Holding a discussion with the individual helped the researcher to form initial ideas and opinions about the methods and to strengthen the questions that the research study would focus on.

3.3 **Research Strategy**

Whilst developing the research questions and gathering some background information about the two methods, it was decided to broaden the focus and incorporate two other methods into the study. These were discovered during this initial investigation period through the internet and word of mouth with Grove practitioners. The two additional companies were Delta 7 and Don Braisby Associates and a similar background study was conducted on these two additional companies.

Once the researcher had gathered the background information on the four companies it became possible to develop some initial research questions to focus the preliminary study investigation. It was decided that the study be an explorative one and that, as of yet, there was not enough information to develop hypotheses to be taken forward for validation. The result was four open questions which presented the researcher with the scope to explore and understand in greater detail the four methods under investigation. The four research questions developed were:

1. Why do these methods appear to work?
2. What do they add to an organisation's change programme?
3. What do they add to a group situation?
4. What are the limitations and drawbacks of these methods?

The initial research aim was to provide an understanding, at a practitioner and theoretical level, of the use and utility of the graphic facilitative methods in an organisational change context.

It was felt that the most appropriate form of data collection for the preliminary study would be qualitative as the study was explorative and concerned with understanding a social situation involving the interactions of people and their interpretations of the methods, all within a business context. The primary method of data collection therefore involved one to one interviews with users and practitioners of the methods. By analysing, in depth, the data collected it was possible to identify emerging key themes and then develop a conceptual model to provide the scope for the focused study investigation. The strategy taken was a Grounded Theory approach whereby the researcher firstly grounds herself within the research area; this is done through immersing oneself in the data and subject. The method purports that the researcher should then allow the data to drive the emergence of themes and theories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

3.4 Approaching the Companies

The next step was to individually approach the separate companies and ask for their help and input into the research.

The most important consideration when approaching the companies was gaining access to clients for interview purposes. As each of the companies are relatively small it was possible to arrange conversations with the CEO's or founding members. This was an advantage as it ensured commitment to the research from the highest levels. Four companies were selected for the preliminary study. These were RootLearning, The Grove Consultants International, Delta7 and Don Braisby Associates. These companies were selected for various reasons; Table 3-2 describes in more detail the selection decision.

Table 3-2 Facilitating company and selection criteria

Company	Why companies were selected for the research
The Grove Consultants International (USA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Largest United States practitioners in Graphic Facilitation. ▪ In 2000 the company was breaking into the European Market which gave the advantage of having access to UK clients. ▪ High profile client list. ▪ Use of graphics.
RootLearning (USA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialised in graphic learning maps and strategy communication. ▪ Most visible practitioner in this field. ▪ High profile client list. ▪ UK client list. ▪ Use of graphics.
Delta7 (UK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialised in visual metaphor. ▪ UK based. ▪ Use of graphics.
Don Braisby Associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialised in Graphic Recording. ▪ UK based. ▪ Use of graphics.

The four companies have slightly different processes and methods (as outlined in Chapter 1) but at this initial stage a core commonality was the visual nature of the methods. At the preliminary study phase the aim was to answer the research questions and to develop a conceptual model. By doing so, an understanding of the four tools and methods was gained, establishing some of the differences between them, and what functionality they offered the client.

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

As outlined in Chapter 2 the data collection for the preliminary study involved the use of exploratory semi-structured interviews, a Graphic Facilitators Forum (GF²) workshop and a literature review of the area.

Thirteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with both practitioners and users of the tool. In total twelve and a half hours of interview data was recorded and transcribed fully. For each interview transcript the same analysing technique was used and re-occurring themes gathered and organised into tabular format (Appendix V).

The GF² workshop involved a discussion between six practitioners and one user of the tool. The researcher observed the workshop and collected notes on the information that was generated (Appendix VI). The data was then analysed and key themes identified. The themes were then linked with the themes emerging from the interview data.

The initial literature review focussed on the graphic elements of the methods and helped establish understanding around the effectiveness of graphics on cognitive, memory and learning ability. The strategy literature was also reviewed at this stage to understand where the methods fit into the overall domain of strategic management. The focus of the literature review was influenced by the on-going preliminary study and the emerging themes.

3.6 Findings

The preliminary study provided the researcher with a rich amount of data concerning the use of the methods in a business environment. From the information gathered the researcher used the grounded theory analysis technique (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) to establish key commonalities and themes between the sets of data. These are discussed in this section.

3.6.1 Key Themes

Interview Data

The primary source for the data was extracted from thirteen semi-structured interviews conducted with seven users and six practitioners of the methods.

Negatives	Emerging dominant themes						
Resistance 2	Communication 8	Systems Thinking 5	Emotions 3	Flexible 2	Visualisation / Dialogue 1	Emotions / Feelings 1	Listening and Recording 1
Discomfort 1	Visual 8	Change Management 3	Memory 3	Visual memory 2	Flexibility of People 1	Adaptable 1	Strategy 1
Scepticism / Resistance 1	Dialogue / Discussion 8	Change 2	Shared Understanding 3	Culture 2	Customisation 1	Action Orientated 1	Scenario Planning 1
Inflexible 1	Big Picture 6	Shared Vision 4	Structure 3	Data 2	People 1	Stimulated 1	Organisational Level 1
Top down Direction 1	Engaging 6	Participation 4	Mental Models 3	Buy in/ engage 2	Team Learning 1	Patterns / Connections 1	Commitment 1
Manipulative 1	Graphics 6	Interaction 4	Complex Systems 3	NLP 2	Fast & Effective 1	Common Language 1	Repeatable 1
	Creativity 6	Language / Cultural barrier 4	Facilitator 3	Clear Direction 2	Hand Drawn 1	Intuitively Understood 1	Style & Approach 1
	Learning Preferences 6	Holistic/ Whole picture 4	Group Memory 2	Alignment / Agreement 2	Group Thinking 1	Safe Discussion 1	Facilitator Qualities 1
	Metaphor 5	Clear / Understandable 4	Learning Organisation 2	Emphasises Process 2	Quantity and Speed of Infb 1	Shared memory 1	Graphics Secondary 1
	Involvement 5	Real Time 4	Motivation 2	Ownership / Empowerment 2	Therapeutic 1	Space – oral & Written 1	Imagery 1
	Differentiation 5	Group Dynamics 3	Fun 2	Size 1	Facilitator Control 1	Framework 1	
	Learning 5	Stories 3	Visual Learning 2	Personalised 1	Organisation 1	Own Conclusions 1	

Figure 3-1: Emerging themes from the interview data

Figure 3-1 shows the key themes that the researcher elicited from the interview transcripts. The themes were then narrowed down by identifying the re-occurring, dominant themes. This was achieved by recording the frequency they were referred to across the interviews. The themes could have been mentioned several times within one interview but for the purposes of this grouping the frequency here shows that the theme was referred to by an interview candidate. For example the theme ‘dialogue’ was referred to by eight out of the thirteen candidates. The black segments represent the most common, primary themes and the white segments show the secondary themes. The themes with the highest frequency are Dialogue (8), Visual (8), Communication (8), Graphics (6), Engaging (6), Big Picture (6), Learning Preferences (6), and Creativity (6). What is significant is that as the questions asked during the preliminary study interviews were undirected and open, as they were part of an inductive process of theory building, the themes that have emerged were not as a result of interviewer prompting. The candidates, from their own experiences and opinions have all, without any guidance from the interview questions, made reference to a whole variety of issues, many of them overlapping to form the themes outlined in Figure 3-1. Arguably the dominant themes would be deemed less significant if the interviewer had asked direct questions relating to these specific themes. The grey boxes show the themes that were not frequently mentioned in the interviews. The author did however identify these as themes during the analysis process as, at this early stage of the research, all potential areas of interest were considered to be emerging themes. These themes were later discarded and the more dominant emerging themes taken forward for theory development.

Workshop Data

From the GF² workshop it was possible to gather more data that would help corroborate and validate some of the themes that were emerging from the interview study. Figure 3-2 details the key themes emerging from the workshop discussion. Appendix IV outlines the table of themes generated from the analysis of notes from the workshop. The workshop was an all day session of approximately six hours in length. Here the frequency number relates to the number of significant references made to a particular theme during the workshop session. The dominant themes were Dialogue (5), Graphics (3), Visual (3), Complexity (3) and Metaphor (2).

Group Dynamics 1	Communication 1	Learning 1
Dialogue / Conversation 5	Clear / Understandable 1	Process 1
Ownership 1	Graphics 3	Interaction 1
Change Management 1	Empowerment 1	Visual Memory 1
Complexity 3	Visual 3	Metaphor 2
Different 1	Story 1	

Figure 3-2 Emerging themes from GF² workshop

The next step taken was to formulate an understanding of the primary and some of the secondary themes. This involved grouping the themes into explanatory headings as shown in Table 3-3.

Table 3-3: Grouping of themes

Grouping	Themes
The methods are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear / understandable. ▪ Different. ▪ Engaging. ▪ Graphical. ▪ Visual. ▪ Metaphorical.
The process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitator. ▪ Structure. ▪ Real time.
What it involves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involvement. ▪ Interaction. ▪ Participation. ▪ Learning. ▪ Learning preferences.
The effects of the methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Big Picture / Holistic. ▪ Systems thinking. ▪ Complex systems.
The methods encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialogue. ▪ Communication. ▪ Stories.
Resulting in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change. ▪ Change in mental models / assumptions.
Overall affect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared understanding. ▪ Shared vision. ▪ Group memory.

From the groupings made it was possible to develop a framework to better illustrate the understanding of the methods gained from the interview data (Figure 3-3).

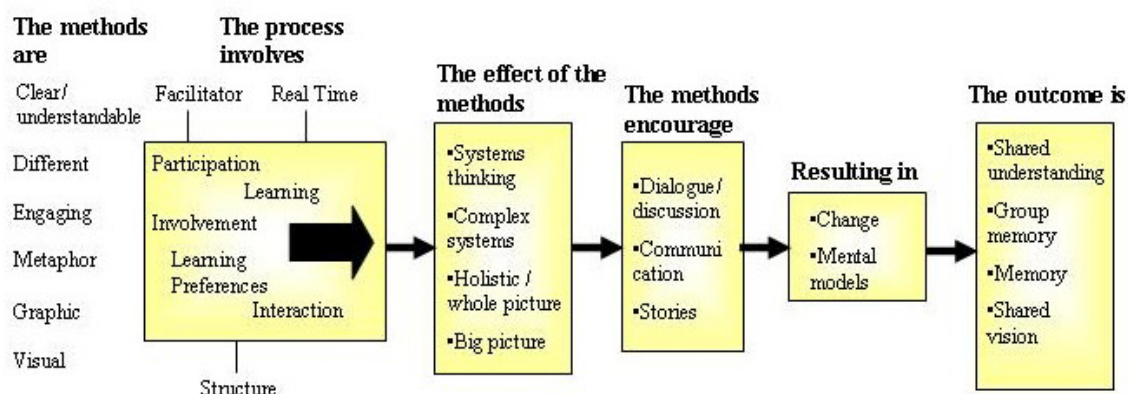


Figure 3-3 High-level understanding of methods

This was used as an initial framework for the study to guide the literature review and to help further focus the research area.

3.6.2 Discussion of Key Themes

Statements were developed around the grouping of the themes for clarification and discussion purposes. These are outlined below with supporting text from the interviews and workshop.

The methods are clear, understandable and engaging because they use graphics, metaphors and visuals.

The initial interview questions focussed on why the interview candidates thought the methods worked. The findings illustrate that candidates considered the methods to be a form of communicating business issues in a clear manner that increased understanding of the information. A user of the RootLearning method stated that *“it was the only thing I thought over a year that would actually engage people and really get them to understand what it is we were trying to say and nothing works better”* (13.32UES).

The methods were considered to be different and a form of communicating business strategy that ultimately people found interesting and engaging. One candidate commented that *“I remember seeing them in use and remember thinking what a good process; I was definitely engaged at what was going on”* (9.22UES). Another stated that the methods use *“a familiar concept presented in a different way”* (8.11UES) and that *“it’s instant engagement and if it’s colourful, it’s meaningful”* (10.40UES).

A key factor that was referred to, concerning the methods, was their use of visuals as a way of engaging people and a method of representing information. Eight out of thirteen interview candidates referred to the visual element of the methods. This became a significant element of the methods’ make-up as candidates felt that it was the differentiating factor of these methods compared to other communication methods that they had used. It was also some of the reason why users felt engaged by the process. One user stated that *“the graphic representation that to me is far more eye catching than just a block of words”* (4.14UES) and another stated that *“you can use that as a*

form of engaging people or getting buy in or getting involvement in things without necessarily even having a meeting ... they engage with the graphic” (5.19PES). A practitioner of the method felt that the methods are “very visual and [that] it’s very plain I think what you’re trying to achieve. And it’s again this point of difference” (6.3PES).

Information emerged about why the interview candidates thought that using visuals, graphics and metaphors might be of benefit. Some felt that metaphors were a way of representing complex issues. A practitioner of the Grove method stated that “*metaphors and working with metaphors ...it’s the way in which the brain deals with complicated things in a holistic way*” (3.38PES). Another candidate believed that “*visualisation really brings to life complex systems*” and that “*it transcends language, so to speak, and words. It is very natural*”. Another factor was that using visual techniques meant that people’s different learning preferences were being addressed and that it improved memory recall. A user of the Grove method believed that “*the major benefits would be the fact that people compute things visually and the graphic format ensures better and easier memory recall*” (3.1UES) and a practitioner of the Delta 7 method stated that “*how we see things is pre-verbal so you’d get it visually, emotionally, aesthetically, before you can even think of what to say about it*” (10.39PES).

In conclusion, the differentiating factor, from other communication methods, is their use of visual techniques (for example, graphics and metaphor) which make the methods clearer, more understandable and more engaging.

The process is real-time, has structure and invariably involves a facilitator.

With regards to the process that the methods use, from the preliminary study it was found that it is a group process that is pre-planned and therefore has a structure and clear objectives. Some of the methods generate data in real-time (the Grove and Don Braisby’s methods) whereas others have pre-defined information to be communicated (the Grove, RootLearning and Delta 7 methods). Whether the objective is to generate and communicate data or just to communicate pre-defined data, the process occurs in a group which ultimately ensures real-time interaction and conversation regarding the communication material and often results in further idea generation. A practitioner of the Delta 7 method believes that the real-time aspect is important as it keeps people focussed on the issues discussed during the session and that drawing the discussion in big picture format allows people to recall key points, he states that “*if it’s done well, big and in the moment...in the moment is important because if we’re solving a big issue and we’ve been talking for six hours then we can instantly go back and go ‘didn’t you say that over there’*” (10.53PES). Real-time delivery of the strategic vision is also possible. An interview candidate described a situation where the CEO of an organisation was giving a presentation of the new strategy to a large group and instead of using PowerPoint slides he used a graphic recorder who drew the vision on a wall and a large piece of paper “*Gill was at the back of him drawing up the picture almost as he was saying the things that we needed to focus on and deliver, and so people could see the vision of the picture forming in front of them*” (4.1UES).

The importance of structuring the process is described by one candidate who stated that *“I think if you go through a business planning process without some form of structure you can end up with lists that get re-iterated”* (4.12UES). One benefit of the methods, described by a user of the RootLearning method, is that despite the tools having some form of structure it is still an open process with few constraints on the interacting group. She states that *“it doesn’t stop you from coming off the script and detouring, but most of the time you’re following a process but not feeling like you’re being forced down a route”* (13.25UES).

In conclusion, the process itself can be for communicating strategic direction or for developing and establishing understanding about organisational change issues within a group setting.

During the process, learning takes place through participation, involvement and interaction. Many learning preferences are met by using the methods.

A predominant theme that emerged from the preliminary study data suggested that the methods were effective at helping people learn and that through the process of participation and interaction people would be more successful in learning about organisational issues. Six out of thirteen candidates talked about how the tools suit people with differing learning styles and five out of the thirteen candidates stated that the methods were effective learning tools. A user of the RootLearning method stated: *“we were all able to learn from each other. I learnt things from them as relative newcomers but they also learnt from people like me, who’d been there a long time, and knew how things were in the past”* (12.11UES).

Another key element of the learning aspect that the methods address is their appeal to different learning styles. Many interview candidates stated that the methods were successful because different people with differing learning styles could understand, and learn from the process. One candidate stated that *“I thought it was an excellent way of learning actually because it immediately captures your attention, just from looking at it, the visual impact”* (12.1UES) and another *“my experience is even if somebody has an audio preference if they look at the visual thing they can connect with it”* (5.13PES). Another interviewee suggested that the power of learning from these methods came from the fact that they used a whole variety of techniques that would thus appeal to a whole variety of people, for example the methods use words, verbal and visual elements which would appeal to people with those learning preferences, and by using three techniques instead of one (i.e. just words) arguably the organisation has already tripled its chance of effectively communicating a message. *“if we want to learn something quickly we use everything we can, verbal, visual...”* (10.33PES).

From the preliminary study data it can be concluded that the methods are successful in appealing to a wide range of learning preferences through using an interactive process with a variety of data representation techniques.

The methods help the user to understand the company wide strategy and the role they play within it.

The methods are used for strategy communication and generally trying to communicate a message of change to employees, with regards to new organisational direction or vision. Therefore a key factor for the methods is successful communication of that vision and from the data gathered the candidates felt that the methods helped them understand the company wide vision and the bigger picture in terms of the role they played within that. A client company employee stated that the benefit of the RootLearning method was to address the need of understanding the big picture level. He stated that *“they need to understand what’s happening at the big picture level and they need to understand which direction the company’s going in, they need to understand how their bit fits in”* (11.2UES) he goes on to add that it *“helps them to feel part of a whole, which is good for motivation, and helps to inform their decision making”* (11.4UES).

Other interview candidates state that the methods help to see connections and understand the bigger picture. One stated *“This is just thinking in action you can see everything holistically, it’s not part of the picture, it is the whole picture”* (1.40PES) and another *“You compare one thing to another thing holistically and you can begin to see connections appearing”* (3.40PES). One candidate also stated that the holistic element comes from discussing things with other people he stated that *“when they meet with other people and discuss things a whole new story, a bigger picture emerges”* (3.15PES).

It can be concluded therefore that the overall aim of the methods is to get people onto the same page in terms of their understanding of the company direction and vision. By enabling people to have the same information, the organisation can try to ensure that people are making decisions based on the same data.

The methods encourage dialogue, storytelling and communication which in turn facilitate a change in behaviour, assumptions and attitude.

A significant theme to emerge from the data was the importance of encouraging communication/dialogue/discussion and how the methods, through various means in the process, encourage this. Eight out of the thirteen interview candidates talked about the significance of this theme. What emerged was the opinion from the interview candidates that the visual element is important as a form of representing the information but that the understanding of that information is achieved through discussion with other people. A practitioner of the RootLearning method stated that what is important is *“taking that data and visualising it in a way that is meaningful and then explaining it, creating a dialogue around it that helps people understand what are the key issues that this data points to”* (2.34PES). He also states that *“the dialogue becomes the driver of learning”* (2.29PES). Another interviewee stated that *“I think the big power of the template approach is to get alignment on what you are doing. The dialogue is what gets the transformation”* (3.48PES) and that it is *“very powerful to get somebody to see what*

you are doing but it doesn't have that transformative power of the conversation, that's where all the breakdown, and build up occurs... (3.51PES) in fact the chart at the end you can almost throw it away, that's not the purpose, it was to have the conversations" (3.53PES).

It became evident through the data analysis that a prevailing theme of change was emerging and that interview candidates felt that through the process of using these methods, and through the process of dialogue and discussion, transformation and change was possible. One candidate stated *"I think change is the over-riding theme. Human change and how we change and basically how we change together so it's all around conversation and dialogue (10.67PES) ... The dialogue and communication is central to changing organisations, absolutely essential" (10.73PES).* An explanation as to why these methods were deemed successful for organisational change was offered by a practitioner of the methods who stated that making people feel involved in the change process is crucial: *"typically the reason people fall out over organisational change is they don't feel like they're involved. They get presented with fait accompli and they get told 'we need to become more customer focussed so we're setting up the business in this way'. And you're sitting in that bit and your job changes and your reporting structure changes. And nobody likes change, and they don't feel that they've been involved" (5.48PES).*

It seems the central tenet of the methods is to communicate a message of change to an organisation's employees. By communicating using these methods the participants are encouraged to discuss key issues and to challenge certain assumptions and opinions about the organisation and its vision. By supporting an interactive and open dialogue it is possible to surmise that people are more willing to accept the changes that the organisation presents as they have understood and internalised the key points through this interactive rather than autocratic process.

By the end of the process the methods will have enhanced shared understanding, group memory, individual memory, and a shared vision.

From the interview data a high-level understanding of the whole process was established (Figure 3-3). It emerged that the outcome of the process was a group of people with a shared understanding of the vision created and communicated by the methods. One candidate stated that *"all experienced the same and although you might have a slightly different conversation around the discussion point you've still have had the same discussion you might just use different words when you're in there or known more about it so have gone off in a different way" (13.45UES).* The importance of getting people onto a level playing field in terms of information so that employees can make informed decisions based on the same information was also considered important: *"we have to get you to an end point and the whole point of doing it is so that we're all on a level playing field in terms of information" (13.22UES).*

The methods not only enhanced group memory but it was also stated that the methods helped people to remember the information that was communicated to them. This was achieved through using a method that was visual, verbal and encouraged interaction.

One practitioner stated; *“It’s amazing, we are continually stunned by how in about a thirty minute experience people can have that much of a lasting memory”* (2.14PES) a client company interviewee stated that *“if they remember the general gist of the story and what we were trying to get across then that was superb”* (13.8UES) and that *“what’s powerful, people have retained the information”* (13.36UES).

In conclusion it can be stated that the overall affect of the methods on participants is evoking a shared understanding of the organisation’s vision and change strategies. They are also effective at reinforcing the amount of communicated information that participants’ are able to remember.

3.7 Focusing of Themes

The preliminary study data generated a vast number of interesting themes and potential areas to investigate further. The high level picture of the methods (Figure 3-3) illustrates these themes. A decision was made to further focus the scope of the research as it was felt that trying to investigate the methods at this high level would only result in more overview data to validate some of the things already outlined in the discussion above. The researcher decided that the next stage of the study should attempt to better understand certain aspect of the methods in more detail. This meant that the data gathered at the next stage would be deeper and therefore have the ability to generate clearer hypotheses and theories greater.

The decision to focus the investigation involved taking into account literature around the current themes, the data already gathered in the preliminary study and an element of personal interest from the researchers’ perspective. The decision is discussed below in relation to the six grouped themes.

1. The methods are clear, understandable and engaging because they use graphics, metaphors and visuals.

It was decided that this theme be explored further through the focused study. The initial interest in the methods themselves was initiated because of their use of visual means to communicate strategy and change initiatives to employees. This was the unique aspect of the methods that deemed it possible to carry out a doctoral study in the subject. From the literature that was reviewed and from the interview data, it was possible to establish that strategy communication itself was not a unique aspect of business theory but methods that used visual means (metaphor and graphics) to represent the information were. Literature reviewed on the use of graphics suggested that representing data in this format offered great advantages in terms of memory recall (Pavio, 1967 and Haber, 1971) and learning (Gardner,1983). It was argued that people recall a lot more information if a combination of pictures and words are used (Pavio, 1967). A great deal of literature was available supporting the use of metaphors in business communication. One of the advantages of using metaphors is said to be the fact that people intuitively understand metaphors as they are used in every day communication (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Morgan (1986) has applied the use of metaphors to organisation life. He states that all theories of organisation and management are based on implicit metaphor although they can have both a positive and negative effect. They can successfully highlight certain aspect of organisations, but they can also restrict

understanding by ignoring others. It was therefore decided that further exploration of the use of visual metaphor and graphics, in the form of these methods, in the process of strategic change would be of interest as a contribution to existing theory on organisational change and from the personal interest of the researcher.

2. The process is real-time, has structure and invariably involves a facilitator.

It was decided that this aspect of the methods' process was not unique and that there were several other methods available to businesses that offered a facilitated, structured process.

3. During the process, learning takes place through participation, involvement and interaction. Many learning preferences are met by using the methods.

The researcher felt that the involving and interactive nature of the methods were important and were contributing factors to why the methods were deemed successful by the client companies. This aspect of the process would therefore be investigated as a secondary theme as it was again not considered to be the overriding defining factor that differentiated the methods from other business strategy communication and change methods.

The interview data revealed that the methods were highly adept at appealing to a wide variety of learning preferences. This initiated an initial literature review into the area of memory and learning, focussing on how people remember information; pictorially and written (Pavio, 1967 and Haber, 1971), cognitive research, the right brain left brain theory (Voneida, 2001 and Buzan, 1974), and learning and intelligences theory (Gardner, 1983). Despite the scope for further researching the effectiveness of the methods in these areas it was felt that this would drive the research down a psychology route and the researcher wanted to keep the research in the business domain and specifically the domain that the methods were developed for, that of strategy and change.

4. The methods help the user to understand the company wide strategy and the role they play within it.

This was an important theme that emerged from the interview data as many interviewees felt that the methods were beneficial as they helped in the understanding of the organisation's strategy and vision and importantly allowed them to understand the role that they would play within that. The importance of this was echoed in the strategy literature and as the methods were developed to help businesses with their strategic change programmes it was felt that this was an area that should be investigated further both within the literature and within future data collection methods. The researcher also found that in the business theory literature an emerging and predominant area was the application of complexity theory in the business domain. Aspects of this theory touch on the importance of seeing the larger picture and systemic thinking rather than reductionism (Stacey, 2000). It was decided that within theory the area of business strategy and business complexity would be researched further to ascertain the theoretical context to which the methods are relevant.

5. The methods encourage dialogue, storytelling and communication which in turn facilitate a change in behaviour, assumptions and attitude.

A noticeable theme to have emerged from the preliminary study data was the importance of dialogue within the process. Repeated references were made to dialogue and its importance in supporting transformation and change. The area of organisational change was of interest to the researcher as from the literature reviewed at this stage it was evident that there was a vast amount of theory about the area but an underlying conjecture that in general organisational change programmes were difficult to implement and monitor and tended to be unsuccessful (Kotter, 1995). From the interview candidates' point of view the methods, it seemed, had to a certain degree addressed this issue. The researcher was interested in investigating further the notion of dialogue as the driver for change and the part that stories played within that process. The researcher was also interested in establishing the role and importance of strategy communication within the larger process of strategic change.

6. By the end of the process the methods will have enhanced shared understanding, group memory, individual memory, and a shared vision.

It was decided not to explicitly investigate this theme further and rather focus on the other chosen themes. In the initial literature review, the work of Senge (1990) was reviewed. Senge's (1990) work emphasises the importance of creating a learning organisation in the current business climate and that employees are the key asset of an organisation. He stresses the importance of five disciplines that organisations should focus on if they wish to become a learning organisation. One of the five disciplines Senge (1990) talks about is creating a shared vision. From a learning organisation theory perspective then the methods become relevant as the interview candidates felt that the methods helped enhance the group memory and create a shared vision. For this study the theoretical scope did initially include the learning organisation theory but it was felt that this was too wide a span and that the study should become more focussed in the theoretical domain of strategic change. It was also felt that investigating this theme further would open the researcher once again to the psychology field. Although this theme was not explicitly investigated further in terms of future data collection focus it was felt that the theme would always be present in terms of its importance as the end result and benefit of using the methods.

3.7.1 Chosen Themes:

1. The methods are clear, understandable and engaging because they use graphics, metaphors and visuals.
4. The methods help the user to understand the company wide strategy and the role they play.
5. The methods encourage dialogue, storytelling and communication which in turn facilitate a change in behaviour, assumptions and attitude.

3.7.2 Conceptual Model

A more focussed model was developed concentrating on these three themes and aspects of the literature already reviewed. The model was used as a guide for further discussion and as the scope for the focused study research.

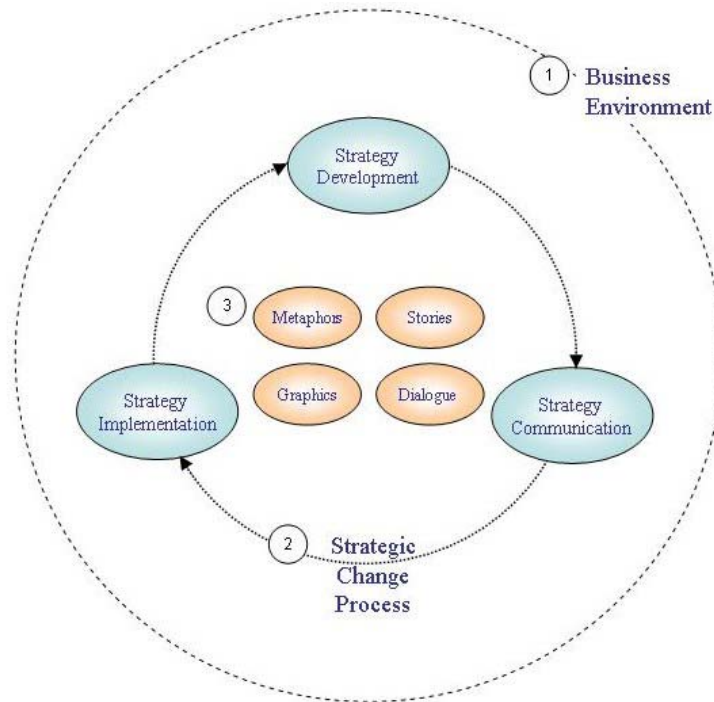


Figure 3-4: Preliminary study conceptual model

The outer circle of the model represents the current theoretical context that makes the methods relevant in current business practices. The inner circle represents the organisational process that the methods contribute to. The elements within the inner circle represent key factors of the methods that have a positive affect on the organisational process of strategy and change.

3.8 Discussion

The methods are applicable to the business domain of strategic change; the process outlined in the conceptual model is that of the strategy process: that is strategy development, strategy communication and strategy implementation with the intention of realising a new organisation vision and direction. Although the methods are used for other business issues, i.e. graphic representation of meetings, the main criteria for use are for strategic change purposes. In the wider context of organisational theory, what has been taken into account is the emerging management literature on complexity and organisational dynamics, for example the learning organisation literature. This is important as it is felt that the graphic and visual methods become more applicable and relevant in the turbulent business environment, of late, and that the more orthodox change methods become less valid in this environment.

1. Business Environment

From an initial review of the literature it became evident that there was an emerging view that businesses were operating in a more complex and turbulent environment. It was decided that for the purpose of the next stage of the research, information would be gathered around this possible theme and in particular whether there was a correlation between this view and the current interest in the use of the graphic facilitative methods. The data collection for this theme would be dominated by literature in the area and also form perspectives of the organisational members involved in the case studies.

2. Strategic Change Process

It has been identified that the methods are predominantly used within an organisation's strategic change process. It is therefore of interest to this research to further investigate the theoretical concepts of strategy and change management. The initial literature review showed that there is an interesting shift in management theory away from the traditional and dominant linear models towards thinking about organisations as dynamic and complex (Mintzberg, et. al., 1998; Ellinor and Gerrard, 1998). It is intended that this be researched further in the literature review. From the data collection perspective the study will aim to gather perspectives and insights from all sources pertaining to the use of the methods within the organisation's strategic change process. The aim will be to establish clearly where in the process the methods are applicable.

3. Metaphors, Stories, Graphics and Dialogue

As shown in Figure 3-4, it is suggested that the key techniques of the methods (graphics, metaphor, stories and dialogue) to a certain degree facilitate and enable the success of the strategy process, thus leading to change within an organisation. Some of the literature on change management believes that change occurs from the interaction of people within a company through their conversation (Stacey, 2000; Shaw, 2002 and Weick, 1988, 2003). Taking this view of change into account it is evident that the tools can support the change process by encouraging conversation and interaction. It has been shown from the preliminary study data collection that the tools encourage people to have a dialogue around the business issues presented in the graphics and visual methods. In some cases this led to new insights and acceptance of issues that until then had seemed alien to employees. One interviewee states that *"We had a member of staff who was actually taking early retirement...that person wrote into the central personnel area and said 'thank you very much for RootLearning. I'm currently being made redundant...and until I did RootLearning I didn't understand why'"* (13.15UES). This demonstrates the value of people having discussion and dialogue around difficult to comprehend business issues. Despite this individual being given the information before, in other forms (i.e. verbally told), the information was not completely understood until it was presented with the relevant financial business information and discussed with other employees during the company's Learning Map session.

There are several ways that the methods communicate business information differently; the main three are through metaphors, graphics and words. It has been found that these methods are highly effective forms of communication, which people from all levels of the organisation can understand. They are also highly engaging and are different from more common methods of business communication (text and verbal). This combination offers businesses the opportunity to engage people and to communicate business

information more effectively. For the intended business transformation, which the strategic processes within a business aim for, communicating the information may not be enough. It has been stated that the transformative power of the tools come from dialogue and conversations that people have with each other and around the information that the tools represent. A practitioner of the Grove method noted that *“the big power of the template approach is to get alignment on what you are doing; the dialogue is what gets the transformation. It’s the interaction for the information”* (3.48PES). A similar opinion is shared by a practitioner of the Delta 7 method, who stated that *“The dialogue and communication is central to changing organisations”* (10.73PES) also that *“Human change, and how we change, and basically how we change together...it’s all around conversation and dialogue”* (10.67PES).

3.9 Focused Study Research Propositions

In the first stage of the research, the aim was to conduct an explorative study of the four graphic and visual methods to gain a deeper understanding of their characteristics and establish key areas for further investigation. From the data analysed, a high level overview of the methods was developed that helped focus discussions and literature areas to review. Three themes were chosen to focus research for the next stage of the research and a conceptual model developed from the three themes. This stage has addressed research objectives 1 and in part research objective 2, these were:

1. To explore and understand how graphic facilitative methods are being used by organisations.
2. To develop a conceptual model that describes the attributes of the graphic facilitative methods.

For the purpose of the focused study the researcher will address research objectives 3 and 4, which are:

3. To critically review the literatures and other secondary sources in relation to; strategy, change management, complexity theory, strategy communication and current perspectives on the use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue as organisational communication techniques.
4. To identify how the methods can improve the process of strategy communication within the strategic change process.

The data collection for this investigation will be carried out using semi-structured interviews and observations of the methods in use.

For the purpose of the focused study it has been decided that the data collection will focus on interviews with users of the Grove methods and RootLearning methods. This decision is based on the accessibility of interview candidates for the focused study. The two methods are the largest of the four companies and therefore have a larger client base. This means that access to interview candidates for these two methods is easier. It was becoming increasingly difficult at this stage to organise interviews with clients of the other two facilitating companies. As the research strategy in the focused study is case study based it was decided to build a case from interviews and other data collection methods from a Grove client company and a RootLearning client company. Further

interview data from other sources will also be collected, for example from candidates considered to be experts in the area, and used as collaborative and validation data.

3.10 Discussion of Preliminary Study Method

This section will discuss the research strategy adopted for the preliminary study looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches taken. The level of influence the researcher had on the process and what was learnt as a result of carrying out the research approach will be described.

3.10.1 Design

Designing the research strategy for the preliminary study was relatively straightforward. It was decided very quickly that the purpose of the study was exploratory, the initial research aim was to provide an understanding, at a practitioner and theoretical level, of the use and utility of the graphic facilitative methods in an organisational change context, and therefore it was decided that a Grounded Theory research strategy would best suit the exploratory nature of the study. Due to the lack of information regarding the four methods it was difficult to establish hypotheses at the early stages. It was evident that the researcher needed to equip herself with more information so as to be in a position to develop a conceptual model regarding the methods and thus develop key themes to take forward for validation. Without any pre-defined theories concerning the methods, a natural strategy to take was that of Glaser and Strauss's (1967) Grounded Theory. The theory allows researchers to conduct an investigation into a particular phenomenon without predefined hypotheses. The hypotheses and theories then emerge from the data gathered through a process of structured data analysis.

3.10.2 Access

The main problem encountered during the preliminary study phase was that of access to interview participants. As the study was concerned with a relatively new business phenomenon the facilitating companies did not have a long history of clients available to talk to. Added to this was the fact that two of the companies are American and are relatively new to the United Kingdom business sector. As the research was independent of the facilitating companies it was necessary to approach them without any previous association or contact and try to convince them to take part in the study. The main aim was to establish a link through the facilitating companies to their client companies. This strategy was successful at first and the facilitating companies were keen to help and provided excellent contacts in some of their client companies. Problems arose when trying to arrange interviews with members of the client companies as it was difficult for them to justify the time and cost of an hour out of their work schedule with no obvious benefits for them. It was then necessary to go back to the client companies to establish further contacts and interview participants.

3.10.3 Use of Interviews

The data collection was of a qualitative nature involving semi-structured interviews. This method was chosen as it seemed the most appropriate option given the amount of people the researcher had access to and the depth and quality of information needed to

develop a conceptual model. It was not viable to conduct a more quantitative questionnaire survey as there was not a sufficiently large enough sample of companies participating in the research. It was decided that the questions be open and exploratory to allow the interviewees to describe, without constraint, their experiences with the methods. This allowed for the emergence of rich data to feed into the development of sound theories and concepts. In retrospect, it was found that comparisons between the interviews were difficult. Similar questions were used for each interview but as the freedom to elaborate given to the interviewee was great it meant that the answers given were quite diverse. However, the interviewees' responses tended to be very descriptive and thorough and the data collected was very rich. Not all of the interviews could be conducted face-to-face (the preferred method by the researcher) as some of the interview participants were situated in the United States. To overcome this constraint, telephone interviews were conducted via speaker phone so that the interviews could still be recorded and transcribed for later analysis. This method still allowed rich and descriptive data to be collected.

3.10.4 Analysis

The data analysis technique chosen was based on the Grounded Theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). For the preliminary study it was necessary to analyse every line of the interview transcript to find emerging themes. The researcher was very thorough during the analysis as she had no prior concepts or theories regarding the methods and therefore needed to take all information available into account. The question of researcher bias and issue of individual interpretation was addressed by asking a second researcher to analyse the interview transcripts separately to ascertain if the themes identified were consistent with those identified by the primary researcher. Some minor adjustments were necessary, but on the whole the themes emerging were consistent.

3.10.5 General

In general, adopting a Grounded Theory strategy to the preliminary study, using qualitative interviews and structured data analysis was successful. It allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the four methods and to ground herself in the research topic. At the beginning of the preliminary study, the researcher was focussing on literature and ideas heavily in the area of graphics and learning. At the initial stage this seemed a very important facet to the methods, but as the interview data was collected and analysed it emerged that although the graphics were an important aspect of the methods there were other key elements that were not apparent until deeper understanding was established. This supports Silverman's (2000) view that the relevance of the literature changes as data analysis proceeds and that the bulk of the literature should therefore be reviewed in concurrence with the data analysis phase. Overall the method enabled key themes to emerge from the data and the development of a conceptual model which could be taken forward for validation in the focused study.

3.11 Conclusions

This Chapter has presented the preliminary research and findings carried out in stage one of the investigation. This was an inductive study that elicited data from a variety of

sources for example, interviews and group discussions. Key themes were identified from the data collection and used to help generate an overview of the use and utility of the four graphic and visual methods in business practice. The themes were discussed with relation to the data and literature surveyed. The emerging themes covered the use of visual means (graphics and metaphor) to communicate a strategic change vision in a holistic and interactive manner with the key driver for change being dialogue and discussion.

This discussion helped decide the research scope for the focused study. Once focus was decided the researcher developed an initial conceptual model to take forward for further research and validation, which is presented in full in Chapter 5.

4 Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to describe the context of the research in relation to the relevant fields of literature and to identify the novelty of the work through its contribution to this existing body of knowledge.

4.1 Introduction

From the preliminary study and initial literature review, a conceptual model was developed that illustrated the key themes to have emerged from the research. It was identified through the preliminary study that the methods have been developed for use within an organisation's strategic change process. It was therefore necessary to gain an understanding of the theories relating to the business areas of strategy and change management. From the understanding of the theory it was then possible to identify where, in an organisation's strategic change process, the methods become relevant and how they might contribute to an improved process. Emerging from the preliminary study was also an understanding that the methods are predominantly used for communication purposes, for the organisation's strategy. The key differentiator of these methods to other organisational communication methods was the use of metaphors, graphics and stories to relay the information. It was therefore decided to explore the literature surrounding these areas in order to understand how they may contribute to an organisations' strategic change process. The final key theme to emerge from the preliminary study was the importance of dialogue to the process used by the facilitative methods. Again this identification was taken forward into the literature to gain insight into the theories surrounding conversation and dialogue and the possible relevance to strategic change programmes.

From the review of the literature, it has become evident that there are many diverse perspectives on organisational management theory. For the purposes of this thesis, the author has decided to divide these views into two broad phases, the traditional management theories and new perspectives on management theories. These show the change in thought that has developed over time. Figure 4-1 outlines the two phases. It

was decided to present the literature in these two phases as the researcher felt that it would be useful and interesting to illustrate how the facilitative methods span both management phases. In some areas the methods correspond to the more traditional views on management and in other areas they move into the realm of the new management theories.

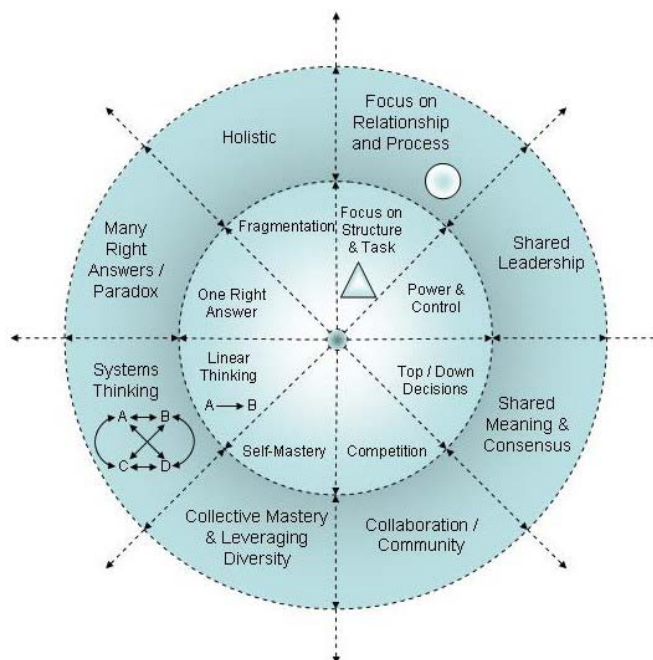


Figure 4-1: A blending of the old and new ways of organizing and managing (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998)

Ellinor and Gerard (1998) describe the outer circle as the emerging worldview and explain that the way people view organisations and managing in human systems is changing. The inner circle outlines the old, Newtonian management perspectives, which have dominated for the past half century, and the outer circle shows the new management perspective (quantum) that has, in the last decade or so, become more prevalent (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998). The permeable boundaries imply that whilst concepts are expanding in terms of what one knows about human systems from a quantum perspective, the old Newtonian concepts and ways of working do not have to be forgotten. The aim is not to give up on structural ways of working, top-down decision making and hierarchical organisations. In a certain domain these principles remain relevant and effective. Recent management theory, focussing on the theories of complexity, builds on the old Newtonian theory. The complexity theory argument states that the rapid acceleration of change and more complex, turbulent working environment calls for a new management approach. An approach which suggests alternative ways of working together and which addresses core dilemmas that come about with accelerating change and complexity (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998). **Table 4-1** outlines the thoughts behind each slice of the circle and how the views in each slice are changing from the traditional view to incorporate new perspectives.

Table 4-1: Description of Figure 4-1 segments

Newtonian Description	Quantum Description
Focus on structure and tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reality consists of concrete matter. ▪ Division of tasks and jobs into units. ▪ Structuring of tasks that our work consists of. 	Focus on relationship and process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reality essentially defined by relationships and process. ▪ Everyone depends on and is impacted by actions, ideas and work of others. Work in tightly woven and interconnected webs of interdependence.
Power and control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisations as machines. ▪ Leaders have the power, authority and control to obtain desired results. ▪ Machines are inanimate objects that need to be controlled. 	Shared leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greater adaptability and creativity to reside in organisation. ▪ Build the norms of shared leadership. ▪ A climate of collaborative partnership.
Top-down decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Works well with power and control exercised at the top. ▪ Decisions arise at top and disseminated to people below. ▪ Rapid results over the near term. 	Shared meaning and consensus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People work harder and more motivated when they have been involved in decision making that affects them. ▪ More incentive to change if say has been had in making the change.
Competition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survival of the fittest. ▪ Dog-eat-dog. ▪ Beating the competition = winning. 	Collaboration / community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pooling of knowledge can result in leap in productivity. ▪ Behaviours based on competition. ▪ Internal competition – dysfunctional and counterproductive.
Self mastery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of skilled individuals. 	Collective mastery and leveraging diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasingly complex and specialised work. ▪ Need for teamwork to obtain desired results. ▪ Communication essential to success of team.
Linear thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cause and effect. ▪ Analyse data and make predictions on trends and simple curves. ▪ Planning for the future by extrapolating past trends. 	Systems thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simple cause and effect is the exception not the norm. ▪ Complex interactions. ▪ Limit ability to predetermine much in advance. ▪ Develop time to communicate about complex relationships and systems interaction. ▪ Need ability to recognise the interplay between interdependent events, processes and entities.
One right answer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One or best answer to problems. ▪ Everything can be objectively determined. ▪ Researchers became objective observers. 	Many right answers / Paradox. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No absolute objective answers. ▪ Observer influences the answer based on expectations and intentions. ▪ Entertain many answers and experiment.
Fragmentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Break everything down into small components. ▪ Analyse problem and fix cause i.e. employee. 	Holistic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our world is one whole. ▪ Ability to see problems within the context of a system as a whole.

The literature section begins by outlining the traditional views on strategy and change theory. Then the new management perspectives of strategy, change, the role of communication in strategy implementation, the concept of complexity theory, moving on to the key elements that the methods use which are dialogue, metaphor, stories and

graphics are described. The literature section concludes with a discussion of the theories and concepts presented in the Chapter and their implications on the research.

4.2 Traditional Perspectives on Strategy and Change Management

The inner circle of Figure 4-1 can be described as the traditionalist style of management and is based on a cybernetic view of interaction (that is negative feedback) and a cognitivist human psychology approach (assuming that humans are autonomous individuals and that they learn in essentially a negative feedback manner and will generally carry out activities without challenging instructions). The emphasis of this view of management is on planning and control. The assumptions are that there is a fixed strategic direction for the company and plans are drawn up to achieve this goal, and also that people can be controlled and the organisation will change in ways that are chosen by its most powerful members, that is the individual is primary to the group (Stacey, 2000).

In general it is perceived that the organisation is driven by a desire to achieve a predetermined, equilibrium state which is governed by its environment. This means that the organisation will alter its state and adapt to its environment in a linear causality fashion. Stacey (2000) states, “*Organisations are goal seeking, self-regulating systems adapting to pre-given environments through negative feedback... the system is recursive. This means that it feeds back on itself to repeat its behaviour...although the causality is circular it is linear. Cybernetics does not take into account the effect of nonlinearity.*” (p. 33). This perspective on organisations has dominated strategy and change theory for decades. The sections below outline the predominant theories on strategy and change within this traditional view of the organisation and management.

4.2.1 Strategy

The field of strategy has seen a vast number of literature published, from within the academic domain and the realm of the practitioner. This has led to an array of perspectives on the subject and the publication of overlapping and competing conceptual models (Hart, 1992). In recent years, several theorists have attempted to integrate these different theories into an overarching framework to aid explanation and understanding of this large field. As with all categorisations of this nature this makes the integration subjective to the individual. The focus for this literature review is on the frameworks published by two authors in the strategy field. These are the overviews offered by Mintzberg et. al. (1998) and Hart (1992). This helps to establish a common understanding of the field, from a holistic perspective, and gives the author a language to discuss the strategy literature within the context of the whole thesis. Included also in the descriptions of the traditional perspectives of strategy are theories offered by other authors.

Mintzberg (1994) has defined strategy as a “*course of action into the future*”. A strategy according to the Collins English Language Dictionary “*is a plan you adopt in order to get something done, especially in politics, economics, or business*”. (Collins, 1989). Mintzberg (1994) states that strategy is difficult to define and a single definition is elusive. He has attempted to define strategy in a variety of ways: as a plan, a pattern, a position, a perspective and a ploy.

- A plan is a common definition - meaning that it is a course of action (Mintzberg, 1994), an intended strategy (Mintzberg, 1987).
- Mintzberg (1994) states that strategy is also a pattern - described as “consistency in behaviour over time”. For example, a perpetual high-end strategy is a pattern by a company of marketing the most expensive product in its industry. This is a realised strategy (Mintzberg, 1987).
- Porter (1980a; 1980b, 1985 and 1990) and his proponents see strategy as position – which is the determination of particular products in particular markets. The company matches its organisation and departments against others and the demands of the environment.
- Mintzberg (1994) also describes strategy as perspective – an organisation’s way of doing things, emphasising the group of strategy makers. Thus, a strategy is a body of concerns, ideas, and imperatives.
- Strategy can also be used to mean ploy – A specific plan can also be a ploy or manoeuvre to outwit the competition.

Intended strategies that are realised can be called deliberate strategies. Intended strategies that are not realised can be called unrealised strategies. A third case where the realised strategy is not intended is an emergent strategy (Figure 4-2) (Mintzberg, 1987).

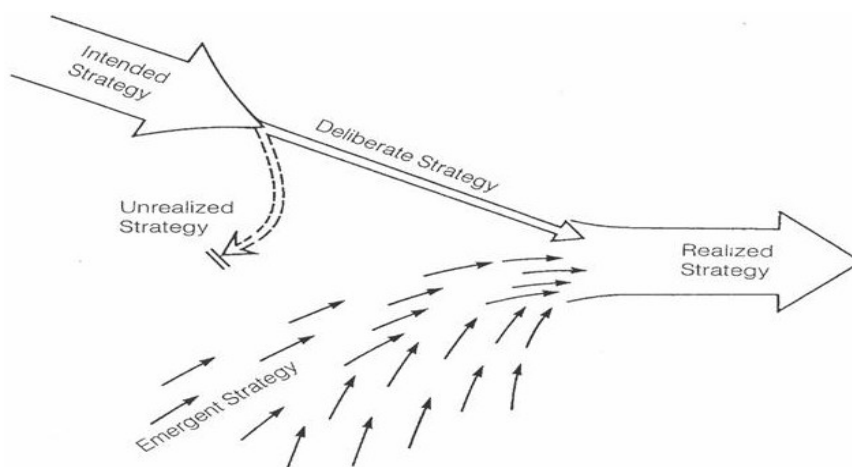


Figure 4-2: Deliberate and emergent strategies (Mintzberg, 1997)

Mintzberg et. al. (1998) have categorised their framework of strategy into ten schools of thought, these are listed in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2: The ten schools of strategy (Mintzberg et. al., 1998)

School	Description	Groupings	Management Perspective
The Design School	Strategy formation as a process of conception	Prescriptive – more concerned with how strategies should be formulated	Traditional
The Planning School	Strategy formation as a formal process		Traditional
The Positioning School	Strategy formation as an analytical process		Traditional
The Entrepreneurial School	Strategy formation as a visionary process Great leader – individual	Descriptive – consider specific aspects of the strategy formation process.	Traditional
The Cognitive School	Strategy formation as a mental process Cognitive psychology to enter strategist's mind		New
The Learning School	Strategy formation as an emergent process		New / complexity
The Power School	Strategy formation as a process of negotiation Conflicting groups confront external environments		
The Cultural School	Strategy formation as a collective process. Strategy formation rooted in organisation culture = collective & co-operative		New
The Environmental School	Strategy formation as a reactive process Initiative not internal but external		
The Configuration School	Strategy formation as a process of transformation		Integrative – cluster various elements of the other schools into distinct stages or episodes. Stable states and transformation.

Four schools can be described in terms of the traditional perspective on management and organisations these are, the design, planning, positioning and entrepreneurial schools. These four will be described below followed with the change management models identified from a traditional perspective. The remaining strategy schools will be described in the section outlining the new perspectives on strategy and change management.

Design School

“Strategy is the determination of the basic long term goals of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals” (Chandler, 1962, p. 13)

The design school is described by Mintzberg et. al. (1998) as the original perspective of strategy and dates back to 1957 and Selznick's publication of *Leadership in Administration*. The principle of the design school is the development of an individualised, best strategy to fit the internal and external capabilities of the organisation. The formation of the strategy is based on a SWOT assessment of the external environment, to establish the threats and opportunities to the organisation, coupled with an assessment of the internal environment, looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation's internal capabilities. The result is the identification of external key success factors and internal distinctive capabilities which contribute to the creation of the strategy. The strategy is designed by the senior managers to fit the organisation's perspective on how it does things.

The premise of the design school is that the chief executive officer is the strategist and thus controls the process. The strategies themselves should be simple and informal and the result of individualised design and conscious thought, which makes them explicit and easy to implement (Mintzberg and Lampel, 1999).

Planning School

“There is now a well-developed technology, called ‘strategic planning’, for converting environmental information about strategic discontinuities into concrete action plans, programs, and budgets” (Ansoff, 1975).

The planning school dominated strategic thought in the 1970s, but evolved at around the same time as the design school. The influential theorist in this school was Igor Ansoff (1965) with the publication of *Corporate Strategy*. The basic model of the planning school is similar to that of the design school in terms of its analysis of the organisation's, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The difference lies in the execution of the designed strategy. For the planning school, this was a highly mechanical and prescribed sequence of steps. The process was formalised so that it could be controlled and measured efficiently through checklists, objective settings, tight budgeting, operational plans and programmes. By breaking the execution down into controllable parts, the assumption was that by managing these parts effectively (through formal systems) the whole would function efficiently. Mintzberg et. al. (1998) state that *“As a consequence, strategic planning [was] often reduced to a ‘numbers game’ of performance control that had little to do with strategy”* (p. 58).

Positioning School

“The key to growth – even survival – is to stake out a position that is less vulnerable from head-to-head opponents” (Porter, 1980a, p. 50).

The most influential of schools within the strategy field is the positioning school which dominated in the 1980s and to this day is still highly influential (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). Porter (1980b) and the publication of *Competitive Strategy* in 1980 gave momentum to the thoughts of the positioning school. The school added to the premises of the design and planning school by emphasising the importance of strategies themselves but not focussing solely on the process by which they were formulated. While the design and planning schools sought to design any number of given strategies in accordance to the SWOT of the organisations, so as a perspective and plan, the

positioning school argued that for an organisation there were prescribed strategies available as positions in the marketplace to any given industry, to be defended against competition (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). Porter (1980a) states that “*the essence of strategy formulation is coping with competition*”. For Porter (1980a, 1980b, 1985 and 1990) the key to strategy was positioning oneself in the marketplace for the purposes of increased market share and increased profitability with the aim of defending that position from would be competitors. This view led to there being quite generic strategies for example product differentiation and focused market scope, “*even a company with a strong position in an industry ... will earn low returns if it faces a superior or a lower cost substitute product ... in such a situation coping with the substitute product becomes the number one strategic priority*” (Porter, 1980a, p. 35).

The view that there could be generic strategies for any given industry led to the development of an array of methods to analyse the strategic position of a company and offer a prescribed strategic solution. Consulting firms especially dominated the field in their development of services to offer support in the strategy formulation process. One dominant method to have emerged from this era was the Boston Consulting Group Growth-Share Matrix. In essence the Growth-Share Matrix viewed the organisation as a portfolio of businesses each one offering a unique contribution to growth and profitability. For analysis of the business portfolio all the businesses in the organisation are plotted on a four by four matrix in relation to growth potential and current market share. Once the plotting is complete an organisation can work out the capacity each business in the portfolio has to make money (cash cow, dog, star, problem child), and where each business wants to be within the grid. Therefore the strategy is determined, and which businesses need cash are identified, and the cash flow of the organisation can be allocated (Hax and Majluf, 1983).

Porter (1980b) developed a method for competitive advantage based on the analysis of five forces in an organisation’s environment. The five forces to be analysed are, the threat of new entrants, bargaining power of firm’s suppliers, bargaining power of firm’s customers, threat of substitute product, and intensity of rivalry among competing firms. Based on the empirical analysis of the firm’s competitive position, Porter (1985) states that there are “*three generic strategies for achieving above average position performance in an industry: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus*”. Porter (1985) also developed a systematic framework for firms to manage their ‘value chain’ to ensure that product flow to the customer is as efficiently run as possible.

In summary, what the positioning school added to the already popular thoughts of the design and planning schools were generic strategies in any given industry and the use of economic and empirical analysis to identify the right strategy based on external industry and competitive analysis. The premise that the strategy was still controlled by top management continued, although the analysts had a great role to play in formulation, and implementation remained a formal procedure to be executed once the strategy was explicit (Mintzberg, et. al., 1998).

Entrepreneurial School

The entrepreneurial school is very similar to the design school in its view on strategy formation. Whereas the planning school put great emphasis on the planners within the

strategy process and the positioning school passed the responsibility on to the analysts and economists, the design school advocated that it was the Chief Executive Officer who was the central proponent of strategic formation. The entrepreneurial school also purports this view but goes on to examine the softer elements of leadership in terms of intuition, judgement, wisdom, experience and insight (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). In this perspective it is the entrepreneurial, visionary leader who dictates the vision of the organisation and commands the direction and strategy from above, based on perspective and intuition. The tenet of power and control is still clearly evident in this school as is the supposition that members of the organisation can be controlled.

Hart (1992) has offered another framework for describing the strategy literature which is based on “*the contrasting roles top managers and organizational members play in the strategy-making process*”. Table 4-3 outlines the five modes offered by Hart (1992) as an integration of a number of previous models and typologies. The rational and command modes described by Hart (1992) outline the traditional view of strategy formation and will be described in this section.

Table 4-3: An integrative framework for strategy-making process (Hart, 1992)

Descriptions	Command	Symbolic	Rational	Transactive	Generative
Style	(Imperial) Strategy driven by leader or small top team	(Cultural) Strategy driven by mission and a vision of the future	(Analytical) Strategy driven by formal structure and planning systems	(Procedural) Strategy driven by internal processes and mutual adjustments	(Organic) Strategy driven by organisational actors' initiative
Role of top management	(Commander) Provide direction	(Coach) Motivate and inspire	(Boss) Evaluate and control	(Facilitator) Empower and enable	(Sponsor) Endorse and support
Role of organisational members	(Soldier) Obey orders	(Player) Respond to challenge	(Subordinate) Follow the system	(Participant) Learn and improve	(Entrepreneur) Experiment and take risks

Rational Mode

The rational mode, as described by Hart (1992), would encompass the design, planning and positioning schools as outlined by Mintzberg et. al. (1998). This mode involves the comprehensive analysis of all available alternatives before strategy selection, and a selection based on an analysis of the environment and internal strengths and weaknesses. Following the selection of the most appropriate strategy a phase of formal planning and target setting to achieve the goals is conducted.

Command Mode

The command mode as described by Hart (1992) relates to Mintzberg et. al's. (1998) entrepreneurial school. Similarly to the design, planning and positioning schools the decisions and control of the strategy process is allocated to individuals at the top of the organisational hierarchy. The strategies developed are deliberate and fully explicit prior to implementation.

In summary, this traditional view on strategy formation can be described as strategy that is formulated through decisions, actions and plans (for example, Goold and Campbell, 1987; Andrews, 1971; Hofer and Schendel, 1978; Laorange and Vancil, 1977; and Wood and LaForge, 1979). Chaffee (1985) describes this view of strategy as a linear model. She states that top managers “*identify their goals, generate alternative methods of achieving them, weigh the likelihood that alternative methods will succeed, and then decide which ones to implement*”. As described by Mintzberg et. al. (1998) and Hart (1992) top managers are thought to have the ability to change an organisation, and the organisation’s strategy is to change according to its environment, namely in response to competitors.

This view on strategy has been criticised as being too linear, too rational and not dynamic thus stifling the creativity and innovative capacity of the strategy development process (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). Coutu (2003) states that in the past there has been a prescription to the view of the organisation as a “*highly monolithic, predictable entity*” and that the members of the organisation “*can be easily programmed to plod along monotonously*”. She believes that this view is deeply flawed and states that “*most organizations face all kinds of unpredictable challenges...that collectively place huge demands on people’s creativity and imaginations*”. In a changing, competitive and uncertain business environment it has been argued that business strategies need to be constantly changing to meet the demands of this business environment (Feurer et. al., 1995). Feurer et. al. (1995) argue that a linear, step by step approach to strategy formulation does not address the need for rapid adaptability of strategies. They state that “*in the face of a high level of uncertainty and change there is a need for a dynamic approach in which strategy formulation and implementation are carried out simultaneously*” (p. 4).

Liedtka (2000) describes how the strategy formation perspectives have changed over time and that the field of strategy used to be about the search for competitive advantage (for example, Porter, 1980) but that increasingly it has become about equipping companies with strategies capable of dealing with changing environments. Other authors argue that the problem of this rational and linear mode to strategy lies directly with its core assumption of the possibility of predictability and that attempting to predict certainty or high probability of business futures is not possible (Barnett, 1995). Barnett (1995) states the “*major failing of traditional strategic planning is a naiveté about its own epistemology, about its program for knowing and learning about the future, resulting in over confident forecasts accompanied by overly constrained action plans*” (p. 347). Heracleous (2000) on the other hand, argues for the importance of strategic planning and that despite recent persistent arguments against its usefulness, companies that do plan perform better than those which do not. He states that “*research has shown convincingly that companies which plan strategically generally perform better than those which do not...such benefits are even higher in more turbulent environments.*” Heracleous (2000) goes on to add that the studies linked strategic planning with strategic performance, as measured by sales growth, return on assets and return on sales.

4.2.2 Change Management

“Unfortunately the writing and research on the management of change is a sprawling and none too coherent collection of bodies of literature, some proclaiming pragmatic

precepts and transparent values, others coolly analysing and theorising without any commitment to statements of practice, and others being concerned with the lofty analytical formulation of strategic change and disdaining the examination of how such strategies are to be implemented in the political and cultural mosaic of large and medium-sized organisations.” (Pettigrew, 1985, p. 2).

Within the domain of change management there is a vast array of literature spanning some 50 years or so. There are several models, theories and schools of thought present in the field of change management, some advocating best ways to achieve change in an organisation, others describing how change initiatives have been carried out in organisations (Collins, 1998).

As in the strategy section, it was decided to show the development of change theory as a two phase evolution, based on the definition of Ellinor and Gerard (1998). The traditional models of change management will be described in this section. The ideas presented here overlap and coincide with perspectives outlined in the strategy section; this is because strategy and change are intertwined, but as they have been traditionally written as two separate fields within literature theory it is inevitable that they differ slightly and offer varying models and theories.

Planned Model of Change

The planned model emerged through the work of Kurt Lewin (1947a, 1947b, 1951) and his work on action research and the three step model of change became the foundation of planned change theory (Burnes, 1996).

Lewin (1951) defines change as the process of moving from one exactly-defined point in time and status to another exactly-defined point via a sequence of foreseeable and planned steps. Lewin (1951) describes a three step linear sequence for change (Figure 4-3). This involves the unfreezing, changing, and refreezing of the organisation.

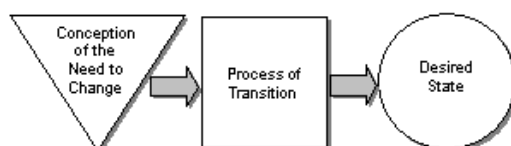


Figure 4-3: Stages of the change process (Lewin, 1951)

Linking Lewin’s (1951) theory of change to an industrial case study, Nelson (2003) discovered that employees in an organisation found it difficult to unfreeze, despite numerous attempts from top management to communicate the need for the change programme. Employees at the lower levels still complained about the lack of explanations for the need to change. The refreezing stage was never an issue for concern as the organisation remained in a continuous state of flux after commercialisation and there was a rapid replacement of staff occurring. She concludes that Lewin’s (1951) model of change might be “*more suited to micro aspects of change rather than massive transformation affecting the whole organisation.*” (Nelson, 2003). Criticism of this model derives from theorists who believe in a more continuous process of change and state that the three stage model of Lewin (1951) is a linear view that

describes an episodic view of change rather than a more realistic recurrent process (Weick and Quinn, 1999). Despite a view that change is not as simple as unfreezing, freezing and refreezing, Weick and Quinn (1999) state that Lewin's (1951) three stages of change "*continue to be a generic recipe for organizational development*" (p. 363) within today's organisations.

Organisational Development (OD)

The seeds of OD's emergence were in the offshoots of group therapy methods that Lewin (1947a, 1947b) was heavily involved with. The method of laboratory training involved unstructured small group situations in which participants learnt from their interactions. The evolving group dynamics has been institutionalised as a technology by Kurt Lewin, Kenneth Benne, Leland Bradford and Ronald Lippitt (Pettigrew, 1985). The term is said to have originated in the US in the late 1950s possibly by Blake, Shepard and Mouton who co-operated on a series of OD experiments at three Esso refineries. The year before the Esso work – 1957 – Douglas McGregor started using laboratory-training skills at Union Carbide. (French and Bell, 1984).

Popular strategy adopted by OD practitioners is that of modifying attitudes, beliefs, values, technical skills and behaviour. In essence the OD approach presents the concept of gradual incrementalism; effective change is seen to continue by small, increased, orderly and planned adjustments over time (Dunphy and Stace, 1988). Huse (1982) describes the organisational development model of change as "*the application of behavioural science knowledge in a long range effort to improve an organization's ability to cope with changes in its external environment and increase its internal problem-solving capabilities*" (Huse, 1982, p. 555 in: Dawon, 1998, p. 15).

Typically the OD model is planned and tries to consider and include all members of an organisation with the support of top management, with an overall objective of improving working conditions and organisational effectiveness. The strategy is top down and the practitioners of such an approach try to facilitate communication and problem solving among members and believe that commitment to change is essential from all, with the ultimate goal being that of lasting change (Collins, 1998). Beckhard (1969) defines OD as "*an effort (1) planned, (2) organisation wide and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organisational effectiveness and health through (5) planned intervention in the organisation's processes using behavioural science knowledge*" (Beckhard, 1969, p. 9, in: Pettigrew, 1985, p. 3).

The OD approach tends to have a number of steps. For example, Lippitt et. al. (1958) developed a seven-phase model and Cummings and Huse (1989) produced an eight step model of planned change. A typical example of the steps or phases is as follows (Aldag and Stearns, 1991):

- Identify need for change.
- Select an intervention technique.
- Gain top management support.
- Plan the change process.

- Overcome resistance to change.
- Evaluate the change process.

Kotter (1995) states that the change process goes through a series of eight phases from the top down (Figure 4-4). These eight phases he has derived from lessons drawn from change projects, some of which have been successful, but most of which have struggled.

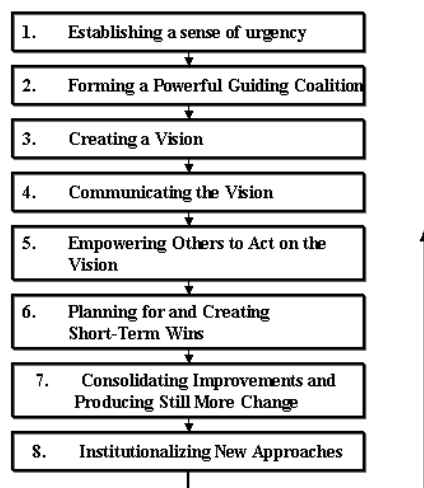


Figure 4-4: Eight steps to transforming your organisation (Kotter, 1995)

The traditional perspectives to change have several common characteristics, some of which are that the change is applied to the whole system, the strategy for change is top down, change agents are used, there must be commitment from all employees to the change programme and the approach should draw upon behavioural science knowledge (Dawson, 1994). Some critics of the traditional approach suggest that it adopts an overly rational and normative framework and assumes that there is a one best way to manage change (Dawson, 1994). Research in the area of organisational change recognises that linear models do not easily define change and that while some of the change processes are linear others are more non-linear, radical and transformational (Sztompka, 1993 and Pettigrew, 1990). The social aspects of the change process were identified by Lawrence (1991) to be more influential than the technical nature of change, Ronkin and Lawrence (1952), O'Brien (2002) and Cooch and French (1948) state that a participative approach to change is the most effective. Lewin's (1951) description of change, moving from one stable state to another, emphasises that prior to and after change the organisation is static and stable thus change is a mere aberration of the norm (Nelson, 2003). Dunphy and Stace (1988) state that the OD model of change hinges upon several assumptions that make the model less viable in today's changing environmental conditions. These are the assumption that management have the capacity to anticipate environmental forces, that the organisation is run by intelligent, pro-active managers, and that large-scale organisational change can always be accomplished incrementally (Dunphy and Stace, 1988). There has been a noticeable shift in the literature away from describing change as a static process to more dynamic models that focus on the discontinuous nature of organisational change (Nelson, 2003) which will be described in greater detail in the following sections.

4.3 New Perspectives on Strategy and Change Management

The second perspective looks at a new spectrum in organisation and management theory that is influenced by organisational theory, complexity sciences, psychology and sociology which in essence are defining a more participative perspective. Instead of assuming that managers stand outside the organisation (as a system) and can control it and define it in a pre-determined state, this new perspective considers that members of organisations are so intertwined with the organisation that it is impossible to stand outside and objectively control and state that “*people speak as subjects interacting with others in the co-evolution of a jointly constructed reality*” (Shaw, 2002). The emphasis is on interaction, communication, systemic thinking and the importance of each organisational member, at every level, having mental images of how the whole organisation operates and knows what is important to it on a timely basis (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998). Ellinor and Gerard (1998) identified several reasons as to why theorists became dissatisfied with the traditional perspective of management theory and why there was a need for a new perspective. They outline these reasons as core dilemmas, which are listed below (Figure 4-5):

- Alienation of workforce – lack of meaning, motivation, increasing apathy, due to downsizing, layoffs, restructuring, mergers and so on.
- Integration of diversity – struggling to find ways to leverage full extent of diverse workforce.
- Fire fighting – stemming the tide of crisis when organisations face downsizing and cost reduction.
- Increasing levels of complexity and size – How to move information up, down and across large organisations. Real time, to right people, makes sense.
- The need to create alignment around vision.
- Moving beyond one right answer – paradox of multiple viewpoints and moving ahead with aligned visions (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998).

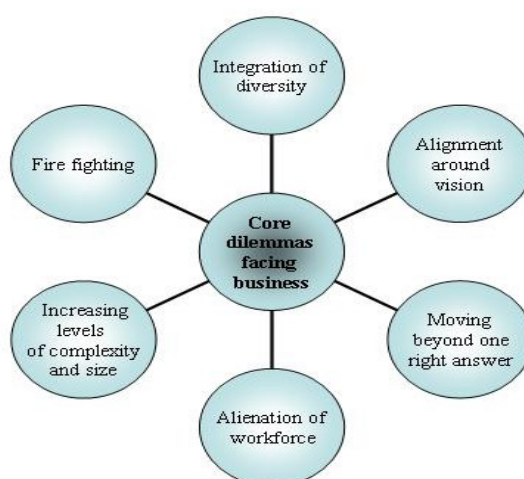


Figure 4-5: The core dilemmas (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998)

Increasingly managers in organisations were facing such dilemmas and the traditional styles of management being used did not address these problems, mainly because the human issues of organisation life were rarely covered in these dominant theories. Thus in the 1980s, a major new management perspective took off, with great momentum, in an attempt to address the dilemmas facing organisations.

4.3.1 Strategy

Within the strategy domain there was an evident shift of thinking from the rational and linear models to a body concerned with behavioural theory, incremental strategy making, strategy as a visionary process and strategy that focused on involvement. For this section the framework of Mintzberg et. al. (1998) and Hart (1992) will again be adopted for review purposes blended with perspectives of additional theorists.

Six of the remaining schools (Mintzberg, et. al., 1998) can be described in terms of the new perspective of management and organisation defined above. These are, the cognitive, learning, power, cultural, environmental and configuration schools.

Cognitive School

“the data do not show a straightforward link between cognition and results, while it confirms the beliefs of many interested in organizational cognition that intuition is an important source of sensemaking” (Huff, 1997, p. 947)

This school of thought is described by Mintzberg et. al. (1998) as a *“loose collection of research”* but one which is growing. The field draws on the area of cognitive psychology and is interested in understanding the mind of the strategist and what the process means in terms of human cognition.

There are two distinct groups to the cognitive school: the positivist (objective) branch and the constructionist (subjective) branch. The positivist view understands cognition as some kind of re-creation of the world and that humans view reality through an objective lens. Reality is re-created through one’s eye, but not re-constructed; this is how the world is and one is just viewing it. The constructive group sees strategy as some kind of interpretation of the world, how the mind does its take on what it sees out there: the events, the symbols and the behaviours. This group sees meaning and reality as constructed through social actions (Mintzberg et. al., 1998).

The positivist group outline the importance of cognition for information processing in business. The belief is that strategies develop in people’s minds as frames, models, maps, concepts and schemas (Mintzberg and Lampel, 1999 and Durand et. al., 1996). Fiol and Huff (1992) have focused attention on cognitive mapping and the importance of providing managers with graphic representations, a frame of reference, for what people know, which help to clarify understanding and decision making. They state that *“Cognitive maps are of potential interest to managers because they are a means of displaying graphically the firm’s current strategic position, as various observers understand it, and because they hold the promise of identifying alternative routes to improving that position”* (Fiol and Huff, 1992, p. 267).

The constructive thinkers argue that reality is socially constructed and that cognition is not just about mirroring reality through a lens, rather that humans interpret what they see and construct different realities based on those interpretations. People construct reality based on their own interpretations of things. When there is a group of people, reality is constructed through interaction and people interact to create their own mental world or frame. Individuals have their own interpretations but these can be influenced by group dynamics, to avoid being restrained by one frame (view of the world). It is thought that managers should have many alternative frames of reference (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). Within this perception of cognition strategies, rather than being a map or schema of the reality that exists it can become creative interpretations of what one sees, thus *“vision emerges as more than an instrument for guidance: it becomes the leader’s interpretation of the world made into a collective reality”* (Mintzberg et. al., 1998, p. 170).

Theorists who have influenced the formation of this school include for the objective view Simon (1957); March and Simon (1958); Kiesler (1971); Myers (1962) and from the subjective view Bateson (1972); El Sawy and Pauchant (1988) and Smircich and Stubbart (1985).

Learning School

“A learning company is an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and continually transforms itself” (Pedlar et. al., 1991).

The learning school’s foundations are in systems dynamics of the 1940s and 1950s and these theories were popularised in the 1980s and 1990s (Stacey, 2000).

There is growing agreement that one of the key drivers of long-term organisational effectiveness is the ability it has to learn effectively (Morey and Frangioso, 1998). The early 1990’s saw the publishing of several books and articles in this area. Two key books were *The Fifth Discipline* (Senge, 1990) and *The Learning Company* (Pedler et. al., 1991). Senge (1990) defined the learning organisation as *“organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together”* (p. 3).

Mintzberg et. al. (1998) attribute the foundations of the learning school to Lindblom (1959) and the publication of an article that described the messy nature of policy making in government and the tendency for people to muddle through the process, coping with problems, making decisions based on intuition, a far cry from the structured, formalised process described in the first three of Mintzberg et. al’s. (1998) schools. This led to an interest in learning about how strategies actually form in organisations, and a change in thinking between strategy formulation and implementation as separate activities. This led to thinking about strategies as an emergent, not deliberate (controlled) process. According to Stacey (2000), the important aspect of learning organisation theory is that it moves away, and advances in thought, from the prescriptive and control focused nature of the design, planning and positioning schools. It does so as it takes account of nonlinearity and incorporates the effect of positive feedback, and the realisation that through feedback people learn.

There is also the realisation that prediction is problematic, due to the complex dynamics of organisations, which therefore makes control problematic (Stacey, 2000). Mintzberg et. al. (1998) agree that the idea of a strategy being emergent allows for the reality of strategic learning and acknowledges the organisation's capacity to experiment. They state that "*a single action can be taken, feedback can be received, and the process can continue until the organization converges on the pattern that becomes its strategy*" (p. 190). Weick (1988) refers to this process of feedback and experiment as sensemaking. He states that people make sense of the world through experience and by trying something (enactment), people learn from the experience and then make sense of that and move forward to the next learning with that experience and learning on board. He uses the term enactment to describe this process and sees management intertwined with this process. He states that "*when people act, they bring events and structures into existence and set them in motion*" and that "*people who act in organizations often produce structures, constraints, and opportunities that were not there before they took action*" (Weick, 1988). To Weick (1988), the ongoing process of enactment, learning and sensemaking are not separate activities and learning is not possible without acting (Mintzberg et. al., 1998 and Weick and Browning, 1986). Prahalad and Hamel (1990) state that in the current business environment, to make growth possible, organisations need to identify, cultivate and exploit their core competencies. They define core competencies as "*the collective learning in the organization*" and "*communication, involvement, and deep commitment to working across organizational boundaries*" (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990, p. 82).

In summary, the learning school premise moves away from the view of organisations as linear, non dynamic systems to the view that organisations are dynamic and the environment is complex and unpredictable (Stacey, 2000). This is an alternative view of using deliberate and prescribed strategy formation. The view is that strategy should take a process of learning over time (Mintzberg et. al., 1998; Senge, 1990 and Pedlar et. al, 1991), that strategies evolve as incremental events within an organisation (Quinn, 1980), that many members in the organisation are potential strategists (Mintzberg, 1989) and that there is an increased focus on the selection and development of capabilities (Hamel and Prahalad, 1989 and 1994). For a more comprehensive review on the theories attributed to the field of organisational learning the works of Burgelman (1988), Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995); Mintzberg and Waters (1985), Hardy et. al. (1983), Miles (1982) Agyris (1990), Agyris and Schon (1978) and Weick (1979) should be referred to.

Power School

The theorists that fall into Mintzberg et. al.'s (1998) power school view strategy formation as an "*overt process of influence, emphasising the use of power and politics to negotiate strategies favourable to particular interests*" (p. 234). This could be within the organisation or as the way an organisation behaves in its external environment to exert pressure. These fall into two separate strategic activities.

The first is micro power strategy. Within this view, an organisation consists of human beings who have certain motives, agendas and strategies of their own who can influence greatly (depending on power) the strategy process. The result is a strategy process

made up of bargaining, persuasion and confrontation amongst the people and groups who hold the power (Mintzberg and Lampel, 1999).

The second focus is on macro power strategy. Within this view, it is believed that the organisation exerts its power and influence in the larger environment to which it belongs for its own gains and advantage. The external actors that influences the determination of an organisation's strategy are: suppliers, buyers, unions, competitors, investment bankers, government regulators, and pressure groups. The organisation's strategy involves managing the demands of these actors and making use of them to its own benefit (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). Theorists who have influenced the formation of this school include MacMillan, 1978; Sarrazin, 1977/1978; Pettigrew, 1977; Bolman and Deal, 1997; Allison, 1971; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, Porter, 1980b and Pekar and Allio, 1994.

Cultural School

“Internal resources and capabilities provide the basic direction for a firm’s strategy... resources and capabilities are the primary source of profit for the firm” (Grant, 1991, p. 116).

Within the cultural school, strategy formation is seen as a *“process of social interaction, based on the beliefs and understandings shared by members of an organization”* (Mintzberg et. al, 1998, p. 267). As a definition of culture Mintzberg et. al. (1998) define it as an organisation's way of doing things, its uniqueness and its differentiating factor from other organisations. They state *“We thus associate organizational culture with collective cognition. It becomes the ‘organization’s mind’, if you like, the shared beliefs that are reflected in traditions and habits as well as more tangible manifestations – stories, symbols, even buildings and products.”* (p. 265).

There has been a growing volume of literature on the issues of organisational culture. A predominant theme is the influence of culture in resisting strategic change. In terms of culture, and its link with strategy, the literature is varied. There has been an interest in the influence of culture on decision making style and thinking favoured in organisations (for example Wright, 1979); also an interest in culture and its negative influence on change (for example, Bettis and Prahalad, 1995; Lorsch, 1986, Yukl, 1989); and overcoming this resistance to strategic change (for example, Cooch and French, 1948, Lorsch, 1986 and Bjorkman, 1989). Other areas look at dominant values in organisations that are said to provide competitive advantage (for example, Peters and Waterman, 1982) and resource based theory, viewing human resources as the basis for competitive advantage, considering the shared meaning that a group of people create over time as the root of strategic advantage and the importance of the development of internal capabilities within the firms (for example, Penrose, 1959; Wernerfelt, 1984 and Barney, 1991). Barney (1991) describes the resources of the firm as all assets, capabilities, organisational processes, information and knowledge controlled by the firm that enable it to create and pursue effective strategies, for example:

- Physical capital resources – technology, plant, equipment, geographical location, raw materials access.

- Human capital resources – training, experience, judgement, intelligence, relationships.
- Organisation capital resources – formal systems and structures, informal relations between groups (Barney, 1991).

Huff (2001) states that the overall idea, articulated by the resource based view of the firm “*is that success depends on skills and the capabilities within the organization*” and that in comparison to the positioning school’s approach here “*learning and knowledge management (rather than gamesmanship) are the methodologies to follow*” (p. 125).

Culture can be seen as a key resource as it is impossible for another organisation to imitate and it includes the knowledge and skills of the people in the company. Grant (1991) states “*When the external environment is in a state of flux, the firm’s own resources and capabilities may be a much more stable basis on which to define its identity...a definition of the business in terms of what it is capable of doing may offer a more durable basis for strategy*” (P. 116).

Additional theorists, who have influenced the formation of this school include Pettigrew (1985); Feldman (1986); Barney (1986); Lorsch (1986); Rhenman (1973) and Normann (1977).

Environmental School

“Population ecology models provide potentially powerful explanations for the phenomena of organizational birth, mortality, and evolution. These explanations follow from the strength of the proposed analogy with natural selection.”
(Betton and Dess, 1985, p. 751).

Mintzberg et. al. (1998) do not pay great attention to this body of literature but state that it does deserve some attention as there is a perspective that views the environment outside of the organisation as the central player in strategy formation. In the previous schools, that role has been allocated to chief executives, top management groups, analysts, planners and to some extent the employees in an organisation. In the environmental school, all decisions are affected by the forces and demands of the external environment. This is defined as a vague set of forces or in effect, everything that is not organisation. This school has its roots in contingency theory which developed the premise that there is no one best way to manage and that it will all depend on certain factors (Dunphy and Stace, 1993) such as size of organisation, stability of environment, technology and so on (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). This view led to the identification of different possible environments that an organisation could be faced with for example; stable environment, complex environment, integrated and diversified markets and munificent and hostile environments (Mintzberg, 1989).

Mintzberg et. al. (1998) state that researchers who label their work population ecology are the strongest proponents of the principles of the environmental school. The central issues of the population ecology models are; the role of structural inertia in constraining adaptation, the classification of organisational species, and the importance of the environment in determining organisational survival (Betton and Dess, 1985). Organisations, as comparable to Darwin’s survival of the fittest, either adapt to the

environment or cease to exist. Through this adaptive nature, organisations form niches or clusters based on resources and needs. When more organisations are introduced to that cluster, resources become scarcer and then the less fit organisations get driven out. The competition is not targeted by the organisations; rather it is the environment that sets the criteria for what the organisations must fit to (Mintzberg et. al., 1998).

Mintzberg et. al. (1998) describe also how researchers in this school have built upon the institutional theory of Max Weber concerned with the pressures that institutions face in their environment (for example, money, land, machinery and prestige, reputation for efficiency).

Configuration School

“Anyone who has studied organizational adaptive behaviour firsthand or has read many case histories will recognize the variety and complexity of ways in which managers choose their structures, strategies, and even their environments”
(Miller and Friesen, 1980, p. 269).

The final school in Mintzberg et. al.’s. (1998) framework is the configuration school. This school considers that each previous school has its own place in a set period of time or under certain conditions or in a particular environment, so *“each school at its own time, in its own place”* (p. 302). For example the planning school would prevail in a machine-type organisation under conditions of relative stability, while the entrepreneurial school is suited to conditions that are more dynamic like that of a start-up or turnaround (Mintzberg and Lampel, 1999). Configuration to a certain state brings with it the notion of transformation. If an organisation wants to adopt a certain strategic perspective then inevitably it needs to transform in order to regain stability as this new state or configuration. So there are two parts to the configuration school, one concerned with the different states that an organisation adopts in a given period of time and the transformation that it goes through to adopt these states, described by Miller (1996) as quantum transformations opposed to the incremental view outlined by Quinn (1980).

When discussing configuration, researchers in this field (Mintzberg, 1989, 1983; Miles and Snow, 1978; Chandler, 1962) study organisational strategies and transformation over a longitudinal period of time not as episodes but from a historical perspective, looking at the pattern that emerges over time which some researchers describe as a company’s life cycle (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). Miller and Friesen (1980) state *“Organization adaptation is process. It takes place over time. The static snapshots...may not reveal the interesting dynamics of the process”* (p. 269). Miller and Friesen (1980) describe the common patterns that evolve over time within organisational transitions and identify some common transition archetypes that emerge from historical case studies they conducted. Some of these archetypes are entrepreneurial, revitalisation, consolidation, towards stagnation, towards centralisation, maturation, troubleshooting, fragmentation, initiation by fire and formalisation and stability. By exploring transitional archetypes that organisations adopt over a period of time, Miller and Friesen (1980) attempt to explore organisational strategy as tactics that organisations take on board to guide them through these transitional periods in an organisation’s life cycle. Their research is interested in looking at the whole cycle of an organisation and the strategies that are adopted over a long period of time, rather than

any one given strategy adopted for one period of transformation, and establishing patterns that emerge from the research. Miller (1996) states that a lot of the strategy literature is too focussed and prescribes generic strategies that “*concerns parts of strategies rather than wholes*” he adds that “*in order to progress from strategic conception to implementation, we must understand ‘how all these parts fit together’*” (p. 508). Miles et. al. (1978) argue that organisations are constantly adjusting to environmental change and that having to align to these changes is complex. They state that by studying this constant transformation and alignment, over time, patterns can be established to guide future transformation efforts; “*the complexity of the adjustment process can be penetrated: by searching for patterns in the behaviour of organizations, one can describe and even predict the process of organizational adaptation*” (p. 547) (see also Miller, 1982; 1986 and Miller and Friesen, 1977, 1978, 1980 and 1984 for a summary of this work). Miles et. al. (1978) proposed a model of the major elements of organisational adaptation (the adaptive cycle; *entrepreneurial problem, engineering problem and administrative problem*) and offered patterns of behaviour (strategic typologies; *defenders, prospectors, analyzers and reactors*) used by organisations to adjust to their environments; to move through the adaptive cycle.

In summary, the configuration school emphasises the importance of viewing strategy as an all encompassing process. That organisations will, most of the time, adopt a stable state but that at some periods there will be an effort of organisational transformation to another configuration. Therefore the “*process of strategy making can be one of conceptual designing or formal planning, systematic analyzing or leadership visioning...response to the forces of the environment; but each must be found at its own time and in its own context*” (Mintzberg et. al., 1998, p. 306). The aspect of organisational transformation that the configuration school discusses is addressed in the change management sections of this Chapter.

The symbolic, transactive and generative modes described by Hart (1992) in his integrative framework, outline the new view of strategy formation and will be described in this section.

Symbolic Mode

In the symbolic mode, Hart (1992) describes strategy as being driven by the mission and vision of the organisation, as communicated by the top management of the company. The emphasis is on inspiration and motivation of employees by giving them a clear direction of where the organisation intends to go. There remains an element of control, as described in the traditional view, the view that humans are mere cogs in a machine and given the right conditions will act according to how top management specify. But the emphasis here is on cultural and behavioural aspects of strategy formation. This mode resonates with the entrepreneurial school and the deemed influence a strong and inspirational leader can have on the company’s direction, in the creation of a clear vision. The recognition that implementation relies upon the motivation of the company’s employees and not on rigid control systems, through shared meaning and consensus, connects these perspectives, more strongly, with that of the cultural and learning schools. Hart (1992) identifies the importance of creating meaning for employees through a shared sense of identity to the company and its mission. He states “*it hinges on the nurturing of a shared perspective for all organizational members, that*

is, a clear mission, shared values, and an emotionally appealing corporate vision or dream” (Hart, 1992, p. 337).

Transactive Mode

Hart (1992) describes the transactive mode as strategy driven by an organisation’s internal processes and where the involvement of organisational members in the strategy process is at a higher level than in the previous three modes. The role of top management in this role is to facilitate “*an interactive process of strategy formation*” and that “*the content of the strategy emerges through the transactions among organizational members*” (Hart, 1992, p. 334). This mode mirrors some of the perspectives outlined in the learning school where strategy was seen as an emergent process.

Generative Mode

The generative mode describes strategy as an organic process driven by actors within the organisation and internal entrepreneurship and “*top managers adjust the strategy to fit the pattern of innovators that emerge from below*” (Hart, 1992, p. 334). This view of strategy formation implies that the organisation’s strategy relies on innovation and ideas from its employees. It resonates with the learning school perspective on strategic venturing, which describes initiatives where management champion ideas for strategic change (Mintzberg et. al., 1998). The cultivation of an environment that encourages risk taking and experimentation is important if this is a strategy to be adopted by an organisation. The classic example of how the 3M Post-It[®] was invented illustrates this (Brand, 1998). Hart (1992) states that “*the generative mode thus involves the ongoing adjustment of strategy to reflect the pattern of high-potential innovations that emerge from below*” (p. 339).

In summary, this new perspective on strategy theory incorporates an array of views about strategy formation in an organisation and was arguably initiated out of dissatisfaction with the more traditional management perspective, namely that of the design, planning and positioning schools. Chaffee’s (1985) framework of strategy offers two models that correspond with the views of this new perspective, the adaptive strategy and the interpretative strategy. The adaptive strategy typifies the view that organisation’s strategy is to adapt to the internal and external environment. Chaffee (1985) describes adaptation as a continuous process for an organisation in line with the view outlined in the configuration school of adaptation over time to certain conditions and configurations (Miles et. al., 1978; Miller, 1996 and Miller and Friesen, 1978). The interpretive model takes on board the views outlined in the subjective side of the cognitive school and also explores the views of the cultural and learning school. The model is based on the view that an organisation is made up of a collection of co-operative agreements and that reality is socially constructed. Hart (1992) states “*The organization’s existence relies on its ability to attract enough individuals to co-operate in mutually beneficial exchange*” (p. 93).

This new perspective on management theory offers some interesting concepts into the strategy formation process. Most importantly, it has emphasised the importance of people in the strategy formation process, an aspect that was fundamentally missing from

the perspectives described by the traditional view. A process that is bottom up and emergent and based on the core competencies and learning of the organisation (as outlined by the learning school) is becoming the desired strategy, but Mintzberg et. al. (1998) warn that the overemphasis on learning can undermine a clearly viable strategy and states that “*effective management means to sustain learning while pursuing the strategies that work*”. There is still therefore a view that the perspectives of the traditional view have a place in strategy formation, as outlined by the theorists of the contingency school, who believe that each perspective is appropriate depending on the state of the organisation (size, configuration etc.) and the environment it is operating in (stable, uncertain etc.). Porter (1997) maintains that strategy is a deductive and deliberate process and that it does not encompass emergent and learning strategy. He states “*if strategy is stretched to include employees and organizational arrangements, it becomes virtually everything a company does or consists of*”. Mintzberg et. al. (1998) argue that to include everything in the strategy formation would simply be to view strategy as perspective rather than position and that Porter’s fit view is too narrow.

4.3.2 Change Management

This section outlines the new perspectives within the change management literature. The perspective outlined in this section differs from the traditional change views outlined in the previous section (4.2.1) as they encompass the new perspectives of management theory that consider organisations to be non-linear, dynamic systems, where power and control is replaced by collaboration and co-operation (Stacey, 2000; Ellinor and Gerard, 1998). The ideas presented here overlap and coincide with the perspective outlined in the strategy section because strategy and change are often viewed as interchangeable.

Contingency Theory

The contingency model of change reflects that organisations operate under different circumstances and that there is more than one approach to change (Dunphy and Stace, 1993). Dunphy and Stace (1993) argue that different organisations will face different environmental circumstances and will need to vary their change approach accordingly; it all depends on environmental fit (Dunford, 1990). Their approach to change grew out of dissatisfaction with the Organisational Development (OD) model and the prescriptive planned approach to change. They felt that although the OD model of change was appropriate in times of uni-directional growth and environmental stability, a more transformative approach to change is more appropriate in organisations operating in more turbulent environments (Dunphy and Stace, 1988). They argue that both approaches are complementary and “*the issue is not whether, but when, to adopt an incrementalist or transformational approach*” (p. 321). Dunphy and Stace (1993) also contend that different circumstances demand different styles of change leadership (Table 4-4) i.e. participative, charismatic and directive. Collaborative (participative and charismatic) modes of change are useful when key interest groups support the change and coercive (forced and dictatorial) modes are needed when key groups oppose the change (Dunford, 1990).

Table 4-4: A typology of change strategies (Dunphy and Stace, 1988, p. 327)

	Incremental Change Strategies	Transformative Change Strategies
Collaborative Modes	Type 1 Participative Evolution	Type 2 Charismatic Transformation
Coercive Modes	Type 3 Forced Evolution	Type 4 Dictatorial Transformation

A criticism of the model is that Dunphy and Stace (1998) take a simplistic view of the environment and of management. The environment is treated as an entity out there and management are seen as adopting a fit strategy with no consideration for alternative strategies that are emergent or innovative (Dunford, 1990).

Emergent Model of Change

The emergent model of change (also referred to as continuous improvement and learning organisation) assumes that change is driven from the bottom up and is an open ended, continuous process of adaptation (Burnes, 1996). It also sees change as a process of learning and not just a method of changing organisational structures and practices (Stacey, 2000). An organisation's ability to learn and adapt may also influence the success or failure of a change management programme. Senge (1990) describes five disciplines that make up a learning organisation. One of which is 'shared mental models'. This describes the process whereby groups and individuals challenge existing 'mental models' (assumptions) of organisational behaviour and learn to rapidly and creatively adapt to a changing environment (Senge, 1990). Becoming a learning organisation is a people-based, company-wide philosophy (Schein, 1998). It involves building visions of growth, devising strategies, establishing lines of action and inspiring commitment. These are all aspects of successful organisations that are able to cope with continuous or rapid change (Teece and Coleman, 1998).

Burnes (1996) states that the role of managers, in an organisational change programme, is not to plan or implement but to create a climate that encourages and sustains experimentation and risk-taking. Managers have a responsibility for developing a collective vision or common purpose which gives the organisation direction. This perspective on change is consistent with the perspectives of strategy formation outlined in Mintzberg et. al's (1998) learning school.

Choice Management – Change Management

“We need to think in terms of appropriateness of an approach with regard to the circumstances being addressed” (Burnes, 1996, p. 16)

Burnes (1996 and 1997) describes a theory that is very close to that of contingency theory and that of the environmental school (Mintzberg et. al., 1998) in that an organisation changes in accordance to the external environment and that depending on what changes are needed it can adopt a planned approach or emergent approach to change. However Burnes (1997) argues that rather than accepting that one has to change in accordance to one's environment, organisation's have a choice and can influence the circumstances they find themselves in. Burnes (1996) states that his choice management and change management model is able to show the complexity of

change management while acknowledging the room and scope for managerial choice. He states that certain organisations have worked to challenge their environment rather than just accepting it. He believes that “*the suitability of a particular approach to change is dependent on the circumstances in which it is deployed*” (Burnes 1997, p. 753). For Burnes (1997) it is a matter of choice and adaptation, he states that “*some organization can ... exert a degree of control or influence over the external environment in order to benefit their own way of working, while others may prefer to align their internal operations to changes in the external environment*” (p. 758). His model outlines three interdependent processes that affect the choice and adaptation strategy an organisation adopts, these are:

- The choice process - managers weigh up and decide upon the nature and scope of the change and upon an appropriate focus for their decision making.
- Organisation trajectory - importance and the longevity of historical factors – past and future interact in complex ways to facilitate choices/opportunities. Analysed contextually and temporally.
- Wider environment - choices and outcomes from previous change management attempts will have bearing on current and future choices and events.

Burnes (1996 and 1997) builds upon the contingency model and argues that managers have more choice and influence in their strategic change approaches, and that they do not have to change the internal environment in accordance to environmental pressures, but that they may be able to influence their external environment.

Contextual Approach to Change

There are a growing number of academics that are advocating the use of longitudinal qualitative research in developing a contextualist approach to change management. This growth in academic interest and the growing publication of case studies means that there is an increasing interest in understanding the dynamics of change as a longitudinal contextual approach (Dawson, 1994). Dawson (1994) defines the contextualist approach as “*research which is able to combine a processual analysis of change with an inner and outer organisational analysis of context*” (p. 25). The contextualist approach is concerned with studying the processes of change within a historical and organisational context. The study is very detailed and draws on a range of perspectives such as; the business historian, corporate strategies and organisational theorists and is concerned with a detailed examination of the process of organisational transition (Dawson, 1994).

Whipp et. al. (1987) state that it is important to examine the content of a chosen strategy, the process of change and the context in which it occurs. They describe two contexts in which organisations operate and change the inner context (cultural aspects, structure and politics) and the outer context (business, economic, political and societal context).

Pettigrew, (1985) a leading academic in the field of longitudinal, qualitative contextual research, states that the traditional perspectives on change focus very much on change as a one off event or episode and assume that managers of change initiatives are working towards a knowable end state in a predictable and stable environment (Collins,

1998). Pettigrew (1985) argues that the orthodox approaches do not strive to understand the larger organisational context and are highly focussed on the immediate business environment. He believes that a company's historical context, current context and the processual dynamics of change needs to be understood. He states:

“For as long as we continue to conduct research on change which is ahistorical, acontextual, and aprocessual, which continues to treat the change programme as the unit of analysis and regard change as an episode divorced from the immediate and more distant context in which it is embedded, then we will continue to develop inadequate descriptive theories of change which are ill-composed guides for action.” (Pettigrew, 1985, p. 15).

Pettigrew and Whipp (1991) describe three essential dimensions that are necessary for understanding strategic change: Context, Content and Process (Figure 4-6). They state that strategic change should be regarded as a continuous process that occurs in given contexts (outer and inner) and should not be regarded as separate episodes unconnected to the historical, organisational and economic circumstances that they emerge from. Rather that strategic change should be viewed as a continuous, iterative and uncertain process, which does not occur in a direct, linear, easily identifiable sequential phase (Pettigrew and Whipp, 1991).

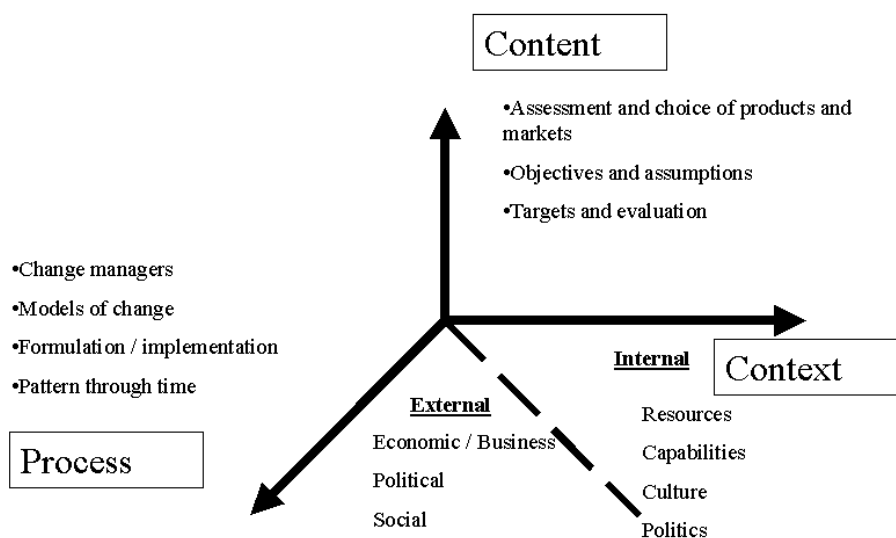


Figure 4-6: Understanding strategic change: three essential dimensions (Pettigrew and Whipp, 1991)

The methods that Pettigrew and his counterparts adopt to the study of change is that of a case study approach focussing on a large time scale for analysis, rather than single-shot studies of change episodes. It is stated that this “will allow researchers to move from the artificial boundaries of the change episode so that changing can be studied over time” (Collins, 1998, p.70). Nelson (2003) argues that one difficulty with this model is the ambiguity of the contexts that Pettigrew and Whipp (1991) define.

Dawson (1994) states that one of the weaknesses of the contextualist studies is that they offer no practical guides to managers and are mainly aimed at the academic world in terms of their difficulty to be interpreted by non-academic practitioners. As a result Dawson (1994) has attempted to address these criticisms and develop a “*non-linear temporal framework for analysing and examining the process of organisational change*” (p. 26). This approach was developed and based on longitudinal case study research in several organisations, for example, British Aerospace, General Motors and Hewlett Packard. His main concern was to design an approach for the study of change that was “*both flexible and yet clearly defined, and also able to deal with the complexity of change whilst remaining uncluttered and of practical use*” (Dawson, 1994, p.36). Dawson (1994) breaks down the temporal aspects of change into three organisational phases or timeframes. Within these timeframes he states that groups and individuals conduct a series of tasks, activities and decisions. He believes that these activities can and will be influenced by external (outside the company) and internal groups or individuals, therefore acknowledging the limiting factor that context has on human action. Dawson’s (1994) three timeframes are:

- **Conception of a need to change** - periods of initial awareness of the need to change.
- **Process of organisation transition** - complex non-linear processes of change; a range of different activities and events.
- **Operation of new work practices and procedures** - periods where resources are withdrawn from the managers of change programmes.

To this temporal framework, Dawson (1994) adds three major groups of determinants of change to explain the process of organisational transition. The three groups of determinants are – substance (type and scale), context (historical perspective), and politics (internal micro-political activities and external forms i.e. politicking) of change. He argues that the substance of change enables or constrains the options which managers may pursue and is concerned with the introduction of new techniques and technologies, for example, just-in-time and management information systems. The context of change refers to the influence of past and present external and internal operating environments as well as future strategies on current organisational practices. For example, changes could be in competitor strategies (external influence) or administrative allocation of tasks and job structures (internal influence). The political determinant of change refers to political activity which includes consultation, negotiation, conflict and resistance that can occur at various levels within and outside an organisation (Dawson, 1994).

Dawson (1994) states that “*Through combining the three general timeframes of change with this threefold classification of factors shaping the process of organizational change (that is, the substance, context and politics of change), it is possible to construct a processual framework for organizational change*” (p. 45) as shown in Figure 4-7.

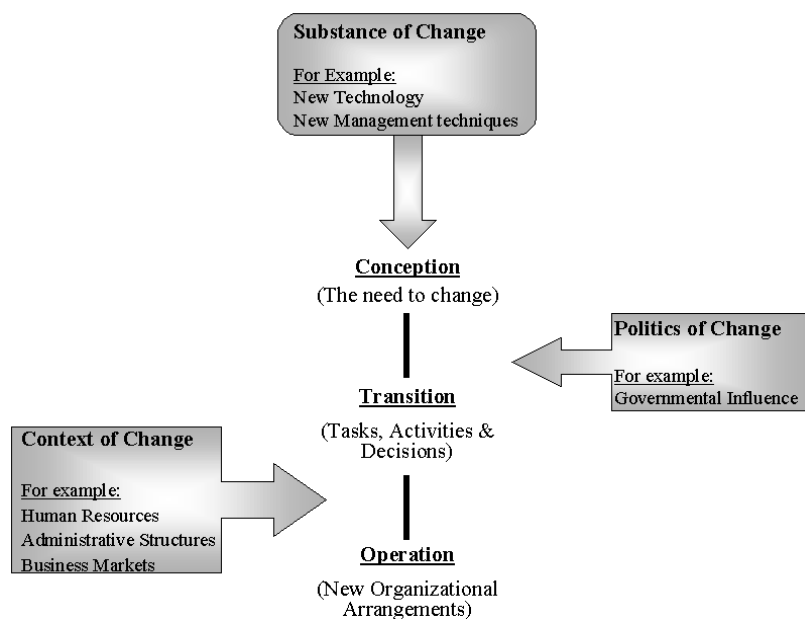


Figure 4-7: Organizational change: a processual framework (Dawson, 1994)

Nelson (2003) argues that a weakness of Dawson's (1994) approach is that it overlooks the dynamic quality of change and that it could initially be taken for a static model for contextualists to work from. Collins (1998) concurs and states that Dawson (1994) on one hand recognises the fact that the change process is complex and dynamic but then by enforcing a timeframe on these complex processes he then adopts a reductionist and static view. It seems that in an attempt to offer a practical solution for managers, Dawson (1994) must compromise the complexity he has argued is inherent in the study of organisational change (Collins, 1998).

The Change Triangle

The theories on change described above have focused on models that describe what change is, describe how change can be managed and how change can be studied. The final model describes types of change that occur and is an overarching model for the theories described so far. In a recent article, Huy and Mintzberg (2003) have described change as being dramatic, systemic and organic and in line with the views of strategy, expressed in the configuration school. They state that there are different types of change depending on the strategy and configuration the organisation adopts and that although each type can happen interdependently, they are more effective when working simultaneously. Huy and Mintzberg (2003) call this the "*dynamic rhythm of change*" (p. 80).

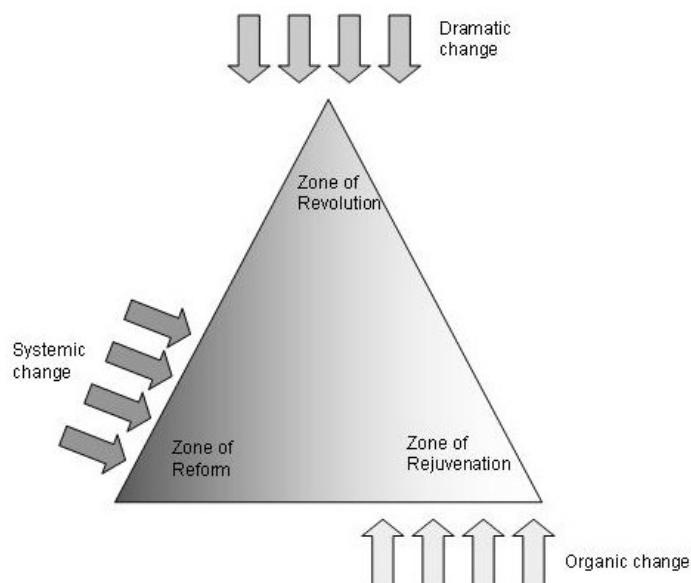


Figure 4-8: The change triangle (Huy and Mintzberg, 2003)

Figure 4-8 outlines the change triangle which describes the three types of change. Huy and Mintzberg (2003) state that dramatic change descends from the top. This type of change is described as “*frequently initiated in times of crises or of great opportunity*” and that it is usually commanded by senior management who expect compliance from organisational members. This type is in line with the planned view of change and with Dunphy and Stace’s (1988) coercive type of leadership style. Systemic change is said to be “*slower, less ambitious, more focused, and more carefully constructed and sequenced than dramatic change*” (p. 80). This initiative is usually driven again by senior management but with the help of staff groups and consultants. This type of change is more in line with the models outlined by the OD theorists (for example, Kotter, 1995) and the leadership style involves a more collaborative approach (Dunphy and Stace, 1988). The organic type is described as change that emerges from the grass roots of the organisation without any formal management and is often a messy process (Huy and Mintzberg, 2003). Here the leadership adopted should be clever and should attempt to stimulate an environment that socialises organic change. This is in line with the emergent model of change outlined above. Huy and Mintzberg (2003) state that organic change “*is not systematically organized when it begins or dramatically consequential in its intention [but given clever leadership] ...its results can be dramatic*” (p. 80). The authors argue that in isolation neither change works well but that they need to work in dynamic symbiosis to create a rhythm of change where “*dramatic change can ... provide impetus, systemic change can instill order, and organic change can generate enthusiasm*” (p. 80). Huy and Mintzberg (2003) go on to further their model by adding three zones associated with each type of change, that of revolution, reform and rejuvenation (for further explanation see Huy and Mintzberg, 2003). In conclusion, Huy and Mintzberg (2003) state that companies should not abandon the “*obsession*” with dramatic initiatives but that “*lasting, effective change arises from the natural, rhythmic combination of organic and systemic change with the well-placed syncopation of dramatic transformation*” and that “*it is now time to manage change with an appreciation for continuity*” (p. 84).

In summary, the new view of the change management literature moves away from the traditional view of planning and control to the perspective of change as an emergent, continuous and dynamic process (Pettigrew and Whipp, 1991; Nelson, 2003; Weick and Quinn, 1999; Huy and Mintzberg, 2003 and Collins, 1994).

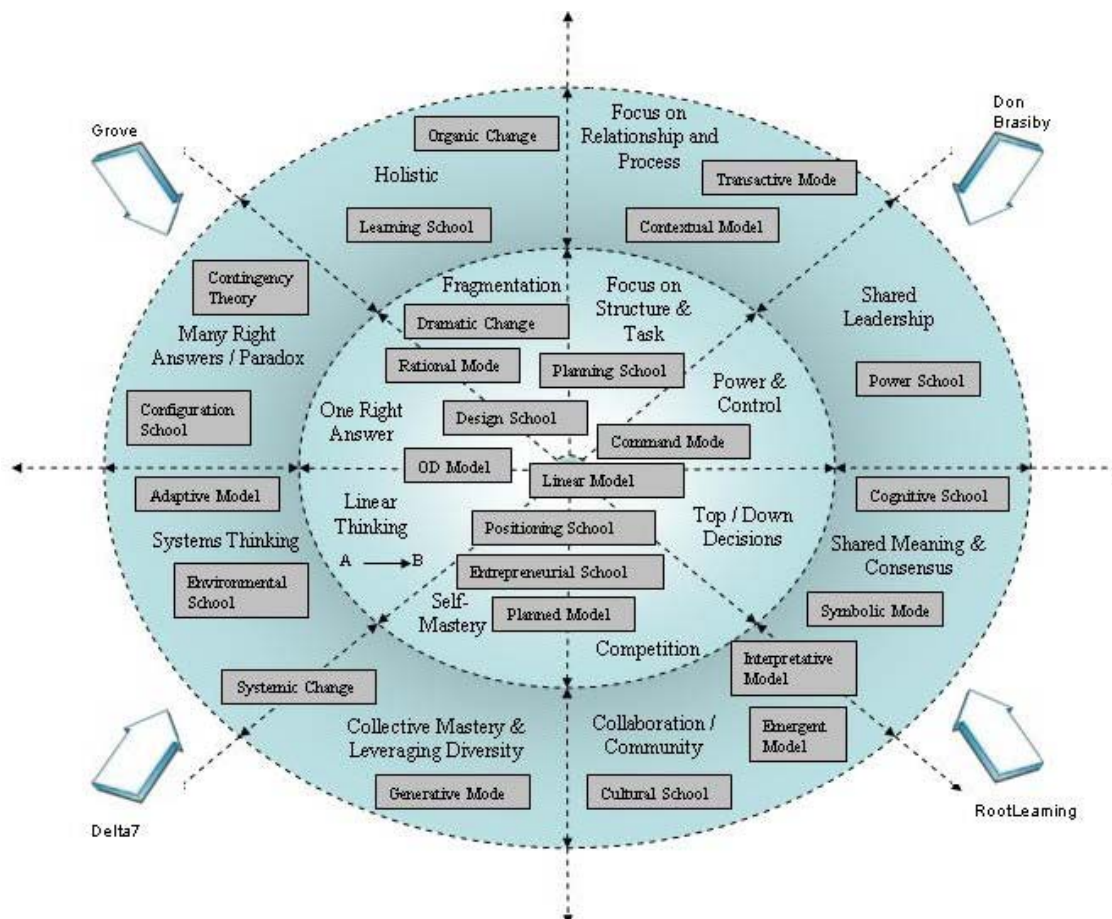


Figure 4-9: A representation of strategy and change theories in the traditional and new perspectives

Figure 4-9 represents a picture of how the theories and models of both the strategy and change literature, outlined so far in this Chapter, map onto the model of the traditional and new perspectives of organising and managing, offered by Ellinor and Gerard (1998). This was mapped by the researcher as a way to represent visually and holistically all the theories and models reviewed in the strategy and change management literature.

It can be seen that the traditional strategic views represented by the planning, design, positioning and entrepreneurial schools (Mintzberg, et. al., 1998), the rational and, command mode (Hart, 1992) and the linear model (Chaffee, 1985) map onto the inner circle, along with the traditional change theories of the planned model (Lewin, 1951), organisational development model and the dramatic change model (Huy and Mintzberg, 2003). The newer strategic perspectives represented by the learning, power, cognitive, cultural, environmental, and configuration schools (Mintzberg, et. al., 1998), the symbolic, transactive, and generative mode (Hart, 1992) and the adaptive and interpretive model (Chaffee, 1985) map onto the outer circle along with the newer

change management theories of the contingency model (Dunphy and Stace, 1993), the emergent model, choice management model (Burnes, 1996), the contextual model (Pettigrew 1985, Dawson, 1994) and the organic and systemic change model (Huy and Mintzberg, 2003). The figure shows that the four graphic methods can apply to the traditional and new management perspectives models. The methods can be applied in top down communications, pertaining to the models described in the traditional perspectives. It has also been realised that the methods can be applied to strategic and change models that seek to incorporate participation, involvement and feedback from organisational members, such as the emergent model of strategy and the organic change model, described in the new perspectives section.

4.4 Radical Perspectives

This section focuses on current theory on complexity and its application on management theory. The review is focused on the works of Stacey (2000, 1996 and 1992) and his contribution to the theories of strategy and change management. In understanding the perspectives of Stacey (2000) it is necessary to give a brief overview of complexity theory in management.

4.4.1 *Chaos and Complexity Theory*

1970s and 1980s development of systemic theories

For this section, the term ‘science of complexity’ is used to encompass the general area. During the 1970s and 1980s, scientists in numerous fields (such as biology, chemistry, physics, meteorology, economy, psychology, computing) worked across their disciplines to develop new theories of systems. That complexity science generally deals with systems is therefore clear, but the specific systems of interest are dynamic systems or systems that change over time. How the system changes from one state (stable) to another (unstable) and whether this change is predictable, is the area of interest to complexity theorists. What enables systems to change from one state to another is said to be non-linear, positive or negative feedback. Systems are constantly changing and some do so in a consistent manner (solar systems) whilst others lack this stability (the universe ‘big bang’). Stable and unstable states are common to science but the concept of ‘chaotic’ behaviour in-between the two states is not. This refers to systems which display behaviour that despite having certain regularities, defies prediction, for example the weather system. The two states are referred to in the literature as ‘stable equilibrium’ and ‘explosive instability’ (Stacey, 2000). So a key discovery for the complexity sciences is that in a deterministic nonlinear system, stable equilibrium and explosive instability are not the only attractors. An attractor is the state of behaviour to which a system is drawn or the final state of behaviour a system settles into. There is a third attractor referred to as the state of ‘bounded instability’. When a nonlinear system moves away from stable equilibrium towards the state of explosive instability, it is said that it passes through a stage of bounded instability and displays highly complex behaviour. This is a state of paradox where two contradictory forces, stability and instability, are operating simultaneously, pulling the system in opposing directions. In this border area, the system is said to generate patterns of behaviour that are irregular and unpredictable over the long term (Stacey, 2000).

The old view of the natural world (Newton, Bacon, and Descartes) stated that a system could be controlled by human intervention. They believed that given inputs are translated through fixed laws into given outputs and once the fixed laws, and data on the inputs to those laws, are gathered and understood then one will be able to predict the behaviour of the system. This essentially led to the belief that once one knows how the system behaves without human intervention, one can intervene by altering the inputs to the laws and get the system to do something different. In the case of a system being in a state of stable equilibrium, it is driven by negative feedback. Or if the system is driven by positive feedback, then it tends towards explosive instability. In the case of instability, an outside agent would have to intervene and return the system to a stable state.

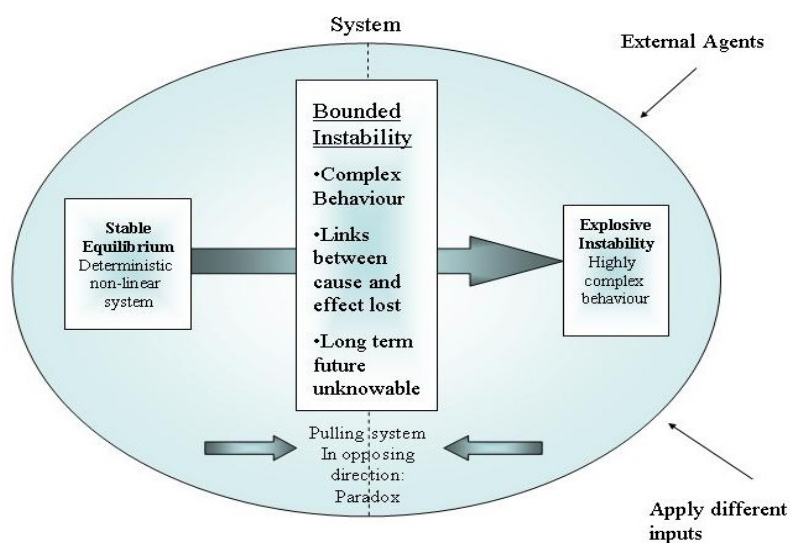


Figure 4-10: Radical potential (Stacey, 2000)

But when the system is drawn to the third possible state, that of bounded instability, internal constraints are automatically applied to keep instability within boundaries, the system self organises (Figure 4-10). In this state, inputs from external agents are useless as the system is no longer ruled by those laws. The behaviour of the system is too complex and one can no longer count on a certain given input leading to a certain given output. The long-term future of a system operating in the borders between stability and instability is said to be unknowable. A pattern of behaviour can be drawn but it is irregular and unpredictable and the pattern emerges through self organisation.

Complexity literature focussing on humans and organisations generally draw on concepts found in three strands of complexity writing, which are: Chaos Theory, Dissipative Structure Theory and the Theory of Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS). The concepts above are an amalgamation of thought emanating from the three strands. Table 4-5 briefly summarises the differences between the three theories from the perspective of Stacey (2000).

Table 4-5: Differences between chaos theory, dissipative structures and complex adaptive systems (CAS) (Stacey, 2000)

Chaos Theory	Dissipative Structure	Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Theory of systems – similar to systems dynamics. ▪ No internal capacity to move from one of its attractors to another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develops the notion of self organisation & emergence. ▪ Move to new attractor, possibly evolving a new one. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very much about self organisation and emergence. ▪ Evolve spontaneously, internal capacity to do so.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on the system as a whole (Macro level). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on the Macro level of the system – but does take into account fluctuations or variety in micro events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus of analysis is primarily on the micro level - the individual agents for the systems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cognitivist human psychology – individual primary to the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cognitivist human psychology - objective observer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cognitivist human psychology – objective observer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deterministic relationships – relationships do not change or evolve - systems that do not learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversity in the system – explores possibility of evolution, emergence of radically unpredictable novelty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerned with the behaviour of the entities comprising the system (agents).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impetus for change comes from outside the system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change need no longer be imposed or triggered from outside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agents interact with and adapt to each other.

Stacey (2000) outlines the three, but pays particular attention to the theory of complex adaptive systems (Figure 4-11). The central concept of CAS is the supposition of agent based models of complexity, that is that agents interact with one another and adjust their behaviour based on other agents, thus self organising.

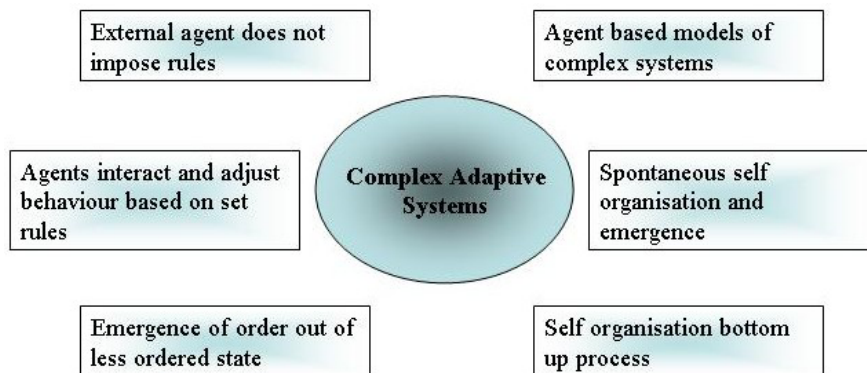


Figure 4-11: Properties of a complex adaptive system (Stacey, 2000)

Complexity scientists use computer simulations to model the behaviour of complex adaptive systems. They model agent interaction with each other and each agent has its own rules and principles of local interaction. Stacey (2000) states that “*in such a structure, no individual agent, or group of agents, determines the patterns of behaviour that the system displays or how those patterns evolve and neither does anything outside the network. This is the principle of self-organisation: agents interact locally according to their own principles, or ‘intentions’, in the absence of an overall blueprint for the system they form.*” (Stacey, 2000, p. 276).

The key concepts in the area of complexity science include the work of the following scientists and theorists:

- Gell-Mann (1994) – Complex Adaptive Systems (biological evolution, organisms, learning and thinking, evolution of human societies).
- Goodwin (1994) – radical views on relationship and participation.
- Kauffman (1993) – simulations of autonomous adaptive agents, radical conclusions that challenge orthodox perspectives on management, Fitness Landscapes.
- Langton (1996) – Vants simulation, Artificial Life (AL).
- Holland (1998) – non-linear agent based models.

In summary, the radical perspectives, based on complexity science, have made advances in the concepts outlined in the traditional and new perspectives. These are the significance of self organisation and emergence in a system, and the importance of unpredictability. This leads to the conclusion that the concept of controlling a system (organisation), as theorised by the Newtonian view, through given inputs, is not applicable if a system is in a state of bounded instability, where cause and effect of actions are impossible to interpret because it is too complex. If the theory of Complex Adaptive Systems is to be assumed then the importance of self organisation and emergence through the interaction of individual agents cannot be ignored as it indicates the significance of change through a bottom up, spontaneous process where an overall blueprint for the system is irrelevant as agents interact locally to their own, unique, predetermined and unpredictable behavioural blueprint.

The emergence of applying complexity science to organisation life is novel but Stacey (2000) believes that it loses its radical potential as theorists' view on humans and relationships remain in the domain of cognitivist and humanistic psychology and it therefore reverts back to the traditional perspectives and language. He states that "*The words are from complexity science but the concepts are from cybernetics and cognitivism*" and "*In the process, any new insight is lost and orthodox perspectives are simply presented in a different language*" (Stacey, 2000, p. 309). In summary, the complexity theories emphasis is still on the autonomous individual, they remain concerned with control, there is a downplaying of the importance of unpredictability and diversity, and there remains a belief in the possibility of an organisation moving according to some organisation wide intention, despite suggestions that agents act according to their own blueprint and not an overarching one.

This final section on radical perspectives is based on Stacey's (2000) view that there is radical potential for the application of complexity theory in organisations. He states that in the traditional view of organisations, managers see themselves as external observer, making decisions, strategic choices and controlling leverage points outside of the system they are operating in. From a complexity science view, managers are actually agents of the system and cannot be external observers of it, which disputes the view that the system can be controlled from outside. Stacey (2000) believes that change and new direction comes from both the choices these agents (managers) make and the responses (patterns) they cause from other agents within the system. He sees the relationships of the agents as crucial to organisational change and management and introduces a new psychology perspective, relationship psychology, to complement the theory of complexity science, specifically its theory of interaction. Relationship psychology

draws on the work of sociologists Mead (1934), Elias (1978, 1989) and Bhaktin (1986) which maintains that an individual is not an object that affects another, but that they are all entities interacting with one another. The key difference between this psychology perspective and the others (cognitivist and constructivist) outlined previously is that the individual is not autonomous or primary to the group (Stacey, 2000). Self organising systems, as explained through simulations, show that there is not a reign of chaos when systems self organise, and that there are conditions that enable and constrain the operation of the system. It also shows that what is self organising is not separate individuals but it is the *“overall pattern of relationships that is organising itself at the same time as the nature of the agents is changing. The agents are forming and being formed by the overall pattern of relationships”* (Stacey, 2000, p. 334). The emphasis is very much on the relationships of the ‘agents’ within the system, which are governed and constrained by a history of relationships and interaction. This is not to say that all agents within the system are equal, some have a greater capacity to respond more effectively than others. In terms of organisation, this can be translated into some individuals having more knowledge and power than others. In terms of agent interactions, some agents may interact more than others and have more connection with other agents. In terms of an organisation, CEOs have more power than others and interact with a great many more people than the less influential. Stacey (2000) states *“A CEO may communicate with, and issue instructions to hundreds of thousands of others...If they all respond according to some blueprint the CEO...had designed, then there would clearly be no self-organisation...if they respond according to their own local capacities, and their responses had some effect on the CEO, leading to further responses from the CEO, then this would be self-organisation”* (p. 335). Self-organisation is determined by the capacity the agents have to respond within a system.

4.5 The Role of Dialogue, Stories, Metaphor and Graphics in Strategy Communication

The graphic facilitative methods are predominantly focused on communicating a company’s vision and strategy to members of the organisation. This section will therefore focus on literature surrounding the area of strategy communication, to gain an understanding of the literature in this area of the strategy process.

4.5.1 Strategic Communication

Traditionally the role of strategy implementation was viewed as a separate episode in a company’s strategic change programme (Kotter, 1996, Porter 1980). Despite the emergence of new perspectives that argue that it is difficult to separate the thinking from the doing and that strategy formation is an ongoing learning process of sensemaking and emergence (Mintzberg et. al., 1998 and Weick, 2003), some of the literature surrounding the area of strategy implementation is still treated as if it is a separate step in a sequenced, linear event. Bearing that in mind, in concurrence with the perspectives of the new views, there is recognition in the recent literature of the importance of participation and involvement within the strategy implementation process and the view that it is a learning, emergent process where communication and informing organisational members is essential because as Michlitsch (2000) states *“while a*

company's leaders may devise the strategy, it is employees – all of them – who will implement the strategy” (p. 28).

A common figure to be quoted in the literature states that 70% of business strategies fail to get implemented (Corboy and O’Corrbui, 1999) which has led to a surge of interest in understanding why this is the case. There are several stated reasons as to why implementations of strategies are unsuccessful for example: the strategy is not worth implementing, Chief executives and senior managers step out of the picture once implementation begins (Corboy and O’Corrbui, 1999); there are unanticipated market changes, competitors respond to strategy (Sterling, 2003); top-down or laissez-faire senior management style, poor co-ordination across functions, businesses or borders (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000). Amongst these are other reasons, for strategy implementation failure, more focused on the importance of communication and understanding (that effective communication brings) of the business vision and strategy.

Autry (2003) states that strategic thinking requires the participation of many employees and bases his view on his experience in the electric co-corporations. The crucial element for him is communication, he states *“no action comes without the need to communicate it to someone”* and that *“where we forget or fail to communicate, the target audience will fill that void with their own beliefs, or rumor, or worse”* which can have devastating effects on the strategic intention of the organisation (Bettis and Prahalad, 1995). Beer and Eisenstat (2000) state that a barrier to strategy implementation and learning is poor vertical communication and top down communication, which they state does not encourage two way communications. They argue that the organisations they examined did attempt to communicate strategic planning documents to organisational members but they were too intricate and detailed, what the organisation failed to do was simply communicate a *“coherent story showing why the changing world outside the organization demanded new ways of working together”* (p. 33). Beer and Eisenstat (2000) state that it is important for employees to understand how the strategy affects their day to day projects and activities and the impact the strategy will have on their decisions. They believe that *“a top down management style is often the main barrier to honest upward communication and organizational learning”* (p. 33). According to Corboy and O’Corrbui (1999), one of the deadliest sins of strategy implementation is that customers and staff do not fully understand the strategy. They believe that the *“frontline supervisory staff must understand what the strategy is about, why it is important and how it will effect them”* because it is them who have day to day interaction with customers and suppliers and they believe that this is where the strategy *“is going to have the greatest impact”*.

Sterling (2003) states that one of the reasons strategy implementation fails is due to the lack of understanding and buy in to the strategy, in effect, as a result of poor strategy communication. He states *“effective communication of the strategy and its underlying rationale are also critically important”* and that *“good strategic management is a function of people actively considering the strategy as they make day-to-day decisions about the business – i.e. adapting continually to a changing world”* (p. 30/31). Similarly Thompson (1997) states that communication is important in ensuring the understanding and acceptance of the organisation’s strategic vision, he states *“effective communication systems, both formal and informal, are required to share the strategic vision and inform people of priorities and strategies and to ensure strategies and task*

are carried out expeditiously” (p. 72). This importance of understanding and decision making is shared by Michlitsch (2000) who states that *“people need to know what they are supposed to do if they are to have any chance for success”* (p. 32).

Within the literature investigated for strategy implementation, all referred to the importance of communicating the vision and strategy, in some way, to the organisation’s members. Some sources stipulated methods for communicating the information based on case studies and experience, the main methods of communication described were; face-to-face meetings, videos, e-mails, bulleting boards and fax (Miniace and Falter, 1996 and Guffey and Nienhaus, 2002). Miniace and Falter (1996) describe several methods of strategy communication, and compare the various communication methods from rich to lean. For them, effective communication (rich) occurs through two way communication and they have developed a system that helps promote top down and bottom up communication. The important factor in their process is that organisational members have the opportunity to pose questions and have a dialogue with senior management (Miniace and Falter, 1996).



Figure 4-12: The communication channel continuum (Miniace and Falter, 1996)

Guffey and Nienhaus (2002) carried out an investigation based in two textile companies. Their presupposition was that employee commitment and motivation improves when the employee has knowledge of their company’s business strategy. Their findings did not support this hypothesis. Despite extensive efforts to communicate the organisation’s strategy in the company a survey revealed that only 56% of the employees correctly identified the strategy. This leads to an interesting question about the methods the company used to communicate the strategy. These were; video messages from the CEO, plant managers and supervisors related the strategy through meetings with employees, and notices were put on bulletin boards and in the company newsletter. Despite using these three methods (standard strategy communication methods) the evidence shows that the understanding of that strategy was not adopted by the company employees. Guffey and Nienhaus (2002) state that *“it would be interesting to see what knowledge levels would be in a future study for a similar clients firm, where message enrichment techniques were used”* (p. 29) they call

for new enriched message communication techniques but do not offer specific solutions but agree that there is a need for new techniques to enhance employee understanding and knowledge of the strategy because of “*the increased importance placed on employee involvement and the value associated with sharing the strategic plan with employees*” (p. 29).

In conclusions there is a consensus for the need to communicate strategy to organisational employees; it is a pre-given assumption that within a strategic change process there will be some form of communication inherent in the implementation phase. What is not always specified is how the communication should take place or what the best methods are for communicating the strategy. Yet the importance of effectively communicating the strategy remains high although it should be stressed that it remains a small part in the overall implementation process, as Peng and Litteljohn (2001) state “*effective communication is a primary requirement of effective implementation but it does not guarantee the effectiveness of implementation*” (p. 362).

4.5.2 The Role of Dialogue

Many forms of communication take place on a daily basis in organisations and often in the form of conversation. In most cases, the message that is communicated by one person to another is interpreted differently, by the receiver, from how the sender intended. The constant back and forth nature of conversation can therefore lead to new perspectives being received, understood and generated; a continual emergence of a new content that is common to both participants (Bohm, 1996). Bohm (1996) believes that this can only occur if people are able to listen freely to one another and not try and change each others’ beliefs and opinions. His theory of dialogue is a method that overcomes this barrier and allows groups to participate in a free and meaningful conversation from which there may emerge some new understanding and ideas (Bohm, 1996).

Dialogue is not a new concept as it was a method practiced by the ancient Greeks and by many “primitive” societies, such as the Native Americans. Dialogue is a group process designed to open communication between participants in a way that conversation and discussion does not. The underlying principles of dialogue are that of trust, an assumption / prejudice free environment, a free empty / open space to talk, a process where relationships can be built, no conclusions or endings are to be drawn and there is no fixed agenda. Bohm (1996) states that dialogue deals with the pressures that are behind our assumptions and prejudices; these are our thoughts. He states that once individuals can disassociate their thoughts from their current reality, an open and free dialogue can occur between group members. “*Dialogue is really aimed at going into the whole thought process and changing the way the thought process occurs collectively*” (Bohm, 1996, p. 9).

Thoughts and assumptions are based on past experience and become a barrier to how individuals approach problems, discussions, and people; as they are influenced by them (thoughts). Suspending these thoughts and assumptions in a group process can lead to individuals gaining insights that they would not normally gain as individuals. Bohm (1996) states “*A new kind of mind begins to come into being which is based on the development of a common meaning...People are no longer primarily in opposition, nor*

can they said to be interacting, rather they are participating in this pool of common meaning, which is capable of constant development and change.” (Bohm cited in Senge, 1990, p. 241). Werther (2003) notes that employee resistance to strategic change becomes likely when employees’ assumptions are challenged, which he argues is often the case in strategic change programmes as leaders’ assumptions and employee assumptions are often very different. While the leader may envision a change as necessary for the survival of the organisation, the employee might see that change as a direct threat to their current work practices and their assumptions about the organisation and how it works. Werther (2003) argues that this leads to resistance and the leader’s defence of their assumptions compound this because they assume that others must see the obvious need for the change. He believes that *“aligning the assumptive worlds of the leaders and followers is fundamental to reducing resistance to strategic change”* (p. 38) and that this can be done through dialogue. Alignment of assumptions in this case often involves leaders sharing their outward and future orientated views of the organisation and its environment with the internally, present-time view of the employees. This involves drawing focus of those in the organisation to the external environments and their future implications to them. He states *“assumptive world alignment emerges from a continuous dialogue”* (p. 40) using questions concerned with the external environment (for example, what are the changes in the environment that are affecting the company? What can the company do to ensure that it is well positioned for that emerging environment?) to prompt a dialogue, that in turns leads to employee understanding of the situation and a change in their assumptions about the company and why there needs to be change. Werther (2003) states that there is a *“need for an ongoing process to educate employees about the external forces that drive the need for strategic change...it is this process that leads to a shared set of assumptions...it is this process that creates a more unified commitment to a shared vision”* (p. 42) and that this should be *“created through continuous dialogue inside the organization about the ever-changing external environment”* (p. 43). Liedtka (2000) concurs with this process of two way communication and the importance of open dialogue for the purpose of strategic understanding. She states *“the process of involvement, itself, will need to be dialogue-based, with direct two-way communication among organizational members in which the strategic logic is open to examination and testing”* (p.199). The challenge for organisations is to find effective processes and methods to facilitate the dialogue and alignment of assumptions.

Ellinor and Gerard (1998) further outline the application of dialogue in a business environment. They believe that dialogue, as developed by Bohm (1996) can help companies navigate in the new complex business environment (Figure 4-1). They also believe that the core dilemmas, outlined previously, (Figure 4-5) can be addressed and possibly overcome by using dialogue as a management practice.

Socratic Dialogue

The Socratic method is a type of dialogue that uses a series of questions to help people think through different problems and derive satisfactory solutions. It is based on dialectic teaching used by the philosopher Socrates over 2,000 years ago. Socrates wrote nothing and is well known for engaging his contemporaries in sharp and often prolonged exchanges interrogating Athenians on any topic bearing on how life should be lived. A crucial element is the potent questioning techniques which act from within

to stimulate intense mental activity that become self - generating (Thomas, 1963). The Socratic method includes three main elements: systematic questioning, inductive reasoning, and universal definitions. Systematic questioning is used to guide the interview process and encourage the client to seek answers independently (Overholser, 1993a). Inductive reasoning (Overholser, 1993b) helps clients generate broad, logical conclusions based on limited experience. Universal definition refers to the process of helping clients learn to see their problems from a broader perspective (Overholser, 1994). Socratic Dialogue emphasises strategies for self guidance and self improvement in clients, pertaining that clients need to be guided, by a professional, through the use of questions rather than being offered the solutions (Overholser, 1999).

Dialogue, Conversation and the Radical Perspective

Relationship psychology emphasises that the individual mind is a silent conversation of voices and feelings that are essentially hidden from other people (Stacey, 2000). Whilst having a relationship and conversation with people, a silent conversation also occurs. These two are difficult to separate as both influences each other and are therefore interchangeable, they form and are formed by each other at the same time.

Stacey (2000) argues that conversations are the key to change, as change can only occur when the pattern of conversation changes and that the behaviour of an individual can only change when its silent conversation changes. This is because it is these silent conversations that organise experiences for the individual. Because silent conversation, and the conversation experienced at a group level are so interchangeable, Stacey states that silent conversation can only change through internalising the conversational change in a group. He states that *“It is only as individuals experience change in social relationships that they can change psychologically and...their relating to others can only change as they change psychologically.”* (Stacey, 2000, p. 365). Dixon (1996) also explores this transformational power that dialogue can have, she states *“Dialogue has the potential to alter the meaning each individual holds and, by doing so, is capable of transforming the group, organization, and society. The relationship between the individual and the collective is reciprocal and is mediated through talk. People are both recipients of tacit assumptions and the creators of them. In this way, dialogue results in the co-creation of meaning”* (p. 24).

Stacey (2000) sees humans as continuously responding to each other and are doing so in a processed way rather than a systemic way. Therefore he proposes that for the application of complex adaptive systems theory in organisations the term ‘complex responsive process’ is more appropriate for the human relating theory that he is describing.

Within the organisation dynamics, Stacey (2000) identifies the importance of narrative themes to human interaction and reality. He states that the narrative links present experience, to past ones and point towards the future evolution of the experience. Some examples of narrative themes are: fantasies, myths, ideology, culture, gossip, rumour, dialogues, debates and presentation. These are both conscious and unconscious themes. Within an organisation, people will be able to talk freely and willingly about some themes and not so freely about others. Change occurs when the conversations are free-flowing and flexible. But organisational reality means that there are often underlying

themes that restrict people talking about all organisational issues, and people generally intuitively know what the restrictions are. Stacey (2000) refers to these as Legitimate and Shadow themes. He states that *“it is not possible to talk freely and openly to just anyone, in any situation, about anything one likes, in any way one chooses, and still survive as a member”* (p. 376). To enable change in organisations, Stacey (2000) believes that Shadow themes need to become Legitimate themes, namely that people need to be able to talk openly about the situation. There are various situations that can help in bringing a theme or certain company ideology out of the shadows. An example Stacey (2000) gives is that of equal opportunity in a company. Within the Shadow themes of an organisation it was a well known fact that the company was not an equal opportunities employer, despite top management claims that it was. This was a company ideology that could not be talked about openly. It took a journalists scathing report of the company as a poor equal opportunity employer, to enable people to have Legitimate conversations on the subject. The conversation was initiated by an outsider to the company and in such a public manner that no individual could be blamed or targeted for initiating or bringing up the subject.

In summary, Stacey (2000) states that organisations exist to *“enable joint action”* and joint action occurs through people’s relationships with each other. People interact and relate to each other through many different themes. These could be ideological themes, emotions, expressions or descriptions. This interaction takes place through conversation of individuals and groups within an organisation. Stacey (2000) argues that conversational life in an organisation cannot develop according to an overall blueprint; control over what people talk about is not possible, therefore conversation is a self organising phenomenon. The radical perspective of the theory of the relationship between the individual and the group is that group and individual interaction is one and the same phenomenon. That they emerge together in the same process and co-create each other (Stacey, 2000).

4.5.3 The Role of Stories

The use of stories as a means of communication is an ancient skill and one which is being rediscovered in organisational life (Snowden, 1999). Effective forms of human-to-human communication are essential in today’s fast changing business environment (Dennhey, 1999). Dennhey (1999) states that stories work because they are easily remembered, are relevant to an employee and evoke emotion and imagery. Kaye (1996) describes story telling as *“narrated or written information that serves to enrich our understanding of an organization and its people”*. He goes on to describe it as *“the process of communicating, revitalising and, if necessary, changing the culture of organizations by redefining individual and corporate values”* (Kaye, 1996). Within an organisational context, story telling is effective for relating a company vision or to paint the big picture, to identify common values and rules, and to tap into and change the company culture (Forster et al., 1999; Snowden 1999; Dennhey, 1999). Forster et al. (1999) state that as organisations function in an increasingly complex and uncertain world, the ability of its leaders to convey this sense of a fast changing and dynamic world is important. He believes this can only be achieved by creating a picture that helps employees discover who they are and where they need to be headed in the future. *“Essentially a vision is a shared view of the future ... It should raise ambitions and be a catalyst for action”* (Forster et al., 1999). Weick (2003) states that in organisations

people tell each other “*stories in order to know more and compete better*” he adds that “*in a crisis, stories help us not to panic*”. He states that it is a method of processing information in an informal way that people are used to and that people make sense through the stories that emerge, about any given situation, and interpret the meaning into some form of action.

4.5.4 *The Role of Metaphor*

The use of metaphors is a fundamental part of our everyday language (Ortony, 1993) and increasingly businesses are becoming aware of their applicability in the workplace, particularly as an effective communication method. This section will outline literature covering the significance of metaphors in everyday life and the value of their application in an organisational context. A metaphor is described by the New Oxford Dictionary as “*a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable: I had fallen through a trap door of depression*” (The New Oxford Dictionary, 2001).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that metaphor has traditionally been thought of as a method for literary embellishment but more recently it has been gaining recognition as being fundamental to people’s understanding of the world. They argue that metaphor is an integral part of our society and language which makes it a form of communicating that is deeply ingrained and understood intuitively by Western cultures.

“In all aspects of life...we define our reality in terms of metaphors and then proceed to act out on the basis of the metaphors. We draw inferences, set goals, make commitments, and execute plans, all on the basis of how we in part structure our experience, consciously and unconsciously, by means of metaphor” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 158).

Some examples of metaphors that are used interchangeably in everyday speech and language are orientational metaphors: happy is up, sad is down (you’re in high spirits, I’m feeling down); more is up, less is down (my income rose last year, his income fell last year); the mind is a machine metaphor (I’m a little rusty today); time is a moving object metaphor (the time for action has arrived) (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

Morgan (1986) has applied the use of metaphors to organisation life. He states that all theories of organisation and management are based on implicit metaphor although they can have both a positive and negative effect. They can successfully highlight certain aspect of organisations but they can also restrict understanding by ignoring others. *“Metaphors create insight. But they also distort. They have strengths. But they also have limitations. In creating ways of seeing, they create ways of not seeing.”* (Morgan, 1986, p. 348). He states that people use metaphors whenever they attempt to understand one element of experience in terms of another. A distinctive metaphor he applies to organisations, and one that he believes is widely used in business, is the notion of organisations as machines. It is common to hear people talk about achieving goals, things operating smoothly, processes being organised and managed mechanistically with the human aspect of organisation life pushed into the background.

Akin and Palmer (2000) state that there are multiple ways in which metaphors can be used, for diagnosis and intervention, for organisational change. An example they use is that of a manager attempting to implement a 'transformational' change programme but struggling as he found it difficult to get people to understand what was required. It was found that the manager was using language that was more associated with 'development' change, asking his staff to build upon past success and further develop ideas. It was suggested that the manager should align his language and metaphors with the type of change he wished to implement, by casting the unfamiliar into the familiar forms for the employees. Another example, used by the authors, of the application of metaphors in an organisation is that of a company wanting to become more customer focused and market orientated. A method used to alter people's perception of their company was 'projective drawing'. In a series of workshops, employees were asked to draw a picture of the company as they saw it currently (examples drawn includes headless horseman, rudderless ship and a tortoise) and afterwards they were asked to imagine what their company would look like if it were more customer focussed and market responsive (projective drawing) and how this would be achieved. This exercise helped focus employees on what needed to be created for future success and communicated what should be left behind and why things needed to change, making the change widely accepted (Akin and Palmer, 2000).

Akin and Palmer (2000) believe that as metaphors are integral to language and communication, it is possible to make sense of strange, novel, and complex situations through metaphors by casting the unfamiliar in terms of something with which we are familiar. They see metaphors as ways in which people can communicate meaning to others. In terms of organisations; metaphors serve as a representation of 'what is going on here'. An example they give is that of a CEO conveying a message to people encouraging them to 'outgun' competition and to 'kick butt' which implies certain expected behaviour and actions from employees. They state each metaphor "*serve in its own way to define for others how they should view the organization's strategy, including the types of actions considered appropriate*" (Akin and Palmer, 2000).

Kotter (1996) states that for communicating a vision the use of metaphor is very powerful. He uses the example of a company trying to alter its image and the final vision was a mere 16 words (as opposed to the previous 39 word version). "*We need to become less like an elephant and more like a customer-friendly Tyrannosaurus rex*" (Kotter, 1996, p91). If people within the organisation had preferred to be seen as an 'elephant' then the vision would not have worked but Kotter (1996) states that at some hard to explain emotional level, most employees liked the idea of being 'king of the dinosaurs'. This form of communication can be very effective, if used appropriately, as it connects deeply and intuitively with people. Bürgi and Roos (2003) also argue that using metaphors can enhance people's understanding of a company's vision and strategy and that metaphoric imagery can be used to represent the reality and complexity of organisational strategy. They conducted a workshop with a telecommunications company. The workshop had nine participants and the aim was to construct a meaningful story of their organisation's identity using LEGO[®] building blocks. They found that dominant visual, metaphorical images were constructed that helped participants "*make sense of their strategic situation*" and that "*the experience of multimodal strategy imagery positively affected their understanding of the*

organization's strategy" (p. 74). Their reference to "*multimodal imagery of strategy*" means the bringing together of verbal/narrative, visual/imagistic and kinaesthetic/haptic nodes to effectively represent an understanding of the organisation and its strategy. The authors conclude that using multimodal nodes to represent organisational reality helped clarify understanding of the organisation's strategy for the workshop participants. Bürgi and Roos (2003) state "*Adding them together, therefore, may allow knowledge to be assembled in a fashion that corresponds better to the complex, layered nature of reality*" and that this may be why the "*participants felt that their understanding of the multifactorial strategic situation of their organization 'crystallized' for them*" (p. 74).

4.5.5 The Role of Graphics

It is now a common assumption that pictures are remembered more easily than words. Increasingly, in education and training circles, more emphasis is being placed on using visual techniques (Caldwell, et al., 1999 – 2000).

The research into learning, memory, and pictures is quite extensive. In the 1960s some key research was conducted by Allan Paivio at the Department of Psychology, in the University of Western Ontario (Paivio, et. al., 1968). In a study conducted in 1968, Paivio, Rogers and Smythe concluded that pictures were more effectively stored or retrieved from long-term memory. It was stated that pictures were also better recalled from short-term memory than words (Paivio, et. al., 1968). According to Paivio et. al (1968) the reason behind this better recall of pictures was due to the fact that a picture can be readily coded and stored in the memory, both in a verbal and image form. Words are coded and stored in verbal form only. He argues that the probability for recall of pictures is higher as the retrieval process has either a verbal or image form to choose from (Paivio, et al., 1968).

This does not mean that words alone cannot trigger a mental image into the memory, but the probability of recall through this route is less (Paivio, 1971). Figure 4-13 describes the process of coding an image or a word in memory.

Paivio's (1971) main emphasis was the 'dual-coding' theory, meaning that pictures are coded twice in the memory, as an image and verbally. The theory assumes that information is mentally represented in a verbal system or a non-verbal system (Paivio, 1971). The basic principle is that presenting information in both visual and verbal form enhances recall. The 'Dual-Coding' Theory attempts to give equal weight to verbal and non-verbal processing. Many experiments reported by Paivio (1971) and others support the importance of imagery in cognitive processing (Kearsley, 1994 – 2001).

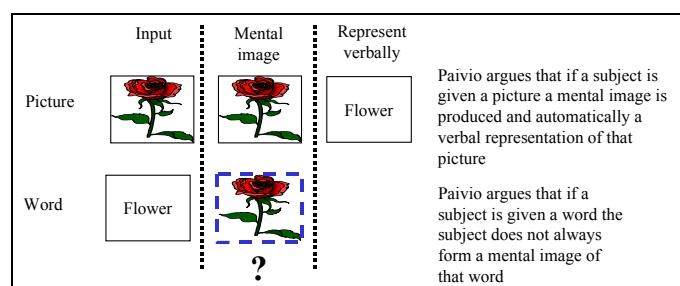


Figure 4-13: The process of coding an image or a word

Haber (1971) has also conducted experiments whose results indicate that verbal memory is different from pictorial memory (Haber, 1971). In a test of visual memory capacity, Haber (1971) and his colleagues at the University of Rochester, showed 2560 photographic slides to subjects. The rate was one slide every 10 seconds, over a number of consecutive days. One hour after seeing the last of the slides the subject was shown 280 pairs of pictures. One member of each pair was a picture previously seen by the subject, the other picture in the pair had not been shown to the subject. When the subject was asked which of the two pairs of pictures he / she had been shown the success rate was between 85% and 95% (Haber, 1971). In another version of the study, the subjects were shown the mirror image of the pictures. The success rate remained the same (Haber, 1971). It indicates that humans have a near photographic memory (Christensen and Tan, 2000). Tierney (2003) states that “*studies show that people retain only 10% of the information they read, 20% of the information they hear, but 50% of the information they see and hear*”. He goes on to add that there are currently three generations of business people who have been raised in the age of television and rich media “*so they intuitively understand the way stories are presented in a visual medium*”.

Visual language is a growing area and illustrates the effectiveness of using graphics in communication. It involves communication not just through the use of graphics but also with the use of text and pictures (Horn, 1998). Horn (2002) states that visual-verbal language can improve communication, he also states that recent research has shown that the integration of verbal and visual elements is better than text. From studies done by Mayer (2001) it was shown that adding visual to words improved learning by 23%.

4.6 Gap in Knowledge

The review presented in this Chapter has shown that in the strategy and change management literature there has been a shift in theoretical perspectives towards a view that business change is not a linear, episodic process but a dynamic and continuous process. The traditional view on management, that was presented, is still very much the dominant perspective in organisation's today but there is an increasing realisation that strategic change processes often fail and that there is a need to try and foster the commitment of the organisational members to alter this statistic. Other approaches to strategic change have been suggested that encourage a fostering of learning and incremental change within the organisations, but managers are still adopting traditional methods of planning, developing and implementing strategies. In a recent survey of the use of strategic tools in companies it was found that the dominant tools are the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis, the PEST (Political, Economic, Social and Technological) analysis and budgeting (Frost, 2003). The study was carried out in Australasian medium-sized enterprises, a total of 783 organisations were surveyed. This indicates that despite a move in theoretical understanding, to concepts of more creative forms of strategy formation, this is not reflected in organisations, which remain very much in the realm of the planning, design and positioning schools of strategy development. One reason for this may be that there are few practical methods or tools developed to help organisations formulate more creative and less narrow, environmentally positioned strategies. There are methods identified

that do fall into this latter category those of Eden and Ackerman (1998) and Huff and Jenkins (2002). The methods developed by these theorists focus on the strategy development element of the process. Huff and Jenkins (2002) deal with the mapping of strategic knowledge and Eden and Ackerman (1998) offer a handbook with a creative outlook to strategy development. Balogun and Jenkins (2003) argue for the need for more active forms of communication within the strategic change process. They state that individuals need to work out the implications of the change for themselves and that organisation strategy communication should be used to trigger debate about where the organisation is going and what it means for the individuals. They believe that such ideas “*have resonance with the importance being placed in the change management literature on the use of ‘symbolic’ communication which involves the use of signs, signals, metaphor, new language ...to get across an understanding of what the future is about*”. They identify that “*effort is needed to create more active forms of communication, such as conversations and dialogues*” (p. 256). The methods investigated in this research perhaps go some way in answering this need, they differ from the more traditional methods identified above, as they are graphical, and use metaphors, stories and dialogue within the process.

Figure 4-14 positions these new methods in relation to the understanding the researcher has established from the literature reviewed in this section.

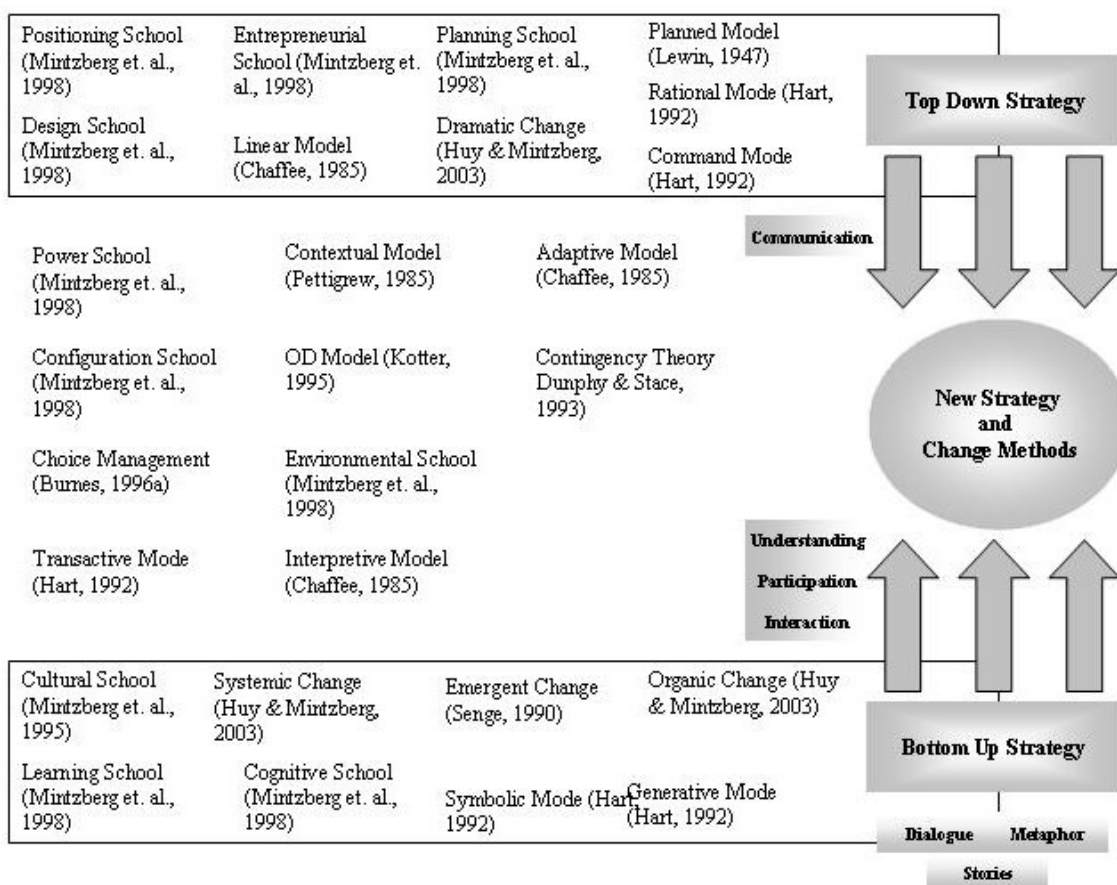


Figure 4-14: An overview of the strategy and change management theories

In the domain of the new perspectives on strategy and change management one thing is clear, the role of communication becomes increasingly important; the emphasis is now turning to involvement, collaboration, participation and social interaction in organisations. The learning schools' perspective on bottom up, emergent strategy (Mintzberg et. al., 1998) and the importance of leveraging the core competencies (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990) of the organisation and the cultural school's view that strategic advantage rests in matching the strategy of an organisation with its internal and external resources (Barney, 1991) implies that the process of strategic change lies with successfully engaging members of the organisation into the process (Gorman, 2003). The phase of the strategic change process where this is possible is at the communication stage, as this is traditionally where leaders have the opportunity to involve and communicate with employees to attempt to enhance commitment and understanding of the strategy. Strategy communication therefore has become an increasingly important area at an organisational and research level. Peng and Litteljohn (2001) state that despite there being an increase in interests in organisational communication and in strategy implementation "*current studies in both fields have paid scant attention to the role of organisational communication in the process of strategy implementation and often fail to address fully issues relating to organisational communication in diverse, dynamic and complex contemporary organisations*" (p. 360).

The novelty of the work is re-iterated here in light of the thoughts emerging from the literature reviewed. From the literature reviewed, a gap has emerged in the theoretical field of strategic change which indicates that there is a need for practical management solutions to help organisations with their strategic change initiative. Past studies show that a high percentage of strategic change efforts fail and it has been argued that one problem is the unsuccessful communication of the vision and strategy to employees.

4.7 Conclusions

The literature review Chapter has presented an extensive but not exhaustive review of the literature concerning strategy and change management theories. This review included the perspectives of traditional strategy and change management theories, new strategy and change management theories as well as more radical perspectives, such as the views of complexity theory in relation to strategy and change management. The theoretical areas of dialogue, stories, metaphors and graphics were also reviewed in an attempt to understand the significance of these areas to the strategic change process, in particular as novel forms of communicating a strategic message.

The following conclusions were drawn from the literature review. Firstly, there has been a shift in the strategy and change management thinking from a traditional to a new view. This has resulted in the development of new models and theory for strategy and change management that express the need and importance for more participative, emergent and involving strategic change processes. Secondly, it was found that within the strategic change process, there was increasing emphasis for organisations to improve their strategy communication process. It was argued that poor strategy communication was one, of a few, causes for strategy implementation failure and that involvement and understanding of the strategy was crucial to its successful implementation. Thirdly that dialogue was a key element of the change process, particularly for individual, behavioural and attitude change, used within group processes and a method to increase

understanding. Fourthly that metaphors, stories and graphics were highly adept methods for communicating information. Finally a view that the graphic facilitative methods can be used as techniques to help develop a strategy, communicate a strategy, and implement a strategy both in the contexts of the traditional and new strategy and change management models. They can help to reinforce the traditional need for top down, directive communication methods but they can also be used for more participative approaches to strategic change.

For the purposes of this research some of the conclusions drawn from the literature review were found to be more relevant than others. The overall review of the strategy and change management literature was necessary to gain a theoretical understanding of the domain and how the methods contributed to the strategic change process; however of particular interest to this research was the strategic communication literature and the current perspectives in that field. It was concluded that the methods being evaluated in this study had particular relevance to the communication element of the strategic change process as it was discovered that metaphors, stories and graphics were deemed as excellent mediums for communication and that dialogue was a driver for understanding the strategic message and thus enhancing a change in behaviour and assumptions.

The three organisational cases presented in the focused study (Chapter 5) examined the use of two of the graphic facilitative methods within an organisational strategy communication process. The cases were all viewed in the context of a communication programme within large, hierarchical organisations using a top down method for communicating the strategy, pertaining to the traditional models of strategy and change management. The fact that the companies used these methods however suggests that despite using a more traditional model for their strategic change programme they were aware of a need for more interactive methods as suggested by the new perspectives of strategy and change management theories, albeit it only for the communication element of the strategic change process.

5 Stage Two – Focused Study

The purpose of the focused study was to investigate further the findings of the preliminary study. The outcome of the preliminary study was a conceptual model developed through the analysis of initial collected data and reviewed literature. The conceptual model was taken forward into a validation phase for the purposes of refinement and theory generation.

5.1 Introduction

To direct the focused study the researcher specified areas for further investigation based on the themes that had emerged from the preliminary study and the conceptual model, these were:

- The use of graphics and metaphors in business communication methods.
- The importance of dialogue and stories within the process of change.
- The importance of effective communication in a strategic change process.
- The existing theory of strategy and change management and how the methods are applicable.
- The wider context of organisational complexity theory and how the current turbulent business environment heightens the relevance if the methods.

These areas were investigated using a case study strategy through multiple methods of data collection.

5.2 Company Selection

It was decided to narrow the scope of the focused study to two of the four methods that were explored in the preliminary study. It was decided that for the validation of the conceptual model and theory building phase the methods of RootLearning and The

Grove Consultants International would be used. The decision was based on several factors:

- The relevant literature to the study was focused on high level strategic change in companies. The two chosen methods dealt with the implementation of strategic change programmes in organisations, in particular the methods of RootLearning, whereas the other two methods focused more on change at a group or departmental level in the organisation. This in itself is an interesting phenomenon but for the purpose of this stage of the research it was necessary to gather information that would contribute to the validation of the conceptual model and hypotheses.
- As the two methods chosen are the largest of the four facilitating companies it meant that there was a wider pool of data collection sites available for access. It was believed that enough information could be gathered from the users of these methods to validate the conceptual model and hypotheses.

5.3 Research Strategy

The research strategy chosen for the focused study was a case study approach. This encompassed the application of multiple methods of data gathering in the investigation of the conceptual model. For the focused study, it was possible to gather information in one client company that used the Grove methods and two client companies that used the RootLearning methods. The data collected remained qualitative in nature and involved primarily the use of interviews and also observation methods. Additional focused, expert interviews were carried out with the aim of gaining feedback on the conceptual model for validation purposes.

5.4 Focused Study Data Collection

As outlined in Chapter 2, the data collection for the focused study involved multiple methods with the aim of validating the conceptual model. The investigation was split into two, focussing on gathering data on the two graphic methods. The first investigation was focused around gathering data on the RootLearning method and involved collection of interview data, company documentation and survey data. The second investigation was conducted on the Grove methods and involved gathering interview data, workshop observation and company documentation. In the final stages of data collection, two semi structured interviews were conducted with experts in the fields of graphic facilitation and strategy and change.

5.4.1 Case I – Investigation of RootLearning Method

For the investigation of the method of RootLearning two company implementations were looked at using several data collection methods.

Company A

Implementation 1

The first company studied, who had used the RootLearning methods, was a large UK high street retailer. There were two implementation projects involved within the

company. The first was an implementation of a new credit card and the second a company wide new strategy implementation.

Founded in 1884, company A is one of the UK's leading retailers of clothing, foods, home-ware and financial services, serving 10 million customers a week in over 340 UK stores. The Company also trades in 30 countries worldwide and has a Group turnover in excess of £8 billion.

The introduction of a new credit card for the company was a large project and involved the roll out of a new strategy, in the form of a RootMap visual, to over 1,500 employees in the financial department. The development of the RootMap, from strategy articulation to a finalised RootMap visual, took three months. The visual took on the form of a mountain which was in line with previous metaphors used within the department for strategic targets. The information contained in the RootMap was extensive, covering the history of the finance department from its conception in 1985 to present day and some of the key successes, especially with the store charge card. The aim was to help employees understand the history of the department, focussing on past products, financial performance and highlights and successes, this was done through the use of multiple choice questions which helped to stimulate discussion and interest in the information. The RootMap was also used to inform employees about their current business environment (in relation to financial services) with the aim of helping them understand why there was a need for a new credit card and why the business could no longer depend solely on the past successes of the other cards. It was felt that by looking at the business' financial performance, and looking at the card trend in the industry, the managers could get people to discuss and start to come up with an understanding as to why there was a need to change. It was also felt that there was a need to bring in some competitor understanding because the business felt that they only ever looked at themselves and felt that it was important for employees to get a wider perspective of the industry they competed in and the products they offered compared to other financial providers.

The roll out of the strategic vision took two days in October 2002, and was a massive operation with approximately 150 people going through the RootMap at any one stage on large big circular tables in the business large atrium room. The tables contained, on average, 8 participants and one facilitator. An effort was made to have mixed tables, with participants from different departments and from different social groups.

Implementation 2

The second implementation was company wide and involved the development of a new RootMap visual. The RootMap was used to communicate an already developed strategy and vision for the organisation and formed a part of the new strategic change programme that the organisation had been working towards. The visual took the form of a race track metaphor with all the different departments of the organisation pulling together in one race.

The company had been going through extensive changes since 1999, spurred by a huge decline in sales and profitability; it had seen its profit drop from approximately a billion pounds to about 120 million pounds in four months. The first phases of the change

involved a ‘fighting back’ campaign and what is described as a purely tactical response to the changes that were taking place in the business environment. The strategy was survival and involved closing down and selling off all parts of the business that did not make money and a focus on all the parts where there was a future to be made; i.e. the clothing industry and the foods industry. Out of that the organisation built on the next phase of change, and it was very much based on recovery and at the same time building a future. It was felt that there was a need to develop a strategic response for future growth and expansion.

What also noticeably changed during this period was the way in which the senior management communicated to organisation members. Through the period of radical change (1999 – 2001) there was a feeling of informing them, as there was not a lot of time for communication, it was all action and fire fighting. The decisions needed to be taken with some urgency, so the whole culture was much more about informing organisation members of what was going on. By the time the feeling of recovery had started to occur there was a desire by senior management to bring in some degree of involvement. It was felt that the organisation had survived through total loyalty and dedication of the employees so there was a feeling that for the new strategy of recovery and growth everybody should be involved. This change in view was also brought about by the change in senior management in the organisation. The board of directors of the organisation were all replaced, so the whole personality changed. The new chairman identified, from the beginning, that the survival of the organisation was down to the employees and that in the future there would be a culture of involvement within the organisation. In the past the company had had a very strong hierarchical culture, dominated by the top and especially by the chairman of the organisation. The business traditionally responded to what the chairman wanted and this compliant culture stemmed from the formation of the organisation as a hierarchical, family run business. In the past this form of leadership worked because, since its inception, the organisation had undergone periods of huge growth and therefore employees had no need to feel threatened. In return for compliance, employees were rewarded with security, paternalism, closeness, and warmth.

The changes, internal and external to the organisation, led to the association with RootLearning as a method to involve people in the story of the organisations future growth strategy. The senior management took the view that it was a necessity to involve and interact with people, as they felt that they played a key role in the business’ future and that if the time was not taken to involve these then the organisation would not be as productive as it could be and that by not involving people there was a feeling that it could cause some degree of damage to the pace of the development of the business.

The organisation decided to tell a much more interactive story and start to give tools to the individuals. Firstly through a cube that had the vision, mission and values of the company written on it and then through the RootLearning Map. The information on the RootMap was extensive and included the story of the past; the strengths of the past; what happened in the business performance; the changes internally and externally that happened; and followed the themes, ‘fighting back’, ‘fighting back to win’, ‘securing a recovery’, and the future vision of ‘getting fit for growth’. At the end of that four year period the organisation ended up with a set of lessons, which are depicted on the RootMap, and those are lessons that came out of the past which are communicated with

the intention that the organisation never make the same errors again. The RootMap also outlines the four themes for the next twelve months and what is happening in the business and competitor environment.

The implementation of the RootMap strategic vision took place from March to July 2003 and was rolled out to 65,000 employees. It was all done in tables of 10, which equated to 6,500 sessions with the RootMap.

Interviews

For the data collection of RootLearning's implementation in company A, two semi structured interviews were conducted. One interview was two hours long and the other one an hour long. The questions used in the interview were semi-structured and related to the themes identified in the preliminary study, some example questions are outlined in Figure 5-1. The interviews also involved interactive sessions with the RootMap visual that had been developed for the company.

1. What did you think about the use of graphics to represent the information?
2. What impact do you think it has?
3. Are there a lot of metaphors embedded in the RootMap?
4. Do you think this helped? If so why? If so what do you think using metaphors adds to the process?
5. Did you find that people were using a lot of stories? Do you think this helped? If so why? If so what do you think using stories adds to the process?
6. Were there instances that you thought you knew about and then it turned out that it was different to what you thought you knew?
7. If so how did you learn about this? Was it through the discussion that took place with other group members?

Figure 5-1: Sample of questions used in company A interviews

Survey

The results from a company survey were provided to the researcher and used as part of the data collection for the focused study. The survey was carried out after the RootMap visual was implemented in the financial department of the organisation and focused on the impact the RootMap had had on organisational members in terms of understanding and clarification of the strategic vision and change programme of the organisation. The survey results obtained are taken from 201 company employees, the questions asked in the survey are outlined in Figure 5-2.

- How much has today's discussion session enhanced your understanding of:**
- Historical Business Performance?
 - How the business is going forward?
 - Our vision, mission and Values?
 - Our part in the business going forward?
 - Our themes for the year?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about this session**
- Participating in this session has helped me feel more confident about the direction of the business.
 - Participating in the session has helped me feel more energised and excited about the direction of the business.
 - The RootMap session was effective and engaging in representing information.
 - I would recommend these sessions to my colleagues.
 - The session generated good discussion that helped everyone understand and learn better.

Figure 5-2: Company A survey questions

Company B

An interview was conducted with a member of a global information company, which provides information for professionals in the financial services, media and corporate markets, 90% of its revenue is derived from its financial services business. Company B was founded in the UK in 1851 and has over 16,000 staff in 220 cities in 94 countries and in 2002 had revenue of £3.6 billion. The interviewee was in charge of the implementation of the RootMap visual to UK and Ireland and eventually helped in the global implementation project.

The implementation of a new strategy was needed as company B felt that they needed to organise themselves differently to better match their clients business. This meant reorganising to match client's business sectors, gaining a deeper understanding of clients' business requirements and forging better relationships and increasing the ability to better serve client needs.

Within the external business environment the company had seen diminishing sales, loss of revenue and shrinking demand for existing products, and also, diminishing customer loyalty, as clients now had ability to switch to new or other players in the market with better matched products to their specific needs. The significant changes that had affected company B, in the business environment that they had previously dominated, were listed as deregulation, new competition, new markets, and new technology.

Internally there was a need for change as company B's product offerings were broad, operating across the client's businesses rather than focused on a sector specific approach by requirements. Therefore the company lacked depth of knowledge to understand specific client needs. Also it was found that the take up on the existing products was low due to higher than acceptable levels of technical deficiencies and slow time to market. This had resulted in low employee morale and specifically problems because of internal frustration with product delivery - delivering what the customer wants and when it needs it; lack of confidence in management; employees said they could do more but were held down by over complicated process and bureaucracy.

More specifically it was found that company B had failed to understand the impact of providing poor customer service, their products and services were too inwardly focused and not sufficiently customer-centric, the company had been slow to embrace new technology and the impact of the Internet, internal business processes, it was found that Research and Development were slow to react, adapt and deliver and the product range offered too many heavy weight products (too much functionality) which historically customers purchased for only a small part of its entire functionality, but had no other alternative – increased competition changed the landscape.

The RootMap was developed to communicate the organisational change that was being implemented worldwide in the organisation. The aim was to communicate what the change was and how the organisation intended to get there. The map also introduced the new strategic objectives and its strategic approach and all of the little initiatives that the organisation was implementing, so that employees could understand the connections. It was felt that there was a real need to understand why the change had to occur as there was real resistance to the fact that the organisation was implementing a change programme. It was felt that by informing individuals about the competition in the market and why there was a need to upset the status quo and what the organisation intended to do about it would weaken the resistance to the change programme and enable a coherent strategy and vision to be communicated to aid the change programme.

The first and second maps were rolled out together in one session in March 2002 through to August 2002 to 18000 employees worldwide. The implementation was planned to run as a parallel roll out by country/region, but in reality it was rolled out at different times. Asia Pacific were first on the uptake and sent back very positive messages, then the UK, and Continental Europe, followed by Americas. Each country (or region for example Asia with some of the smaller countries) took ownership of the roll out in their specific areas. Facilitators were trained in regional training sessions prior to roll out – a central regional coordinator planned the roll out with guidance – in countries with large amounts of staff multiple sessions were held over a period of up to 4 weeks (in order to balance the facilitators work loads).

The same interview questions that were used for company A were used for the client interview in company B.

Practitioner Interviews

Two practitioner interviews were conducted with RootLearning employees. The aim was to collect insightful data of several RootMap project implementations that the interviewees had managed. The questions focused on experience that the interviewees had had in large scale change programmes and the impact of graphics, metaphors and dialogue within that process. The interviews lasted, in total, two and a half hours. Figure 5-3 outlines a sampling of the questions used within the interview.

1. What changes have you seen in the business environment in the last three years?
2. How has it affected your products / toolkit?
3. Have you seen change programmes that have failed?
4. Why do you think they failed?
5. Have you ever seen individuals or groups change their behaviour as a result of the RootLearning process? Any examples?
6. How much is change directed rather than emergent?
7. Do you believe that top down is the best way? Only way? What other forms of strategic direction could an organisation have?

Figure 5-3: Questions for RootLearning practitioners

5.4.2 Case II – Investigation of Grove Method

For the investigation of the Grove methods, a workshop process that used the Grove tools was observed and several interviews were conducted with the participants of the workshop, all in the same company.

Company C

Company C is a commercial vehicle manufacturing company based in the UK and is a sister company of a larger UK vehicle manufacturing company, one of the longest established motor manufacturers in the world, both of which are owned by a parent company, one of the world's largest corporations. Company C produces commercial vehicles (vans) and although commercial vehicles had been produced at the same site as the motor manufacturing company since 1937 as part of the same company, in 1982 there was a split from the parent company and the commercial vehicle business became an autonomous operation. By 1987 increased competition and falling market share led to the decision that van production would continue under a separate new company, financially independent from the sister company and in joint venture with a Japanese vehicle manufacture, to operate as a separate sister company to the larger UK car manufacturer but still within the fold of the parent company. Thus in 1987, company C was established.

During the 1990's the company saw great changes in management practices, resulting in unsettlement and uncertainty. The change of ownership in 1987 and partnership with a Japanese manufacturer saw an influx of Japanese style management practices into the company. This style was adopted and for a large proportion of the late 1980s and early 1990s, company C enjoyed the flat structure and empowerment principles of the Japanese management style. In the mid 1990s shareholder ownership of the company skewed towards the parent company and American / European hierarchical practices were re-introduced and slowly replaced the Japanese style practices. This change was also re-enforced by a gradual influx of employees from the sister company, a lot of whom took up management positions within company C, thus re-enforcing the hierarchical practices adopted by their company. Historically relations with the neighbouring sister manufacturer had been strained and the split into a separate identity in 1987 re-enforced the feeling within company C that they could not rely on their sister company for financial support and that their future was as a separate business.

The company operates in a turbulent and unpredictable environment and since 1987 has fought to keep production levels of commercial vehicles. In 1999 a 12 year order

agreement, with a competitor car manufacturer, was signed to produce their vans at the site. A reversed decision to move van production, for the parent company, from company C's site to another UK site meant that company C has seen a stabilisation and an increase in production and employment levels. The company currently employs 2,700 people, twice as many since its conception in 1987. In 2000 a decision was made by the parent company to cease car manufacturing at the neighbouring sister site and in 2002 production ceased and company C took an influx of 1,000 new employs from the neighbouring site. This has proved a difficult transition for both sets of employees as historically the two companies' have very different management practices and have traditionally viewed each other with quiet enmity.

The reason for the workshop was to graphically record the history of company C, to capture the changes that have taken place within the company for public display, for all employees. It was felt that with the mixture now (from various other company's and cultures) in the staff group, the management levels and the shop floor levels it was important, especially for those who have been brought in from outside, to give them a description of the company that they work for and its history. It was hoped that this would enable the coming together of all the different employees so that they would recognise that they are now a team that work for company C, who are in the big fold of the parent company and in Europe. It was felt this would give them an identity, at all levels of the organisation, and that it would also offer an understanding of how the company was formed and what the beliefs and philosophies were at that time, which would help share the enthusiasm and pride that is felt from the original company C employees. There is an assumption that the employees from the sister company do not understand where company C has come from and that it has often been seen as the 'poor relation' to the larger car manufacturer. This perception remains and it was felt that it would be good to get the two groups together to try and create some ownership between the two of them, and so that the new members could recognise that they are part of company C now, and to perhaps change the view of a separate identity and the perception of rivalry that still remains between the workforce.

Workshop Observation

As part of a supportive and supplementary data collection technique (Robson, 1993) for the investigation of the Grove method, a workshop was observed. The workshop was part of an organisation wide initiative by company C to help people understand the changes that had taken place within the company and to help build relations between a mixed and diversified workforce. The strategy and vision of the company was also recorded on the chart for communication purposes and for the clarification of future direction for all employees.

The workshop took place in May 2003 and lasted one full day. The purpose of the workshop was to collect data regarding the history of company C and the outcome was to be a draft graphically recorded template of the history and key facts of company C. The draft was then taken away and drawn professionally and laminated as a large wall graphic. Two graphic templates were produced for company C for the purposes of communicating the history to all employees. The templates were mounted on walls within the two main entrances to the manufacturing site.

The observation was mainly focused on the process that took place within the workshop, the interactions of the participants and to gain insight into the impact that the method had on the group and the outcome. There were twenty five company C participants, one graphic recorder, one facilitator and one observer present in the workshop. Figure 5-4 outlines the room layout for the workshop.

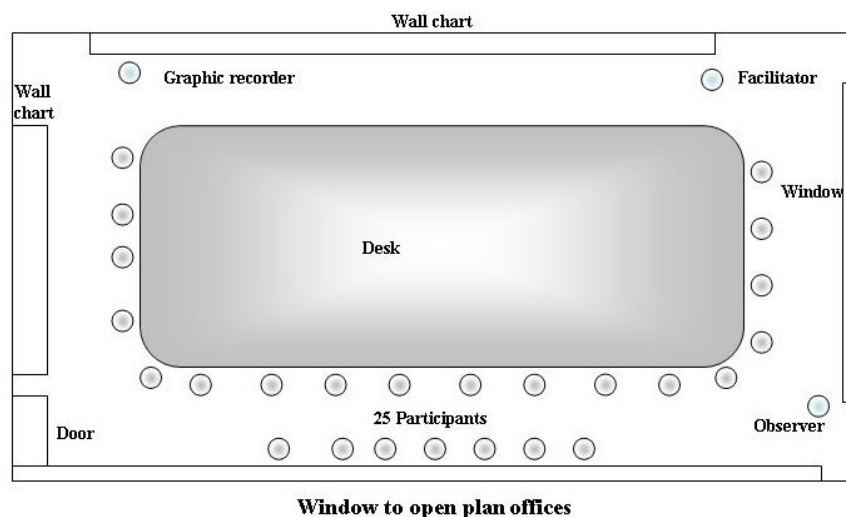


Figure 5-4: Layout of workshop room

The data was collected using structured data collection sheets and a list of themes to observe for. Extensive preparation for the workshop was conducted beforehand based on observation techniques outlined in Patton (1990).

Table 5-1 outlines an extract from the notes taken from the workshop observation. Column one is used to describe the activity that takes place within the observation. This is a very descriptive and factual account of what is taking place and is not used for interpreting what is going on. Column two is where the researcher is allowed to add personal interpretations to the actions being observed and described in column one. Finally the third column allows the researcher to draw conclusions about the action and interpretation (Patton, 1990).

Table 5-1: Extract from workshop observation

Descriptive Observation of activity	Personal interpretations	What it means (Hypothesis)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brian Peck has written his own short history on a piece of paper, he says he wrote it the night before. He gets up from his seat and goes to the front of the room and relates his personal story of how he started in Company C. He reads from his notes which are written in anecdotal fashion. The story is funny and descriptive. Written in first person. ▪ He gets some laughs from the other participants. Some ignore him and read the magazines that they are given. ▪ At the end the audience applauds him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This person feels very strongly about the company. His relating the story of how he started at Company C is very nostalgic. He talks of how his boss of the time told him he would not last two weeks. ▪ Some people seem embarrassed by the story and Brian's action of standing there and talking. They ignore him by doing something else. Others laugh. As the story goes on more people listen and laugh and become more comfortable with it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People enjoy telling a story. Feeling the need to share their personal stories with the group. They were asked to prepare or think about the history of Company C and Brian has put great effort into thinking about the history but relates it in very personal ways and things that have happened to him during the course of 25 years. It results in a reaction from the group either to ignore or to listen. People not comfortable with such a personal and forthcoming action.

The themes that guided the observation were prepared beforehand and based on the outcomes of the preliminary study and the conceptual model. These are outlined in Figure 5-5.

<p>Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative attitude to activity. ▪ A change in negative attitude. ▪ Groups / sub groups. ▪ Who makes the decisions? <p>Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Power structure – does it change through the process? ▪ Conflict – does it change through the process? ▪ Who does all the talking – does this even out? ▪ All contributing? ▪ Kinship? ▪ Note change in behaviour and patterns of activity progressing throughout the day. <p>Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What people think of the methods? ▪ Metaphors that are used. Try and understand why they are using them. ▪ Stories that arise. Do they help? What do they contribute? ▪ How much discussion is going on? Does it impact behaviour / attitude change? ▪ Key thing to observe ▪ A change in behaviour or attitude negative to positive, not understanding to understanding, conflict to peace, look for this change pattern.
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Figure 5-5: Observational themes and actions

Interviews

Four semi structure interviews were conducted two weeks after the workshop. The purpose of the interviews was to supplement the data already gathered during the

observation session. The questions focused on the Grove methods used by the facilitators, and the process that took place. A sample of the questions used in the interview is outlined in **Figure 5-6**.

1. If you could put a value out of ten on the importance (to the outcome) of the group discussion that took place what would you give it?
2. If you could put a value out of ten on the importance (to the outcome) of the graphic recording what would you give it?
3. If you could put a value out of ten on the importance of having a facilitator (to the outcome) how would you rate it?
4. If you could put a value out of ten on the importance of having a recorder (to the outcome) how would you rate it?

Figure 5-6: Sample of questions used in company C interviews

Practitioner Interview

One interview with a graphic recorder and facilitator was conducted. The purpose of which was to gain insight into his use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue as a process for organisational change projects. The practitioner has worked in the graphic recording business for 10 years and worked on many change projects the questions used for the interview were focused on his experience with using the methods in organisational scenarios and particularly his insights into the use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue within this domain.

1. Can you describe what you do? The range of things you do?
2. For what business purpose / activities?
3. Can you explain a little bit about the graphic tools that you use?
 - In what context do you use the graphic tools? (Strategy, business planning, change projects, communication).
 - How and why did you start using these tools?
4. How is this approach different from more traditional change programmes?

Figure 5-7: Questions for Grove practitioners

5.4.3 Expert Interviews

Two interviews were conducted with the aim of gaining feedback on the research and added insight into the area of graphic facilitation and strategic change management.

Interview 1

The first interviewed explored the experiences and expertise of a business professional whose focus was the implementation of strategic change projects within organisations. He started his career in a global pharmaceutical company, in the financial department and was involved with the implementation of several information technology projects within the organisation. He then moved on to working in the financial sector for a large UK financial provider in an internal consultancy role. Following an MBA qualification he went to work for a large global consultancy group and worked primarily on major transformation projects and in particular with the leaders of the organisations. Four

years ago he set up his own consultancy business. **Figure 5-8** outlines some questions used in the interview.

1. Can you describe a traditional change management strategy implementation process that you were involved in? Steps/stages.
2. Was it successful, why?
3. What do you think makes a successful organisational change project?
4. What are the challenges a strategic change programme faces?
5. How important do you think it is to communicate the change strategy to all employees?
6. In your opinion, were the change programmes you were involved with communicated effectively to the company employees?

Figure 5-8: Sample of questions used in expert interview 1

Interview 2

The second expert interview was conducted with a graphic facilitator who had used the Grove methods extensively in her business. She had first started using the methods when she worked in a large snack food, pet care and food company known globally for its leading brands in the industries. The organisation had been using the methods since the early 90s for its strategic visioning and communication process. She left the company four years ago and along with a colleague set up a business specialising in the facilitation of business workshops using the Grove methods as part of the workshop process. **Figure 5-9** outlines some questions used in the interview.

1. From your understanding of the research concept what do you think of its relevance and validity in a business context?
2. Do you think that by combing the elements of metaphors, stories and graphics into one method, organisations can improve their overall strategic change process?
3. Do you think there has been a change in the business environment in the last 10 years? Explain your views.

Figure 5-9: Sample of questions used in expert interview 2

5.5 Data Analysis and Findings

The interview data and the workshop data was gathered and then analysed using the same techniques used in stage one of the research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Yin, 1994 and Miles and Huberman, 1994).

5.5.1 Interviews

The interviews developed for the focused study were again semi-structured but used more specific questions based on the preliminary study findings. Ten semi structured interviews were conducted with both practitioners and users of the tool and two semi-structured expert interviews were conducted. In total fifteen hours of interview data were recorded and transcribed fully (Table 5-2).

Table 5-2: Interview information

Interview type	Number of interviews	Hours of interview	Transcribed pages
User Interviews	7	8.5	143
Practitioner Interviews	3	3	32
Expert Interviews	2	3.5	56

Using the analysing technique the themes, outlined in the conceptual model, were gathered and organised into tabular formats, an example of which is shown in Table 5-3. Appendix IV outlines a full table of coded interview data from the focused study interviews.

Table 5-3: Extract from interview data: coded, themed and tabularised

CODE	THEME	TEXT FROM INTERVIEWS
23.78	<i>Metaphor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How important is the use of metaphor to the success of the methods and process? Out of 10. ▪ It's a mountain. The journey up the mountain – K2. That was very key for us that's probably 10 actually. Because we've...all we'd been talking about all year was this K2 mountain. If we'd have introduced a race track at the time, they'd have probably thought what the hell are they doing?
23.64	<i>Change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Because of the change we were going through. It was actually trying to get people to understand that full change scenario really. It was just so key to us to get people thinking differently
23.67	<i>Change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We hadn't seen anything that we felt would be as engaging as this. And we had a new CEO, we were going through a whole period of change. It was almost as though we needed something, something new to set us off on a different route and this did it

Once the interviews were analysed, coded and tabularised it was possible to further analyse the data by cross comparison of themes for all the interviews. Table 6-2 shows the results of the analysis of the interview data. The researcher has drawn out the dominant themes within the data, which are shown in the first column. The themes are predominantly those identified in stage one of the research as important to the study. This is because the questions developed for the focused study were based on exploring, in more detail, these emergent themes. What have also emerged, as a result of the focused data collection, are other themes which will be discussed in more detail below. The table below represents the total amount of times, from each interview, the theme was discussed. The top column shows the interview code, explaining whether it was a user interview (U), a practitioner interview (P) or an expert interview (EI).

Table 5-4: Analysis of interview data

Interviewee	14U	15P	16P	17U	18U	19EI	2021	22U	23U	24U	25EI
Themes	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	FS	UFS	FS	FS	FS	FS
Graphics	15	5	0	3	1	0	9	5	7	0	13
Metaphor	6	13	1	2	1	0	4	0	5	1	4
Story	12	2	0	2	2	0	0	3	2	12	5
Dialogue	3	6	1	10	2	4	2	2	8	4	6
Change	9	21	4	14	3	5	11	1	12	1	16
Strategy	0	16	7	9	0	9	3	0	22	11	9
Vision	1	0	0	0	0	6	9	0	1	3	1
Tools / methods	0	1	2	9	1	0	4	3	13	4	4
Business Environment	1	3	2	3	2	1	2	0	3	4	1
Shadow Themes	3	8	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Understanding	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
People	0	4	4	4	2	0	0	6	12	9	9
Holistic	1	8	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Engaging	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2

5.5.2 Survey

The data from the survey are based on feedback from employees of company A which was carried out in the weeks following the RootMap visual sessions. The data is based on the responses of 201 participants.

The first survey focused on gaining feedback concerning the level of understanding that the participant's felt they had following the RootMap session. The areas in which the survey focused on was the understanding of; the organisations past business performance, the future strategy of the organisation, the vision mission and values of the organisation and the strategic themes that the organisation has planned for the year. The results of this survey are shown in Figure 5-10.

How much has today's discussion session enhanced your understanding of:

	<i>An exceptional amount</i>	<i>A good deal</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not very much</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Historical Business Performance?	10.4%	61.7%	22.9%	4.5%	0.5%
How the business is going forward?	40.8%	55.2%	3.5%	0.5%	0.0%
Our Vision, Mission and Values?	39.8%	53.7%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Our part in the business going forward?	34.3%	54.7%	8.5%	1.5%	1.0%
Our themes for the year?	42.8%	51.2%	5.5%	0.5%	0.0%

Figure 5-10: Result of survey A - RootMap session conducted in company A

The survey shows that a high percentage of participants responded favourably to the RootLearning methods. As can be seen, 72.1% of the respondents felt that they had

enhanced their understanding of historical business performance an exceptional amount or a good deal, and 96% had a better understanding of how the business was going forward. 93.5% of respondents felt that their understanding of the organisations vision, mission and values had been improved and 89% felt that they now had a better understanding of their part in the business going forward. Finally 94% of participants said that they had an enhanced understanding of the organisations' themes for the year. Overall it can be concluded that there was a largely positive response to all questions and that participant's had felt that their understanding had been increased an exceptional amount or a good deal.

The second survey (survey B) focused on gaining more general feedback of the RootMap process and the effect it has had on the individuals perceptions of the organisation. The feedback looked for was concerned with the confidence individuals now felt about the future direction the organisation was taking, whether people felt more motivated by the sessions, how effective the RootMap was at representing information, whether the participants would recommend the session to colleagues, and how the discussions helped enhance understanding and learning. The results of the survey are shown in Figure 5-11.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about this session.

	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Tend to agree</i>	<i>Hard to decide</i>	<i>Tend to disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
Participating in this session has helped me feel more confident about the direction of the business.	53.2%	40.3%	6.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Participating in the session has helped me feel more energised and excited about the direction of the business.	46.3%	43.3%	8.5%	1.5%	0.5%
The RootMap session was effective and engaging in representing information.	52.7%	40.3%	4.5%	2.5%	0.0%
I would recommend these sessions to my colleagues.	50.7%	40.8%	5.5%	2.5%	0.5%
The session generated good discussion that helped everyone understand and learn better.	48.8%	44.3%	4.5%	2.0%	0.5%

Figure 5-11: Result of survey B - RootMap session conducted in company A

Again the results of the survey showed a predominantly positive response from respondents to the RootLearning methods. 93.5% agreed that participating in the session had helped them feel more confident about the direction of the business and 88.6% of respondents felt that it had helped them feel more energised and excited about the direction of the business. 93% of respondents agreed that the session had been effective in engaging and representing information and 91.5% said they would recommend the session to their colleagues. Finally 93.1% of participants agreed that the session had generated good discussion that had helped everyone understand and learn better.

5.5.3 Workshop Observation

The data collected during the observation of the Grove workshop supplemented the data gathered in the interviews conducted in company C. The workshop observation provided rich, descriptive data that helped explore further the themes generated from stage one of the research. The graphical process was observed using a structured approach for data collection based on Patton (1990) and Robson's (1993) structuring techniques for observational purposes. The data was analysed, coded and tabularised using the same approach as the interview data analysis. The results of the data analysis are shown in Table 5-5. The themes identified from the preliminary study and the stage two interviews are shown in column one along with additional themes that emerged from the observation. The amount of times the themes were referred to in the observation data is shown in the second column.

Table 5-5: Analysis of workshop observation data

Themes	Workshop Observation
Graphics	3
Metaphor	6
Story	7
Dialogue	15
Change	4
Strategy	0
Vision	0
Tools / methods	2
Business Environment	0
Shadow Themes	0
Understanding	1
People	20
Holistic	2
Engaging	0
Facilitator	2
Process	3

5.6 Discussion of Focused Study Method

In this section, the author will discuss, with retrospect, the research approach and methods adopted in the focused study. This will focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the approach, things that could have been done differently and the level of influence the researcher had on the approach.

5.6.1 Design

The design of the research strategy was slightly more difficult than designing the preliminary study. This was due to the fact that the researcher would no longer be using grounded theory as the research approach. It was then decided that the most appropriate strategy to take was a case study approach as there was a focussing on two particular methods and the availability of multiple sources of data from three separate organisations. At this stage there was also a focussing of concepts determined by the preliminary study which guided the research to collect data on specific themes and

concepts. The focus was to gather more data for validation of the conceptual model but the researcher did not want to curtail the exploratory nature of the research as there remained a scope for more data to emerge for the benefit of theory building and conceptual development. Despite the focussing of research scope, the research remained exploratory and inductive for the purposes of developing hypotheses and theories.

5.6.2 Access and Time

Access was again a slight problem for the researcher as some organisations contacted did not respond positively to research being undertaken. This could be down to time issues or confidentiality issues. However other organisations reacted positively to being part of the research and allowed access to employees and organisational meetings.

The largest challenge faced by the researcher in the focused study was not gaining access to client companies but the organisation of time with client companies and practitioners. The time and effort that was spent in stage one of the research, on building relationships with the practitioner companies, ensured that by stage two of the research, access to their client companies was easier. Unfortunately different business pressures for the practitioner and client companies meant that there was often a re-scheduling of meetings or a long delay in response to the researcher's enquiries. The researcher found that arranging convenient times for interviews with industrial clients was also difficult. There were also unforeseen delays in the arrangement of the workshop schedule. Originally the workshop was planned for February 2003 but numerous re-schedules meant that the workshop did not take place until June 2003. This left very little time for follow up interviews with the participants of the workshop. The researcher had scheduled the end of data collection phase for May 31st, 2003 but because of these delays she had to prolong the schedule to July 31st, 2003 where a final cut off point for further interviews was enforced.

Unforeseen issues were included in the schedule but in this case not to the extent that actually occurred. It is difficult to predict such problems, but in retrospect it would be wise to schedule in a larger buffer for data collection by, as in this instance, beginning it earlier than scheduled. The research could also have communicated more forcefully, to the interview respondents, the urgency of the time schedule but this had the added risk of harming the relations with the practitioner and client company contacts.

5.6.3 Use of Interviews

The primary source of data was again from the interviews conducted with users of the graphic methods. In contrast to the preliminary study, the interviews were less exploratory and more structured. New questions were developed based on the themes that had emerged from stage one and from the literature that was being reviewed. The interviews did remain semi structured in definition as the researcher did allow for some exploratory discussion to enable the collection of rich and informative data.

If there had been more time, the researcher would have liked to have conducted more interviews in both cases, although it is felt that the data collected was extensive and of good quality. It had been observed that data saturation was occurring as the latter

interview candidates started to re-iterate similar information to earlier interview candidates. It is therefore concluded that further interviewing was not required to complete the data set.

5.6.4 Workshop Observation

The workshop observation offered a unique opportunity for the researcher to observe the methods used in real time, with a large client company and for an important and interesting company initiative. The data collected was very rich and descriptive and has been used as supplementary findings to the interview data collected at the same site. The researcher did encounter many challenges with the workshop observation. Firstly there was the issue of lack of experience, on the part of the researcher, in observational situations. However it was not the first observational role undertaken as in the background investigation and stage one of the research several workshops had been observed by the researcher. To add to this experience the researcher reviewed techniques and approaches published in the literature to aid observational data collection (Robson, 1993 and Patton, 1990).

Another challenge faced by the researcher was that the observation took place over one day and it was difficult to gather a great deal of information over such a short period of time. This was because the observer had no time to sensitise herself to the environment and the people under observation. Traditionally social observation techniques are used over a long period of time. There were also a lot of people to observe all at once and it was therefore difficult to capture all that was occurring. This method is an effective way of capturing data over a long period of time, in a given situation, observing a given phenomena but it is difficult to sensitise oneself to an environment in one day.

An advantage of the method overall is that it allowed for some capturing of relevant data and it also enabled the researcher to build up relationships with the workshop participants. This made the post workshop interviews easier as the candidates were familiar with the researcher and she became more familiar with the organisation and its history. It is felt that this made the interviewees more open and relaxed in the interview phase which was a distinct advantage as the candidates were trusting, open and very willing to share information and opinions with the researcher.

5.6.5 Survey

A great advantage to the focused study findings was the survey results obtained by the researcher from company A. This added great weight to the data already collected for the RootLearning methods. It enabled the researcher to evaluate responses from over 201 candidates and added to the validity of the research.

5.6.6 Analysis

The data analysis for this stage was easier as the themes identified in the preliminary study had guided the questions used in the focused study. This meant that when it came to the analysis of the data, the themes were already known and could be identified very easily in the interview transcripts. The researcher also ensured that additional themes

were not overlooked in this process. The analytical experience gained by the researcher in stage one also ensured that in stage two the process was less difficult.

5.6.7 General

It was felt that adopting a case study strategy to the focused study worked well. The data collection remained qualitative and the analysis structured and methodological. The focussing on the case of two methods rather than four enabled the collection of richer data. It also helped focus the research into the specific domain of strategic change.

5.7 Conclusions

This Chapter has presented stage two of the research – the focused study. This was an preliminary study involving the collection of qualitative data for the purpose of validating the conceptual model and theory building.

The Chapter has presented the research method taken in this study, detailing the data collection that was undertaken, giving a description of the companies involved in the research, and presenting a high level view of the findings of the data analysis. A review of the approach taken was then conducted.

The next Chapter intends to present the findings from focused study and in respect of these findings refine the conceptual model.

6 Findings of Focused Study

The purpose of this Chapter is to present the findings of stage two of the research.

6.1 Introduction

The conceptual model, outlined in Figure 6-1, was the result of the development of key themes, identified in the preliminary study. Stage two of the research was designed to explore, in greater detail, these concepts to provide data for further analysis and theory building. The results from the focused study are outlined in this Chapter.

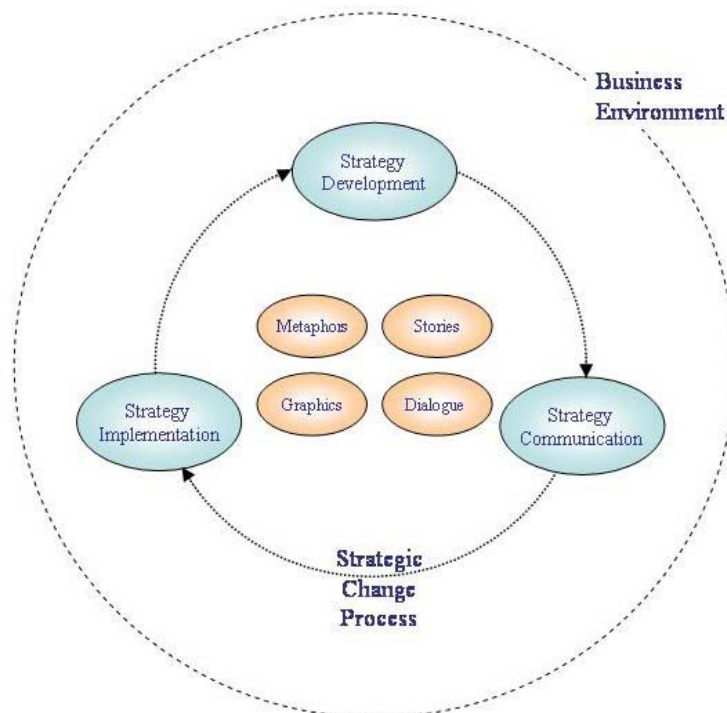


Figure 6-1: Conceptual model

6.2 Presentation of Findings

The first concept to be presented is the outer circle of the conceptual model, focusing on the business environment and its relevance to the methods, then the themes of strategy and change will be presented and finally the findings for the themes of dialogue, stories, metaphors and graphics.

6.2.1 Theme 1 – Business Environment

There is a consensus from several interview candidates that the environment that their organisations are operating in has changed. One interviewee stated *“I think there’s a lot of things going on in a lot of organisations ... the turbulence that is out there, the quickness of change at the moment”* (17.42UFS). There is a feeling of an increase in turbulence and, as another interviewee noted, fast paced change; *“and things do change very quickly nowadays in this industry”* (18.18UFS) and that people are facing increasing challenges in terms of increased competition and faster innovations. An interviewee stated that *“there’s a new demand for agility, for responsiveness, flexibility, innovation”* (15.4PFS). This has resulted in employees seeing a change in how their organisation addresses strategic planning. One interviewee commented that *“we used to have ten year plans and ... and then five, and now we are down to about six months”* (2021.16UFS).

An interview candidate describes how his organisation had recently seen a period of drastic change which meant the adoption of new management practices. He stated that in the past *“the business would respond to what the Chairman wanted”* (24.14UFS) and that *“the business had a family hierarchical feel to it [and] very strong dominance from the top and a strong feeling therefore of compliance”* (24.15UFS) but in recent years there has been a shift in involving people more, he stated that there *“is a necessity to involve and interact with people, if you really are going to get them to play that key role in the business”* (24.20UFS). From the interviews there was evidence of employees feeling less secure and more unsettled by the turbulent and quick changing business environment. One interviewee observed that *“you’ve got an all time high of people that are disengaged, distrusting and fearful; uncertainty and doubt somewhat reign supreme within the workforce because of the abrupt end to expansion, because of mistrust of senior officials, and because everybody knows somebody that lost their job. So there’s that fear, uncertainty and doubt that really reign supreme, we have statistics that show that as much as 75% of our nations’ workforce is disengaged”* (15.2PFS). This has led to a belief that there is an increasing need to find ways of engaging employees, an expert of the facilitative methods stated that *“gone are the days where your work force comes in and they file all day long and you just tell them what to do.”* In current businesses, she said that *“there’s an expectation now in the workforce that they will be involved and consulted and ... if you haven’t done that then [they’ll] be disengaged”* (25.70EIFS).

The consensus from the research data was that in this current unpredictable and changeable business environment the key resource for an organisation was its people. One interviewee noted that *“I think what’s changed is that in some cases about five years ago organisations could compete under innovative product or they found an*

interesting way to stand behind a regulation. What you have seen in the last few years is that all those things have been stripped away so all you are left with is just the people” (16.33PFS). Another interview candidate stated that “in the past companies could compete on technology, who had the best technology, automation, but now everyone has the same; they are equal. So the key differentiator now in a company is its people” (18.20UFS).

6.2.2 Theme 2 – Strategy

Directed by the conceptual model, the researcher was interested in gathering data concerning an organisations strategy process. What emerged were views around the strategy process in general and perspectives on the use of the graphic methods in the strategy process. One perception of strategy in current businesses, given by a consultant in the field of strategy and change, is that the important part is developing a clear vision and that strategy departments who were mostly focused on the planning of how to get to that vision are not needed anymore as the how part of getting to the vision is now carried out by managers and the decisions they make. He observed that in *“my education ... strategy was the key thing over the last twenty years or so, but it is not now, because people realise that ... where you want to get to is the critical thing... which is the vision, and there is no point having a strategy part, and many organisations that I have seen are ... dissolving their strategy departments” (19.6EIFS). He goes on to add that employees need “to have a clear vision of where to go to” and that “it is the managers’ job and the leaders’ job to work out how you are going to get there with the budgets and resources” (19.8EIFS).*

Many of the interviewees focussed on the implementation aspect of strategy. One interviewee stated that in organisations very often the implementation of the strategy is not successful and that very often strategic plans are drawn up and that they are often forgotten. He stated that *“We used to go off with the senior executives to these retreats and do strategic plans. And at the end we’d sort of say “we’re brilliant” and toast that at the bar. But what would happen was that we’d put it in the binder and take it back to organisations and it would be stillborn and the binders sat on the desks” (15.39PFS). He believes that the reason for this lack of action to strategic plans that are detailed and comprehensive is that there is a lack of understanding of the overall need for change and how to take action. He said that “when we used to do strategy where we just came out with motion and direction of where we are headed people used to say “I don’t get it”. But if you come up with; why change, how do we keep score, what do customers really value, what is the infrastructure of the scaffolding that we need to put in place to deliver that and where are we headed, you get it” (15.45PFS). Another interviewee observed that implementation is not successful as actions are not followed through and that the strategy is often developed without thinking through the implementation and the problems that might be encountered during implementation “a mistake that’s often made is to assume implementation happens once you’ve communicated” (25.49EIFS) and that “the implementation comes about through effective development. So if you do some appropriate development taking into account central problems with implementation (25.59EIFS) ... you can close the loop. So when you communicate, what you’re communicating is something which you have more chance of successful implementation” (25.60EIFS).*

The key element of strategy to emerge from the interviews was the importance of strategy communication to the implementation process. The emphasis on the communication element was focused, in particular, on the effectiveness of using the methods for strategy communication. One interviewee recalled that previous organisational strategy communication had been done with A4 paper based flyers with limited information; she observed that *“our strategy in the past has been very much maybe done on an A4 flyer and we’ve just talked about the key objectives of the business... And it would have the key objectives and this is where we’re going and why. With almost no background and understanding and rationale in terms of why we’re doing that (23.47UFS)*. She also added that PowerPoint presentations was often another method adopted for communicating the strategy to a large number of employees and adds that this form of communication does not keep the interest of the recipient and the information is not absorbed or remembered. She stated that *“If we wanted to communicate I don’t know our strategy or something we’d have probably a 30 slide presentation that by the 14th slide everybody had just switched off and couldn’t remember anything” (23.38UFS)*. In comparison she stated that the RootLearning Map *“actually allowed us to almost get more information on here than we needed, and to try and link it so it was all on the one page. So it wasn’t like a 30 slide presentation that people would go to sleep on” (23.38UFS)*.

Another interviewee explained that in her company large organisational presentations were also the method for the communication of new strategic direction. She noted that the organisation *“would typically have big presentation... you would go to an arena and have a huge presentation. And most people do that because how do you reach a large group of people? So they do a series of road-shows maybe of a particular presentation that would go around the country or countries” (17.30UFS)*. She felt that the problem with this type of communication was again that people did not understand the information being presented and left the presentation with no understanding or incentive to change, in accordance with the new strategic direction being communicated; she stated *“new leaders they give a new message and everybody goes in and are very cynical...and come out and when you ask them “did you understand what that was about?” they say “no, not really” some people do but maybe other people don’t understand. Do they connect with it and feel that they can contribute to it? No they don’t, they’ll carry on doing the same job. It doesn’t matter what happens at the top as far as they’re concerned” (17.9UFS)*.

There is evidence that increasingly organisations were aware of the fact that the traditional communications methods they were adopting were not having the desired effect of communicating the strategic direction of the company in a manner that was understandable, memorable and change inspiring to employees. The adoption of the graphic facilitative methods had a positive affect on addressing these issues. One interviewee said *“What we found was that a lot of people understood far more clearer, there was a huge percentage of people who said that pre-RootMap they didn’t understand the direction, or they didn’t understand that they had a role to play in it, they didn’t feel they could contribute to moving forward with the organisation” (17.62UFS)*. As well as being a method that created a greater understanding of the strategy, another interviewee felt that there were other benefits. She stated *“I think it’s just so different from anything we’d ever used in the past, and there was a real appetite*

for something quite creative and innovative. And I think that people felt valued in terms of being able to go through it. The fact that everybody was going through it and they could see everybody was going through it. It wasn't as though it was just the top team being communicated to; they saw everybody going through this. So they saw all like the directors and the senior team going through it, it was just such a powerful tool" (23.62UFS). The survey data showed that 93.5% agreed that participating in the session had helped them feel more confident about the direction of the business and 88.6% of respondents felt that it had helped them feel more energised and excited about the direction of the business.

A practitioner of the methods added that the graphical methods are simply a tactic by which to communicate the strategy and direction of the organisation, she said the *"strategies if you like are the process by which they go on and do the change, or the process by which they're going to make the decision, and the tactics are the graphics. We are going to use graphics to make that communication work better"* (25.5EIFS). It seems that there is recognition that the methods have a role in communicating the strategic direction of the organisation to employees but that actions and strategies are needed after the communication aspect to ensure implementation and that one should not assume that communicating the strategy means that implementation has occurred. One interviewee noted *"the tool is the bit that's opened the door and it's what you do afterwards to capture their views to keep that going. You can have the maps up and remind people... To keep the discussions going and turning some things into action plans but then they're continually looking and asking "am I in line with where the organisation is going" and there's lot of things that you can bring in afterwards that can help you check that. The picture changes but at least if you can apply the same thoughts, is it suitable or not, should we be doing it or not and I think a lot of people are experienced in that but the map certainly helps them"* (17.40UFS). Another interviewee concurs and stated that *"rather than being one event it's this continuous process but what hold it all together is that it went back to "where are we going" that original visualisation and learning process on where are we going as an organisation, always linking back to that"* (16.64PFS).

Interestingly one interviewee felt that it was possible to use the graphic methods to support a bottom up strategic process, although she feels that in the current business environment strategies still tend to be top down there is great scope in using these methods for bottom up development of strategies. She stated *"the strategy still tends to be 'top down'. I think there's huge potential though for graphics to be used to help communication 'bottom up'. Because if you do want to do consultation it's not very easy and one of the things we often get told is well, we'd like to hear the views of these people and how do you do that. And one way you can do that of course is get small groups of people to work around graphics, and to use templates and graphics and metaphors and stories and so on, and to collect that information. And it can be compiled in a graphical format and passed bottom up"* (25.66EIFS).

6.2.3 Theme 3 – Change

The next theme to be discussed is change, again directed by the conceptual model the researcher was interested in gathering data concerning the change process. What

emerged were experiences and thoughts about organisational change in general and more specific views that related change to the graphic facilitative methods.

There was a view that successful change programmes occur when the right people are involved. This was often perceived to be top management. One interviewee said *“actually change should be being seen to be driven from the top”* (25.52EIFS) another stated *“and when it comes to seeing the change, it has to change at the top level”* (19.22EIFS). The view is that change should be driven from the top but the people on the front line are fundamental to the change programme as in essence they make the change happen. One interviewee stated *“our client is really the people at the front line...ultimately in a change process ... when a customer walks in or gets on the phone with your employee there’s the moment of truth. There’s your brand, there’s your strategy, there’s everything in play right at that moment. And unless you get to the people at the front line change is not going occur, your brand is nothing until that person lives it with your employees”* (16.87PFS). In concurrence another interviewee observed *“most fundamental of which is the people ...the biggest set...human beings are not good at change for all sorts of reasons. And I think there’s a naivety in businesses that once we’ve decided what we’ll do that everybody will then just do it”* (25.50EIFS).

Most of the data gathered on the subject of change reflected on change in behaviour of individuals in an organisation. There was a belief that to affect change in an individual it is necessary to change their core assumptions and beliefs. One interviewee noted that change *“is also about base assumptions ...So you have got to get these people to illicit their base assumptions and all of that is ... management talking about things* (19.22EIFS)...*I think they are reflective on them [base assumptions] and I think it is very difficult to change core assumptions completely because they are their equipment from the start, from the day you are born ...But I think people reflect”* (19.26EIFS). He added *“I think through the reflectivity, through discussion they can think about where they position their views and how they make decisions ... And they might change out of that”* (19.27EIFS). A practitioner of the RootLearning methods believes that when people’s base assumptions are challenged and checked very often it leads to change, he stated that *“we’ve seen behaviour change dramatically at times just because assumptions are just totally wrong, when you think about the assumptions you have in life a lot of them have never been checked”* (15.114PFS). He also says that it is often a commitment to a peer group that can lead to a change in behaviour and cites the example of Alcoholics Anonymous or Weight Watchers as support groups that often elicit a change in behaviour from its members, he stated *“In the case of AA or Weight watchers ... in many case they’re making commitments to their peers and those commitments really cause that behaviour to change”* (15.108PFS). The methods support the element of a group process that is suggested here as core to changing people’s behaviour.

What the methods are said to do is allow people to change or question their base assumptions through discussion with other people and through gaining an understanding of the organisational situation. One RootLearning practitioner stated *“we all have information that we think is the whole story but it never is. So when we change our opinion sometimes it’s because we see it in context, it makes sense in light of the whole”* (15.26PFS) and it is believed that the graphic methods allow the organisational story to be depicted visually and holistically. He added *“all we are trying to do with the visual*

is getting people to think in systems that are often complex when you see it up there a lot of the pieces make sense. I think then I can change my conclusions” (15.29PFS). The interviewee went on to give several examples of where he had experienced change in assumptions from participants of the methods; one example is of a RootLearning Map they implemented with a retailer who were trying to launch a new store card, a difficulty they faced was trying to get the store employees to cross sell the store cards. He said *“another example would have been that same store people begin to realise the difference in how people purchased from cash to a 3rd party credit card to our credit card. And all of a sudden they realised that if it was a 3rd party credit card we may have made 2 cents, if it was our card we’d made 8cents. And the dramatic difference in terms of cash made because of cash flow in terms of financing. Those things cause people to say I guess what we’re asking them if they want one of our credit cards is not just to win a bear or to win a trip it has massive impact on the business. So I do think if people can see and understand they will naturally make some changes”* (15.112PFS). A user of the methods explained that the methods allowed people to understand the reasons for the change that was taking place in their organisation which was crucial for successful change; she said *“all the coming together of the little things that people were hearing about to understand the connection. So it brought the whole picture together... there was a real need to understand because there was real heels dragging about the fact that we had to change into something different”* (17.23UFS). The survey data purported this view and the results show that 96% had a better understanding, by an exceptional amount or a good deal, of how the business was going forward. 93.5% of respondents felt that their understanding of the organisations vision, mission and values had been improved an exceptional amount or a good deal and 89% felt that they now had a better understanding of their part in the business going forward.

The methods are also said to create an environment that allows people to talk openly and freely about issues that can be potential blockers for change. Within the thesis these issues are referred to as shadow themes and refer to the issues that people feel they cannot talk about within an organisational context. By allowing these issues to be addressed and discussed, people’s assumptions can be challenged so potentially leading to behaviour change. One interviewee stated that *“the formula for businesses to really change right now... the first is to get the real issues on the table”* (15.5PFS). He added that the graphic methods allow the issues to be drawn and seen and this allows people to feel able to discuss them openly, he stated that *“we have found a way to draw these sketches to say what everybody’s thinking but nobody will talk about. And that really does get everything on the table and people sort of then get permission to talk about what really concerns them”* (15.7PFS). He believed that if these shadow themes are not drawn out and discussed then the problem *“goes underground. And if it goes underground then things can change but it’s going to be a lot slower and people are going to be a lot more fearful”* (15.10PFS). An example given by one interviewee describes a meeting that was run using the Grove methods where the discussions were graphically recorded onto large wall charts. At one stage in the meeting it was evident that there was a two way split in the group. The graphic recorder drew this on the chart and the participants noticed that he had drawn this and started discussing with each other why there was a split and what the problems were. Once the participants had talked about all the issues, the meeting was much more productive. The interviewer believed that drawing up the problem allowed people the time to absorb the situation,

reflect on it and not feel threatened or defensive about the problem and then they felt able to talk about it in their own time. He observed, *“if they saw it then they could actually deal with it, so by having it on the drawing rather than having it pointed out verbally from the top table or from the stage meant that they could just see it and absorb it and come out with it themselves (14.37EIFS)... when it’s drawn up people can choose to either see it or not see it, but it’s left up to them” (14.38EIFS)*. The fact that people can feel safe to talk about the problem issues allows for discussion and potentially a change in assumptions and behaviour.

6.2.4 Theme 4 – Dialogue

The theme of dialogue is closely linked to that of change as from the data gathered and from the literature it became evident that through group discussion and dialogue people’s base assumptions were challenged, and very often changed. As the methods are used in group processes there was the added element of peer group responsibility to help facilitate behaviour and assumption change. A practitioner of the Grove methods stated that through using the group process and the graphic methods *“people start making connections between things that maybe they hadn’t realised before. So maybe they knew about this bit at point A but the only way it’s actually been put together is...you know...they see the juxtaposition of it. They start to say ‘oh isn’t that interesting’, so you see the dialogue, the challenging of assumptions because people’s current assumptions and working knowledge is based on history as they understand it. And if they get an insight into different aspects of that history then that can change their assumptions”*. (25.19EIFS). A practitioner of the RootLearning methods observed that *“dialogue is the oxygen of change. The dialogue really is...someone once told me that without dialogue no commitment can occur; only with the dialogue can commitment occur because the dialogue is the digestion process of the content” (15.120PFS)* he added *“How do you really allow people to discover and uncover the issues on their own which is through the dialogue” (15.54PFS)*.

Part of the data gathered on the themes of dialogue focused on the ability of the methods to stimulate an environment that encouraged dialogue. This was mainly because they used visuals. One user commented, *“I think by using the visuals you were able to have a debate around them” (23.39UFS)* and added *“It stimulated discussion and debate and almost trying to get that consensus” (23.80UFS)*. A practitioner of the tool believed that *“there’s an element of that which is definitely instigated by the graphics, but there’s also some other bits that you do to encourage the dialogue. So the way you use a kind of procedure and roles and methods that will encourage dialogue. But the graphics definitely draws out more contribution and more conversation and more discussion” (25.16EIFS)*. The survey data showed that 93.1% of participants agreed that the session had generated good discussion that had helped everyone understand and learn better.

The importance of stimulating dialogue is interlinked with the element of change covered in section 6.2.3. The dialogue helps the participant understand the content of the strategic communication tool as well as helping to challenge the key assumptions he had made about business issues, thus potentially leading to a change in behaviour back at the workplace.

6.2.5 Theme 5 – Stories

The methods encourage participants to relate personal stories and can stimulate dialogue and create a deeper understanding of the business issues depicted on the communication tool. The interview data shows that there is a feeling that people like to communicate using stories and that it enhances understanding of the issues being discussed. A practitioner of the Grove method stated that *“they use them when they have meetings to actually put up around the wall and tell the story of where they’ve got to so far and the way that they work. What it means that people who are just joining the group have a real insight into the history of this group and where it’s been to and where it’s coming from, which can be incredibly valuable”* (14.53PFS). Another interviewee added *“Sometimes they’re very tangible stories and sometimes they’re quite abstract stories, but they communicate those things because it’s more memorable ...they bring difficult concepts to life, there are all sorts of reasons why. But it works”* (25.9EIFS).

A reason for the success of using stories is because it has been a form of communication that has been present in human culture for centuries, as one interviewee stated *“Storytelling has been through all cultures. Wherever there are human beings dating back thousands of years, story-telling has been used to communicate wisdom, knowledge, ways of working, sort of methodology, principles - all that stuff is communicated through stories”* (25.9EIFS). A user of the RootLearning method added, *“there is no doubt what human beings love is a consistent story”* (24.49UFS). It is a benefit therefore that the methods encourage people to communicate in this way and that they are also able to graphically represent an organisation’s story (journey) so that users can tell the story facilitated by the visual representation. A practitioner of the Grove method observed that *“when you’ve got something like the big graphics you can actually story tell from them”* (14.16PFS) and a user of the RootLearning method added, *“a picture, that tells a story and takes them through the story but lets them tell the story and how they personally feel about that story and their personal experiences”* (17.35UFS). What it can result in, according to a user of the RootLearning method is an increase in understanding and clarity of the message represented in the visuals, he noted *“when it reaches the culmination of it, there’s no doubt there will be good read on clarity, because the clarity of the story is particularly strong”* (24.39UFS).

The workshop observation found that during the process participants were very eager to share their stories in terms of the history and their experiences of working within the organisation. One group member had prepared an anecdotal story beforehand and during the workshop related the story to the other participants. The result was a mixed effect but on the whole it seemed that the participants associated personally and empathised with the story. On reflection it seems that people can generally relate to a story, be it personal or business related, it is easily understood and resonates naturally with people.

6.2.6 Theme 6 – Metaphor

The use of metaphors was discussed in the literature as being a way of helping people understand complex situations or phenomena by thinking of them in terms of something familiar. An interviewee stated *“They help people understand, they help people connect better to things that are quite abstract, that can be quite abstract”* (25.10EIFS).

Another interviewee concurred and noted *“I think a metaphor does two things at least in my practical sense. The first thing it does it takes complex concepts that are adjacent or adjoined and makes sense of them when in fact they might not make sense”* (15.69PFS).

Using visual metaphors seems to be very powerful in terms of enhancing people’s understanding of a situation. A practitioner of the RootLearning method describes how an organisation wanted to visualise the current working environment. They were a utility company and with the onset of de-regulation had found there was increasing competition in the marketplace and the customer was now considered to be the most powerful player. To describe this situation to their employees, a metaphorical RootMap was developed showing the customer as superman (the metaphor of power and control) and the customer had six plugs to plug into its chosen utility company. The utility companies were represented by trucks and there were nine trucks depicted in the visual map. The impact of the metaphor was that it was instantly understandable, he said *“you didn’t need to sit down and say ‘well let’s talk about price, let’s talk about cost, which is the way they used to charge to price’ and at a quick glance you had a sense of ‘wow looks like there’s a shift of power, looks like somebody’s going to lose, looks like the trucks that are most attractive to the consumer will win’ so you get all that instantly. So all this drama and at times your head hurts, because you can’t connect it all, but this puts it together in a way, ‘I get it very simply”* (15.72PFS). A user of the RootLearning method also described how using a visualisation and metaphor helped her understand the business environment her company was working in very easily and very quickly, she commented *“the metaphors I think they just put that visual picture and understanding of ... I get the gist of it, there’s a turbulence at the moment in the marketplace I get that, I get the winning arena, where we’re going for this is a strategic message and these are the things that are going to help us get there, the sort of strategic enablers that help us get there I get that, because the picture is there, the metaphor is there and if I want the detail I can go and find it if I’ve forgotten about it, so I think it just plants a memory in there for sure. It’s much easier”* (17.60UFS).

The benefits of using metaphors to convey a strategic message or information was shared by most of the interviewees. One interviewee thought that metaphors allowed people to have insights into the business. He stated *“it’s basically helping people to have insight. A lot of the time you are uncovering stuff as people are working so they’re getting deeper insights into what they’re actually doing as a group as well as telling their story. You’re building a giant metaphor for them to tell their story against, you’re also using all the metaphors and material that’s coming out as they’re having their meeting”* (14.43PFS).

An interviewee explains that using metaphors in today’s businesses is very useful as there is an element of the need to convey information to people quickly so that they can understand the business situation rapidly and take the information and understanding away and act upon it, he said *“somebody said a picture is worth a thousand words but a metaphor is worth a thousand pictures. What that means is the speed issue”* (15.67PFS).

6.2.7 Theme 7 – Graphics

The final theme explored in the focused study is that of graphics and the use of graphics to represent strategic information. One benefit of using the graphic methods is that they help people remember the information better. One interviewee stated *“It’s easy to switch off if you are in a crowd in a presentation and you see the same old slides, you see the graphs, “do they mean anything to you?” you can see if the line goes up or if the line goes down it means something. The graphics help you remember I think so when you go back you’ve got that picture, a year on from [company B] I still have the pictures in my mind”* (17.59UFS). In emphasis of this point, another interviewee commented, *“you know, if you went away from a slide presentation and said OK how many of those slides can you remember? If you actually asked somebody to describe this map, they haven’t got it now...but you say OK what was on that map? They go, oh right oh well over here was such and such there was a bridge, they could actually do that”* (23.46UFS). As well as enabling people to remember the information representing things graphically can also encourage discussion and debate which is important if the organisation is trying to change the way people behave or view the organisation, one interviewee observed *“I think because we’ve got the visuals there it actually helps that debate and discussion, and helps you to do that – more so than in a presentation”* (23.41UFS).

The use of graphics was also said to help people understand the information in an easy and informative manner. A user of the tool stated *“I went through the history of it with him and he just looked at me and said ‘you’ve just told me so much about the business in a couple of minutes because you had the picture there to be able to do so”* (23.33UFS). Another interviewee felt that by representing the information graphically enhanced people’s understanding of the subject area. She said *“the context is usually people talking...meeting and talking but, you know if there’s some way in which that’s also visually represented people can just understand it better”* (25.1EIFS). The survey data showed that 93% of respondents agreed that the session had been effective in engaging and representing information.

As the methods are predominantly used for communicating strategy, a great deal of the comments was focused on the beneficial use of graphics for communication purposes. An interviewee stated, *“you can produce some graphics, you can engage people in those graphics, get their views, get their buy-in, maybe do some development work and so on. You know, it’s a very engaging communication medium”* (25.39EIFS). The interviewee also noted that the combining of the visual element with the graphical element is what makes it successful she said *“the concept of if you’ve got a visual as well as an oral input, people just connect to it much better”* (25.2EIFS). In conclusion, she states that although it is an effective method it is still just a tool to be used in a wider process and not as a complete solution to strategy implementation and strategic change, she stated *“for me it’s a tool, I mean a very important one, but it is a tool that supports”* (25.3EIFS).

6.3 Conclusion

The Chapter has outlined the findings from the main study, presenting the data from a thematic perspective. The findings from the study will now be used to refine the conceptual model.

7 Refinement of Model and Discussion

This Chapter builds upon the findings of the focused study to refine the conceptual model and outlines a theory developed for improved strategy communication, based on the results of the whole research study.

7.1 Refinement of Conceptual Model

Stage one of the research, the preliminary study, culminated in the development of a conceptual model to help focus the data collection for stage two of the research. The themes identified from the preliminary study were based on the data gathered at stage one and on the exploratory approach adopted by the study, which allowed the themes to emerge from the data.

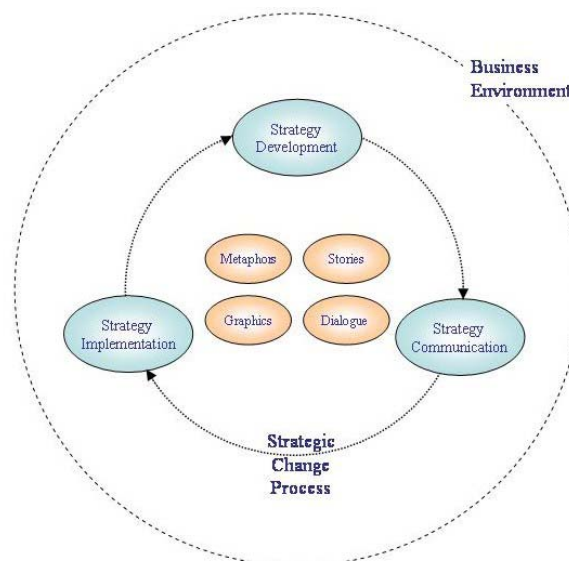


Figure 7-1: Conceptual model

The themes that emerged were formed into a conceptual model (Figure 7-1). It focused stage two of the research on the strategic change process and the use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue within that process. In addition it was decided to explore the wider business environment within the literature and in the data collection. The focused study produced a rich set of data, in all of these areas, and from the analysis of the data it was found that a refinement of the model was required.

The results of the preliminary study led to the exploration of the strategic change process within an organisation. This instigated a highly focused literature review within the areas of strategy and change management, which highlighted the change in perspectives that had occurred within the domain in the last 20 years. It was identified that there was a current focus, by theorists, on encouraging learning, involvement, participation and understanding in the strategic change process. This was an alteration on the past perspective of strategy and change management as a top down, directive process. Within the literature great emphasis was now being placed on the communication phase within the strategic change process. It was argued that in the current climate of increased learning and involvement it was important that individuals understood the strategy being communicated and that past communication efforts and methods had not succeeded to do this. Despite the communication phase being identified as important to the success of the overall strategic change process, there was very little guideline as to how organisations could communicate the strategy more effectively to its employees. There was a segmented body of literature reviewed that highlighted the effectiveness of using methods such as stories, metaphors and graphics for communication purposes but there was very little in the way of utilising these techniques for organisational strategy communication purposes.

The focused study explored further the use of the RootLearning method and the Grove International Consultants method within the context of the strategic change process and from the data analysis it was evident that the methods were focused in the strategic communication phase of the strategic change process. Prior to the focused study it was thought that the methods could be effective in the development side of the strategy process as well as the implementation element. Although this view may still be valid, the data that emerged from the study supports the use of these methods from a strategic communication perspective. This result was not pre-defined and was an emergent factor from the study. As the data is highly concentrated on the communication element of the strategic change process it has led to the refinement of the conceptual model to reflect this phenomenon. Figure 7-2 shows the new refined model where the focus is now clearly on the use of the methods in light of strategy communication.

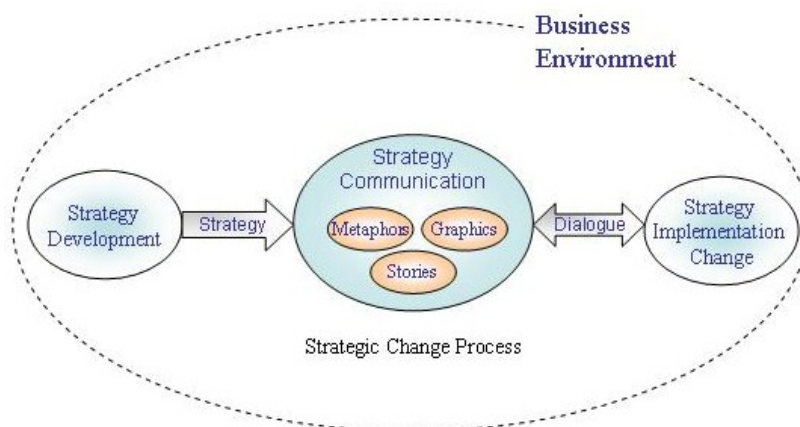


Figure 7-2: Refined conceptual model

What has emerged from the focused study is a novel theoretical concept that combines the theory of strategy and change management and the use of metaphors, graphics and stories within the process of strategic change. The conceptual model identifies the use of the combined techniques of graphics, metaphors and stories to communicate the intended strategic change to organisational members. The dialogue that takes place within the process remains a crucial outcome of using the techniques and the overall result is the enhancement of implementation and change. The role of dialogue was identified by Stacey, (2000), Bohm (1996), Dixon (1996) and Werther (2003) as crucial to the change process at an individual and at a group level and it has been shown through this study that the methods encourage and enhance the dialogic process at a group level. The strategic change process is depicted here as a separate sequenced process but from the literature it could be argued that it is very difficult to separate these activities clearly. Despite this view, the organisations in the research did in fact treat the process of strategy development, strategy communication and strategy implementation as quite separate activities; although it could be argued that strategy communication becomes the start of the implementation process. For the purposes of this thesis and for the new conceptual model, the strategy communication aspect has been drawn out from the overall process and focused upon. The two-way dialogue that takes place in the organisation once the strategy has been communicated indicates that the two stages are intertwined. The literature within the field of the new perspectives on strategy and change management argued for the development of more emergent, learning based and bottom up strategies. Huy and Mintzberg (2003) described three types of change that occurred within an organisation's strategic change process. These were dramatic change (top down and directive), systemic change (facilitated) and organic change (bottom up). It could be argued that these methods, to a certain degree, can help facilitate these different types of change. From a dramatic change viewpoint the methods can be used for cascading information. From a systemic change perspective the methods can be used to involve people, at a collaborative level, within the process. From an organic change view the methods can help transfer information to the local levels of the organisation to facilitate the emergent, self organising strategy.

It should be re-emphasised that the methods are not limited to strategy communication and that there was evidence of the Grove and RootLearning methods being used for strategy development and both methods being used for lower level action planning after

the large scale communication, for more focused implementation purposes. However, the research did show that the methods were strongest and most needed to support the strategy communication process. Within this communication process, the data showed the importance of metaphors, graphics and stories to facilitate an improved understanding of the organisation's past, present and future which could help to engage employees in the changes required for strategy implementation. Within the literature it was identified that as perspectives on strategy and change management alter, the strategy communication phase became increasingly important (Corboy and O'Corrbui, 1999). The new perspectives place increasing importance on people and finding interactive methods to involve and engage people within the strategic change process, with the aim of enabling understanding and learning (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000 and Balogun and Jenkins, 2003). A key phase where this can be done is through the communication phase of the strategy. This signifies the pertinence of such methods as RootLearning's and the Grove's as the research has shown them to be effective as strategy communication methods.

Stage one of the research helped focus the study in the form of the conceptual model. Stage two of the research explored further the concepts identified and has resulted in an overall focus for the research; this is the use of the graphic facilitative methods for strategy communication. A novel conceptual model has been developed from the findings. The next section will build and discuss the novel theoretical outcomes of the research, in terms of the implications of using graphic facilitative methods in the strategy communication process, culminating in the building of a new theory for improved strategy communication.

7.2 Improving Strategy Communication

The focus within organisations has increasingly turned to the need to build understanding and commitment to the strategic change process, which was traditionally carried out at the communication phase of the process. There was always recognition by senior management of the importance of communicating the vision and mission to organisational members. Within the traditional perspective, this aspect has always been outlined as one of the steps in a strategic change process (Kotter, 1995). What has altered now is the degree of importance placed on the human element of the strategy process and this has come from a change in theorising about organisations and increasing awareness of the organisational difficulties with strategy implementation and change. In the past it had been assumed that organisational members would comply with top-down directives and managerial governance and, to a certain degree, this may have been true. Allen-Meyer (2001) argues that in the past employees could be expected to be compliant and serve the directives of the leaders as they had little choice, but nowadays employees feel scepticism for change programmes as they have experienced so many and have more options available to them. He states "*today's people at work are better educated, better skilled, better informed, and better prepared to leave for other opportunities...today's people at work – and, to a greater degree, tomorrow's – expect inclusion, and most organizations lag behind*" (p. 6). Another example of this shift in employee expectation and behaviour is given by a member of a traditional, UK based retail firm, interviewed for this research, who stated that their organisation used to manage in a very hierarchical, dictatorial fashion and that it had

worked because organisational members had never had cause to question that style of management as the organisation was successful. They were therefore compliant and content with how things were run. He states *“It worked for reasons I think you and I identified, it was about huge growth. It also identified with the image of family ... if you use the word family, and we were, it has connotations about warmth, security, paternalism possibly, closeness, security...all of those things are ample reward for those that grow to be compliant”* (24.16UFS). Problems arose when, in the early 1990s, dramatic, unforeseen change occurred within the organisation - downsizing, job losses and re-structuring were the results. These led to an alteration of belief, from the employees' perspective, in job stability, management ability and essentially, trust. This has led to the organisation needing new methods and management styles to attempt to re-address the balance.

These examples indicate that although the management perspectives of the traditionalist view have dominated in the past and have been practiced in organisations, with success, there are, increasingly, circumstances where they become less applicable and new theories have emerged. The circumstance shown in the latter example, above, was of a sudden change in the market where consumer purchasing of the organisation's product decreased and there was increased competition in the market. The strategy they had been reliant on in the past, which was a strong brand and high quality products, had become irrelevant in the changing marketplace. The organisation had failed to predict this change because they were reliant on extrapolating from past successful strategies, as prescribed by the traditional strategy schools, and had therefore a narrow view of the marketplace and had become complacent (24UFS). This organisation was not alone in experiencing these sudden changes and unsettlements in the early 1990s. The result was an increase in unsettled and distrusting employees who had seen redundancies and job losses take place and had, to some degree lost faith in the senior management (15PFS). One interviewee stated *“you've got an all time high of people that are disengaged, distrusting and fearful, uncertainty and doubt somewhat reign supreme within the workforce because of the abrupt end to expansion, because of mistrust of senior officials, and because everybody knows somebody that lost their job...we have statistics that show that as much as 75% of our nation's [USA] workforce is disengaged”* (15.2PFS). Within these circumstances of unpredictable business environment and disengaged workforce there has emerged a theoretical and practitioner perspective of the need to focus more on the internal, human capabilities of the organisation. Some theorists and practitioners even argue that the most essential capability of the organisation is now its people (for example Prahalad and Hamel; 1990; Eden and Ackerman, 2001 and 18UFS).

If this view is taken into consideration, the communication of the strategy to all organisational members has never been more critical. In the literature review, it was shown that the communication of the strategy has always been a critical factor in the strategic change process as it lays the foundations for the vital implementation phase. In the past, the information has been mostly cascaded from the top-down, in a one-way, directed fashion using methods such as memos, presentations, videos and notice boards (Miniace and Falter, 1999). Arguably, for the organisations operating in a stable and growing market, these were adequate methods for relaying information and organisational employees relied upon line managers for further strategic direction. Even

so, in a current publication, Corboy and O’Corrbui (1999) stated that 70% of business strategies fail to get implemented successfully. There are several causes described, as to why this failure occurs, one of which is that the strategy is not communicated successfully to employees (Corboy and O’Corrbui, 1999). It is stated that for a strategy to be communicated successfully, the organisational employees need to have understood how the strategy affects their day to day activities and that front line staff need to understand what the strategy is about and how it affects them, as they have the interaction with customers and suppliers (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000; Corboy and O’Corrbui, 1999). It is argued that the traditional top-down communication has been poor because the methods used information that was too complicated and detailed. It is argued that a simple story needs to be communicated illustrating why the company has to change and the call for new ways of working and more two-way communication should be encouraged to enhance this understanding (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000).

The methods researched in this study were all developed during the 1990s which indicates that at a practitioner level, as well as at a theoretical level, there was a momentum towards richer methods of communicating to and engaging with employees. The two methods of Grove and RootLearning have large client lists and therefore provided a rich source of information for the use of these methods within a large organisational strategic change process. From the data collected it seems that the development of these methods occurred as there was recognition, amongst the practitioners, that organisations were looking for methods that would engage and enhance employee commitment to the change programme. It was felt that the client organisations were increasingly becoming more focused on involving their employees in the strategic change process (24UFS; 2PES; 14PFS; 15PFS and 16PFS). From the practitioner perspective what developed were methods that could be used at the development, communication and implementation phases of the strategy process. Figure 7-3 shows a method used for development and communication purposes.

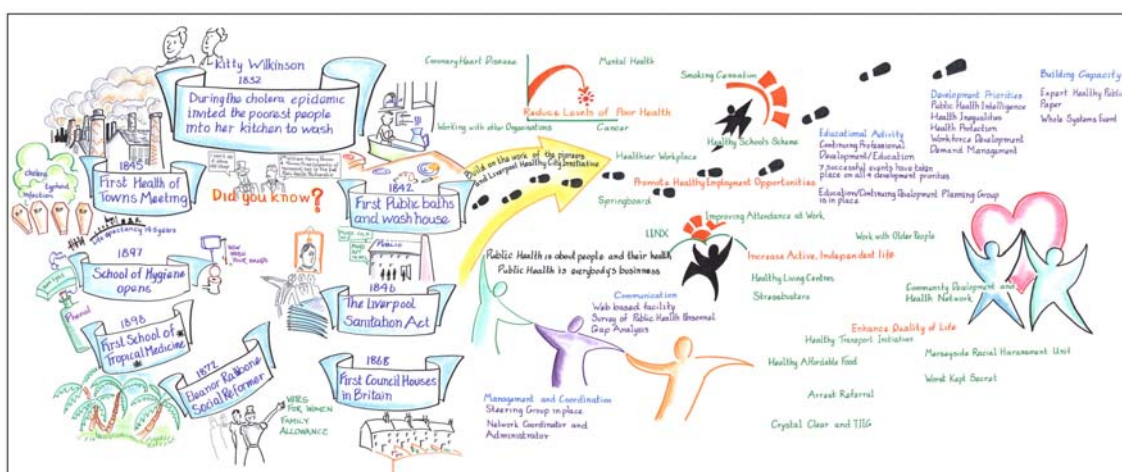


Figure 7-3: Example of graphical communication method (Don Braisby Associates)

From the study, it has emerged that the methods have become most practical and utilised at the communication phase of the process. It could be argued that the applicability of the methods at this phase is due to the increasing demand, from senior managers, for methods that aid at the communication phase, in order to enhance

understanding and commitment from employees. It is also the phase where traditionally senior managers would involve employees in the strategy, only in as much as a cascading of information rather than involvement in the development of the content itself. The methods are used for cascading pre-defined information, developed at the senior level of the organisation. The uniqueness of the methods is that they communicate the data in a graphical and metaphorical format and the attraction of the methods to senior managers is that they allow a two-way discussion of the content which favours the involvement approach that the organisations are attempting to adopt.

The results of the study have been used to build a theory, based on the research and on current literature, for improved strategy communication within an organisation's strategic change process. The outcome of the communication phase of the process is assumed to be to prepare the groundwork for the implementation phase, that is the creation of urgency and willingness for change and to familiarise employees with the intended strategy. The next section outlines the concepts developed within this research that can create improved strategy communication.

7.2.1 The Strategy Conveys a Clear Message

In essence, for the message to be clear it needs to be concise, understood and consistent. From the research conducted it has become evident that, from past strategy communication efforts, people felt that the messages being conveyed by the organisation were too in depth and difficult to understand (22UFS; 23UFS and 17UFS). This led to a confusion concerning the intended strategic direction of the organisation and a feeling of uncertainty concerning the change programme. From the literature, it was found that many theorists and practitioners recommended that when it came to communicating a strategy that it should be clear and understandable to the employees (for example, Joffe and Glyn, 2002; Jick, 2001; Sterling, 2003; Kotter, 1995 and Michlitsch, 2000). This means that the message within the communication is kept simple, and not too many facts and figures are used as they overwhelm the receiver. Miller (1956) argues that people struggle to retain more than about seven pieces of information in the short term memory; the amount of information retained can alter depending on how well the receiver knows the subject area (Miller, 1956), therefore attempting to communicate much more than this may be a futile exercise. Within the interview data it was found that traditionally the organisational wide communication was carried out using Power Point slide presentations, given in a large forum session (potentially to more than a thousand employees), by the Chief Executive Officer of the firm. The evidence shows that the employees felt that there was too much information to take in (17UFS; 22UFS; 23UFS and 13UES) and that after the sessions they did not know how the new strategy would affect them (17UFS) and they did not understand the message being conveyed, as it was lost in the graphs and figures presented (22UFS and 17UFS).

Why it is Important

A clear message is important as the strategy needs to be understood by the employees on the front line, so that they can change their behaviour and make decisions according to the new intended strategic vision. A lot of the evidence in the literature and research suggests that implementation fails because people do not understand why there is a need

for change and have no buy in to the change programme (Hoag et. al, 2002; Sterling, 2003; Klein, 1994 and Guffey and Nienhaus, 2002). Guffey and Nienhaus (2002) state that *“management has also found that when employees understand the context of decisions they contribute more meaningfully”* (p. 23). It is important to communicate effectively to employees especially if it is assumed that people are the core resource in an organisation and that the strategic change can only occur through them. It is also deemed important, especially in a retail environment, as it is the people at the front line that are in close contact with the customers and suppliers of the business, so creating positive impact is important. Michlitsch (2000) states that *“a clear mission and strategy also helps employees to better understand their roles in implementation”* (p. 30).

To increase understanding of the strategy, the communication side of the strategic change process needs to be kept consistent, so as to limit confusion and increase understanding (Joffe and Glyn, 2002 and Laing, 2000). If there are inconsistencies in the messages being conveyed in the organisational wide strategic communication effort and in the actions and behaviours of the managers then it can possibly derail the overall programme (Laing, 2000).

Discussion

The findings from the research indicate that the graphic methods use a very rich format for communicating information. It has been shown that the fact that they are visual, using graphics and metaphors to represent the data, has made them successful at enhancing the clarity and understanding of the strategic message. As shown above, this is of great benefit for organisations wishing to improve the clarity and understanding levels of their strategic message. One interviewee stated *“you’ve got to be able to have people who are on their toes, take in information quickly, you can’t busy them up with a three month programme of understanding and moving forward you’ve got to get them focussed on adapting quickly in the business. I think a blast of; get the picture, get the connection, get them to think about it on the ground floor is much more helpful to an organisation”* (UFS17.44).

From the literature, it was shown that the use of graphics is particularly useful for representing information in a format that is easily understood by people and that it enhances people’s memory recall of the information. The research data supported this theory. The literature surrounding the use of metaphors for clarification and communication purposes has also been well documented (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Morgan, 1986; Akin and Palmer, 2000, Bürgi and Roos, 2003 and Kotter, 1996). There is an agreement that as they are widely used in day to day language that they become highly effective for communicating information as they are intuitively understood. It has also been stated that they are especially effective methods for allowing people to understand complex pieces of information, as they take a complex phenomenon and present it in a familiar way (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Morgan, 1986; Akin and Palmer, 2000 and 15PFS) and in light of the whole. The holistic approach adopted by the methods allows people to understand the strategy in relation to the whole organisation and can help them understand how the strategy affects them. One interviewee stated *“what the visuals do is they allow people to think in systems of the whole so that then they can also go down to the piece where they play. But without the whole the ... the pieces will never allow the whole to make sense, you have to see the*

whole for the pieces to make sense” (15.25PFS). Another interviewee stressed the importance of enabling people to see the whole picture; he commented *“they need to understand what’s happening at the big picture level and they need to understand which direction the company’s going in, they need to understand how their bit fits in”* (11.2UES).

The methods take a large amount of information and distil it so that the key pieces of information are represented on the visual template. The process of turning the information into a visual representation proves to be very effective in ensuring that senior managers articulate the strategic vision clearly (15PFS). Language can be interpreted in several ways. A metaphor and graphic however leaves less room for interpretation. This process can cause a lot of discussion when creating the visual. An interviewee stated that once managers see the picture they often say to each other *“that’s not what I thought you meant”* which leads to further discussion and to a real refinement, exactness and accuracy of the information that is finally represented in the graphic. An interviewee explained that *“in many cases change, change management and strategy are comfortable subjects until you have to visualise and when you visualise it ... it almost becomes a workout project and you [have to] discipline your mind and ...your context and it is then much clearer than it ever was before... and then you have the ability to engage others in something that is much clearer”* (15.21PFS). Once it is in a picture format it proves to be much more understandable than when it is in written format as there is less room for interpretation and it has the added benefit of the audience having the same, clear, picture of where the organisation is headed (17UFS; 23UFS and 13UES). The data also supported the use of stories within the process, indicating that people understand better when the message being communicated follows a clear and consistent story (24UFS). This is often the case with the visuals as there are journey metaphors embedded within them, which show the past of the company, the present and where it is headed which, when visualised, delineates a clear and understandable story of the organisations journey. The use of storytelling is widely used in organisations as a communication technique (Snowden, 1999; Denning, 2001 and Dennhey, 1999) adding to this, by incorporating the visual element, mainly serves to increase the impact of the message, in terms of clarity and understanding (10PES; 15PFS; 24PFS and 25EIFS).

The use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue has shown to enhance memory recall. This is of benefit as if people remember things better then it can enhance their decision making capabilities. Remembering some crucial element of the strategy can help inform an action later on. An example brought out in the interviews was of a strategic change in a retail store of new store cards being implemented. The communication detailed the benefits to the employees of customers signing up to the store card. By recalling the information that was communicated, front line staff were then able to alter their behaviour and encourage customers to sign up for the store card (15PFS). One interview commented *“we’ve got thousands of people everyday making millions of decisions, the more understanding they can have about what the business is trying to achieve in the long run and what it needs to do to achieve it the better that [decision making] will be”* (11.7UES).

Key Contributions

- The development of a graphical and metaphorical visual representation encourages the clear articulation of the strategic vision. Once in this format it proves to be more understandable to employees who were not directly involved in its development.
- The graphical and metaphorical representation provides a clear and understandable story of the past, present and future of the organisation and its strategy.
- Memory retention and recall is improved through the visual representation and this in turn enhances employee decision making capabilities and provides engagement and motivation in context of the strategy.

7.2.2 *The Strategy Communication Process is Interactive*

For the purposes of this thesis, interaction can be described as two-way, face-to-face communication and more often than not involves a group process where conversation can occur. For interaction to occur there needs to be two or more people within the group. Group dynamics and social interactions have been considered an important organisational discipline for many years; this is due to its motivational, behavioural change and creative capacity (Lewin, 1951; Scehin, 1988; Brown, 1988; Huczynski and Buchanan, 1991; Katzenbach and Smith, 1993; Stacey, 1996 and Shaw, 2002).

Why it is Important

Being involved in an interactive process for strategy communication has shown that participants feel that they have had some involvement in the strategy process; they therefore feel valued, are more engaged and are potentially more committed to the organisation and the change process (15PFS; 17UFS and 23UFS). Miniace and Falter (1996) describe a strategy communication process that they developed for their health care organisation, based on group two-way communication and discussion sessions. They state that responses from the participants showed overwhelmingly that the most valued part of the process was the panel discussions and that participants specifically asked for more interaction within future processes (Miniace and Falter 1996). Klein (1994) argues that face to face communication is the most effective form, as it has a greater impact than any other medium and it encourages involvement in the process. He states “*It also clarifies ambiguities and increases the probability that the sender and receiver are connecting appropriately. It is the best way that feedback can be used to immediately correct deficiencies in the communication process*”. (p.27)

The new theories on strategy and change emphasises the importance of creating an environment where employees take action on information that has been given to them with emphasis much more on encouraging and engaging action rather than, as in the old perspectives, an emphasis on directives and control. Within the typologies outlined by Hart (1992) if an organisation were to adopt the strategy making mode of symbolic, transactive or generative the emphasis would be on communicating to persuade and encourage action, communicating in an encouraging manner and communication in a motivational manner, all of which Hart (1992) states involves two-way communication. In a study conducted by Lewin (1947a) it was found that behavioural change occurred in groups that had formally discussed the issues (dietary habits), where 32% of

participants reacted positively to the interactive group sessions. In comparison there was only a 3% positive behaviour change in the group that had been given a lecture on the information and no discussion (Lewin, 1947a). It was felt that this positive behaviour change was because people do not like being lectured to and resist information that is given by a higher authority and that they prefer new ideas to be introduced and discussed with their peers (Wetherell, 1996).

Discussion

Interactivity can be created through a small group process. The RootLearning methods are used to communicate the strategy through using a facilitated graphic display, used within a group of 8 – 10 people who are taken through an interactive process of questions, answers and explanation lasting approximately an hour. The methods can be used to communicate strategy at a small group level and involving two-way communication. The Grove methods also use a group process where interaction and discussion is encouraged.

The methods encourage communication and interaction through the use of facilitated stories, and structured questioning. It is believed also that having the information in a graphic and metaphor based format stimulates interaction and engages the audience much more with the information that is being communicated.

This is a benefit as it creates a feeling amongst participant that they have been involved in at least some part of the strategy process. One interviewee stated *“I think that people felt valued in terms of being able to go through it. The fact that everybody was going through it and they could see everybody was going through it. It wasn’t as though it was just the top team being communicated to; they saw everybody going through this”* (23.62UFS). This could help engage people in the strategy and the change that will take place. Users of the methods stated that they felt valued because they were involved in discussion and debate about the strategy, the added benefit was that the participants felt that they had arrived at their own conclusions about key issues in the information, this occurred through the process of questioning and debate. They felt involved as they were given an opportunity to get their own view across. One interviewee observed *“It’s interactive and they come to their own conclusions, so they don’t feel talked at or talked down to and what we’ve found is that the most junior assistant is quite happy to stand his/her ground and argue with a senior manager because most of the time it doesn’t feel like it’s that sort of relationship in the session”* (13.59UES). This does not happen in a normal strategy communication session as it can involve thousands of people and leaves little room for interactive discussion, merely a questions and answers phase (17UFS). The fact that it is a small group environment means that discussion can take place.

The opportunity for people to ask questions and discover for themselves what the answers are allows them the opportunity to come to their own conclusions. This was deemed important in the Lewin (1947a) study where the participants in the group process were given the ability to make their own decisions from the information that was communicated, Wetherell (1996) states that *“the act of making a decision of one’s own choice, whether privately or publicly, led to the commitment to carry it out”* (p. 47). It could be argued that the choice of whether to change their behaviour or not, based on the information given to them and the discussions with peers, gave the group members a

sense of feeling valued and important and that they had had a part to play in the overall strategy process. The fact that it is small groups with peers may mean that there is more commitment to the change. Examining other group processes, where the outcome is often successful change in behaviour, it seems that people often depend on the group as a support network to help facilitate that change, for example Alcoholics Anonymous (15PFS) and the Lewin (1947a) group experiment.

Key Contribution

- The graphics and visual metaphors encourage discussion which helps employees to become engaged and more committed to the strategy.
- The process allows people to debate amongst peers and come to their own conclusions about the content of the strategy which stimulates a feeling of being involved with and valued in the strategic process.

7.2.3 The Communication Occurs in an Open and Safe Environment

A safe environment is defined, for this research, as an environment where participants feel they can voice their opinions and beliefs about difficult organisational issues and blockers. This environment is ideally one where people feel safe, where there is little possibility for humiliation, they are not tested on their organisational knowledge and there are no wrong answers (13UES and 15PFS).

Why it is Important

The importance of allowing people to have an open dialogue about issues pertaining to the organisation and its strategy is increasingly seen as critical to the change process (Stacey, 2000). A great deal has been written concerning people's assumptions and beliefs and that by challenging and checking those assumptions, people have the ability to change them. It is argued that this occurs through interaction with other people and through the process of having a dialogue concerning those beliefs and assumptions (Schein, 1988; Stacey, 2000; Wetherell, 1996; Weick, 2003 and Huff, 1997). In an organisational situation, for change to occur it is stated that key people need to be bought into and understand the concepts of why there needs to be a change. Often people do not understand the need for change as they cannot associate with why it is needed. If an organisation member holds strong assumptions and beliefs in certain organisational practices as he/she understands why they are important they will become quite resistant to changing those practices if they do not know why they need to change (Werther, 2003). Allowing people the opportunity to explore why it is the organisation needs to change through dialogue and an interactive process helps them challenge and address their core assumptions and potentially they will change their behaviour accordingly.

Stacey (2000) discussed shadow themes as the underground conversations that organisational members partake in on a daily basis. These are often concerned with difficult issues for the people involved and issues that they feel they cannot talk openly about with their managers and, to some extent, their peers. These issues often become blockers for change as they create an environment of distrust and anxiety amongst the

workforce. By surfacing these shadow themes it is stated that people are then free to move on and alter their behaviour.

In general people are hindered in openly discussing issues in organisations because of a factor of fear. Individuals feel they cannot talk about issues and may have a real problem, with something or someone, but may feel unable to voice their concerns as they are scared of, in the worst case scenario, losing their job (Perlow and William, 2003). In the traditional perspective the command and control style of managing was common which created and re-enforced the view that it was not appropriate to speak openly against the organisational system and processes. This inability to be open could have a great hindrance on all aspects of organisational life. Perlow and Williams (2003) state that *“silence can exact a high psychological price on individuals, generating feelings of humiliation, pernicious anger, resentment...that is unexpressed, contaminate every interaction, shut down creativity, and undermine productivity”* (p. 53). In the new perspective it is felt that this kind of management style does not resonate with the kind of environment one wants to create in current organisations. There is more focus on the people element therefore in practical business terms this means creating an environment that is not hostile and that issues are raised and talked about. Despite this new view the fear of speaking out remains, therefore it is important to encourage an environment where employees feel able to discuss openly past, current, and future organisational issues. Beer and Eisenstat (2000) describe a case where they observed a lack of open discussion and an environment where employees did not feel able to talk freely, which resulted in an increase in cynicism towards the leadership and the change programme. They state *“employees recognized the problems, but they feared the senior managers were not open to candid discussion. Employees suspected that the top team preferred to avoid potentially threatening and embarrassing issues and that the people at the lower levels would do better keeping their observations to themselves. Cynicism grew”* (p. 32).

Discussion

The research has shown that the methods are adept at allowing people to discuss real and potentially untalkable issues. The visual representations of the organisational strategy often entail a journey metaphor which depicts the history of the company and often problems and issues faced in the past. By allowing people to see these issues it is stated that they feel that they have been given permission to talk about them whereas in the past these were viewed as issues that could not be openly talked about. In an example given by a user of the RootLearning method the participant outlined how the visual showed a period of history that was deemed painful, as the changes that had occurred had resulted in many job losses and a loss of brand image. An interviewee stated *“one talked about the history of [company A], so this one went back to the dark and doomy gloomy days and they called it the winds of change on here, where we saw management shuffles and share prices fall and clothing not meeting expectations (23.69UFS). Despite knowing the organisations past misfortunes people felt that it was almost disloyal to talk openly about them and there was also a sense of failure and embarrassment about being associated with the organisation. By openly depicting these past misfortunes people felt relieved at being able to discuss the issues with their peers and also begun to change their views about the organisation, as the focus turned away from the past into more current and future issues and plans she stated “they knew they went through difficulties but during that time if anybody had said to any of our*

employees 'who do you work for' it would have been" the Financial sector of company A not company A itself. "But now if you ask I think people are more inclined to say" company A and add that they work in the Financial sector (23.70UFS). The process allowed people to relieve the baggage of the past and move on and regain some of the loyalty and commitment that had been diminished by the organisations recent bad history (23UFS).

Another example from the data is described by a practitioner of the Grove method who relates a session where he visibly saw a change in behaviour and attitude because of the graphic representation he drew during the meeting. The participants were split into two camps and were visibly opposed to each others views. He states that graphically representing this split and animosity, allowed group members to see for themselves the problem and it allowed them to freely discuss the issue and resolving the tensions. He feels that if a member of the group had stood up and stated that there was a problem the animosity would have been directed towards him and it would have been a different dynamic created but that by having a non threatening picture of the situation allowed the issue to be discussed in a less confrontational manner. The outcome was a resolution of the differences through open and honest dialogue stimulated by the graphical depiction of the problem (14PFS). One interviewee states that getting the real issues on the table is important otherwise there are problems before the strategy implementation process has even started he noted *"if we try to skim over all these issues we've got cracks in the foundations"* (15.6PFS). He added *"we have found a way to draw these sketches to say what everybody's thinking but nobody will talk about. And that really does get everything on the table and people sort of then get permission to talk about what really concerns them"* (15.7PFS).

The methods are said to create an environment where participants do not feel they are being judged by their peers or by managers. One interviewee commented that *"a lot of people get uncomfortable when they do training or course, that they're going to fail in front of their peers but there's none of that, it's very easy"* (17.6UFS) she added *"you might feel nervous at first but you get drawn in so it's very easy and it's not a finger pointing exercise, it's really comfortable so you can talk about things without fear, I think, or humiliation or ... what you know or don't know"* (17.8UFS). This allows them to contribute actively and freely in the discussions that takes place. It has been shown that discussion and dialogue is crucial for change to occur, therefore, creating a group situation where the quality and freedom of discussion is enhanced is an important benefit for organisations who wish to influence change in the behaviour of the employees. It is argued that the graphical methods help to create an open and safe environment as having a visual stimulus of an organisations often complex and problematic situation permits participants to talk openly and candidly about the issues, without a visual representation things are often left unsaid but because it has been drawn out, in this case in the form of a graphic, people feel free to talk.

The ability to discuss the organisations strategy in a non-threatening and non-judgemental environment increases the potential for people to challenge their views with peers. This association with peers has also come through as a strong incentive to change and it is argued that the a group process that is open and honest allows for relationships with peers to be strengthened which encourages commitment to a change strategy. If individuals feel that a change in their behaviour will have as positive effect

on their peers and that other group members are also willing to change then there is an increased chance that behavioural change will occur, in accordance to the strategic intentions of the organisations.

Key Contribution

- The graphic and metaphorical representation of the strategy legitimises the conversation of previously difficult to discuss business issues and provides a less confrontational space for dialogue.
- The research re-enforced the view that discussion of these shadow conversations facilitates a change in assumptions and potentially behaviour, in line with the strategy.

7.2.4 *The Strategy is Driven by the Right People*

There seems to be a general consensus within the strategy and change literature that for a strategy to be implemented successfully in an organisation it should be driven by senior management or by the CEO of the organisations; it needs to be driven by the top. The right people therefore are described as leaders and senior management of the organisation. Kotter (1995) stipulates that it is not enough that the CEO is seen to be leading the strategic change effort but that there should be a “*powerful coalition*” driving the change and this includes the chairman or president and then another 5 – 15 senior managers. He states that in the most successful cases of change, that he has witnessed, the coalition is always made up of the organisations most powerful members. He defines powerful in terms of “*titles, information and expertise, reputations and relationships*” (p. 62).

Why it is Important

It is stated that for an organisations strategic change effort to be taken seriously by the employees it needs to be seen to be driven by the highest of channels within the organisations. It simply adds credibility to the programme and creates a sense of urgency and importance within the organisation as a whole. Without this drive from senior management it is often stated that implementation efforts fail as in general people will only commit if the change is viewed as sponsored by top management who are seen to be, themselves, highly committed to the change effort. Guffey and Nienhaus (2002) state that “*to increase the commitment to implement new strategies, the CEO must personally communicate the strategy to employees*” (p. 25). Klein (1994) adds that “*quite clearly communicated from those in authority carry both practical and symbolic weight*” and “*that the credibility of a message is directly related to the status of the source of that message*” (p. 27).

Discussion

As in the literature the data collected supported the view that the strategy needs to be seen to be driven from the very top of an organisation. The data suggested that leadership commitment is needed. One interviewee stated “*I think you have to have leadership commitment*” (17.20UFS). Another interviewee felt strongly on this matter and insisted that the strategy should be driven by senior leaders and not through the

Human Resource department. She observed “*very often change management is driven through HR. But... actually change should be being seen to be driven from the top. HR is not seen to be top of the business. The HR Director is not the No. 2 in the business. It very rarely is, and is certainly never perceived to be*” (25.52EIFS).

In light of the strategic methods researched in this study the strategy was developed by senior management and communicated in a top down, traditional manner. In the cases looked at there was a mixture of the Human Resource department and top management organising the communication roll out. Invariably though the communications involved some direct link to the senior executives of the organisation. In one example the organisation split the RootMap session into two and in the middle added a video clip of the directors of each department explaining the departmental strategy and vision. This seemed to be well received by the participants (23UFS). In other examples top management were themselves visibly seen to be going through the communication session. As the RootMap sessions were conducted in groups of 10, in a large open spaced environment, alongside one another (often the organisations had 20-30 sessions running concurrently on separate tables in one large room) it was possible for other group members to see top management experiencing the same process. One interviewee stated “*the executives and the senior managers could not be put on the tables with the others because we thought they would take over...and people would look to them for the answers ... [but] we wanted them to be visible as going through it*” (23.12UFS). In another organisation it was decided to mix the groups and it was found “*that the most junior assistant is quite happy to stand his/her ground and argue with a senior manager because most of the time it doesn't feel like it's that sort of relationship in the session*” (13.60UES). Showing senior management to be actively participating in the process is arguably an important element in obtaining commitment and motivation to the change programme. There was evidence to suggest that employees respect leaders who can publicly show that they are willing to or are changing in accordance with what they are prescribing. Gorman (2003) states that “*if they [employees] think that leader's are walking the talk, then the company can earn a lot of loyalty and trust*” (p. 23). An interviewee concurs with this view and stated that in order to effectively manage a strategic change programme leaders need to be willing to change their behaviour also and that people cannot be expected to change without this show of commitment by the senior management. She stated “*another favourite expression of mine is that you can't talk your way out of something you've behaved your way into ... if a business behaves in a certain way you can't then just tell everybody to do something different, you've got to start modelling that behaviour*” (25.55EIFS).

What these methods offer is an opportunity for leaders to be visible in the strategic change process. Traditionally the communication phase of the process is the opportunity where senior executives have the opportunity to interact with employees, and can illustrate their commitment to the change programme through speech and presentations. The advantage of using the methods at this phase is that senior executives can now be seen to be playing a much more interactive and participative role in the process. The cases in the research give examples of some leaders taking a ‘hands on’ approach to the process and visibly displaying their commitment to the strategic message through actions and interactions rather than through rhetoric. This had a positive effect on the employees. It was also shown that the use of mixed groups within

the process allowed people at all levels in the organisation to have an open discussion. The examples show managers at all levels of the organisation participating in the interactive communication process but it is felt that this could be taken further in terms of hierarchical levels, as the directors of the organisations did not actively participate, which indicates there is still a gap in terms of organisational hierarchy. It is felt that if the top directors of the organisations were seen (or known) to be participating, it would have the added benefit of strengthening the impact of the importance and value of the strategic change process. The methods can facilitate this but it seems that there needs to be a shift in behaviour and attitude, on the part of the senior executives. As one interviewee stated *“it can’t be intellectual for the leaders and then emotional and behavioural for everyone else”* (15.14PFS).

Key Contribution

- The research re-enforced the view that senior managers should be visibly seen to be involved, supporting and committed to the strategy programme. The methods allow a degree of visible participation to employees. This facilitates increased commitment and motivation to the change programme from other employees.

7.2.5 *The Strategy Development is Realistic*

In this thesis the author defines a realistic strategy as a strategy that can be implemented in the organisation it is being communicated to. It has been found that a failure of strategy implementation can sometimes be because the strategists have developed a strategy that cannot, realistically, be implemented successfully in the organisation. This may be because the organisation does not have the appropriate skills, resources or processes to implement that strategy. It could also mean that the strategy does not reflect current business practices and would therefore be deemed alien and inappropriate to the employees.

Why it is Important

Developing a realistic strategy is crucial for successful implementation to take place. If the employees cannot resonate strongly, or to some degree, with the strategic message then the chances of implementation failure are increased. Within the literature there is a view that organisations can increase their chances of success and survival when their strategies are based on organisational distinctive competencies or core competencies (Eden and Ackerman, 1998).

Within the research it was felt that the strategy needs to be real and authentic to the employees, so that they can associate strongly to the message being communicated. The organisation runs the risk of adding confusion and uncertainty to employees if they communicate a strategy that does not resonate with them. An interviewee stated that *“I think authentic is really key because there’s just so much change around, so much uncertainty and so much confusion, if it’s not authentic it adds to that and it’s even more disorientating”* (15.104PFS) he adds that *“if it’s relevant and real and authentic it really picks up momentum, if it’s fabricated and not totally true then it doesn’t stick”* (15.76PFS). Guffey and Nienhaus (2002) add that key to implementation of the strategy is the need for accurate and real information.

It seems that the key to successful communication and implementation is the development stage. One interviewee argued that often the strategy is developed without thinking through the implementation phase, which leads to the problems described above, of implementation failure. She stated “I think the implementation comes about through effective development. I mean implementation can happen if you actually do the development piece right. So if you do some appropriate development taking into account central problems with implementation” (25.59EIFS). She adds “*so then you can close the loop. So when you communicate, what you’re communicating is something which you have more chance of successful implementation*” (25.60EIFS). The interviewee gives an example of a strategy development project she worked on where the organisation had a new idea that was very different to current organisational projects and that required a specialist set of skills, competencies and resources. Instead of trying to implement this completely different strategy into the current organisational set up the senior management team decided to set up a separate company taking the specialist employees from the existing organisation and setting up new processes and plans. She states “*that’s a great way of influencing change...they knew one of the problems would be that it [the idea] wasn’t a cultural norm within their business, so they came up with a strategy which meant the implementation was much more likely to be successful*” (25.61EIFS).

It is also important that employees can come away from the communication phase of the process with clear perceptions of what to do next. The communication phase must therefore be realistic in a sense that it is possible for managers to then take the core messages and turn them into actionable plans at a departmental level. Managers must be able to take the information away and develop it in their departmental groups so that it is in line with the strategy and that it does not mean that they are going to have to do a huge re-organisation of resources, people and processes. One interviewee states “*making it a success is not the Root map; it’s about people then walking the talk, working to the key issues of these messages, not bringing too many foreign messages to the table that aren’t working in harmony with that*” (24.57UFS).

Discussion

The key advantage of using these methods for the whole strategic change process is that the process itself is designed so that the message being conveyed is clear, consistent and understandable to the employees. The process is such that from the outset the strategists develop the message so that it can be conveyed in a visual format. As discussed previously this has the advantage of compelling the strategists to discuss and re-shape the strategy and message so that it becomes clear and articulate, it involves a series of iterations. Before the communication of the strategy takes place the process then involves a checking phase where the graphic is taken to a pool of organisational employees to ensure that the strategy being communicated is not alien to them, that they understand it and that it is deemed realistic. The whole process that the RootLearning methods use can then ensure that when it comes to the development of the strategy implementation is considered and checked with organisational members.

The methods, especially those of the Grove International Consultants, could be used to develop bottom up strategies. This could be achieved through the process that is already in place within the company for strategy development (Appendix I). Within the

context of new business theories there is more focus on emergent strategies and on harnessing the intellectual and creative potential of all organisational members. There is therefore a potential for using the interactive methods to gather input and ideas for strategy development from a wide source. Huy and Mintzberg (2003) described three types of strategic changes that occur in organisations dramatic change, systemic change and organic change. In view of this model it is argued that the methods can facilitate, to a certain degree, the implementation of all three types of change. From a directive approach the methods help communication a top down, clear strategy. From a systemic approach the methods can be used in affiliation with staff groups and consultants to communicate and deliver a more collaborative message and strategy. Finally from an organic approach it is felt that the methods could help to stimulate an environment that encourages a change from the grass roots level of the organisation (Huy and Mintzberg, 2003). An interviewee states *“I think there’s huge potential for graphics to be used to help communication bottom up. Because if you do want to do consultation it’s not very easy and one of the things we often get told is well, we’d like to hear the views of these people and how do you do that. And one way you can do that of course is get small groups of people to work around graphics, and to use templates and graphics and metaphors and stories and so on, and to collect that information, and it can be compiled in a graphical format and passed bottom up”* (25.64EIFS). It is felt in the context of this research the methods are used to facilitate as a more systemic approach to strategic change. Another view is that the methods are valuable for developing a strategy with a group of senior executives. This would be deemed as a top down approach but would mean the development of a strategy that is clear (because of having to visualise it), realistic (as it taps into a large pool of resources) and possibly more creative. An interviewee states it is of benefit as the leaders have a dialogue and feel involved in the process which would enhance commitment and the willingness to take ownership of the strategy which is important especially in the communication and implementation phase. He states it involves *“the 30 top leaders, get them all in a room show them a sketch and make that the centre point of a dialogue about what’s really happening, get them involved, let them help make adjustments. They then move from being on the outside to being on the inside and carrying ownership of it”* (16.95PFS) and he adds the important element is bringing them *“into the fold so they’re part of the engagement, they feel a sense of ownership, and they carry that commitment, engagement and energy out to the people at the front line”* (16.98PFS).

Key Contribution

- The development process of the graphical and metaphorical visual representation is such that it encourages the clear articulation of a realistic strategic vision.
- The methods represent a practical method that can address the current need for a more emergent approach to strategic change.
- The process allows for some integration of bottom up, organic and emergent strategies with the current top down approach.

7.2.6 *The Methods Used for Strategy Communication are New and Different*

Strategy communication is not a new phenomena but it has been traditionally carried out using several mediums that have, over the years, become commonplace. These

mediums are, more traditionally, large group presentations (usually from the CEO), memos, faxes, notice boards, letters, newsletters and reports (Miniace and Falter, 1996). An alternative and new form of strategy communication can be defined as anything that differs from these more traditional mediums.

Why it is Important

Within the literature there is a growing view that strategy communication needs to be, amongst other things, interactive, two-way, engaging and understandable. The traditional communication mediums, some of the more popular ones were outlined above, may not facilitate all these needs. There are mediums that are effective at creating a two-way, interactive communication; invariably these are small group discussions or workshops. It is deemed important as increasingly management theory suggests that the core resource and strategic advantage lie with organisational members. Therefore methods that can facilitate interaction, understanding and importantly engagement are needed in this current business environment. The research indicated that the more traditional communication mediums, such as power point presentations from senior management fail to engage and communicate understanding of the strategy to employees. There were several examples outlined of cases where the employees felt that they would remember very little of the information that was presented to them, firstly because there was too much information to retain and secondly because they got bored (17UFS; 22UFS).

The literature also indicates that there is a growing cynicism amongst employees concerning strategic change programmes as they have seen such a number of initiatives and changes within their organisation and that currently there is little enthusiasm for new initiatives and projects (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000). Arguably then any medium that can communicate a strategic change project in a new and engaging manner is highly beneficial.

Discussion

The main evidence to support this theory is based on the research data collected for this study. On numerous occasions different respondents highlighted the fact that the success of these methods was, to some extent, because they are different. It was felt that employees had grown tired of the traditional methods and were cynical about management initiatives and changes. One interviewee said *“I think it’s just so different from anything we’d ever used in the past, and there was a real appetite for something quite creative and innovative”* (23.62UFS). She added *“It was almost as though we needed something new to set us off on a different route and this did it”* (23.65UFS).

There was also evidence to suggest that the traditional methods did not convey the strategic message clearly, or in a manner that was easily understood or remembered by the audiences. It is suggested that this is down to a change in society in terms of learning and education. Increasingly we are of a society that favours multimedia and visual methods for entertainment rather than text based. More and more the educational system is recognising that people learn in different ways and that there are a recognised number of multiple learning styles to cater for within society. One interviewee stated *“when I was a school you sat in a row, and you read a textbook, and you learnt that*

way. *My son can't understand that way, and he hasn't learnt that way*" (2021.57UFS). This indicates that increasingly organisations will be faced with the dilemma of finding new and different methods to communicate with its employees. Another interviewee argued *"we're increasingly of a society that doesn't read, that doesn't really engage so the real question is how do we rapidly transfer meaning because all of the other mediums that have been faced with the time issues, transfer information but they don't transfer meaning"* (15.126PFS).

Communicating business strategies in the format used by the methods, that is interactive, graphical, metaphorical and story based, is still not common and it is an effective method of representing information to enhance memory and understanding. Currently they are still new enough to have an impact on the audience one interviewee stated *"it works because it's different if you did it everyday perhaps it would fade off, but it's different to what people see"* (17.14UFS). The reservations voiced by many respondents show that although the methods are different now there is the risk that if used too many times it may lose its effectiveness, which arguably has already begun to happen in some companies. They can also be overused to a certain degree thus again affecting their different impact on the employees. The challenge for organisations is to not overuse the methods as they are essentially highly effective communication methods for deployment of large scale organisational strategic communications. After the communication takes place the organisation should have procedures in place to enable the implementation to occur. These could be departmental meetings that use the graphics as a springboard for localised action and game planning. As there are technological advancements more interactive and interesting methods can be thought of for communication purposes but it is important to ensure that the strategy is still realistic, driven from the top, encourages dialogue in an open and safe environment, relays a clear message and uses an interactive process.

Key Contribution

- The methods are currently new and innovative for strategy communication which makes them effective and engaging. It was seen that the methods had less impact the more they were used.

Figure 7-4 details the six individual theories, described in this Chapter, that have been developed as a result of the research conducted throughout this study. All six elements are deemed important as actions that can be taken to improve an organisations strategy communication process and should therefore be used in combination.



Figure 7-4: Improved strategy communication

7.3 Summary

In summary, the research has shown that within the field of strategy and change management there has been a change in perspective over the last two decades resulting in a view that the traditional methods of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s are outdated and becoming less relevant to today's management and deployment of organisational strategy. Within the literature, there is a growing field dedicated to the development of new theories on strategic change, depicting the discipline as a dynamic, people orientated and unpredictable process. The new views call for new methods to help managers develop, communicate and implement the strategy, methods that focus on harnessing the potential that organisational members have to offer, in terms of their capabilities and commitment. In the last decade or so there has been an increase in the number of facilitative methods used by organisations for this purpose, most notably, the development of the technique of storytelling to enhance communication within organisations. Theorists and practitioners have also recognised the importance of dialogue and discussion for organisational change and especially for group and individual behavioural change. The methods researched in this study have attempted to harness the use of these two techniques for communication purposes along with the use of metaphorical thinking and graphical representation. The two former techniques add to the effectiveness of audience understanding and memory recall of the information being communicated. The methods researched in the context of this study used the four techniques together as a facilitative tool for organisational change purposes. The two methods of RootLearning and the Grove have been examined in detail and it has been shown that, for the purposes of strategy communication, the methods have been highly successful.

7.4 Conclusions

This Chapter has discussed the refinement of the conceptual model and offered a novel model. Implications of the research to the field of strategy and change management have been outlined and a new theory for improved strategy communication, based on the use of graphic facilitative methods developed.

The next Chapter will conclude the thesis showing the contribution of the research to current strategy and change management theory and outlining the possible further research that can be carried out in light of the research undertaken here.

8 Conclusions

This Chapter presents the conclusions of the research. The meeting of the research aim and objectives is outlined in detail showing the conclusions from the research. The contribution to knowledge made by the research is presented and areas for future research have been identified.

8.1 Research Objectives

The initial aim of the research was to provide an understanding, at a practitioner and theoretical level, of the use of the graphic facilitative methods in an organisational change context. This understanding was established through the meeting of the research objectives. The following section discusses how the research objectives were met and identifies specific conclusions that have been drawn from the study.

8.1.1 Research Objective 1

To explore and understand how graphic facilitative methods are being used by organisations.

The author identified four practitioner companies who were using graphic facilitative methods within client organisations. Two were small US based consultancies and the other two were small UK based consultancies. Links were established with the companies and interviews conducted. A preliminary study was carried out which entailed conducting thirteen interviews and observing a workshop process that used the methods. Eight of the data collection interviews were conducted with users of the methods and five with practitioners of the methods.

A rich set of qualitative data was gathered and analysed. Through this analysis, key themes were identified and an understanding of the methods established. The dominant

themes to have emerged were then identified so as to be taken forward for further exploration. These dominant themes were:

- The methods are clear, understandable and engaging because they use graphics, metaphors and visuals.
- The methods help the user to understand the company wide strategy and the role they play.
- The methods encourage dialogue, storytelling and communication which in turn facilitate a change in behaviour, assumptions and attitude.

The methods are used predominantly within the strategic change process, to help companies to develop, communicate and implement strategic change.

Research Objective 2

To develop a conceptual model that describes the attributes of the graphic facilitative methods.

The three themes identified as important for further investigation were built upon and developed into a conceptual model.

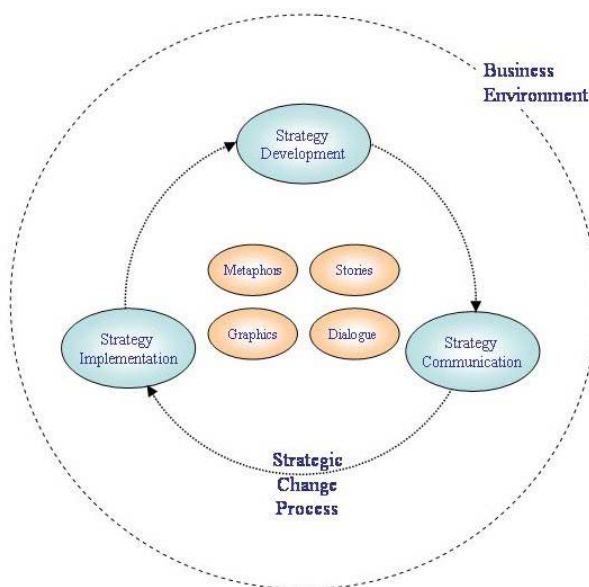


Figure 8-1: Conceptual model

The conceptual model describes the strategic change process within the context of the changing business environment. It was identified, from the literature and research interviews that the strategic change process involved three phases. These are the development of the strategy, the communication of the strategy and the implementation of the strategy. It was also identified that the methods were predominantly used within this strategic change process to facilitate one or all of the phases. The research showed that the methods used four main techniques to encourage communication and change; these are graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue.

From the understanding developed, through the preliminary study and the on-going literature review, the author conducted a focused study to explore the use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue in the strategic change process. For this phase of the study, the author chose to use two of the four graphic facilitative methods as data collection sites and conducted research into three cases (Companies A, B and C). A further twelve interviews were conducted with questions focused specifically on the themes identified in the conceptual model. Seven of the data collection interviews were conducted with users of the methods, three with practitioners of the methods and a further two with experts in the fields of strategy and change management. Survey data was obtained from one of the three cases (company A) and a workshop observation carried out in another case (company C).

The data gathered identified that the methods were being used predominantly to facilitate an improved strategy communication process and, in concurrence with the literature review, this phase in the strategic change process was considered important by the organisations.

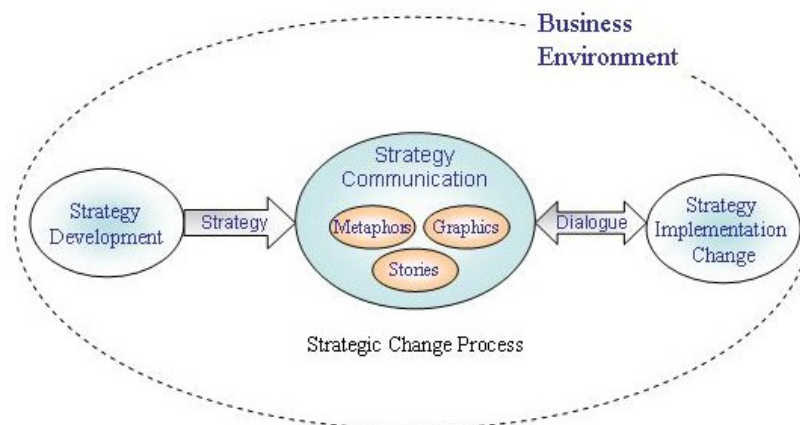


Figure 8-2: Refined conceptual model

Figure 8-2 shows the refined conceptual model based on the findings. The focused study established that the methods use three key communication techniques, these are: metaphors, graphics and stories. The dialogue, rather than being a communication technique, as previously supposed, is an outcome of the process and helps in facilitating a change in behaviour and assumptions. The research has shown that these methods, through the combination of using metaphors, graphics and stories, provide a unique communication method and one that can help in improving an organisation's strategy communication phase, with the aim of having a positive impact on the implementation phase through improved dialogue, interaction and understanding.

8.1.2 Research Objective 3

To critically review the literature and other secondary sources in relation to; strategy, change management, complexity theory, strategy communication and current perspectives on the use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue as organisational communication techniques.

The researcher categorised three perspectives within the literature of strategy, change management and complexity. It was found that there was a change in perspective from a traditional view, to a new perspective and a third perspective, that the author refers to as radical. The literature indicated that theorists were moving away from the traditional view of organisational strategy and change. The traditional perspective was described as a rationalist approach to strategic change, whose premises were focused on control, stability, planning and linear models. The newer perspective focused on the notion of emergent strategy and the importance of facilitating the learning and creative capabilities of people for strategic purposes. In addition a more radical perspective is emerging, which builds upon the premises of the new perspective, where increasingly theorists have been focussing on the effect of unpredictability and complexity in strategy and change management.

In conclusion, it was seen that the new theories emphasised the need for new management practices as well as a new strategic development process for the changing organisations. In terms of strategic change, the emphasis was on the importance of people within the whole organisational change context and viewing strategic success as dependent on obtaining employee commitment to the new strategy. The theories recognised that employees were not likely to respond to directive approaches as they had done in the past, and that more interactive and facilitative methods would better enhance employee understanding and commitment to the organisation and its strategy. Great emphasis was placed on the importance of the communication aspect of strategy and the need to deliver a strategic message to all employees in a format that allowed them to understand, firstly why there was a need for a new strategy and secondly what their role was within the new strategy. From the literature reviewed therefore a gap emerged in the theoretical field of strategic change which indicated that there was a lack of new management solutions to help organisations, to introduce new perspectives, within their strategic change process.

Alongside this review, a separate field was reviewed that focused on the four elements identified in the conceptual model as key techniques that the methods use for strategy communication and change. The literature in these areas was found to be fragmented. Although these techniques are described as effective methods for the purpose of communication and understanding, it was found that the use of graphic, metaphors, stories and dialogue were not highly connected into the strategy and change management literature. There is little research to understand how these techniques could facilitate improved strategy communication.

8.1.3 *Research Objective 4*

To identify how the methods can improve the process of strategy communication within the strategic change process.

Through the combined findings of the preliminary and focused study, the subsequent refinement of the conceptual model, from the literature reviewed and from insights gained during the study, the researcher has established an understanding of how the methods can contribute to improved strategy communication and developed a theory as a contribution to this academic field.

1. The use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue, in combination, can help to improve the strategy communication process by conveying a clear strategic message.

- The development of a graphical and metaphorical visual representation encourages the clear articulation of the strategic vision. Once in this format it proves to be more understandable to employees who were not directly involved in its development.
- The graphical and metaphorical representation provides a clear and understandable story of the past, present and future of the organisation and its strategy.
- Memory retention and recall is improved through the visual representation and this in turn enhances employee decision making capabilities and provides engagement and motivation in context of the strategy.

2. The use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue, in combination, can help to improve the strategy communication process by facilitating an interactive strategy communication process.

- The graphics and visual metaphors encourage discussion which helps employees to become engaged and more committed to the strategy.
- The process allows people to debate amongst peers and come to their own conclusions about the content of the strategy, which stimulates a feeling of being involved with and valued in the strategic process.

3. The use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue, in combination, can help to improve the strategy communication process by encouraging communication in an open and safe environment.

- The graphic and metaphorical representation of the strategy can help legitimise the conversation of previously difficult to discuss business issues and provide a less confrontational space for dialogue.
- The research re-enforced the view that discussion of these shadow conversations facilitates a change in assumptions and potentially behaviour, in line with the strategy.

4. The research has re-enforced the view that the strategy communication process will be more successful by ensuring the strategy is driven by the right people.

- The methods allow senior management to have a degree of visible participation in the communication process. This facilitates increased commitment and motivation to the change programme from other employees.

5. The research has re-enforced the view that the strategy communication process will be more successful if the strategy development is realistic.

- The development process of the graphical and metaphorical visual representation is such that it encourages the clear articulation of a realistic strategic vision.
- The methods represent a practical method that can address the current need for a more emergent approach to strategic change.
- The process allows for some integration of bottom up, organic and emergent strategies with the current top down approach.

6. The use of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue, in combination, can help to improve the strategy communication process because they are new, innovative and different.

8.2 Contribution to Knowledge

There has been no formal academic research into the use of the graphic facilitative methods in a business environment. In that respect, to the authors' knowledge, this piece of research is unique.

Through the review of the literature it was recognised that other researchers have identified the growing importance of strategy communication, but to date there is little research on how strategy communication can be improved.

The research is novel as it conducted an in depth study into the use of these graphic facilitative methods in the context of the strategic change process. The investigation built an understanding of the graphic facilitative methods based on preliminary and focused exploratory studies. The knowledge gathered in relation to the methods was developed into a theoretical conceptual model. This showed that the methods could be used, at a practical level, for strategy communication.

The research also led to a review of the literature in the fields of graphics, metaphors, stories and dialogue. These areas were traditionally highly segmented fields but through the study the researcher has argued for the benefits of combining the four elements to provide a practical solution for strategy communication. The research has therefore also contributed to current knowledge by bringing together several separate fields within the literature to provide coherence.

The research has therefore identified a gap in current knowledge and has developed a novel theory on which future strategy communication projects can be based. This

theory provides a descriptive (rather than prescriptive) blueprint of the elements which can be combined in order to improve an organisation's strategy communication process.

8.3 Further Work and Limitations

In many respects it is felt that the research has provided a starting point for future research on these graphic facilitative methods. The research has provided understanding and deeper insights into the methods from which a conceptual model was developed and a theory built. This section makes some recommendations for further work that have emerged out of this research study.

8.3.1 Test Theory in More Cases

The development of the theory was based on a limited number of cases, therefore further research could include taking the findings from this study and applying them to a wider sample of client companies, to validate and strengthen the theory developed.

8.3.2 Qualitative vs. Quantitative

The research was an exploratory study using a qualitative, grounded theory approach, which proved to be a highly effective strategy for guiding the research. It allowed for the collection of explorative data in a valid and transparent method for the development of concepts and theory. As little was known or written about the research subject, it was felt that adopting an inductive approach to the study would be more beneficial as it allowed for the development of theory based on rich understanding and qualitative data from a phenomenological perspective.

However, the adoption of an exploratory approach based on the grounded theory strategy can be open to criticism. The phenomenological approach used to investigate the graphic facilitative methods within the strategic change process means that the findings of this research cannot be fully assessed in terms of the more traditional measures of reliability and could therefore be criticised as not being objective. Future research could include the collection of more measurable data; including more survey data for example, to enhance the view of reliability and objective reasoning.

8.3.3 Longitudinal Case Study for Change

The researcher believes that an interesting future research project would be to take a longitudinal view of the strategic change process, which has used the methods of RootLearning and the Grove, within its strategy communication phase. In particular to try and establish what occurs after the communication phase of the process and what measurable changes take place linked to the use of the methods.

8.3.4 Other Methods

Since the beginning of the research other methods, such as Big Picture Interactive², Griots Eye³ Hands on Graphics⁴, Meeting Magic⁵, MG Taylor Corporation⁶ and

² <http://www.bigpictureinteractive.co.uk/>

Sociable Media⁷, have come to light that could contribute to future research. These could be used for a comparison study or as further data collection cases.

8.3.5 Learning Preferences

One of the themes that emerged from the preliminary study showed that the methods were adept at appealing to a wide range of learning preferences. This theme was not taken for further investigation in the focused study but it is felt that further work could focus on the benefits of applying the methods for learning intensive situations, for example educational environments.

8.3.6 Group Behavioural Change

It was felt that the methods enhanced the capabilities for behaviour change because of the group interaction and the resulting dialogue that ensued in this situation. This element was not the focus of the primary investigation and further work could examine the use of these methods and similar methods for the enhancement and facilitation of behaviour and assumptions change within groups and on an individual level.

8.3.7 Development Phase

It was noted in the research that several practitioners and theorists felt that the development phase of the strategic change process was crucial to the overall success of the implementation of the strategy. The methods of the Grove in particular are used for strategy development and further work could include focussing on the effectiveness of using these methods at this phase of the process. Furthermore a theoretical outcome of the research was the significance of developing organic, emergent and bottom up strategies in current organisations. It has been argued, within this piece of research, that these methods offer practical solutions to help bridge the gap between directive strategies and more bottom-up processes through involvement in the development phase of the strategic change process. Further work could include researching the effectiveness of these methods in enabling bottom-up and emergent processes for strategic change.

³ <http://www.griotseye.com>

⁴ <http://www.handsongraphics.com>

⁵ <http://www.meetingmagic.co.uk/>

⁶ <http://www.mgtaylor.com/index.html>

⁷ <http://www.sociablemedia.com/>

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Appendices

Appendix I	Description of Methods
Appendix II	List of Questions from Stage One
Appendix III	Full Table of Results from Stage One
Appendix IV	List of Questions from Stage Two
Appendix V	Full Table of Results from Stage Two
Appendix VI	Results from Workshop Observation

I Description of Methods

I.1 RootLearning Inc.

Root Learning delivers innovative learning, communications, and change management solutions to help clients engage their employees and achieve their goals. They accomplish this by helping their clients define strategic content, develop an understanding of the strategic content, and deploy the content effectively within their organisations.

RootLearning Inc. is based in Ohio, USA and is a consulting group that assists companies in achieving corporate strategies by helping their employees understand core business issues and the individual's role in achieving corporate goals. Their philosophy is that the "root" of a successful business is an educated workforce. To do this, RootLearning creates "learning maps" that depicts corporate functions and the interrelation between each function. The learning maps are then used by the client to conduct focus groups in which employees are challenged to address various issues relating to the performance of the business. (RootLearning Inc, 2001).

The founders of RootLearning are Randy Root and James Haudan. As strategic planners they discovered that, in most businesses, there was a 'Grand Canyon' between leaders *"who could see what needed to be done, but who did not have their hands on the levers of change, and the doers who had their hands on the levers of change, but who simply couldn't see the big picture"* (Root and Haudan, 2001). They felt that companies who invested in strategy creation often failed in the task of communicating that strategy effectively.

One fundamental learning that became clear to Root and Haudan was that *"People will tolerate the directives of leadership, but they will ultimately act on their own"*. A second conclusion was that *"Everyone in the organization must see and understand the big picture"* (Root and Haudan, 2001). Their solution was to develop a learning process that

allowed people to draw their own conclusions, contribute their own opinions and understand the ‘big-picture’.

1.1.1 Learning Maps

The RootLearning creators based the development of RootLearning ‘Learning Maps Visuals’ on three fundamental beliefs.

The first is that people learn visually. They believe that visualisation is an accelerant tool and creates focussed thinking. As Root and Haudan explain, “*Visualisation allows people to develop a shared understanding of the larger systems that determine the effectiveness of their individual actions*” (Root and Haudan, 2001).



Figure I-1: Learning map (www.rootlearning.com)

Secondly they adopted the Socrates approach to learning, Socratic dialogue, believing that there are a few sustainable right or wrong answers, rather there are just better questions. The better the question the better the participation. Socrates advocated that the key to learning was a matter of asking the right questions and developed a system of asking questions to get to the core truth. His approach was as a non-interventionist, avoiding presenting his own conclusions and preferring that his students learn through their own exploration and enquiry. RootLearning have adopted a dialogue approach to the Learning Maps demanding that assumptions are challenged and long held beliefs are explored. The key is to minimise the leader / teacher talk and to maximise the learner questioning and searching.

The third principle of RootLearning is that people learn best in small groups. They recommend a group of five to eight people with a facilitator who is merely a guide and questioner leading the process. The facilitator does not have to be a content expert on the company’s business issues but a person who encourages participation and understanding through “*thought-provoking questions and what-if scenarios*” (Root and Haudan, 2001).

The Process

- A team of RootLearning facilitators meet with top executives at a client company to help them clarify their message.
- Over a period of months the team (including illustrators) and the company go through several iterations of RootMaps.
- These maps, which are custom made for each situation, are tested on pilot groups, made up of people from the company.
- The maps are changed according to the discussions and feedback from the pilot groups.
- The RootLearning Visual maps are rolled out into the company

(Dahle, 1999)

I.II The Grove Consultants International

Grove Consultants International was founded in 1977 by David Sibbet and is a process-consulting firm. The Grove has pioneered visual approaches for use in collaborative work environments. Their techniques aim to stimulate participation, focus big-picture thinking and enhance group learning and memory (Grove Consultants International, 2001a).

I.II.I Evolution of Grove's Graphic Methods

The Grove's visual approach to organisational consulting (Graphic Facilitation) grew out of a network of west-coast (USA) consultants in the 1970's who were inspired by group process facilitation. David Sibbet first encountered graphic recording of group process in 1972 when the training organisation he was working with (the Coro Foundation) moved into a building next to a consulting firm, Interaction Associates (IA). IA used a facilitator / recorder model for problem solving and running meetings. During eight years at the Coro Foundation, Sibbet developed an integrated system for working with large, interactive graphic displays in facilitation that he called 'Group Graphics'. "It became clear that working visually consistently enhanced group creativity, productivity and the quality of results." (Conner, M., 2000 – 2001). Between 1976 and 1981, inspired by Arthur M. Young's 'Theory of Process', Sibbet began a focused investigation of visual thinking from a process perspective and developed a grammar for visual language called the 'Group Graphics Keyboard'. The 'Group Graphics Keyboard' and 'Group Graphics' are explicit translations of Young's insights about the way simpler processes become subsystems of more complex processes in all of nature (Grove Consultants International, 2001a).

In the 1980's Sibbet and Allan Drexler used process theory to design the 'Drexler / Sibbet Team Performance' system, which has become widely used as a simple yet comprehensive framework for understanding teams and enhancing their effectiveness. More recently, in the 1990's, the theory helped shape Grove's 'Strategic Visioning' process for business planning (Grove Consultants International, 2001b).



Figure I-2: Strategic vision (www.grove.com)

Graphic Facilitation

Graphic facilitation involves recording and organizing a group's ideas with graphics, metaphors and icons on large sheets of paper. It is a type of "explicit group memory" -- a way of capturing the thoughts of group members in real time and making those thoughts available to the whole group. The appeal is that it is a technique for helping groups reach consensus and resolve disputes. Practitioners of graphic facilitation (called "graphic recorders" or "graphic facilitators") use felt marking pens and large sheets of paper, sometimes in combination with pre-made templates, for organizing group members' discussions and ideas. The templates can be both loose and free flowing or relatively tightly structured. These visual charts encourage interaction driving the group to define goals, clarify differences and form agreements by stimulating and documenting innovative thinking and dialogue.

Graphic facilitation has been used effectively in brainstorming, visioning, strategic planning, annual retreats and focus groups. It is a transferable technique but works best with groups of people to run meetings and workshops (of any nature) more effectively. Large graphic charts and posters help anchor ideas and keep concepts alive long after the meeting.

I.II.II The Grove's Models

The tools and techniques that Grove developed over time have also been influenced by systems theory, General Semantics, and established practices of strategic planning, as well as graphic language and process theory.

Group Graphics Keyboard

The keyboard contains seven archetypal display formats; posters, lists, clusters, grids, diagrams, drawings, mandalas. Each format has a different structure and function. Understanding which to use at different phases of a meeting is important. For example, single images focus a participants attention and are good for title posters. Lists flow in a linear fashion and are therefore good for brainstorming and action lists.

The Drexler / Sibbet Team Performance Model

This process is used for understanding the seven repeating challenges (orientation, trust building, goal clarification, commitment, implementation, high performance renewal) of

high-performing teams. It provides team leaders and members with a clear framework for developing teams and helps identify the blocks to high performance.

Strategic Visioning

This process is used for designing organisational planning and change management processes, to achieve maximum alignment on mission, vision, values and strategies. Using the ‘Graphic Guides’ (templates) as tools for big-picture thinking, the team is encouraged to make decisions based on a shared understanding of the past and vision of the future.

Figure 6 is the first Graphic Guide of the Strategic Visioning process, it draws out a group’s past tracking where the organisation has been in order to define its future. There are currently approximately 18 ‘Graphic Guides’ to choose from for the ‘Strategic Visioning’ process, and more in development. On average only seven of the fifteen ‘Graphic Guides’ will be chosen in one ‘Strategic Visioning’ process.

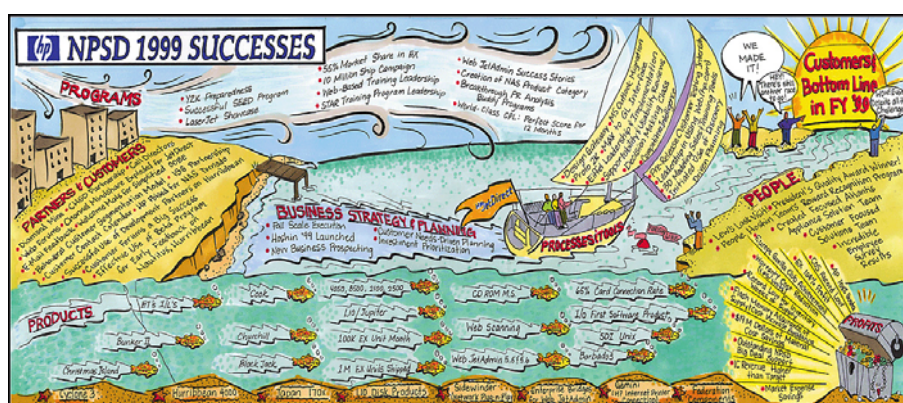


Figure I-3: History template (www.grove.com)

I.III Don Braisby Associates

Don Braisby is a graphic recorder who set up his own business seven years ago to work as an independent facilitator to all business sectors in Europe and the USA.

Graphic recording is a process that is used to record meetings in words and pictures on large visual displays, which has been shown to stimulate the creativity, productivity and understanding of work groups (<http://www.donbraisby.co.uk/graphrec.html>).

The display provides a group memory of the meeting that is easy to understand and share with others. This enriches the work of the group and enhances its ability to focus and find creative ways around problems. Graphic recording is a helpful tool to facilitate the work of many different types of group working on complex problems. A well executed graphic display supports people to work more effectively, efficiently and creatively in groups.



Figure I-4: Graphic recording (www.donbraisby.co.uk)

Using large displays for recording and facilitating meetings and giving presentations has many advantages over the using flip charts and overhead projectors. As an integrative big picture technology it takes recording and presentations into new dimensions beyond the mere recording and presentation of lists.

- the richness of the whole picture can be seen at a glance
- links can be identified and further drawn out
- participants get drawn in and involved
- a visual dialogue is created during which people construct new meaning and gain new insights
- the display becomes a group memory
- when participants see what they say being recorded they feel acknowledged, have a way of checking its accuracy and can actively engage with the process
- the working group experience empowerment
- presentations using large displays become alive and interactive

(<http://www.donbraisby.co.uk/graphrec.html>)

Process

Don Braisby uses graphic recording to develop a rich picture of meetings, conferences or events. The result is a record in words and pictures to remind clients of the event and its activities, which can be used to summarise and present the event in a lively and interactive way.

I.IV Delta 7

Julian Burton is a graphic artist who set up his own business to work as an independent practitioner. By translating current context, vision and strategy into large, colourful pictures he provides a powerful catalyst for discussing the challenging and complex

Process

One use for this method is to help teams agree on a common perspective. A team is interviewed, and a picture is created that distills many aspects of the organisation's current reality that are not usually discussed openly. It is then used to engage them in conversation. Usually it allows discussion on difficult subjects, as the picture, often containing humorous details, becomes a focus of attention creating a safe space to voice concerns and ask burning questions.

Another application is as a bridge between team development and internal communication. From initial interviews with a team leader, a "Big Picture" emerges that is used personally by them to communicate their vision/strategy/values to their teams, engaging them in a rich and insightful discussion. The picture is then evolved and developed to be taken out into the organisation to engage everyone in discussion, moving the dialogue forward in a constructive and creative way, in short, this method catalyses rich, informal and meaningful dialogue.

(www.delta7.com)

II List of Questions – Stage One

○ Questions for companies who have used graphic methods

Table II-1: Company demographics

Company Name	
Size of company	
Market segment	
Which graphic templates have you used?	
For what purpose did you use the templates? (Business plan, strategy development, projects plan, communication.)	
Was it a workshop process?	
Number of participants	
Over what time period	

1. Can you outline your first impressions of the Graphic methods / tools?
2. Did you find the graphical tools beneficial?
3. If so, what were some of the benefits? (Short term and long term).
4. What did you not like about the approach?
5. What were the disadvantages of using the tool?

6. Do you think the graphic method is different to other methods you have used before? Explain why. (Comparison with what you have used it for i.e. business planning)
7. Which method do you prefer and why?
8. Have you used the tools / methods as a one off?
9. Will you use them again? In different situations or the same?
10. In general, is there something in particular that you found interesting when using these tools?

Interview Questions for facilitating companies

1. Can you explain a little bit about the graphic tools that you use?
2. In what context do you use the graphic tools? (Strategy, business planning, projects plan, communication.)
 - a. How and why did you start using these tools?
 - b. Do you find that the graphical tools have benefits over other methods that you use or have used in the past?
3. What do you think it is about the graphical methods that make them successful?
4. Do you think there are any down sides to using these methods?
5. How do your clients respond to these tools?
6. Are there some organisations that seem to like these methods more than others?

III Full Table of Results – Stage One

Table III-1: Full table of results from stage one interviews

CODE	THEME	TEXT FROM INTERVIEWS
13.1	<i>Shared understanding</i>	we saw them as being a foundation stone that needed laying across the whole organisation so that people all had a shared understanding of where we were, why we were where we were and where we were going from this point in time
13.2	<i>Understanding</i>	because people had very different understandings of where we were and how we got there and what we were doing next
13.15		I'm taking early retirement, and until I did RootLearning I didn't understand why.'
13.16		They were managing the leisure area and they didn't understand why we were exiting leisure. But having done RootLearning they went 'no brainer, we don't make money on it, all these people do, so we're coming out
13.33		It was the only thing I thought over a year that would actually engage people and really get them to understand what it is we were trying to say and nothing works better
13.47		So for me it is essential that people understand how they are contributing to what the company's trying to do. Because otherwise what's making them get out of bed in the morning
13.3	<i>Level playing field</i>	So it was very much a 'let's get everyone to a level playing field'
13.62		As a company we've benefited because everyone's on the same page, we're at a level playing field, everyone has at least this level of information about the company, assuming everyone's gone through it
13.63		Whereas before it would have been some people would have had detailed knowledge about some stuff and other people would never have heard of that project. So at least know everyone has 'oh right 'on shelf availability' is one of our projects' if that had been in a RootMap we would all have known about it

13.4	Engaged	How we could get our people engaged and motivated in an interactive way of communicating to them and I couldn't find anything else. I found different companies that did the same thing
13.32		It was the only thing I thought over a year that would actually engage people and really get them to understand what it is we were trying to say and nothing works better
13.5	Motivated	How we could get our people engaged and motivated in an interactive way of communicating to them and I couldn't find anything else. I found different companies that did the same thing
13.48		So for me it is essential that people understand how they are contributing to what the company's trying to do. Because otherwise what's making them get out of bed in the morning
13.6	Communication	it was the best communication tool that people had ever experienced
13.38		We described it as a fun, interactive way of communicating a message
13.42		And it just gives people a hook that we can back and communicate future messages off because everyone's gone through it or 95% of people will have gone through it so therefore we have a common language
13.7	Enthusiasm	The store teams have never been, and logistics team, I have never seen them so excited about something and saying 'what this has done for my people is superb' and people were talking about it in the corridors so you didn't have to prompt them there was a lot of 'have you been on the RootLearning?
13.8	Memory	they remember the general gist of the story and what we were trying to get across then that was superb and that's what we got
13.35		but when I've walked away from a RootMap, from what other people have said, I can actually remember quite a lot of it, and I might not remember it was 62% but I do remember that the biggest proportion was that particular answer there
13.36		And that's what's powerful, people have retained the information and have said
13.9	Vision	they remember the general gist of the story and what we were trying to get across then that was superb and that's what we got
13.10	Own conclusions	I think that it is because you don't preach at people
13.13		And I think that is the power. Instead of having somebody stand at the front of the room and speak AT you however interactive and Q & A you might make it, it's never the same as working it out for yourself
13.14		And the power is that it opens people's eyes and when you're facilitating you can see in some cases pennies dropping
13.18		That's why I know it's a success. And that's why I know it hit the mark, it's what people wanted, they want more of it and the reason they give me is that it's interactive and they come to their own conclusions
13.19		That's the most important element, although we tell them the answers, or people tell me the answers, I feel as if I've come to my own conclusions and I've not been forced down a road, going somewhere that I don't want to go
13.56		For various reasons at least RootMap gives you a consistent message going out and people take out of it what they will. Which is fine, but the message has gone out consistently
13.59		It's interactive and they come to their own conclusions, so they don't feel talked at to talked down to and what we've found is that the most junior assistant is quite happy to stand his/her ground and argue with a senior manager because most of the time it doesn't feel like it's that sort of relationship in the session

13.11	Manipulative	although it could be seen as manipulative because you have decided what story you want and you obviously guide people through to at least a vague conclusion
13.12	Right answers	And in some cases there are right and wrong answers. On Map 3 there isn't actually, there are two things on there that have got right and wrong answers the rest of it is 'what do you think about this
13.17	Interactive	That's why I know it's a success. And that's why I know it hit the mark, it's what people wanted, they want more of it and the reason they give me is that it's interactive and they come to their own conclusions
13.52		nothing has created such a buzz as the RootMaps and that's probably because you've got 8 – 10 people that you're round a table with having a really, heated at some points, discussion about things, rather than you sitting in a room with 50 other people looking at the front and being talked at by people
13.60		It's interactive and they come to their own conclusions, so they don't feel talked at to talked down to and what we've found is that the most junior assistant is quite happy to stand his/her ground and argue with a senior manager because most of the time it doesn't feel like it's that sort of relationship in the session
13.20	Conversation	think it's because it's a conversation that people have around a structure so it's not just a 'what do you think about our strategy
13.21	Structure	think it's because it's a conversation that people have around a structure so it's not just a 'what do you think about our strategy
13.22	Level playing field	we have to get you to an end point and the whole point of doing it is so that we're all on a level playing field in terms of information
13.23	Discussion	So I think it's actually a mixture of the fact that it's a big discussion and a big picture and there are key elements along the way where you get your points across
13.28		and it helped people articulate and discuss what xxx was like and why it was like that in then past, what's changed in our environment
13.50		nothing has created such a buzz as the RootMaps and that's probably because you've got 8 – 10 people that you're round a table with having a really, heated at some points, discussion about things, rather than you sitting in a room with 50 other people looking at the front and being talked at by people
13.24	Big picture	So I think it's actually a mixture of the fact that it's a big discussion and a big picture and there are key elements along the way where you get your points across
13.25	Process	But it doesn't stop you form coming off the script and detouring, but most of the time your following a process but not feeling like you're being forced down a route
13.26	Story	We didn't use a story as much as we used the picture to walk through
13.29		The picture tells a story itself then the script says "this map is about xxx changing retail environment" and it takes you through
13.31		So it's not a story as in a Jackanory story but it is very much about getting your from here around the board to there and do things along the way
13.27	Picture	We didn't use a story as much as we used the picture to walk through
13.30		The picture tells a story itself then the script says "this map is about Boots' changing retail environment" and it takes you through
13.34	Presentation	that's about somebody standing at the front and talking at you and I am a visual person so I can look at the slides but I don't really take it all in at that time

13.37	Thirst	It gives people the thirst to want to know more but it dies off quite quickly
13.39	Buy in	So then as soon as they'd gone through it there was no barrier whatsoever it was more a case of okay
13.40		proof of the pudding was that the stores have said 'this is so important we will fund it'
13.41		so they don't just have to do it and do it with your existing salaries budget, we'll give you extra money to do it.
13.43	Common language	And it just gives people a hook that we can back and communicate future messages off because everyone's gone through it or 95% of people will have gone through it so therefore we have a common language
13.44		So we don't have different languages whether you're a senior manager to a more junior member of staff because we've all done the same map
13.45		And all experienced the same and although you might have a slightly different conversation around the discussion point you've still have had the same discussion you might just use different words when you're in there or known more about it so have gone off in a different way
13.64		It gives people a common language
13.46	Applicability	we haven't been able to successfully make enough of a link between everybody's job and the RootMap.
13.49	Different methods	We've tried presentation, where line managers have been given a script and a presentation package. I did quarterly communication video with a briefing pack that went out to all stores and to line managers here. We're now doing quarterly communication events, where people turn up and get talked at. We've got team briefing packs. We have drop in sessions that we call 'pavilions' where we put on supplier exhibitions, where you walk around and look at everything. We've tried all sorts of different things
13.51	Buzz	nothing has created such a buzz as the RootMaps and that's probably because you've got 8 – 10 people that you're round a table with having a really, heated at some points, discussion about things, rather than you sitting in a room with 50 other people looking at the front and being talked at by people
13.53	Poor information	you're no longer reliant on your manager to cascade information and that we know in most companies line manager cascades don't work
13.54		People don't remember stuff, people don't do the cascade because they decide 'my people don't need to know that information' or knowledge is power so 'I'm going to know it and you aren't'. So for various reasons people just don't get the information or they don't take it in and people put their own spin on it
13.55	Consistent message	For various reasons at least RootMap gives you a consistent message going out and people take out of it what they will. Which is fine, but the message has gone out consistently
13.57	Participation	For the person doing it the biggest thing is that they get to participate, normally with people they don't work with on regular basis, so they build a network and they get to see things from a different viewpoint.
13.58	Investment appreciation	The second thing that people have found valuable is that the company has invested that amount of time in them so it makes them feel valued as an individual because it's two hours off the shop floor
13.61	Equality	It's interactive and they come to their own conclusions, so they don't feel talked at to talked down to and what we've found is that

the most junior assistant is quite happy to stand his/her ground and argue with a senior manager because most of the time it doesn't feel like it's that sort of relationship in the session

IV List of Questions – Stage Two

1. How is this approach different from more traditional change programmes?
2. Some of my earlier interviews put emphasis on metaphors, dialogue.
 - c. Do you find that people use metaphors when describing things? If so what do you think using metaphors adds to the process?
 - d. Same question for dialogue.
3. When do you think this approach would not be appropriate?
4. Do you think there are any down sides to using these methods?
5. Another key aspect that I found from my 1st set of interviews was that stories are used frequently.
 - e. Do you find people tend to ‘tell stories’ within your workshops?
 - f. What do you think the impact of this is?
6. Do you find that the graphical tools have benefits over other methods that you use or have used in the past?
7. What impact do you think you had in a change programme?
8. Some authors in the literature that I have been reviewing believe that change occurs through people interacting and talking, by having a dialogue.

- g. What do you think?
9. What do you think the companies would have done without you?
 - h. What methods could they have used and why is using yours more beneficial?
 10. What changes have you seen in the business environment in the last three years?
 11. How has it affected your products / toolkit?
 12. What made you choose the methodologies you have chosen?
 13. Have you seen change programs that have failed?
 - i. Why do you think they failed?
 14. What has made you focus on the local level change initiatives?
 15. Have you ever seen individuals or groups change their behaviour as a result of the RootLearning process? Any examples?
 16. How much is change directed rather than emergent?
 17. Do you believe that top down is the best way? Only way? What other forms of strategic direction could an organisation have?
 18. From your experiences in change implementations do you find that there are general trends across organisations or is each case very different and specific?
 19. Views in general about change management programs.

V Full Table of Results - Stage Two

Table V-1: Full table of results from stage two interviews

CODE	THEME	TEXT FROM INTERVIEWS
23.22	<i>Biz environment</i>	this was very much getting everybody onto the same page and looking at the opportunities that we have now working closely with retail, that we talked about on the bridge, further investing
23.23	<i>Biz environment</i>	Working together, we've never worked this closely with retail until this year, and I think that's significant in terms of things like Laurel's appointment. Because when she was appointed to replace xxx Our Chief Exec, she was actually appointed a main Board director as well whereas xxx wasn't. So she's got that relationship with the Board, and we actually have got xxx as our Chairman of Financial Services who attends our Board meetings, even though he is about to transfer back off to the south
23.69	<i>Biz environment</i>	Lots of internal issues and most of it came back to not listening basically to the customers and being a bit complacent I think
23.1	<i>Tools / methods</i>	we couldn't believe it and at the end of it we all went 'yes that's it, this is going to be really powerful'. And we turned to the training girls and we said 'what do you think?' and they said 'oh, what a tool'. And then we turned to the guys from the front line areas and said 'how do you think your staff would...', he said well we've never done anything like this before. And we said right that's it, lets...we need to take it a stage further
23.2	<i>Tools / methods</i>	And it was really the guys that were taking a strategy and making it happen in the business. And saying to them we believe that from an internal communications we can use this as a really good tool to get everybody on the same page
23.3	<i>Tools / methods</i>	And she sat there and she goes 'well guys, I don't know what you think but I think this is what we need

23.7	<i>Tools / methods</i>	We did a couple of trial sessions at work to see if they worked and the feedback was tremendous. Couldn't believe...people went 'oh that's fantastic', they didn't want it to finish
3.47	<i>Tools / methods</i>	Yes, our strategy in the past has been very much maybe done on an A4 flyer and we've just talked about the key objectives of the business. And there's been a picture of, you know, somebody, maybe Laurel, or it would be...the year before would have been xxx and it would have the key objectives and this is where we're going and why. With no almost background and understanding and rationale in terms of why we're doing that.
23.49	<i>Tools/methods</i>	To a certain degree, because people needed to understand where they were going. But if you actually understand or know, because yes they would know what we were trying to achieve but they wouldn't necessarily know why
23.58	<i>Tools / methods</i>	And what they had in the past was a book, and you'd open this book out and a 3D image would pop up. And it was very similar to this it was a store frontage, and it would stand proud. I've got one in Chester actually, I suspect they won't have any here. And they used that in stores to get people on the change process for the store. But I'm not sure it's as engaging, because when xxx who worked on this from Group, who worked with us as our Group person if you like – our Group spokesperson for ours – he felt this was so much more engaging because people were having to do things and talk about things and actually come up with answers. Whereas the storyboard was just the manager stood there with this very fancy board people could look at. You felt as though somebody could drive a little bus round
23.62	<i>Tools / method</i>	I think it's just so different from anything we'd ever used in the past, and there was a real appetite for something quite creative and innovative. And I think that people felt valued in terms of being able to go through it. The fact that everybody was going through it and they could see everybody was going through it. It wasn't as though it was just the top team being communicated to, they saw everybody going through this. So they saw all like the directors and the senior team going through it. It was just such a powerful tool
23.65	<i>Tools / methods</i>	We hadn't seen anything that we felt would be as engaging as this. And we had a new CEO, we were going through a whole period of change. It was almost as though we needed something, something new to set us off on a different route and this did it
23.86	<i>Tools / methods</i>	<i>And the last one is about having it graphically represented.</i> Definitely it must be 10 out of 10, cos there was no other way we could have got all this information over to them apart from the mega slide show, which would have been boring. And even a video – you could do it on a video – but it wouldn't be engaging.
23.87	<i>Tools / methods</i>	People are just static, they're sitting watching. They're not doing, they're not taking part. It hasn't got that interaction so
23.88	<i>Tools/methods</i>	And each of them did their...and it was very brief, it was probably only three/four minutes. And they each talked about what would grow our customers. What then would simply be more efficient – what did that mean to the Financial Services business.
23.89	<i>Tools/methods</i>	I think there was one... 'video's – good to see xxx Board members on video'. So yes they'd seen Laurel because she's in the business and she spends a couple of days a week up in Chester, but they hadn't seen any of the other ones. They'd heard the name but they had never seen them
23.32	<i>Vision</i>	But they each on the video you just see them, and then you carry on

		the journey and it's again, looking at competition and looking at where we're going. And then Roger...there's another video right at the end where Roger talks about the future and it's like visionary actually, and it's actually interjection
23.4	<i>Strategy</i>	But the people that we had working on it were people like Richard who's been in the business for years, he's also in strategy and development, so he's very clear about our direction and everything and what we're trying to do
23.27	<i>Strategy</i>	So she did that and from there they started to say with the new strategy that Group were wanting to do and really focussing on the strategy for this next year, they want to develop one of these for roll out to the 60,000 staff at xxx of which we were part of it
23.38	<i>Strategy</i>	I think if you go back into how we used to do presentations. If we wanted to communicate I don't know our strategy or something we'd have probably a 30 slide presentation that by the 14 th slide everybody had just switched off and couldn't remember anything. This actually allowed us to almost like get more information on here than we needed, and to try and link it so it was all on the one page. So it wasn't like a 30 slide presentation that people would go to sleep on
23.15	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	And they loved these because they didn't realise just how well we'd done. When you ask them, even the directors when you say to them 'how much did our funds under management grow during this period?', and... I don't know about 5/10% B, 20% C
23.16	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	And what we were given was almost like this golden opportunity this bridge into the main business. And seeing that we had the opportunity to support the business in developing their sort of reward as well
23.17	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	And it was only through looking at the financial performance, looking at what the card trend in the industry's doing, that you could actually then get people to discuss and start to come up with an 'ah, crikey, that's really not the area to be in any longer - that's a declining market'. And you get them to start thinking about it
23.18	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	And we wanted to bring in some competitor understanding as well because we very much felt that within the business we were only ever looking at ourselves. We never looked outwards in terms of competitors. And what we have is we obviously we've got the competitors in terms of the retailers that have also gone into financial products. So we've got xxx and xxx which also compete with xxx.
23.30	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	you go through almost like the history and the strengths and everything
23.48	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	It was a what, not why we're doing it as well. Whereas this gave us the opportunity to actually say why we're doing it, cos you could bring in the different aspects – the competitors and the market place
23.56	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	Common language, common sort of understanding of the goal really. And something we could keep using throughout the year in any communication plans. They were constantly coming back, like the mountain that we had, we constantly came back to this mountain. Any time we did any communication the people knew it was about the strategy, they knew it was about well what they'd heard through the root map sessions. It was the next phase
23.63	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	I think it's probably the first time we'd really talked about competitors as well. I don't think we've really talked about those from an internal communication perspective. Marketing use them

		and the analyst team would have known them, buyers probably, but some of the front line areas wouldn't. They'd know them because they'd seen them on the press or they'd seen them on TV or they'd got their own card, they'd got a xxx card or something. But it...no way had we ever talked about those in the same context of what we were trying to do
23.70	<i>Strategic Understanding</i>	But going through this you talk through about the xxx strength and they actually link in because they've got a customer focus there of being a strength but during this period there was no customer focus whatsoever. And I think that helped our people certainly get to a common understanding of what the causes were in the past
23.71	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	We took great pride in making sure everybody understood everything on the map, and it was suitable for the audience it was going to. This one seemed to come out without really that consideration and it was going to some areas that may not understand that terminology. Even though we were included we were excluded in terms of understanding
23.74	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	So from my perspective what this did for me was to bring all that information that I've picked up over my 8 and a half years and put it down onto one page. And certainly it helped me understand like the card trends. I had to be one of those people in the business that really wasn't paying a great deal of notice of the competitors, so that's increased that awareness. And certainly from an objective – my own personal objective – was to get more understanding of the competitor side. And I used to work in Finance but, yes the figures were good, but I'm not sure we actually...cos we do celebrate, I don't think we ever realised we were doing so well. So yes it helped me, helped me understand, and actually able to capture it all onto one page.
23.76	<i>Strategic understanding</i>	This is coming back to our existing products and being able to sell those customers more products. So it's fitting into the whole business so the life and pensions dept should be proud that we're doing this because this is going to re-invigorate base, and they can then start selling more of their products
23.21	<i>Strategic learning</i>	It's not who you think at all. And what we were trying to do is with the launch of our credit card, this pilot that we were doing in South Wales and hopefully finding the learnings from that would be what would be our next goal, if you like, in terms of what we were trying to do. We were trying to get across you know why would somebody want our card more than anybody else's and trying to get them thinking about it in a wider sense rather than just purely a store card. And it worked
23.61	<i>Strategic learning</i>	It was almost recognition. I can't believe on some of the people's faces when you do...when we did this. And...they wanted more information, they were absorbing so much. And they actually said to us at one stage can you pop us all the answers onto the internet somewhere so that we can look at all the answers. 'I'm not sure that's really the point of this', yes so we can share the answers we need
23.75	<i>Strategic learning</i>	It was almost as if we were trying to make it 100% correct before we went out. I think the credit card proved to us that actually to do a pilot gave us that freedom to do the learnings but also to trial it at the same time
23.57	<i>Strategic alignment</i>	And then when this map came out and we could actually position it, and we did at the beginning of the sessions, we talked about it 'you've all been through this one, you know what we talked about

		in there in terms of that opportunity we've been given by Group. On here you will see just how important we are to Group in their delivery of their strategy for the next few years'. It was good that we'd done this one.
23.5	Strategic communication	and to make sure what we were saying about group – cos we talked about group in it – that we made sure that we were correct in our... it wasn't just our interpretation from xxx, it was actually what the group would be feeling as well
23.36	Strategic actions	And again we've got competitors in there, and it's a facilitated session but this time it's more...we've focussed on very much of a getting everybody onto thinking about brands and the next stage is that they actually develop action plans, so it's a two-staged session
23.37	Strategic actions	So rather than it being the atrium session where everybody does all the bits and pieces and, you know, mixed tables and everything, we've actually got it so that the manager in Customer Services will do his teams. Cos the issues we felt were, it was about the ways of working so you're trying to take it forward in terms of actions for the department themselves. So that's a completely different way.
23.8	Implementation	it's nothing like here, it's a very modern building with a huge atrium – and the whole of the atrium was taken over by Root maps. So we had big circular tables and we must have had about 150 people going through it at any one stage
23.11	Implementation	Though it's funny on some of the days you'd look down into the atrium to see it all taking place and taking shape, and you'd see somebody there in their catering uniform stood with the other groups
23.28	Implementation	We use it now on an ongoing basis for inductions but again we've taken everybody through it.
23.6	Story	This last one has been through quite a few different changes, but ours we probably had a very clear story about what we wanted to do
23.29	Facilitator	When we did this one we trained up something like 25 facilitators from across the business. They weren't managers, they were just people with the right skills and the right sort of...I suppose approach really, because you wanted them to be almost like a 'trainer' but not be seen as a training tool
23.9	People	And it was a real buzz. Everybody you know...to start with there was a little bit of scepticism, they were going 'oh I'm not sure, I don't like this – what are we doing?'. And it was almost as though we were going to be tested. When they had the feedback then from some of the people coming back into the department to say 'oh actually that was quite good', 'I've learnt ever such a lot on that', and they were all saying 'oh I might go on the next one then
23.10	People	But basically the departments worked with us cos we wanted mixed tables, we didn't want everybody from Finance and everybody from HR, we wanted that cross-section
23.12	People	I facilitated one of the groups which was the executives. The executives and the senior managers could not be put on the tables with the others cos we reckoned they'd just take over the whole thing. And people would look to them for the answers so we said we'll move them. Even though we wanted them to be visible as going through it, we didn't want them to almost make the tables look to them for the answers really
23.13	People	And they didn't get the answers right either! Even though they were like senior managers/directors they didn't know some of the answers that the teams were being asked either so...it was really powerful.

23.90	People	. We had one lady who worked in our payment centre and she was due to go on one of them, and she was really nervous. In fact she was almost having a fit because she was getting herself so worked up that she was going to be on this session
23.93	People	Being challenged if you know your business, you know, and I think that's why she felt she was going to be asked questions about her area, I don't know the answer. At first when you give the cards out to some people and they spend hours reading the map trying to look for the answer... 'it's not on there – it's a guess – we don't need the exact amount'. I mean some of them are, the card options at the bottom, we talk about percentage changes and things, and we've got the cards trends up in the corner, but we'd never even mention that at this stage. The answers that come up on those card trends are actually on that... No, because they're so busy concentrating...they've all been here, and they're all concentrating down that end, nobody had looked at the card trend in the corner. It's only when they'd come to that card trend they go 'god that's the answer
23.95	People	And we found that we're using it more and more. People enjoy being in it, because they're not tucked away in a room somewhere going through a training session that they see, they see as part of the business activity
23.91	People (assumptions)	And she went down and she said to her manager 'I'm really not feeling well, I'm not sure I should be going'. And the manager said oh go on, you've booked into this session and everybody's got to go through it. 'I'm not feeling very happy, I'm feeling very hot and bothered', and she was very, very concerned. And the facilitator said that she was very quiet during the whole session, hardly spoke and in fact when she was handed a card she just... So he started to worry 'oh my god am I doing something wrong?' Anyway this lady went back into this department and said to her manager and said 'oh it was fine – can I go on the next one?'. 'Yes but you've been on one'... 'yes but I can now participate because I know it's not scary'
23.92	People (assumptions)	Because we'd never done anything like this before. People saw it as a bit of a test I think. They thought it was going to be like a game and a test. I just don't think they'd experienced anything like it before and so assumed if anything this would be testing their knowledge about what we're doing and she was so nervous about coming along..[
23.25	People (sharing)	And also we've got the way that we work closer in terms of management teams and that sort of thing, sharing of information, and clarity of focus
23.72	People (understanding)	We gave them the opportunity on ours. We actually gave a little briefing card to the guy at the very beginning who introduces the session, and says we have got a couple of store champions here today – and we get them to stand up and say where they are in the room somewhere. And if you've got any – if your table asks you a specific question that's to do with retail and you don't know what it is, stick your hand up and we'll get somebody to come over and talk to you. And that worked really well. It worked.
23.83	People (senior management)	It was because being a senior manager he wasn't able to come to one of my other sessions where the senior managers sat together so he went to another table. And he proved to us almost that it's a good job we did those separate sessions, because people did look to him as being the person with the knowledge. And he obviously was quite happy to take on that role – the person with all the knowledge.

		And it was like ‘don’t talk!’. ‘Don’t you dare say another word – let them talk’
23.73	Holistic	So from my perspective what this did for me was to bring all that information that I’ve picked up over my 8 and a half years and put it down onto one page. And certainly it helped me understand like the card trends. I had to be one of those people in the business that really wasn’t paying a great deal of notice of the competitors, so that’s increased that awareness. And certainly from an objective – my own personal objective – was to get more understanding of the competitor side. And I used to work in Finance but, yes the figures were good, but I’m not sure we actually...cos we do celebrate, I don’t think we ever realised we were doing so well. So yes it helped me, helped me understand, and actually able to capture it all onto one page.
23.24	Buy in	Then we’ve got significant buy-in at the top for what we’re doing
23.14	Metaphor	Yes, it started out as K2 for some reason – it was Laurel’s idea. We had it depicted on a symbol as on a mountain, it was like...we focussed obviously on targets and things so it was still financial but it was a mountain, it was K2
23.26	Metaphor	And we’ve got a couple of these framed up in the office now because it’s so significant for us that people look at it and know exactly it’s the history – it’s where we’ve gone and where we’re going. It’s our journey
23.52	Metaphor	This year we’ve launched the getting fit for growth as a bit of a race track, because we’ve now said that whereas on here we were striving to get up that mountain to be with the competitors, now we’re up there we now need to be instead of looking up. We now need to be looking ahead at where we’re going but also to the side of us on this race track in terms of what our competitors are doing.
23.54	Metaphor	It’s almost as if it’s common understanding. If everybody knows what it is. I mean we talked at quite a few of our senior meetings where we were talking about the whole change scenario. And the only time it really came across strongly was when somebody actually told a story. And they had that whole journey ahead of them and they could see this. And he talked about this trek across the mountains, across the desert and the mountains. And everybody around the room said we needed to be talking to our people like this, because they need to understand that when they climb this first mountain that’s not home at the other side. There’s another stretch of desert that they’ve got to go through to get over that next set of hills. So it was almost as though at this group session the senior management team were recognising the importance of actually taking the employees on this journey rather than just doing
23.78	Metaphor	<i>How important is the use of metaphor to the success of the methods and process? Out of 10.</i> It’s a mountain. The journey up the mountain – K2. That was very key for us that’s probably 10 actually. Because we’ve...all we’d been talking about all year was this K2 mountain. If we’d have introduced a race track at the time, they’d have probably thought what the hell are they doing?
23.43	Change	And it was a whole period of change that we were going through in the business. We’ve got people that have been there for...well since the business opened in 1985, but also before that when they worked for xxx or xxx, whoever it was. xxx at the time. They couldn’t understand why we needed to even change. And it was like yes but

		we're doing OK aren't we, because we've had all these successes. And they could remember the successful times
23.44	Change	And with the change in CEO – with xxx coming in and xxx leaving it was almost as though crikey we need to do something different. Because we almost were looking at things too small, we were too focussed inwards and not necessarily looking at what was actually the...what was happening in the market place around us that we weren't actually reacting
23.64	Change	Because of the change we were going through. It was actually trying to get people to understand that full change scenario really. It was just so key to us to get people thinking differently
23.67	Change	We hadn't seen anything that we felt would be as engaging as this. And we had a new CEO, we were going through a whole period of change. It was almost as though we needed something, something new to set us off on a different route and this did it
23.68	Change	I think so yes, yes. I think in this one in particular there was more of an appetite for more information, cos they came away wanting to know more about xxx and wanted to know why xxx wasn't as big as they thought it was going to be. So it created an appetite for more information about the market that we were going to go into.
23.50	Change (alignment)	Everybody working to the same goals. If you all know what it is you're trying to achieve and why you're trying to achieve it then you don't get sort of taken off on different strands and you think you're going to do something completely different. With all understanding this was key to our business that it was...we were still recognising some of the successes in the past so still needing to go back to the successful model that we had but through a different mechanism. So we were almost like congratulating ourselves for some of the stuff that we'd done but not losing sight that actually we needed to get through that change
23.51	Change (implementation)	In the past we've not been very good at implementing new things. It's taken us a long time. We almost have to be 100% right before we do anything, and then by then the market's changed. So it was actually trying to get that pace of change moved as well
23.19	Change (assumptions)	And xxx always comes out as 'oh they must have millions, they must have millions'. And it's only because I think they're on our doorstep that they're actually...they do have a significant number of cards but not as many as the traditional banks have. And then the next question is a bit more in terms of what's the percentage growth in those cards over the last sort of 5 years or something. And you exclude some of them because they haven't been running for 5 years. But everybody puts 79% on xxx when it's actually 5.
23.20	Change (assumptions)	It's not who you think at all. And what we were trying to do is with the launch of our credit card, this pilot that we were doing in South Wales and hopefully finding the learnings from that would be what would be our next goal, if you like, in terms of what we were trying to do. We were trying to get across you know why would somebody want our card more than anybody else's and trying to get them thinking about it in a wider sense rather than just purely a store card. And it worked
23.60	Change (assumptions)	Yes it was a visual way of displaying something but it didn't generate the discussion and debate. And that, particularly where you've got questions that say is it A,B C or D and the Group look round and say 'oh I think it's C, what do you think?', and it's 'well

		you know stock market's been doing this', and you get the varied opinions and then suddenly they'll go 'oh yes, yes you're probably right, I'd go with that as well'. And you'd get a consensus and you go no it was 80% and you all talked it down and you find it was 80%,
23.81	Change (assumptions)	It stimulated discussion and debate and almost trying to get that consensus. And what they did it was almost like a shared/sharing of their specialist areas. So if somebody worked in life and pensions and the questions on life and pensions they all looked to this person and go 'do you know?', and it was like I only work in the department and I don't know. But they'd talk through it more and they'd looked for the rest of the people around the table who was it on that table that could actually give them that little bit of extra information. So it was a bit competitive, they wanted to get the answers right, but they were learning as they were doing it.
23.42	Change (understanding)	Understanding. From our perspective when we did this it was an understanding of why we needed to change
23.31	Communication (senior management)	And then just as you're getting to these four themes that they're running with for next year, they broke off and then showed a video and it was each of the top Board talking about their own area
23.33	Graphic	And I went through the history of it with him and he just looked at me and said 'you've just told me so much about the business in a couple of minutes because you had the picture there to be able to do so
23.41	Graphics	I think by using the visuals you were able to have a debate around them. So having the picture here and then getting somebody to explain it. I mean yes you could put that onto a slide and everybody would go 'oh, yes', but you wouldn't have a debate. You'd have a presenter doing, you know, and this what's happened here and the people would just fall asleep. So I think because we've got the visuals there it actually helps that debate and discussion, and helps you to do that – more so than in a presentation
23.45	Graphics	So this actually allowed us to bring a lot of information together and actually demonstrate with the graphs and with the...just the dire straights really See I think the pictures help. And people remember them.
23.53	Graphics	So it's visual again and we like the visuals. So they seem to go down quite well in our business actually. I think it's innovative
23.85	Graphics	<i>And the last one is about having it graphically represented.</i> Definitely it must be 10 out of 10, cos there was no other way we could have got all this information over to them apart from the mega slide show, which would have been boring. And even a video – you could do it on a video – but it wouldn't be engaging.
23.97	Graphic (memory)	So they do have give-aways and they have reminders. But I think the fact they could take the picture away meant they could actually go back and re-look at the journey. Yes. And we put the two we framed of our original ones, we put into areas of the business that had seating. So teams could go back, and if they wanted to have a team meeting right by the map, then they've got the map up on the wall to go and re-visit it.
23.46	Graphics (memory)	You know, if you went away from a slide presentation and said OK how many of those slides can you remember? If you actually asked somebody to describe this map, they haven't got it now...but you say OK what was on that map? They go oh right oh well over here was such and such there was a bridge, they could actually do that

23.55	Story	<p>It's almost as if it's common understanding. If everybody knows what it is. I mean we talked at quite a few of our senior meetings where we were talking about the whole change scenario. And the only time it really came across strongly was when somebody actually told a story. And they had that whole journey ahead of them and they could see this. And he talked about this trek across the mountains, across the desert and the mountains. And everybody around the room said we needed to be talking to our people like this, because they need to understand that when they climb this first mountain that's not home at the other side. There's another stretch of desert that they've got to go through to get over that next set of hills.</p> <p>So it was almost as though at this group session the senior management team were recognising the importance of actually taking the employees on this journey rather than just doing</p>
23.39	Dialogue	I think by using the visuals you were able to have a debate around them. So having the picture here and then getting somebody to explain it. I mean yes you could put that onto a slide and everybody would go 'oh, yes', but you wouldn't have a debate
23.40	Dialogue	You'd have a presenter doing, you know, and this what's happened here and the people would just fall asleep. So I think because we've got the visuals there it actually helps that debate and discussion, and helps you to do that – more so than in a presentation.
23.59	Dialogue	Yes it was a visual way of displaying something but it didn't generate the discussion and debate. And that, particularly where you've got questions that say is it A,B C or D and the Group look round and say 'oh I think it's C, what do you think?', and it's 'well you know stock market's been doing this', and you get the varied opinions and then suddenly they'll go 'oh yes, yes you're probably right, I'd go with that as well'. And you'd get a consensus and you go no it was 80% and you all talked it down and you find it was 80%,
23.77	Dialogue	<i>How important is the dialogue and group discussions are to the success of the methods and process? Out of 10.</i> Oh very important I'd say 9.
23.80	Dialogue	<p>It stimulated discussion and debate and almost trying to get that consensus. And what they did it was almost like a shared/sharing of their specialist areas. So if somebody worked in life and pensions and the questions on life and pensions they all looked to this person and go 'do you know?', and it was like I only work in the department and I don't know.</p> <p>But they'd talk through it more and they'd looked for the rest of the people around the table who was it on that table that could actually give them that little bit of extra information. So it was a bit competitive, they wanted to get the answers right, but they were learning as they were doing it.</p>
23.82	Dialogue	And I think the questions were quite well structured in that sense because it made people, it wasn't just like right we'll move on now – that's the answer – they'd actually stepped back and said 'we're you surprised at that...why do you think that was...?' and so it actually gave more discussion and debate. And during the facilitator's pack it actually talks about try and get everybody to respond to this, you know. Or maybe take two or three people's views on this, so I mean you can go on for hours otherwise.
23.94	Dialogue	I think the fact that it has discussion/debate means that people...they may take different stages of getting to that understanding. But by the time they've finished they're actually on that same page.

		They've got an opportunity during the whole course to actually...it's almost like the learning that they're going to go through on a journey. Whereas in a flyer they might read it, but they don't necessarily have that opportunity then to actually say 'well what does this mean' in an environment that may be a bit scary to them. So if they go and ask the manager what this means and the manager goes 'what you mean you don't know?'. Whereas on here it was very much, it was almost like a game I suppose they got taken through. So discussion and debate.
23.96	Dialogue	There they had some discussion points there for back at in their own teams the more they share their understanding of the map
23.34	Facilitator	When I did this one, the 'getting set for growth' one with group at the 'heads of' event, the guy basically got everybody to read and it was almost like after every single question – and I found it really distracting. And I suppose I'd already been through a Root map and I know how a Root map should work, and I actually felt as though I was sat round the table thinking 'I know this should be better than this, and he's not doing it'. And I always felt shall I get in...and I thought no, no it's his map, it's his map not mine. But I did feel that he actually...it was disjointed and it didn't flow because he was constantly handing this...and everybody was like oh it's me next, it's me next...
23.84	Facilitator	<i>How about having a facilitator? Out of 10?</i> 8.
23.35	Brand	We're re-launching our Brand and we wanted to bring the brand alive. So it was almost like how we do business, what do we do, how do we say, how do you talk to our customers and that sort of thing.
23.66	Engaging	We hadn't seen anything that we felt would be as engaging as this. And we had a new CEO, we were going through a whole period of change. It was almost as though we needed something, something new to set us off on a different route and this did it
23.79	Questions/ cards	<i>How important do you think it was to the success of the process to have the questions and cards? Out of 10</i> I think that worked for us, certainly on ours. It was probably 7 out of 10.

VI Table of Results Workshop Observation – Stage Two

Table VI-1: Full table of results from stage two workshop observation

CODE	THEME	TEXT FROM OBSERVATION
1.1	<i>Dialogue</i>	Once interaction started people are very talkative. In groups talking animatedly about their jobs and role at xxx.
1.3	<i>Dialogue</i>	A lot of discussion going on at the same time facilitator asks them not to talk over each other as it gets difficult to record everyone's points.
1.10	<i>Dialogue</i>	A lot of discussions going on which are hard to organise on the chart.
1.11	<i>Dialogue</i>	Dominant few talking
1.12	<i>Dialogue</i>	Very little conflict mostly humorous discussions.
1.14	<i>Dialogue</i>	People get up to get drinks disrupting the flow of conversation. Facilitator struggles to bring it back to the point where she stopped.
1.18	<i>Dialogue</i>	Jokes about what xxx means – one man says "I've been conned". They disagree about what it stands for one man claims it is xxx commercial another says that was just a myth. The other man insists that that was the name on his contract of employment.
1.19	<i>Dialogue</i>	Some disagreement about people and when they were employed there but nothing too drastic.
1.28	<i>Dialogue</i>	Recorder records the point made by one group member about there being a "quiet period" in xxx history. This sparks a lot of discussion in that it might have been a quiet period in manufacturing but in other departments it was very very busy. Especially in the planning stages and negotiation of new deals with xxx.

1.30	<i>Dialogue</i>	12.00 pm – discussion moves on to more present focussed facts. People are a lot more quiet. Very different dynamic from when talking about the past. Discussing break up of organisation, separating departments to world xxx plants. Influx of 1,000 xxx employees to xxx.
1.33	<i>Dialogue</i>	Could be down to energy levels dropping as discussions have been going all morning. Also down to the fact that this is a less happy time period in the history
1.44	<i>Dialogue</i>	Discussion and disagreement about key headings for the map. Fascinating to listen to varying opinions about whether the business was a success or not.
1.50	<i>Dialogue</i>	Metaphor of “death by a thousand cuts” and “baptism of fire” for the different time frames. Causes a lot of discussion.
1.64	<i>Dialogue</i>	A lot of banter and good humour. People disagreeing with things but in an accepted way. 2.55 – mainly agreement on all post its some discussion over new post its and other that have been missed
1.67	<i>Dialogue</i>	There were occasions where people disagreed and the point was discussed. The outcome was either someone saying “I stand corrected” or “I didn’t know that I thought this...” no real battles to get one’s point across.
1.2	<i>Story</i>	One person telling the story. Pride in history evident.
1.4	<i>Story</i>	Brian Peck has written his own short history on a piece of paper, he says he wrote it the night before. He gets up from hi seat and goes to the front of the room and relates his personal story of how he started in xxx. He reads from his notes which are written in anecdotal fashion. The story is funny and descriptive. Written in first person.
1.7	<i>Story</i>	This person feels very strongly about the company. His relating the story of how he started at xxx is very nostalgic. He talks of how his boss of the time told him he would not last 2 weeks!
1.8	<i>Story</i>	Some people seem embarrassed by the story and Brian’s action of standing there and talking and ignore him by doing something else. Others laugh. As the story goes on more people listen and laugh and become more comfortable with it.
1.9	<i>Story</i>	People enjoy telling a story. Feeling the need to share their personal stories with the group. They were asked to prepare or think about the history of xxx Brian has put great effort into thinking about the history of xxx but relates it in very personal ways and things that have happened to him during the course of 25 years. It results in a reaction from the group either to ignore or to listen. People not comfortable with such a personal and forthcoming action.
1.15	<i>Story</i>	The man relating the story which is very personal to him.
1.55	<i>Story</i>	This is not depicted visually. Many stories used up until now but now that they’ve been asked to do heading metaphors are used to show a wider picture.
1.45	<i>Methods / tools</i>	She had not seen this used before and was impressed.
1.62	<i>Methods</i>	Another person says of the method “It’s great how it comes together so quickly”.
1.5	<i>People (involvement)</i>	Participants suggest that they map the models of cars against the timeline.
1.6	<i>People (involvement)</i>	A lot of history to go through and people keep remembering new things and want them added to the map.

1.13	People (teamwork)	xxx contract brought a strong sense of teamwork. All in the same boat. Single status. Everybody treated to the same. Good spirit. Good atmosphere empowerment.
1.16	People (perspective)	Different perspectives on people who had most influence. People take it very personally when it comes to talking about people.
1.21	People (involvement)	It causes a good interruption many people find it amusing to have photo's of their leaders on the map
1.24	People (dominant)	People are looking to him a lot for the history and letting him speak a lot.
1.25	People (personal)	People take a very personal interest in what goes up on the chart. Get agitated if it is not accurate and repeat several times to the facilitator to correct it.
1.26	People (influence)	He doesn't work in xxx anymore but must have held a senior position because people are being very respectful of his opinions.
1.27	People (interaction)	As a result there are some separate activities going on in the room. There are some people looking at the photo's and others reviewing the hand outs and magazines. The photos are being passed around.
1.29	People (perception)	Recorder records the point made by one group member about there being a "quiet period" in xxx history. This sparks a lot of discussion in that it might have been a quiet period in manufacturing but in other departments it was very very busy. Especially in the planning stages and negotiation of new deals with xxx.
1.32	People (interaction)	The facilitator has focussed on a group at the right hand side of the room it means that the rest of the group is quiet and listening.
1.34	People (Inclusion)	Perhaps feeling slightly isolated from the discussion. Facilitator though is focussed on getting the history down and probably feels that trying to include all members is very difficult as there are so many of them.
1.38	People (behaviour)	Caused some tension within the whole group and people stopped talking. Some people still answering facilitators' questions though.
1.40	People (behaviour)	The side conversations were happening earlier because people were excited and keen now it seems people are getting bored and restless.
1.46	People (understanding)	Has a big impact on people in terms of understanding what is going on and getting a clear picture.
1.47	People (behaviour)	Positive means they are enjoying themselves.
1.58	People (contribution)	Gives people who don't contribute in front of whole group a chance to get their views across. One woman who has not spoken much at all in larger group is now giving her opinions to the smaller group.
1.61	People (perception)	Norman – makes a cynical view about the cost of consultancy "how can they charge so much for doing so little?"
1.63	People (interaction)	People are heavily involved with the grouping of the themes. Listening and adding any additional information from the main map which is discussed before moving on to next post it.
1.65	People (involvement)	Not everyone is contributing now 5- 6 dominant people.

1.17	Change (perceptions)	Perceptions about head count in the company very different. People discussing it. A man asks the recorder to change the arrow from 30,000 employees to 8,900 employees.
1.23	Change (perception)	The debate doesn't get heated but in the end the 2 nd man concedes that he didn't know that and always thought it was made up.
1.35	Change (behaviour)	People always think the past is rosier than what it actually was therefore when talking about it are more positive, current day issues invoke less dynamism from the Group
1.52	Change (behaviour)	Lifting mood of group by interacting people get up to wall chart and take the information that they want. 2.10 pm – sub groups working interactively. Some people taking the role of recording on post its more than other.
1.42	Graphics	During lunch break a participant (Simone) commented about how this was a different method of conducting a meeting. Impact of graphics better than black and white seeing it all rather than pieces. Do you really need it (the large graphic) – yes when you understand what she is doing
1.53	Graphics	One group interacting greatly with the graphic map using information recorded on there. Spent the whole time at the map
1.54	Graphics	2 out of the 4 groups using the graphic for information.
1.22	Information (accuracy)	Feels a strong sense that what goes up on the chart should be accurate.
1.31	Facilitator	The facilitator feels the disruption as people continue to talk over one another.
1.41	Facilitator	Facilitator is not knowledgeable in the automotive field therefore finds it difficult to understand some things same goes for the recorder. Some prior knowledge would be useful.
1.36	Understanding	Frustration from facilitator as things are not recorded and misunderstood. Norman said that this is “your” chart but was not talking directly to the facilitator. She thought he was and insisted that it was not “her” chart that it was theirs.
1.37	Holistic	Facilitator asks group to review the map as a whole bringing out key points that had been pre-defined before the meeting. Some extra pieces of information gathered.
1.39	Holistic	Brings group back to what they are trying to cover holistically.
1.43	Process	Opening – facilitator re-caps the structure for the afternoon agenda. She wants the group to come up with clear headings for the different time frames and external factors affecting the events.
1.51	Process	Group split into sub groups to sort categories from the large map. People very willing to break out into sub groups and contribute – working together.
1.66	Process	Breaking them into groups to do the work has seemed to work well as it has brought energy into the group.
1.48	Metaphor	Uses a metaphor of a river. xxx being the main river and then the other influences into that river as tributaries into that.
1.49	Metaphor	Metaphor of “death by a thousand cuts” and “baptism of fire” for the different time frames. Causes a lot of discussion.
1.56	Metaphor	This is not depicted visually. Many stories used up until now but now that they've been asked to do heading metaphors are used to show a wider picture.

1.57	<i>Metaphor</i>	People see these as a negative description of the company and don't feel that it is wholly representative of the whole group and only applies to some parts of xxx.
1.59	<i>Metaphor</i>	Metaphors can be used for all encompassing explanations for a time period or key event
1.60	<i>Metaphor</i>	Very powerful metaphors and all people are not comfortable with using them as they are deemed very strong.

