Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Retention of Top Talent in the 21st Century

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DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment of the programme of study leading to the award of B.A. (Hons) in Human Resource Management is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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ABSTRACT

Many organisations grapple with labour turnover as the costs associated with turnover can be high, specifically where organisations are faced with a loss of skills and knowledge the consequent reduction in productivity as well as the costs of replacing leavers. At the same time, some level of turnover is desirable to make room for new employees with different innovative ideas and perspectives that bring fresh approaches to the business. The objective of the research is to identify, what are the retention drivers top talent chooses to stay with or to leave their employer.

As the 21st Century unfolds, major changes are starting to take place in organisations, such as a growing awareness of the challenges around workforce demographics, the globalisation of workforce strategies and a contest for talent. These major challenges and the suggestion that there is a potential gap in research in relation to retention processes are linked. These challenges will inevitably impact on an organisations workforce and human resource strategies and processes as we move further into the 21st Century.

DEDICATION

To my mother Brighid Thompson who celebrates her 88th birthday on the 27th July, 2010, three days prior to the thesis submission date of the 30th July, 2010.

Happy Birthday Mum

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Problem

There is a significant amount of literature written on employee turnover aimed at identifying factors that cause employees to quit. However, it appears that much less is known about the factors that compel employees to stay. The research on this topic has revealed that little literature has been developed from the perspective of top talent on why they choose to stay with or leave their employer. It has been suggested that human resource strategies and retention processes need to be studied along with quitting processes (Griffeth, Horn and Gaertner, 2000; Steel, Griffeth, and Hom, 2002; Maertz and Campion, 1998).

As the 21st Century unfolds, major changes are starting to take place in organisations, such as a growing awareness of the challenges taking place in workforce demographics, the globalisation of workforce strategies and a contest for talent. These major challenges and the suggestion that there is a potential gap in research in relation to retention processes are linked. These challenges will inevitably impact on an organisations workforce and human resource strategies and processes as we move further into the 21st Century.

This brief introduction highlights the necessity to understand an organisation's retention drivers, the human resource strategies and processes that support the retention of top talent as it will start to become a primary concern for many organisations.

1.2 Contest for Talent

The subject area of talent management is complex, mainly due to the reality that there is no one common agreed universal definition for talent management, or an established set of concepts and common language to refer to when talking about talent management. It is important that there is a shared and agreed common understanding of what talent management is and how top talent is viewed by an organisation (Baron and Armstrong, 2007). However, views on talent management vary by organisation as there is no definitive definition or recognised best practices in support of talent management.

The term 'war for talent' is commonly used to reflect the changing nature of the employment relationship and the shortage of top talent in the workplace. The 'war for talent' (Chambers, Foulon, Handfield-Jones, Hankin and Michaels 1998) coined the phrase with many other authors getting involved and either agreeing or disputing that there is indeed such a war. It has been suggested that it is actually a 'war on talent'. The notion of 'war for talent' is a damaging, divisive term coined in the 1990s and best left there (Butler, 2010). The implication here is that we should not be targeting on war, but how to prevent a 'contest for talent' thereby focusing on the real issue of retention of top talent.

With a global economic downturn and organisational financial issues, low turnover is a desirable effect. It appears that when economic conditions are in turmoil, talent management can be forgotten (Sujanski, 2008), therefore organisations need to make retention a priority. Globalisation of an organisation's workforce is growing so fast that even established global players are not recruiting and retaining sufficient top talent.

Top talent is a role that is not seen to be outsourced as they play a pivotal role within the organisation, typically working close to the clients and senior leaders. In addition, there are increasing opportunities to recruit top talent discarded by competitors due to redundancies, mergers and acquisitions. Retention is a component of talent management with many approaches and models with no one right way of 'doing it', that suggests a just-in time model, which opposes the view of talent management being a critical driver of business performance Bardach (1997) and Chambers et al (1998).

It is essential that organisations focus on recruiting, retaining and developing internal talent at all levels. The concept of 'brand you' (Peters, 1999) enables individuals to develop and differentiate their own unique brand of talent. This concept suggests that organisations develop strong value propositions for those who accept the best approach is succession planning Pfeffer and O'Reilly (2000) and Goffee and Jones (1996).

Sartain and Schumann (2006) have thrown in an interesting argument to the above approaches and models; they say there is a whole network of smart innovative people who don't want to work for companies that have created an environment that does not allow them to do their best work. A number of organisations have taken a fresh and creative approach to the work environment such as Google; they have structured 'freshness' into the working day. 70 percent of each employee's time is spent on their core role, 20 percent on projects, and 10 percent on exploring new opportunities. Innovative thinking leaders need to look at creating an environment that allows top talent to work to the best of their ability; otherwise they may become emotionally disconnected from their work.

Employee turnover has been defined as 'voluntary terminations of members from organisations' (Hom and Griffeth, 1995). Turnover can also be involuntary, e.g. dismissals and exits due to moving location or country, illness or death. Organisation retention practices have generally been concerned with developing models for voluntary turnover because these kinds of employee exits can be costly and may be preventable. In reality, a great deal of effort has gone into understanding the background and consequences of voluntary turnover for organisations Hom and Griffeth (1995) and Price (2004).

Early human resource models regarded voluntary turnover as an entirely negative and costly phenomenon (Staw, 1980). Organisations bear performance losses, high replacement costs and potential talent shortages, all of which ultimately erode the organisations impending leadership base. Therefore, employers seek to retain high performers and replace low performers with workers who bring greater skills and abilities to the organisation. This is a concept that is consistent with both the recent talent management emphasis and arguments introduced several decades ago concerning turnover functionality (Dalton and Todor 1979; Dalton, Todor and Krackhardt, 1982 and Staw 1980).

Researchers have recognised that benefits as well as costs can result from turnover, depending on who leaves the organisation. From this perspective, a framework for classifying voluntary turnover is required that is dependent upon the employer's evaluation of the quality of the departing employee (Dalton and Todor, 1979; Muchinsky and Morrow, 1980; Staw, 1980; Dalton, Todor and Krackhardt, 1982). These authors divided voluntary turnover into two distinct categories, dysfunctional turnover and functional turnover. Dysfunctional turnover is where the individual wants to leave the organisation, but the organisation would prefer to retain the individual.

Functional turnover is where the individual wants to leave the organisation and the organisation is unconcerned with the loss of this person, because the organisation has a negative evaluation of the individual. In such cases, turnover is functional because it benefits the organisation to let such a person go Dalton, Krackhardt and Porter (1981).

In statistical terms, measuring employee turnover is comparatively straightforward, and is traced by most organisations. Organisations appear to work to some kind of turnover metric or churn that keeps them focused on when an employee turnover situation becomes critical and requires a formal review. It has to be noted that organisations do initiate involuntary turnover of employees when there is a shift in business strategy, and/or when acquisitions and mergers take place, these are considered to be appropriate and necessary.

However, in recent times these employee cuts, lay-offs, outsourcing and downsizing have decimated the workplace. These aspects represent a reflection of the way organisations have managed their workforce over the last number of years and appear to be continuing to do so. Organisations are losing their top talent to their main rivals without realising that it is happening. There appears to be a lack of attention for retaining top talent. The reason may be that it is possible to sustain a high level of service (for the short term) despite having a turnover of top talent.

Attrition, the reduction in numbers of employees is often viewed as organisation malfunction and conversely, retention is equated with organisational effectiveness, but these perceptions do not reflect the reality of all retention factors Hom and Griffeth (1995). It is the unplanned voluntary turnover that organisations do not seem to have obtained a grip of.

Whether planned or unplanned, employee turnover does have an effect on the morale within an organisation including the lack of engagement of their employees. Because of these events many employees, specifically top talent have switched off, become disengaged and are waiting for economic prospects to improve so that they can flee their present positions.

Globalisation of the workforce is leading to a greater need to compete effectively against competitors in the 'battle for talent' (Grantham, 2003 and Patel, 2002). Along with layoffs there has been outsourcing, particularly off-shoring. The most recent concern for many workers is that their jobs will be outsourced to other countries. At the moment the most popular countries are China and India where the cost of labour is much cheaper.

Exploring this topic has indicated that to some extent the countries where work is outsourced and off-shored are experiencing their own turnover problems. However, this global workforce strategy is showing no signs of fading, rising wages and increased competition in Chinese and Indian organisation hubs continue to reduce the savings global multi-national organisations reap when they send work abroad (Schieber, 2004).

Current workforce demographics such as an aging workforce and increasingly dynamic and competitive labour markets ought to concern organisations with regard to the retention of their top talent. Even though retention is seen as a major concern to some organisations, the concept of retention is not well defined in organisational theory. Organisations that fail to retain top talent will be left with a less qualified workforce. For this reason, retention issues will hinder an organisations ability to succeed with sustainable company performance in a highly competitive global market and post-recession economy.

The workforce in western industrialised economies is ageing. What this means is that the proportion of the population who have retired from employment is growing relative to the proportion of the population still in work. Organisations that discriminate against older employees may find it difficult to recruit. The demographic time bomb fuelled by aging 'baby boomers' (1940 to 1960) is not a guess, it is an actuarial fact with significant literature written around this area. Therefore, any kind of demographic projection with respect to people who have already been born is extremely accurate Huczynski and Buchanan, (2007).

Retaining top talent should be seen as a primary concern for organisations; the reason being is that current workforce trends point to an imminent shortage of highly skilled employees who have the requisite knowledge and ability to perform at high levels. Organisations that fail to retain top talent will be left with an understaffed and a less qualified workforce that ultimately will hinder their ability to remain competitive Rappaport, Bancroft, and Okum (2003).

1.3 Justification and Objectives

Regarding the retention concept discussed in Section 1.2, Contest for Talent, page 2, it could be argued that turnover is functional when high performers stay and low performers leave, and dysfunctional when low performers stay and high performers leave. Thus an effective approach to retention management involves understanding why employees stay, but also examines the differences in reasons for staying based on what organisations are trying to accomplish to retain top talent Dalton, Krackhardt and Porter (1981). This argument forms the problem declaration and justification for the research.

The research objective is an exploration based on the research question, 'what are the retention drivers top talent chooses to stay with or to leave their employer?' and the research problem, 'the need for organisations to consider differentiation their retention strategies to safeguard the retention of their top talent based on an interpretivism paradigm using an inductive approach. In answering the following two questions asked of the participants in the interviewing phase 'why do you stay?' and 'why would you leave or consider leaving?' is anticipated that the research will make contributions to the literature on top talent retention drivers in support of human resource strategies. In addition, the research is expected to contribute to the literature in relation to the theoretical model developed.

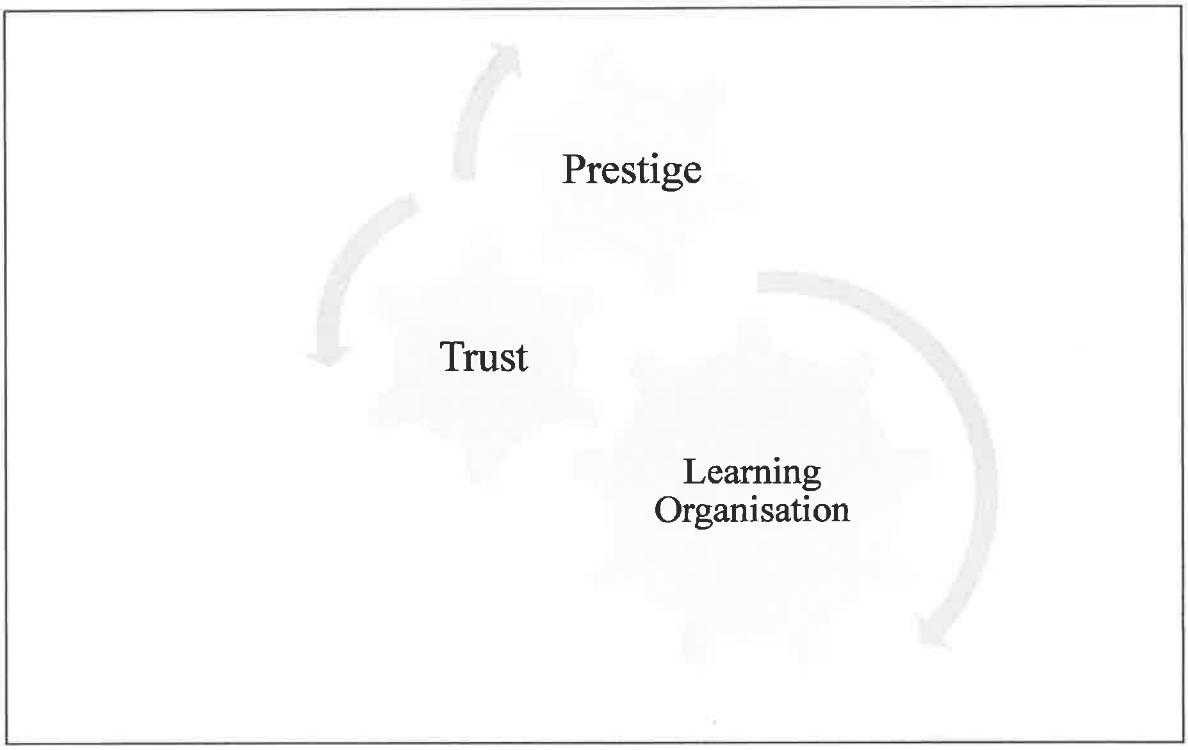
The research is exploratory using a grounded theory approach, a qualitative method and grounded theory analysis for the data collection and analysis to help identify the retention drivers. In addition, to understanding the retention drivers of top talent, as the researcher I wanted to see if the retention drivers for staying with or leaving their employer were the same or different. The outcome of the analysis endeavours to draw attention to the research question and research problem by serving to identify theories to enable a literature review to be conducted based on the theoretical model developed during this phase of the research. Illustration 1: Background to Research Objective, page 9, depicts the research title, research problem and overall research question.

Illustration 1: Background to Research Objective

Research Title:	Should I Stay or Should I Go? Retention of Top Talent in the 21^{st} Century
Research Problem:	The need for organisations to consider differentiating their retention strategies to safeguard the retention of their top talent
Research Question:	What are the retention drivers top talent chooses to stay with or to leave their employer?

The theoretical model developed from the research is based on the findings and analysis from a top talent perspective. The research is targeted at eight individuals working for four large global multi-national organisations who are considered top talent by both their peers and their organisations. The process of identification was through a peer recommendation process staying true to grounded theory analysis. The eight participants provided valid and robust empirical research data from the interviewing process. Illustration 2: Theoretical Model, page 10, was derived and driven by empirical research which formed the framework of the literature review.

Illustration 2: Theoretical Model



It is interesting to note how much of the literature read during the course of the research suggests that the rating that employee's provide are different from that provided by managers with regard to retention strategies. It is clear that managers and their organisations must become aware of the drivers that contribute to the retention of employee's in particular top talent (Musser, 2001).

Based on the justification and objective of the research, organisations need to start to consider differentiating their retention practices for top talent. An organisation's current retention practices may work for employees in general, however retention practices designed for this group may not be adequate to retain top talent. The research purpose was to highlight the reasons that organisations need to consider or review their retention strategies as a key issue for the retention of top talent.

This section provided for a depth of research into the contest for talent and the retention drivers perceived by top talent and the global and demographic factors included in the debate. The other sections are highlighted as follows:

1.4 Organisation of the Research

Chapter 2, Literature Review, page 13, covers the 'Evolution of Employment Theories' in the areas of organisational development and organisational behaviour models and concepts during the 'Industrial Age (1800–1970)' and the 'Technological Age (1970–1990)'. The purpose of these sections is to examine what the classic academic authors were discovering and creating during these periods. The 'Information Age and the 21st Century (1990–2010)' leads to the literature review based on the theoretical model that was developed from empirical research analysis. Therefore, the main sections of this chapter are Section 2.3, Learning Organisation', page 22, and Section 2.4, Trust, page 27, and Section 2.5, Prestige, page 32.

Chapter 3, Methodology, page 38, introduces and describes the methodology used in the research, the reasons why an interpretative paradigm was chosen, the research approach using grounded theory, the qualitative method and grounded theory analysis used as the research methods. This chapter also covers confidentiality and ethical issues, and the limitations for further research.

Chapter 4, Findings, page 58, describes the findings from the primary data and secondary data, using quotes, dialogue and bullet points to highlight and bring validity and robustness to the research and the formal introduction of the theoretical model developed.

Chapter 5, Analysis, page 71, describes the data collection and data analysis using qualitative data approach and grounded theory analysis. Although this was time consuming it brought about a true and honest approach in support of the findings.

Chapter 6, Conclusions, page 86, concludes by discussing the theoretical implications, the practical implications and overall conclusions, thereby bringing the highlights of the research together in one chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The learning organisation, trust and prestige have emerged as the retention drivers for the theoretical model developed through empirical research. The literature reviews undertaken in this chapter supplement and enhances the theoretical model.

Section 2.1, Evolution of Employment Theories, page 13, discusses the literature review undertaken prior to the theoretical model being developed, therefore is seen as a deductive approach to research. The principle behind the review was to gain an understanding of established and recognised organisational development and organisational behaviour models and concepts developed by the classic academic authors.

Section 2.2, Information Age and the 21^{st} Century (1990 - 2010), page 18, discusses the literature review and provides for a more contemporary view of organisational development, and organisational behaviour models and concepts established in more recent times in support of the theoretical model using an inductive approach to research.

2.1 Evolution of Employment Theories

This section highlights the evolution of organisational development, organisational behaviour models and concepts established through the ages, and how these theories have evolved.

Classical	Industrial Age	1800-1970
Modern	Technological Age	1970-1990

The rationale behind this section was to take a high level view of the evolution of employment relationship theory (both explicit and implicit) over two organisational development periods.

2.1.1 Industrial Age (1800–1970)

The industrial age was an exceptionally tough period; a harsh economic climate which included a major crises such as the 'great depression'. The workforce during these years had an implicit understanding that if they worked hard and followed the rules, then good things would happen to them. Good things were perceived as promotions, salary increases, and most importantly, lifelong employment – often with the same employer (Morgan, 2008). The work environment during this period, although being rather a tough period suggests that employee loyalty and trust was high. The industrial age brought about a number of early schools or models on how organisations should function, some of which are described briefly below:

The 'classical school' believed in control, measurement, order and formality, with the rationale that organisations focus on formal relations (Fayol, 1916; Taylor, 1911; Urwick, 1947; Armstrong, 2009).

The 'human relations school' challenged the 'classical school' model. Barnard (1938) emphasised the importance of the informal organisation, the network of informal roles and relationships which, for better or worse, strongly influence the way the formal structure operates. The importance of informal groups and decent, humane leadership was emphasised by (Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939) and Armstrong (2009).

The 'behavioural science school' in the 1950s and 1960s introduced the idea of organisational behaviour, specifically identifying how people behaved and what their motivators are in organisations. Hertzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1957) suggested that improvements in organisation design centre on the individual job as the positive source of motivation. He felt that if individuals are stretched in their job, they will perform well. Likert (1961) stated that effective organisations function by means of supportive relationships which, if fostered, will build and maintain people's sense of personal worth and importance (Argyris, 1957; McGregor, 1960; Armstrong, 2009).

The 'bureaucratic model' or the term 'bureaucracy' as a label was coined by Max Weber, whose work was translated in 1946 for a type of formal organisation, where impersonality and rationality are developed to the highest degree. His saw this cold, logical model as the most efficient form of organisation, for the reason that personalised relationships and non-rational emotional considerations do not get in the way. Some of his ideal bureaucratic features were, close job definition as to duties, privileges and boundaries, vertical authority patterns and the impersonal administration of staff (Armstrong, 2009).

The best known motivation or content theorists were Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1968). Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs', states these needs are arranged in a hierarchy of importance, with the most basic needs at the foundation. As one's need is satisfied this level of importance diminishes, and the next need emerges as the primary source of motivation. This continues until self-actualisation becomes the primary motivator. The three sets of needs at the bottom of the model are called deficiency needs as they must be satisfied for the individual to be comfortable. The top two sets of needs are termed growth needs because they focus on personal growth and development.

Herzberg and his associates developed the 'Dual-Structure' theory where they found that entirely different sets of factors are associated with two kinds of feeling about work. Their theory demonstrates that there is one dimension ranging from satisfaction to no satisfaction and dissatisfaction to no dissatisfaction. This means that employees might be either satisfied or not satisfied and, at the same time, dissatisfied or not dissatisfied.

Maslow's model is intuitive; however the hierarchy does not always conform. Hertzberg's model fails to account for individual differences and does not define the relationships between satisfaction and motivation. Both models have several deficiencies e.g. achievement, affiliation and power.

The concepts developed by these and other behavioural scientists such as Schein (1965) provided the movement towards organisation development. Some of the concepts developed may now sound un-sophisticated, it is important to note that these behavioural scientists started the development of concepts and models in an era where they themselves were pioneers.

2.1.2 Technological Age (1970-1990)

During the technological age, especially the late 1980s organisations eroded employee loyalty and trust with momentous organisational strategic changes such as: delayering, downsizing, outsourcing, best-shoring and off-shoring the workforce. These strategies were introduced for economic reasons such as reducing margins and competitive pressures thereby ensuring shareholder return.

Miles and Snow (1992) offer a historical perspective on the 'relentless' re-organisation that occurred in the 1980s. American organisations throughout the first half of the twentieth century grew around a central-control of hierarchical-structures model, presumably because of economies of scale and market dominance. Through this central management structure, efficiencies could be maintained where the production of goods and services would be very competitive. At the time, companies had few competitors since most of Europe had been ravaged by two World wars. As these organisations moved into more global markets and the Japanese production model with its quality products began to change consumer loyalties. American businesses began to look at other ways of organising to meet the rapid pace of change Gulati, Khanna, and Nohria (1994) and Perrucci and Potter, (1989).

Job satisfaction was viewed as the primary determinant of an employee's intention to leave and brought about the idea of organisational commitment in turnover decisions (Mobley, Griffeth, Hank and Meglino, 1979). Steers (1977) suggested that committed employees are expected to remain because they believe in the goals and values of the organisation and are willing to exert effort on its behalf. The 'behavioural science school' model mentioned in Section 2.1.1 Industrial Age (1800-1970), page 14 also submits to this idea, specifically the suggestions and ideas proposed by Hertzberg et al (1957) and Likert (1961).

2.2 Information Age and the 21st Century (1990-2010)

The 21st Century work environment is just as turbulent as it was at the beginning of the industrial age, we only think that the pace of change is accelerating (Ogburn, 1922; Mintzberg, 1994; Huczynski; Buchanan 2007). The information age and the 21st Century with the latter often referred to as the 'mobile age' has brought about corporate greed and in some cases unethical business practices that led to the collapse in the early 2000s of the dotcom industry bust, to the downfall of corporations like Enron and more recently Lehman Brothers, and in Ireland Anglo Irish Bank and Nationwide. The last couple of years have publicised the on-going mergers and acquisitions of large multi-national organisations to remain competitive in the global market.

These events have contributed to the claim that an increasingly turbulent macro environment has encouraged the development of a new organisational paradigm. Behind all this talk about organisational change lies continuity, but the fact is many features of work and organisation environments are not changing. Therefore, with this potential new employment paradigm it is not surprising that people, particularly the most talented, take a more proprietary, self-interested approach to work. If the paradigm is changing as suggested, human resource practitioners will be required to evolve, change and adapt to a changing organisation environment. Senior leadership and human resource practitioners are responsible for top talent, and need to create an environment with excellent retention strategies making it complex for them to consider alternative options elsewhere. Recruiting top talent is not easy and it is becoming more difficult to retain it. Top talent have significant opportunities to choose from and lest it not be forgotten - great people attract great people.

2.2.1 Organisational Behaviour

To understand the employee retention phenomenon, exploration into organisational behaviour suggests linking internal and external factors to employee beliefs and behaviour, hence, this research articulates the view of an inductive approach that attempts to link the internal work environment and external macro-environment to further understand this contemporary phenomenon (Bennett, Thatcher, Stepina and Boyle, 2002). Consistent with organisational behaviour exploration, the research focuses on the theory around a learning organisation, trust and prestige (both organisational and individual) as predictors of retention drivers which are discussed in Chapter 4, Findings, page 58.

Organisational behaviour is recognised as a significant field of investigation in its own right, drawing from the social sciences. There are many definitions in the field on what is organisation behaviour, and along with the many definitions there are also many controversies as different commentators have different ideas about the scope of the field. Wood (1995) notes that the term 'organisational behaviour' was first used by Fritz Roethlisberger in the late 1950s as it suggested a wider scope than human relations (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939).

In addition to organisational behaviour theory it is important to note from a corporate strategy perspective, organisations also need to encompass the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Ecological (PESTLE) macro-environment of their organisation, offering jobs, providing goods and services and contributing to the existence of communities.

Understanding and using a corporate strategy tool such as PESTLE, along with the theories of organisational behaviour provides leadership and human resource practitioners with a more balanced business view when looking into retention strategies, best practices and policies. In addition, top talent stated that they required being part of the development and deployment of corporate strategy and initiatives. For completeness, a generic organisation PESTLE has been included, see Appendix 8.1: PESTLE, page 104, developed by (Huczhnski and Buchanan, 2007).

2.2.2 Retention Strategies

The literature is extensive with articles summarising various retention strategies from an organisation perspective or from managers and leaders within organisations. This has made for good literature reviewing; however it brings with it its own bias. Very little literature covered the retention factors on why top talent decide to stay with or to leave their employer therefore this may be seen as a potential gap for further research.

In the early 2000s, organisational behaviour scientists and human resource experts began sounding the alarm that the aging baby boom generation and declining birth rates in the West were converging to create a looming talent crisis. As business has become increasingly global and economies and emerging markets have flourished, experts have failed to fully anticipate two further developments that have intensified the contest for talent. The emerging markets such as China and India are fuelling explosive growth with young people, many of whom earn advanced degrees outside their home countries.

Traditionally, large numbers of these highly trained graduates stayed in the West to work, but now many of them are returning home, taking their valuable skills with them. The West has experienced a generational shift in the workforce, which now encompasses three generations (baby boomers, generation x and generation y) that bring distinctly different sets of values, expectations, attitudes, and motivational factors to their work.

With the convergence of these trends, organisations find themselves in a costly and complex battle as they strive to recruit and retain their top talent. Increasingly, organisations have to work across geographies and cultures to find talented people who are technologically savvy, operationally clued in, and have the ability to think globally whilst working locally. Some organisations are beginning to develop strategies and tools that take into account the differing values between the generations, not only to gain a competitive edge in attracting and recruiting high-potentials, but also to maximise innovation, creativity and productivity (Klun, 2008). The next decade will be a time of unprecedented challenge and opportunity for organisational leaders and human resource practitioners.

Organisations that continue to ignore demographic changes in the workforce and uphold strategies optimised for a younger workforce will increasingly experience critical talent shortages and retention problems. Organisations that reshape their recruitment, employee engagement, work structures and organisation cultures to attract and retain the members of a new mature workforce will be well positioned to capitalise on an unprecedented growth in a vast pool of experienced and valuable workers (Dychtwald and Baxter, 2007).

2.3 Learning Organisation

To have an effective learning environment, organisations require introducing practices that reflect the aspirations of a learning organisation with clear links to the organisation's business strategy. Top talent is looking for organisations to support the development of skills and capabilities, not necessarily through traditional approaches to learning (Verhaar and Smulders, 1999). Top talent is looking for development programmes that maximise their learning opportunities for the benefit of the organisation as well as themselves (Edwards, 2005). This observation was noted during empirical research, whereby top talent sought to be recognised for the contribution and value that they bring to their organisations.

From an organisation's perspective investment in learning and development as part of a talent management programme requires a return on investment therefore, it is equally important that top talent is retained to meet both career aspirations and the growth of the organisation. Social networking tools are being adapted for training and collaboration within companies. Organisations have come to realise that they do not have to spend money on discrete structured training. Social networking will be able to provide just-in-time coaching and mentoring relationships across borders and time zones.

Maslow's concept of 'Hierarchy of Needs' influenced educators who viewed people as having the ability to control their own destiny, linked to unlimited possibilities for individual development. Rogers and Freiberg (1993) further wrote of learning that engaged the whole person, combining logic with intuition and intellect with feelings (Maslow, 1943).

Social learning theory suggests that we learn from observing others, thus learning takes place in social settings (Merriam and Caffarella, 1968). Lave and Wenger (1991) suggested situational learning, these academics see learning as the acquisition of knowledge and place learning in the context of social relationships e.g. as people join communities and learn at the sideline, they then become more competent and move to the centre of the community. Learning is not seen as the acquisition of knowledge, but more of a process of social participation. This was fuelled by the concern with identity through speaking and acting in a way that fits into the community.

Argyris (1982) expanded learning by identifying the types of learning. Single-loop learning and learning that leaves the theory of action unchanged. This went further by incorporating double-loop learning, that is if organisations are unsuccessful in understanding the principal variables of the fault, then the underlying cause for the deficiency is unaffected and therefore, the initial fault is institutionalised in a cycle of fault and correction.

The learning organisation is viewed as the acquiring, processing and disseminating of information and is similar to individual learning (Dewey, 1938). The learning organisation includes the intra-organisational dynamics that new knowledge creates and instils learning within the individual, team and organisational levels as a foundation for improvement, change and performance (Marquardt, 2002; Pedler and Burgoyne, 1991; Senge, 1990; Watkins and Marsick, 1993). A learning organisation purposefully puts together strategies to enhance and maximise organisational learning (Dodgson, 1993).

The concept of a learning organisation is increasingly relevant as organisations wish to be more adaptable to change, especially where it has been suggested that organisations are engaging in a change in paradigm. In business theory, learning has been expressed as behaviour that resolves the conflict between expectations and actual outcomes, similar to resolution of expected outcome to actual results (Dewey, 1938).

Learning as a dynamic concept emphasises the continually changing nature of organisations, therefore organisations need to establish the necessary models and processes to enable organisational learning. However intuitive the discussion of the learning organisation becomes and despite the depth of literature on it, most studies begin by reminding us that not one single definition is yet to be recognised Garvin (2000) and Marquart (2002).

Senge (1990) created much of the foundational framework of the learning organisation. He maintained that organisational learning was the creation of 'new patterns of thinking' that were beyond survival or maintenance of existing marketplaces, but instead were generative having the capacity to create, innovate and generate the new knowledge from present knowledge.

Deming (1986) focused on continual learning for performance improvement in an organisation. He saw that a learning movement focused on improving how employees perceive learning, whilst Senge believed that the quality movement focused on improving work processes. He believed that systems thinking and the dynamics that affect system-wide performance are crucial. Organisations that create a climate of trust and dialogue could produce a system for organisational learning that provides for sustainable competitive advantage.

In order to achieve this goal Senge developed five organisational disciplines. The disciplines help create the interactivity that provides for the system to accomplish the goals of a learning organisation. The five disciplines are personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning and systems thinking. Although he is credited with the learning organisation, this conceptualisation was augmented by the theories and writings of others. Watkins and Marsick (1993) explored a more complete overview of the learning organisation. This overview looks at the creation of continuous learning opportunities; the promotion of inquiry and dialogue, the encouragement of collaboration and team learning, the establishment of systems to capture a collective vision, and the need to connect the organisation to its environment. Illustration 3: Comparison of Watkins and Marsick with Senge's Model, page 25, depicts the comparison of these academics.

Illustration 3: Comparison of Watkins and Marsick model with Senge's Model

Watkins and Marsick (1993)	***Senge (1990)***
Continuous Learning	Personal Mastery
Inquiry and Dialog	Mental Models
Collaboration / Team Learning	Team Learning
Systems Thinking / Capture Knowledge	Systems Thinking
Collective Vision-Empowerment	Shared Vision
Connect to Environment	Systems Thinking-Mental Models (The ability to see outside the internal model)
Source: A validation of the learning organization as a driver of performance improvement. Herrera (2007).	

Marquardt (2002) likewise focused on a learning system composed of five linked and interrelated subsystems related to learning; the organisation, people, knowledge, technology and learning. The learning system centred on continuous learning, knowledge creation and sharing, systemic thinking, a culture of learning, flexibility and experimentation, and a people-centred view similar to personal mastery or a system of personal empowerment (Gephart, Marsick, Van Buren and Spiro, 1996).

Watkins and Marsick (1992) and Yang, Watkins and Marsick (2004) expanded to include the concepts of action imperatives, or elements needed in order to facilitate a learning construct. The seven imperatives include; continuous learning, the promotion of inquiry and dialogue, provision of strategic leadership for learning, encouraging collaboration and team learning, empowering people towards a collective spirit, and an added system to capture and share learning. They concluded with connecting the organisation to the environment. The seven imperatives were used as a basis for determining employees' perception of the learning culture within their organisations. The following Illustration 4: Watkins and Marsick Model of the Learning Organisation, page 26, depict their seven imperatives and their definition.

Illustration 4: Watkins and Marsick Model of the Learning Organisation

Action Imperative	***Definition***
Create continuous-learning Opportunity	Learning is Systemic / Opportunity for Ongoing Education / Training / Growth
Promote inquiry and dialog	Culture supports open questioning / feedback / experimentation / expand mental models

Team Learning-Collaboration	Groups used to access various modes of thinking / Collaboration valued by culture and rewarded
Empowerment / Collective Vision	Power to win and implement joint vision-responsibility moved close to process
Leadership Models and Supports Learning	Leaders model, champion, and support learning: use learning strategically for business results
Systems to Capture / Share learning	High and low end technology shared learning and integrated to work systems – information access provided
Source: A validation of the learning organization as a driver of performance improvement. Herrera (2007).	

Top talent are more likely to stay loyal and motivated if they feel that they have room for advancement. It is important that organisations develop a culture of continuous career development. Organisations need to ask their top talent what they require to continue growing their careers, top talent know what they need to be successful (Dychtwald and Baxter, 2007).

2.4 Trust

One is more likely to resist change when one does not understand the reasoning behind it, its nature or possible consequences. Resistance to change can be reduced through improved understanding and communication. When leaders have little trust in their top talent or employees in general, information about change may be withheld or distorted, intentionally or un-intentionally.

If top talent distrusts leadership, information about changes proposed by the leadership team may not be believed and therefore not followed. Incomplete and incorrect information creates uncertainty and rumour. This has the unwelcome result of increasing perceptions of threat, increasing defensiveness and reducing further effective communications about the change. The way in which change is introduced can be resisted, rather than the change itself (Huczynski and Buchanan, 2007). Empirical research indicated that nothing affects retention more than the loss of trust and therefore the erosion of loyalty.

Organisational trust for the basis of the research is one's overall trust in the qualities and abilities of others e.g. co-workers, communities and leadership within an organisation, along with the confidence to depend on and be vulnerable with others.

Shockley-Zalabak, Ellis and Winograd (2000) and Tanner (2007) describe the construct of organisational trust as 'the positive expectations individuals have on organisational roles, relationships, experiences and inter-dependencies'. It is important to trust one's co-workers and immediate leadership along with the importance of feeling trusted and valued as a member of the organisation and, ultimately to believe the organisation itself is worthy of the trust of its employees. An employee will have trust in another employee when he or she believes that there is a likelihood that the other will perform an act that is helpful or at least one that is not disadvantageous.

Trust is based on an employee's expectation that others will act as expected, regardless of their ability to monitor or control the others. Trust is not something that is instantly given, it is something that an employee or organisation develops over time, and therefore requires a foundation of consistently encouraging reliable behaviour and results.

Employees themselves develop trust networks, in which they share potential information and back each other in a crisis. The concept of trust as it is used in common language refers to the extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people (Collins and Porras, 1994; Chen and Dhillon, 2003; McKnight, Choudhury and Kacmar, 2002; Shockley-Zalabak, Ellis and Winograd, 2000; Cook and Wall, 1980; Tanner, 2007).

There appears to be no universal definition of trust, however there is agreement that trust can be either dispositional or situational. Dispositional trust is an individual trait that has been described as a generalised expectancy that others can be relied upon (Rotter, 1980) or a general belief in human benevolence. Situational trust is whereby the intention is specific such that a person, workgroup or community is trustworthy. Some people are generally trusting in all situations, whereas others rely on their level of dispositional trust when encountering a new situation (Bigley and Pearce, 1998; Connell, Ferres and Travaglione, 2003; Kramer, 1999; Bhattacharya, Devinney and Pillutla, 1988; Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1998; Herrera, 2007).

Therefore, in an organisational context after the early socialisation of employees in which dispositional trust is important, with the additional experience from leaders and colleagues situational trust can gain value. Trust is prejudiced by previous experience, yet is applied to the present or is determined by the expectation of future interactions. In a situation where an employee is faced with a decision to trust or not trust, the extent to which trust develops is largely dependent on respect. The employee decides whether the other person is competent, has integrity and cares about his or her well-being based on earlier behaviour or situational attributes.

When people are trusting they acknowledge and respect integrity, capability and goodwill for the person, although trust involves encouraging potential regarding future outcomes. The likelihood for these expectations to go unmet is always present. It is generally accepted that all decisions to trust involve some degree of uncertainty (Bijlsma and Koopman, 2003; Bijlsma and van de Bunt, 2003; Mayer et al., 1995; Bhattacharya, et al 1988; Mollering, Bachman and Lee, 2004; Herrera, 2007).

Rogers (1959) established a set of skills that require development for trust to grow in people: congruence, empathy, empathic listening and unconditional positive regard. As employees within an organisation acquire and apply the set of skills advocated by Rogers to build collaborative, trusting relationships in the workplace, they also reinforce their efforts to develop a stronger commitment to their organisation. Therefore, there is an assumption that employees will be more accepting of their management or leadership when there is a firm basis for trust Cook and Wall (1980) and Tanner (2007).

Trust is essential when an employee or employees consider engaging in some form of collaboration. It is an essential component of successful collaborative teams or communities. To function effectively requires a level of interdependence among all those involved. In heterogeneous groups (groups that come together for specific tasks) mutual trust is essential to build interdependence than is easier in a homogeneous workgroup Porras, Collins and Collins (2002) and Herrera (2007). Traditional communities are thought of as being very homogeneous with simple relations and interactions. Today's virtual community is thought to be heterogeneous and complex and challenges the conventional ways of working within communities to have some heterogeneity of knowledge since this encourages new inputs and different combinations of ideas from its members.

Reno (2007), Lewicki, McAllister and Bies, (1998) and Tanner (2007) believe that the need for trust arises from an inbuilt interdependence with others. Employees depend on one another, and other people outside their group to help obtain the outcomes that are respected. The level of trust that employee's have for each other and the organisation directly affect the perceptions of their roles in the organisation.

Employees who trust their leadership to pay attention to their requirements are more likely to see their roles as being supportive of the organisation, as far as their levels of cooperation and productivity are concerned. It is very important for top talent to be seen as team players for the reason that they are expected to collaborate and make strategic decisions with other professionals whom they have never met with on a global basis. Trust helps promote the well-being of employees specifically in terms of reducing stress, improving job satisfaction, reducing uncertainty about the future, and building a solid track record in the organisation. In today's economic climate having trust that the organisation will survive, and continue to be a steady and reliable source of income can be directly linked to employee commitment (Jones and George, 1998; Tannenbaum, Beard and Salas, 1992; Fox, 1974; Dirks and Ferrin, 2001; Hart and Cooper, 2001; Shockley-Zalabak, Ellis and Winograd, 2000; Tanner, 2007).

Organisational trust helps establish a framework for productivity because employees can focus their efforts on achieving organisational and personal work related goals. Establishing trusting relationships in organisations help to establish the stability of the organisation. Employee's trust in their leadership is a possible consideration to which clients trust a company's products and services.

Trust-based work environments where employees experience high levels of satisfaction through working in a learning organisation along with organisational trust may serve as a conduit that leads to a greater attachment and identification with the corporate goals and values of the organisation (Daley and Vasu, 1998; Fox, 1974; Laporte and Metlay, 1996; Tanner, 2007).

2.5 Prestige

Organisational prestige is virtually absent from literature on employee turnover and has been noted by academic scholars. Steel, Griffeth and Hom (2002) have stated that certain factors induce employees to leave e.g. better benefits, but these must supersede reasons for staying. Thus, a traditional turnover study aimed at uncovering reasons that people may leave is unlikely to throw light around that of organisational prestige emerging as a factor. This suggests that focusing on retention factors such as prestige (organisational and individual) may offer additional future insight into employees' decision making processes.

Muchinsky and Morrow (1980) introduced the notion of organisational prestige as a potentially important retention factor. This dimension is similar to definitions of company reputation (Fombrun and Shanle, 1990) and reflects the more recent effort by organisations to attract and retain talented employees by becoming an 'employer of choice' which often involves communicating and emphasising the positive features of working for a particular organisation to current and potential employees (Branham, 2007).

Organisations may perhaps ensure that their employer branding, internally and externally is a key component to employee retention, and encouraged to work toward being recognised as an 'employer of choice'. By addressing these issues strategically and purposely, leaders will be seen to be supporting the retention issues of their organisations. Experienced and savvy leaders recognise that when they have trouble attracting qualified workers, employee retention is their most productive policy (Herman, 2005).

One of the novel recommendations that stems directly from empirical research is that organisational prestige shaped the decision to stay among many of the participants interviewed. Efforts to promote an organisation's reputation or employer brand have been shown to influence an applicant's attraction to the organisation during recruitment (Collins, 2007).

Empirical research indicates that organisational prestige offers retention benefits for employees who are currently working within an organisation. Organisations might consider applying the marketing campaigns that are more typical of external recruitment to retention management practices. It has been found that organisational prestige and advancement opportunities are particularly important to high performers and those at higher job levels, whereas extrinsic rewards were more prominent for low performers and hourly workers. The efforts to enhance the prestige of the organisation through internal marketing or branding campaigns may enhance retention among high performers and non-hourly employees. An organisation's reputation, visibility and vision are important to top talent, along with a work environment that is concerned for the individual as they are looking for a sense of community, mutual sharing and respect.

Top talent who are committed to their organisation are less likely to leave than their less committed peers. Communities that consist of high-potential employees are commonly known in organisations as 'talent pools'. Talent pools can be very elite or can be loosely structured, this approach is often referred to as 'egalitarian versus an elitist approach'. A talent pool is a collective of talented employees who are recognised and sought after in an organisation, typically they are made up of top talent who have the same background, profession and/or interests. Members of talent pools typically have closer access to the senior executives in an organisation, and are asked to contribute to the corporate strategy and therefore supporting sustainable organisation performance.

2.6 Summary

Retaining top talent is a primary concern for many organisations. Workforce trends point to an impending shortage of highly skilled employees who have the requisite knowledge and ability to perform at high levels. Organisations that fail to retain high performers will be left with an understaffed and less qualified workforce that ultimately will hinder their ability to remain competitive (Rappaport, Bancroft and Okum, 2003).

Taking into account Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs', many employees (especially the significant number that have been let go) are now trying to address their deficiency needs, and looking at Herzberg's model employees will be more concerned about their hygiene factors being met e.g. pay and security, more than the motivational factors e.g. achievement and recognition due to the downturn in the economic climate. Leaders and human resource practitioners need to be aware of appropriately using retention drivers as a means to keep their workforce motivated, specifically their top talent.

The core features of the employment contract are important by providing exciting work in a growth environment along with creating opportunities for skills development and the progression of one's career in a job that is satisfying and challenging. These features include an organisation which offers a clear and compelling corporate strategy, an innovative environment, low in bureaucracy, and rewards based on how well the organisation performs.

Organisations need to survey their employees to better understand their retirement intentions and refine retirement projections. Identify which strategies can best retain and motivate older workers, including career development, job design, training, corporate culture, compensation and benefits. Prioritise retention, succession planning and recruiting efforts to target older employees and work teams that are most critical to maintaining vital corporate capabilities. Retention of key valuable employees who might prefer a change is often used to retain top-performing employees who might prefer a change in responsibilities or reduced hours over full retirement (Dychtwald and Baxter, 2007).

Organisational and individual reputation helps lead to positive relationships with colleagues and provides for interesting work and continuous opportunities for learning. Organisations need to develop and communicate internally and externally their 'employer brand'. For the reason of the greedy demand for a limited number of places for top talent, leaders need to consider a policy ensuring a larger investment in retention drivers than they do currently.

To attract and retain top talent an organisation must have a compelling story by communicating their corporate vision or mission. They need to consistently show how their mission or vision will help an individual's career.

In addition to communicating how innovated they are as an organisation they need to consider carefully about cultivating their image as 'employers of choice' or to be seen as the 'preferred employer'.

Employers need to boast and convince top talent why they ought to stay within their own organisation, especially in the current climate when they have many opportunities to go elsewhere. Over the past several years there has been an interest in how organisations build 'leadership brand', a reputation among investors, customers and other stakeholders that the organisation does a superior job of developing leaders (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2004).

Past experience has taught organisations that the short-term performance gain of hiring experience in specialised areas is not worth the organisational morale and attrition cost (Pfeffer, 2001). They typically find that the 'rejection' rate of externally hired top talent is quite high despite their skills, because they represent a poor cultural fit. Growth from within used to be prevalent in many organisations but today is somewhat more rare. As organisations have downsized, flattened, and redefined the employee contract, it has become less common to see an emphasis on internal development and personal growth. Some organisations appear to continue with this strategy rather than hire experienced high potentials. The organisations that continue to do so recognise the cost advantage of developing rather than poaching established talent. However, it is recognised that it is necessary from time to time to bring in outside talent to address gaps, and to bring a new or fresh perspective to the organisation.

Top talent is looking for a form of identity. The concept of identify, being recognised and valued for their contributions, being sought after are some of the areas that top talent is looking to obtain for themselves and are seeking from organisations. Organisations need to portray an identity or a brand, and employees are looking for an identity that provides them with the prestige they so value (Alvesson, 2001). Being seen and acknowledged both internally and externally as a 'trusted advisor' supports the idea of prestige as a retention intervention.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a reminder of the research justification and objectives, the research methodology, research design with the approach and methods used, thereby articulating the overall methodology applied for the empirical research.

3.1 Research Objective

The objective of the exploratory research by means of an interpretivist paradigm, using an inductive and grounded theory approach, qualitative method and grounded theory analysis, is to identify the retention drivers that top talent choose to stay with or to leave their employer. In addition to understanding these retention drivers is to see if the same retention drivers for staying with or to leaving their employer are the same or different.

The outcome of the empirical research endeavours to draw attention to the research purpose and objectives by serving to identify theories to enable a literature review to be conducted based on the theoretical model developed. Illustration 5: Research Objective, page 39, depicts the research title, research problem and over-riding research question.

Illustration 5: Research Objective

Research Title:	Should I Stay or Should I Go? Retention of Top Talent in the 21st Century
Research Problem:	The need for organisations to consider differentiating their retention strategies to safeguard the retention of their top talent.
Research Question:	What are the retention drivers top talent chooses to stay with or to leave their employer?

3.2 Research Methodology

There are a number of epistemological views (the theory of knowledge and its justification) of learning and this therefore has implications for which methodological choice a researcher may apply. Trochim (2002) distinguishes epistemology from methodology as follows: epistemology is 'how we come to know or the philosophy', and methodology is the 'practice'.

Research literature suggests that any research methodological process navigates using both inductive and deductive procedures and processes. Whether the decision is, 'what to study, how to study it, or whom to study', it is a subjective decision at some point during research. The same argument applies to qualitative methods, at some point of the research processes and procedures are employed to assist in making deductions based on the findings, hence a quantification of sorts Gummensson (2000) and Reno (2007).

Outlined below is a high level view of three epistemological views (pragmatist, positivism and interpretivism). The purpose of highlighting these three views is having considered each of them during the research planning and evaluation phase to establish which view was most appropriate for the research.

Pragmatist View

The epistemological rationale for mixing qualitative and quantitative methods of research is provided by Creswell (2003). He describes the epistemological claim of the mixed method researcher as pragmatist. Pragmatists are real-world practice oriented, and their research is used to explain a problem or discuss consequences of action. Pragmatists will use all methods to solve a problem or answer a question. The pragmatist approach for mixed methods allows for a pluralist view of research methods, a 'middle position' as opposed to engaging in the age-old duality debate about whether quantitative or qualitative methods are better (Reno, 2007).

Positivism View

This view sees the world as knowable by empirical research, typically focusing on quantitative analysis, so that theory can be tested and causal factors can be known. One term for this epistemological stance would be critical realism. The positivism view moves beyond characteristics of the scientific management era. Hatch (1997) by understanding that observations are fallible and that for the positivist, fallibility is generally due to the biases of the researcher, and therefore triangulation is often used to test a theory's soundness Trochim (2002) and Reno (2007).

Interpretivism View

The emphasis on this view shifts from what is 'out there' to what is going on in your head. As a researcher, much of what you are interested in may be a social reality, which from this perspective is considered the result of negotiations or meanings of and for situations. Knowledge is therefore derived from concepts and meanings. The job of the researcher is to capture this reality and re-present it in 'scientific' or 'academic' language. Where the positivist seeks to understand cause and effect, and produce 'laws', the interpretivist looks for rules people use to make sense of in social situations. Where the positivist seeks generalisable laws, interpretivists might argue that the underlying assumptions make it illogical to seek to generalise from one situation to another Cameron and Price (2009).

Having researched these three different epistemological views, the interpretivism paradigm which supports an inductive and qualitative method (where patterns and/or theories are developed) to understand the phenomenon was chosen as being the most appropriate for the research.

3.3 Research Design

The research was initially targeted at ten participants who are considered top talent by their peer group and by their organisations. The participants work for five global multi-national organisations, where the challenge was to draw from empirical research the retention drivers they consider to stay with or to leave their employer. Having interviewed eight of the participants and reached data saturation point, that is, the information that was collected was beginning to return the same thoughts and concepts.

An email was sent to the remaining two participants kindly thanking them for their support, stating that for the moment their support was not required and that further interviews may be arranged based on the outcome of the final analysis. Follow up on the two outstanding interviews was not required; this was communicated to the two participants that their contribution was not necessary.

The over-riding research question was not posed to the participants as it was necessary for the interviewees to focus on the two questions developed specifically for the semi-structured interviews. By providing the participants access to the over-riding research question may have limited their ideas and thoughts. A number of secondary questions were developed as a backup. These secondary questions were in support of the two main questions being posed. Prior to asking the two main research questions during the interview process, the nature of the research was re-emphasised to all participants.

The purpose and objective of the research was explained in an email invitation to the participants, however by re-emphasising the purpose enabled both parties to discuss any queries prior to beginning the interview. The format of the questions asked are depicted in Illustration 6: Format of Research Questions, page 43 and Appendix 8.2: Interview Protocol Template, page 105.

Illustration 6: Format of Research Questions

Main Questions	***Secondary Questions in support of Main Questions***
Why do you stay?	• Why did you choose to work for your current employer? • What could have kept you at your last company? • What aspects of your work do you enjoy?
Why would you leave or consider leaving?	• What would cause you to take work with another company?

The significance or outcome from the research is hoped to create a greater understanding, and therefore be of assistance to organisational leaders and human resource practitioners. Based on the theoretical model developed, they may consider reviewing their organisation's retention strategies and differentiate these strategies for their top talent.

It is normal to develop a theoretical model prior to proceeding with a literature review using an interpretivism paradigm with an inductive approach. To enable the comprehension of the background associated with the retention phenomenon being explored, the initial approach undertaken was deductive reasoning.

During the interviewing phase distance was maintained from the earlier perspectives and discoveries researched enabling an open and clear mind. The background literature review allowed for synthesising and theorising of different themes and concepts. The empirical research provided for a richness of thought and the theorising is seen as the 'constant development and manipulation of malleable theoretical schemes until the best theoretical scheme or model is developed' Morse (1994) and Collis and Hussey (2009).

3.3.1 Research Approach

The research is modelled on grounded theory philosophy which explores a phenomenon for the potential discovery of a theoretical model. (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Martin and Turner, 1986; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Reno, 2007).

In the Research Proposal, an opportunist case study was considered as access to a group of top talent within one company was obtainable. The original objective was to interview top talent who had worked in one group within the same organisation. Using this approach was perhaps limiting the research, as the plan was to develop a theory from empirical research. As a greater understanding developed around the use of grounded theory approach to research, this approach was felt to be more appropriate to the research purpose and objectives.

Grounded theory was devised by Glaser and Strauss (1967), and presented a major test to established (positivist) thoughts about research. It is widely used in academic social research even though is still the subject of controversy. Grounded theory actions to investigation are by taking an inductive approach where results are derived purely from the context of the research. Open questions are asked through qualitative methods which are not based on theories and models from a literature review. The analysis is taken from the narrative from the interviews, using aspects recommended by the data rather than literature Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Cameron and Price (2009). Grounded theory is an inductive approach to research based on the belief that data should drive theory, rather than the reverse. Grounded theory relies on qualitative data and generates 'theory' in the form of concepts which 'explain' the ways participants view situations. Grounded theory analysis is both a data-collection and an analytical method.

The purpose behind using grounded theory as the choice of research approach was based on observations that were taken from personal experience. Over the years observation around the retention of top talent, or to be more specific an organisation's approach (or lack of) retention practices for their top talent was not looked at in any great detail. Observation of this retention phenomenon provided the background to develop two research questions for the interviewing process, which are depicted in Illustration 6, Format of Research Questions, page 43 and Appendix 8.2, Interview Protocol Template, page 105. In addition, Appendix 8.2: Interview Protocol Template, page 105, lists the supporting questions and probes that were used during the interviewing process. A grounded theory approach allowed for the research to start with vague and generic questions, which changed many times along the research journey.

This approach provided an environment to generate concepts and theories. The questions that were finally determined provided a theme, which allowed the interview discussions to go in any direction, although if the discussion went too far off track, the secondary questions and probes that were prepared re-focused the interviewee.

3.4 Research Methods

The main research method undertaken was a qualitative method, this approach was appropriate for the research as the sample size was small. The objective was to understand what was happening in a particular situation and looking for (aspects) patterns and themes which may be repeated in a similar context. The use of a qualitative method allowed for the gathering of data and therefore provided for the depth and breadth of data required.

This method for collecting primary data provided a richness of experience as it related to each of the interviewees (however this approach can sometimes be seen to lack a certain amount of verifiable evidence). As the researcher having worked with the participants in the past, my respect for the evidence presented and the data was a true and honest account. For further validation, each participant was emailed the details of their interview narrative and the analysis and emerging theory, to verify if the analysis portrayed their genuine feelings and thoughts; their reply agreed with and fully supported the analysis.

The qualitative method was chosen as the main research approach because of the nature of the research which was interviewing employees to obtain empirical data (primary data) to establish a depth of knowledge gleaned from their own personal experiences, with regard to why they choose to stay with or to leave their employer. The narrative data helped to understand why the problem exists, or what could be done about the problem. This method enabled the generation of the rich narrative data required for analysis and helped seek explanations and reasons why the problem exists, by providing ideas about potential solutions therefore, a more effective approach than numbers or statistics on their own. The interviews required some administration in organising, facilitating and transcribing the data. Appendix 8.4: Interview Administration Process and Timetable, page 111, depicts the timeline and activities.

The secondary data collected was not gathered in the same context as the primary data collected under a qualitative method, so it has to be looked at as providing additional support.

3.4.1 Interviews

A pilot interview was undertaken very early in the research process. Undertaking a pilot interview provided the experience on how to articulate the research purpose and objective. This approach helped develop interviewing skills, specifically probing skills. It provided for the confidence to proceed with the research, as it was seen as a worthwhile exercise by the first pilot interviewee at an early stage of the overall process. The pilot interview provided the creation of an early draft of the 'Interview Protocol Template' which was updated for the following seven interviews, see Appendix 8.2: Interview Protocol Template, page 105.

The purpose of the pilot interview was to test the two research questions and the probes that were developed, the application of the Apple iTouch as the recording tool that was used to record all the interviews. This tool was an enabler for writing the narrative after each interview, allowing for play back, play forward, and to stop as and when required. After the pilot interview, it was necessary to develop some secondary semi-structured questions for the interviews, which is not keeping true to a grounded theory approach. The reason this aspect was overlooked is that after the pilot interview, the participants scheduled to be interviewed were excellent communicators (talkers). There was the potential that they might drift from the main theme unintentionally. Therefore, the risk was too high not to prepare several secondary questions prior to the interviews. The forthcoming interviews would take place with the possibility of un-appropriate narrative that could not be used for reflection and analysis. As it turned out, in most cases the secondary questions were not required and the conversation was allowed to flow.

The rationale in undertaking telephone interviews as opposed to developing a questionnaire (quantitative approach), or to using focus groups was that the telephone interviews provided for a more flexible and adaptable approach that is difficult to replicate using either a questionnaire or focus group techniques.

The telephone interview approach allowed for the use of probing techniques to help draw out discussions as required. This approach felt more like a natural conversation that provided for the collection, contrasting and comparison of the narrative. This enabled the interviewee to elaborate, explain or clarify further their ideas of reasoning, allowing for empirical research and allowed for the exploration of the meanings behind some of the words used.

Some probes were established to ensure that there was a semi-structure to the interview process. The probes proved to be useful as most of the participants assumed a basic organisational framework was a given, and were not presenting this argument as an answer to the initial questions. The holding back of the information came out during probing, the interviewees did not intentionally mean to hold back this information as they considered it do be a basic premise. The interviews then turned to understanding what the basic premise could be, and led to the codes and concepts that were gathered for the analysis of the data. The issue was caught at the beginning of the interviewing process, and therefore did not pose to be a problem moving forward.

In addition, each interview was recorded and served as an appropriate interviewing approach for many reasons:

- Facilitated the transcribing of appropriate information
- Allowed for the re-visit of interviewing techniques
- The appropriate use of probing
- Ability to rewind and listen many times which helped to provide:
    - an accurate, valid and rigorous understanding of the narrative, taking into account the integrity of the conversation

As per ground theory analysis, data collection and data analysis occurred at the same time through constant comparison during the interviewing process, where calling to mind previous interviews whilst conducting the current interview and revisiting the narrative previously collected. The recording of interviews provided the integrity of the previous interview(s).

During this process there were a few structured questions to gather a small piece of quantitative data, length of service, job title, education, gender and demographic background, see Appendix 8.5: Narrative Data and Coding Template, page 113. This approach may be seen as mixed methods; however the use of quantitative data was very small and therefore did not lend itself being referred to as a mixed methods approach. A high level summary of the interview participants including the pilot interviewee is depicted in Appendix 8.3: Background Information of Participants, page 110.

The interviews took place with top talent who are busy senior people in the organisation, interviews were limited to one-hour sessions and all interviews were recorded with prior consent of the interviewee.

Apart from having busy schedules, to hold their attention span any longer than this amount of time could have reduced the quality of the narrative. All the interviewees were very co-operative and took a personal interest in the empirical research. Each interviewee asked for a summary of the research when completed. It is important to note that no gifts were offered in return for their time and contribution.

3.4.2 Theoretical Sampling

The original plan was the selection of identifying my own participants to interview, however Glasser and Straus (1967) suggest that one should be led by previous interviews and interviewees. The interviewees that participated in the telephone interviews, except for 'Interviewee 1' who was the pilot interviewee were recommended by Interviewees 2 to 9. This is known as theoretical sampling and is specific to grounded theory analysis Cameron and Price (2009).

3.4.3 Collecting and analysing data

The analysis of the data took place at the same time that the narrative data was collected via the interview process. This was done by comparing and contrasting the narrative from the interviews and by revisiting the interview narrative previously collected. The narratives from the interviews are based on the formed opinions and views of the participants, their explanations, concerns, feelings and emotions. This is therefore a genuine reflection of their perception in what is occurring in their respective organisations. This approach has the potential to surface issues not previously considered or may suggest insights not provided by existing theoretical frameworks.

The data used for analysis came from the semi-structured interviews and from observations from experience in working for a large global multi-national organisation. The narrative data formed the basis of the analysis which helped identify the codes, for examples see Appendices 8.6, 8.7 and 8.8: Interview Narrative and Coding, pages 114 to 126, for Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4 and Interviewee 5. These codes then led to the development of concepts, for an example see Appendix 8.9, Axial Coding, page 132. This was an important part of the process seeing the codes and concepts starting to generate themes that were relevant to the top talent interviewed. The codes and concepts gathered from the narrative data collected helped determine the next stage of the coding process concepts and categories when then led to categories and theories being developed, for an example see Appendix 8.10: Concepts and Categories, page 138 and Illustration 10: Category and Theory, page 79.

In line with the notion of theoretical sampling as mentioned in Section 3.5.2, Theoretical Sampling, page 50, or from codes and concepts that came from the constant comparison of the narrative data. Theoretical sampling lies at the heart of a traditional approach to grounded theory analysis. Continual assessment and constant comparison at every stage of the process is very important as it determines the next step taken. The coding of the issues that emerged, the means by which they were connected to concepts and the concepts then leading to categories and categories to theory is a time consuming process, however provides for a robust and trustworthy analysis. This approach is about recognising issues which emerged from the narrative data. It is an on-going process until the point of data saturation is reached. Data from the first interview (pilot interview) was also coded and classified.

The next seven interviews took place in a five-day effort of interviews in the morning and the afternoon to allow for the narrative to be typed, and for constant comparison considerations prior to the next interview taking place. Appendix 8.4: Interview Administration Process and Timetable, page 111, depicts in detail the process taken and timeframe.

The emergent themes were then compared with the emergent codes from the previous interview. The process of constant comparison continues until the data reaches the point of data saturation. Saturation of data is the point at which the data being gathered, coded and compared is no longer generating new codes and concepts Cameron and Price (2009).

It is the point at which the key codes being extracted from the narrative data are simply replicating the codes that have been previously identified. Because the on-going analysis of the data is a key part of grounded theory approach, the point at which you are unable to determine any new codes, the point at which each of the codes and categories are sufficiently populated to enable a robust and trustworthy discussion, and the point at which you can inductively generate reliable connections to categories and theory, is the point at which the data gathering stops. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that the analyst jointly collects codes and analyses their data and then decide what data to collect next and where to find it. This took place from the inferences and the codes collected from the narrative data.

Inductively taken from the data were the codes and concepts that were used to determine the next stage of data-gathering. The coding process stopped when the process of constant comparison ceased to generate any new codes or concepts. This then led to the theoretical model being produced.

3.5 Confidentiality and Ethical Issues

For confidentially and privacy reasons, the names of the interviewees, their organisations and their organisations corporate websites; used to obtain primary and secondary information are not available as this information is treated in confidence.

3.5.1 The Data Protection Act, 1988

The Data Protection Act, 1988 was passed in order to deal with privacy issues arising from the increasing amount of personal information kept on computers about individuals. In extending the new privacy rights to individuals, the Act places responsibilities on those who keep 'personal data' on computers, including employers.

Employers keeping employment records on employees on computer absence/attendance records, injury or sickness details, disciplinary or performance records, interview results, etc are covered by the Act. Such information would be regarded as 'sensitive'. All personal data about employees kept on computer or word processor disk is covered by the Act.

In the spirit of honesty, confidentially and privacy and having reviewed, 'The Data Protection Act, 1988', all participants were provided assurance in this regard. There was a confidentiality clause stated in the email inviting participants to contribute to the research, see Appendix 7.2: Interview Protocol Template, page 105.

The following practices were undertaken to ensure confidentiality and privacy:

- Interview narrative, including voice recordings will be kept secure until submission of the thesis, thereafter will be destroyed by shredding all paperwork, and deleting files held on the computer and the Apple iTouch voice recorder
- Names of the participants, including their organisations were replaced with codes
- In the spirit of honesty and verification, participants were provided with the narrative from their interview, which included the analysis. The purpose was to validate if the analysis represented their genuine feelings and thoughts; their reply agreed with and fully supported the analysis

The ethical issues of honesty, confidentiality, privacy and non-abuse of power issues were followed during the process of the research.

3.6 Limitations and Further Research

There are a number of limitations in this dissertation associated in terms of research design, the samples used, and the data collected that may affect the validity of the study. While the research was tested in four global multi-national organisations with information technology as the career of choice the results may be specific to these four organisations and industry. As a result, the model needs to be tested in additional global multi-national organisations with a breadth of industry and career choice. The sample used for assessing the top talent perspective, on why they should stay with or to leave there employer was small which may have limited the probability of finding significant effects.

However, given the small sample size, there were significant findings and the results can be interpreted as fairly robust. To confirm this, it is recommended that future studies should be conducted with larger sample sizes. As the timeframe was tight with regard to the research and the development of the research, it would have been opportunistic to have obtained an academic with experience in this field to review the research questions prior to undertaking the interviews.

With regard to the results of the study, the findings involving the three theories in support of the theoretical model should be interpreted with caution. While the reliabilities are believed to be accurate based on the findings and analysis (the sample size used was small and the top talent sample used in this research rated themselves as top talent) it was not possible to determine if the current economic downturn in the global market had an impact on their views.

Additional research is also required to include examining the human resource retention practices within each of the organisations. It may be that the relationship between an organisation's human resource practices and top talent is mediated by the quality of the relationships developed and maintained by the organisation's employees. One of the organisations went through a recent acquisition and merger, where both organisation cultures and industry are very different.

Further research would provide for and interesting opportunity to investigate if an organisation has excellent retention strategies that support the theoretical model developed. The interviews did not go into organisation human resource strategies, or any specific details to see if their organisations had such a model in place, as top talent assessment of their human resource practices may not be accurate. This element could be included which may provide a different perspective to this research.

Another observation, as all the interviewees were male, it is worth considering female top talent in future research, they may highlight different retention drivers to that of their male colleagues, something that needs to be factored into any future research and analysis.

3.7 Summary

From developing the methodology chapter the most important lesson learned is that it is essential to use methodical and rigorous methods for recording and reducing qualitative data. The challenge using an interpretive paradigm to apply method(s) that will retain the integrity of the data is critical to the research. This was upheld along with following the guidelines with regard to ethics and ethical behaviour.

Contemporary literature in support of the research objective was not reviewed prior to empirical research, with the exception of developing a high level of understanding on what the classic theorists had discovered as discussed in Section 2.1, Evolution of Employment Theories, page 13. This approach is seen as deductive, and is seen as acceptable within a grounded theory approach.

Data collection was gathered using semi-structured interviews. The rationale behind using a semi-structured interview approach was to facilitate the fact that the participants like to speak a lot.

A key academic insight learned from the understanding of a grounded theory approach is the practice of coding. The coding system used is the means by which you translate the narrative data collected to a series of codes, concepts, categories leading to the development of a theoretical model.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The research approach carried out for developing the theoretical model was by means of a qualitative method for gathering primary data, and grounded theory analysis for the analysis phase; see Chapter 5.0, Analysis, page 71. The key findings are based on the analysis derived from both primary data obtained from empirical research, and secondary data related to top talent and the theories developed. For clarity this chapter is divided into Section 4.1, Primary Data, page 58, Section 4.2, Secondary Data, page 63, Section 4.3, Theoretical Model Identified, page 66 and Section, 4.4, Summary, page 68.

4.1 Primary Data

The codes, concepts, categories generated from the primary data collected during the interviewing process means that the theory was inductively derived. The overall objective was to understand the retention drivers that top talent considers when choosing to stay with or to leave their employer. A particular area of interest was to see if the reasons for staying with and the reasons to leave an employer are the same or different.

The findings suggest that the retention drivers are mostly the same, therefore what keeps a person motivated to stay with their employer are the same for choosing to leave their employer. What the analysis indicated, if the drivers are seen as a positive and are in place, top talent are contented and they will stay. If the drivers are not in place it is seen as a negative, and top talent will look to another employer with the drivers that deem to be important and supports there career and personal aspirations.

In obtaining legitimate findings in support of the research objective and to develop an understanding of the retention phenomenon, the foundation of the data analysis originated from the narrative from the interviews. This understanding was based on the primary data collected having analysed the data that was gathered. This approach is based on the view that to understand something you have to start with interviews and observations, not literature. The narrative obtained from interviews and observations as a researcher drives the theory rather than the literature driving the theory.

The process of coding as laid out in Chapter 5, Analysis, page 71, allowed for the condensing of a large amount of narrative from the eight interviews into the code, concepts and categories that were salient to the participants involved during the interviewing process. In presenting the findings in this chapter, the themes are discussed and illustrate the points by making direct quotes from the participants involved. This approach provides for robustness and validity.

The findings have shown that there is no real difference between why top talent chooses to stay with or to leave their employer. During the interview process when asked Question Two, 'why would you leave or consider leaving'. The answer in most cases was a reverse of the answers given to Question 1, 'why do you stay'. Therefore, very early in the interview process the discovery that there was little or no difference between the reasons for top talent choosing to stay with or to leave their employer. Separate to retention drivers, the one answer that was overwhelmingly specified was; if a significant event took place, which meant to the participants, if someone came knocking on their door, offered an opportunity in their chosen profession, providing career growth and challenges, closer to home and twice the money they would consider it very closely.

In Chapter 1, Section 1.2, Contest for Talent, page 2, where 'contest for talent' is coined there are many organisations selectively looking to pick up top talent, so the phone call may not be too far away, and organisations need to be aware of this imminent threat to their top talent.

4.1.1 Interviewee Quotes

As depicted in Chapter 5, Analysis, page 71, the findings are in support of a rigid and robust form of analysis taken from the narrative of each of the eight interviews. To add authenticity and enthusiasm in support of these findings, the following sub-sections record three quotes per participant (four from Interviewee 8), taken from the narrative of the interviews:

Quotes from Interviewee 1

'Recognition of the role that your profession plays within the organisation'

'Sense of belonging, support, mutual respect and recognition'

'Organisation prestige, and that I was getting the recognition for what I have achieved through my career to date'

Quotes from Interviewee 2

'Being valued, feeling needed, being part of a team, moving forward'

'People company, being valued and trusted

'Prestige, not so much the title, but being recognised for the work and value brought to the company'

Quotes from Interviewee 3

'It is the way the company values the contribution that you are making, the opportunity to make a difference by applying the expertise that you have'

'Being recognised, that the area of your chosen career, (for me it is technology) actually does matter'.

'Trust is very important and one of the great motivators for staying somewhere and retaining people'

Quotes from Interviewee 4

'You need a challenge, you go to automatic pilot and your energy level drops and it becomes a machine type effort so you do need challenges'

'It is important for me to have recognition and status'

'Trust is what I need 100 percent, I function 50 percent in trying to prove or gain trust, trust is key to me, I would malfunction, because it would kill me'

Quotes from Interviewee 5

'Have to be with a company that understands and values the role, alignment of personal goals and ambitions, personal interests, along with making the company successful also'

'Good opportunities and good job content and recognised for my efforts'

'I think it is obviously the variety of work that we get to do as architects, lots of different roles, training programmes, being a valuable resource, looked after and challenged'

Quotes from Interviewee 6

'Job classification, loss of trust, not been valued'

'I would get totally bored with the job if it would not meet my satisfaction criteria any more'

'Prestige in an organisation there is none and this is important to me'

Quotes from 'Interviewee 7'

'Boils down to a couple of things, is the work challenging, does it stretch me (as I get bored easily), needs to keep my attention, and I need to learn stuff'

'A challenging learning environment, being part of complex problems, having to research, resolve and probe'

'Culture and working in a learning environment, ultimately is important'

Quotes from 'Interviewee 8'

'Learning environment, supportive environment, willing to give people a chance to do other things, open and flexible organisation'

'Empowerment and trust, they go together, trusting people, empowering people, don't micro-manage'

'Being in a position of prestige, leading people, not the power lead, and get something from it'

'Retention of top talent, the most important, organisations need a view of what they want from top talent, some perspective 'you can't have them wandering'

4.2 Secondary Data

The following sub-sections are high level findings of secondary data obtained during research and analysis depicted in Chapter 5, Analysis, page 71, in support of the theoretical model as depicted in this chapter under Section 4.3, Theoretical Model Identified, page 66. It is important to note that the secondary data as discussed below is not in the same context as the primary data. For ease of clarity, the following sub-sections are broken down representing the three theories that make up the theoretical model.

4.2.1 Learning Organisation

During secondary data research to help understand the challenges in support of a learning organisation, the following aspects were identified as organisational workforce challenges for the retention of top talent:

- Changes in the workforce due to an increasingly global labour market and greater workforce diversity, along with organisation strategies towards best-shoring of work to countries like India and China

- Significant changes in demographic trends. In the United Kingdom (UK), by the year 2020 it is projected that the workforce aged 20 to 40 will decrease by 16 million and those in the workplace aged between 45 and 65 will increase by 17 million

- Less loyalty to one employer from individuals who self-manage their careers and development, research has indicated that employees will change careers approximately every seven years

- More flexible ways of working combined with a growth in the virtual workplace and the growing priority given by individuals to work-life balance

- Shift in emphasis to the quality of contribution made while at work, rather than the hours spent at work

- More people working part-time, and the associated challenge of making the most of the talents of individuals not working in full-time roles

- Continuing growth in the numbers of women in the workforce and issues of their representation in senior roles

- Importance of being involved with establishing the strategic direction, vision and mission of the organisation (Tansley, Turner, Foster, Harris, Sempik, Steward, and Williams, 2007).

4.2.2 Trust

To have the greatest chance for retaining top talent, an organisation's environment must be challenging, fun and rewarding (both intrinsically and extrinsically). Top talent contributions must be recognised, and they must be given the opportunities to experience continued growth. Successful people want to work for a winning team and as mentioned earlier - smart people attract smart people.

Top talent needs to be nurtured and valued; leaders and human resource practitioners must consider it a privilege to have top talent in their organisations. Employees who have grown up together within a company are more likely to work together over time on a variety of projects, and building trusting relationships which enable greater cooperation in achieving business goals. There is a trust that you approach problems in a similar way, share a common language, and that your values generally go well together (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich, 2002 and Younger and Smallwood, 2004).

Top talent are moved often both for development and to keep them motivated and fresh (Feld, 2004). They are evaluated regularly and work closely with their leaders to construct an individual development plan. As Interviewee 8 quoted, you can't have them (top talent) wandering around. Their progress needs to be discussed in executive talent planning meetings, and a plan in place for their next role and for when they change or advance in position.

4.2.3 Prestige

The image of an organisation as a place to work commonly known as 'employee branding', is generating increasing interest from human resource practitioners, and has a clear relevance to top talent. Creating an organisational identity that is regarded positively by current and potential employees can be an effective way to 'win the war for talent' Edwards (2005) and Ulrich (1997). A strong employer brand combined with a dominant presence in the market can help to create a strong and attractive image to win potential candidates.

There are several important characteristics for the success of acquiring and retaining top talent; industry or sector image and the perceived values of the organisation are critical (Tansley et al, 2007).

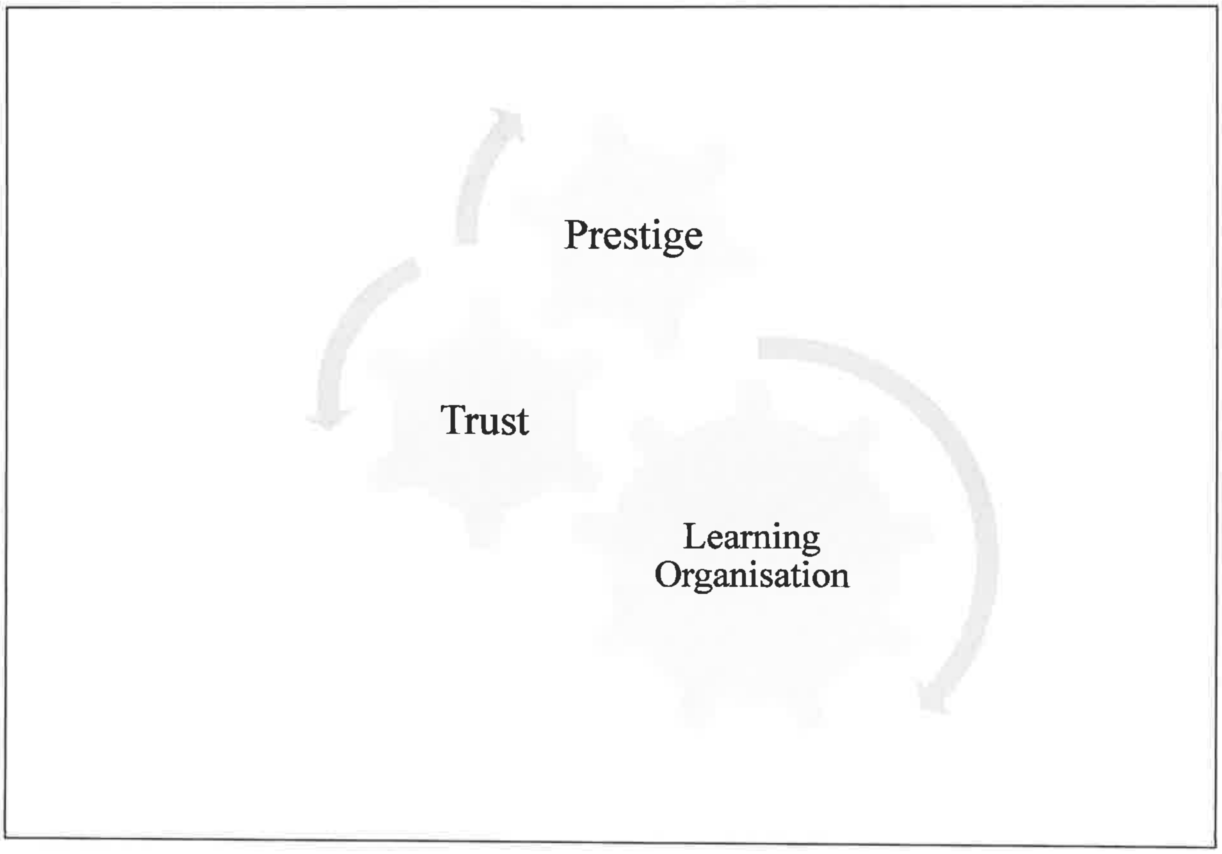
It is important not to micromanage, but it's equally important to recognise when employees are doing a good job and to acknowledge their contributions to the organisation. Not being micro-managed came up a few times during the interviewing process. Top talent want to be respected for their professionalism (skills and experience), their knowledge and decision making skills.

4.3 Theoretical Model Identified

The theoretical model identified is the result from the analysis stage depicted in Chapter 5, Analysis, page 71. A theoretical model is revealed that posited three themes as retention drivers; learning organisation, trust and prestige.

The theoretical model came from the narrative provided in the interviews and the codes, concepts and categories derived from the coding process. The theoretical model based on empirical research is where a focused literature review was undertaken in support of the three retention drivers identified.

Illustration 7: Theoretical Model



The earlier review was a deductive view to establish a basis of understanding, a theoretical model of the three key concepts/themes was then created from empirical research and a literature review undertaken. By using grounded theory analysis, these results were produced via the recommended coding process.

The research into the literature provides an explanation with regard to the findings and analysis highlighted during the interviewing process, and where the three theories can add additional insight to the theoretical model produced.

4.4 Summary

Talent management has proved to be a complex area to research because of the lack of a universal definition of talent or an established set of concepts and common language to refer to when talking about talent management (Tansley et al, 2007). Empirical research in this area as seen by top talent is perceived to be organisation specific. This depends on a combination of external and internal factors which vary according to the industry or sector, nature of the work, organisation culture and the approach to learning and development, as well as existing human resources strategies. The factors most frequently associated with talented individuals are; leadership behaviours, creativity and high levels of expertise and initiative. The significance contributed to these factors is dependent on current organisational priorities. Key retention drivers highlighted during the interviewing phase:

- Retention of top talent
- Under utilisation of the expertise of existing workforce
- Recruitment reservations
- Global workforce changes
- Increased global competition
- Skills shortages
- Outsourcing and best-shoring

The CIPD 2006 'Learning and Development Survey' reported that 94 percent of respondents agreed that well-designed talent development activities can have a positive impact on an organisation's bottom line. Developing high-potentials (67 percent) and growing future senior managers (62 percent) are the two main objectives for talent management activities.

In addition, the survey suggests that a workplace culture in which people can maximise their potential is still not the norm. This outcome may affect the efforts top talent put into their work and may cause them to look for opportunities elsewhere.

The most overwhelming issue for organisations with regard for the future workforce is retention of top talent. More than 75 percent of the survey's respondents cited it as the most critical challenge. It stands to reason that reducing turnover, and holding onto top performers reduces the burden on recruiting and its associated costs. It is also a good sign that this is being recognised as a top challenge for leaders and human resource practitioners (Tansley et al, 2007).

In-house branded talent development programmes that are emerging in a small number of cases seem to have 'cracked the code'. The best organisations appear to be more capable of consistently recruiting and keeping top talent. They appear to exemplify best practice in talent management, such as hiring for talent, actively training and developing, treating talent fairly and focusing on retention of top talent (Frank, Finnegan and Taylor, 2004). In doing so consistently and well, organisations create investor confidence (indicated in increased stock prices) because investors believe that their leaders are investing in the talent required to deliver future results, and do so in the right way (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2004).

Top talent are committed to lifelong learning and as a result they value leadership who facilitates as a coach or as a mentor. They value an organisation that is committed to providing continuous training and education. A strong aspect for top talent is that they value being around peers who stimulate them. This is part of creating a fun environment (Jamrog, 2009).

There are a number of lessons that can be drawn from looking at retention drivers from a top talent perspective, organisations should take note of what their top talent are saying and what the retention drivers are and how important these drivers mean to the retention of top talent.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the analysis through a coding process of the primary data taken from the narrative transcribed from the eight interviews undertaken as part of the research process. The richness of the data composed through primary data is complemented through data survey results that contributed to a greater understanding of top talent retention drivers in the course of researching and analysing secondary data.

The secondary data was researched following the analysis of the primary data, and the literature review in support of the theoretical model derived from the findings and analysis phase of the research. The purpose of this approach was to identify secondary data that supported the theoretical model.

For ease of reading and understanding the logic of data collection and analysis, this chapter is divided into three main sections, Section 5.1, Primary Data, page 71, Section 5.2, The Coding Process, page 74 and Section 5.3, Secondary Data, page 80.

5.1 Primary Data

The research formerly began with a generic research question with constant changes taking place during the initial planning phase. The subsequent research questions presented the interviewee participants with a theme allowing, the interviews to expand in many directions Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Cameron and Price (2009).

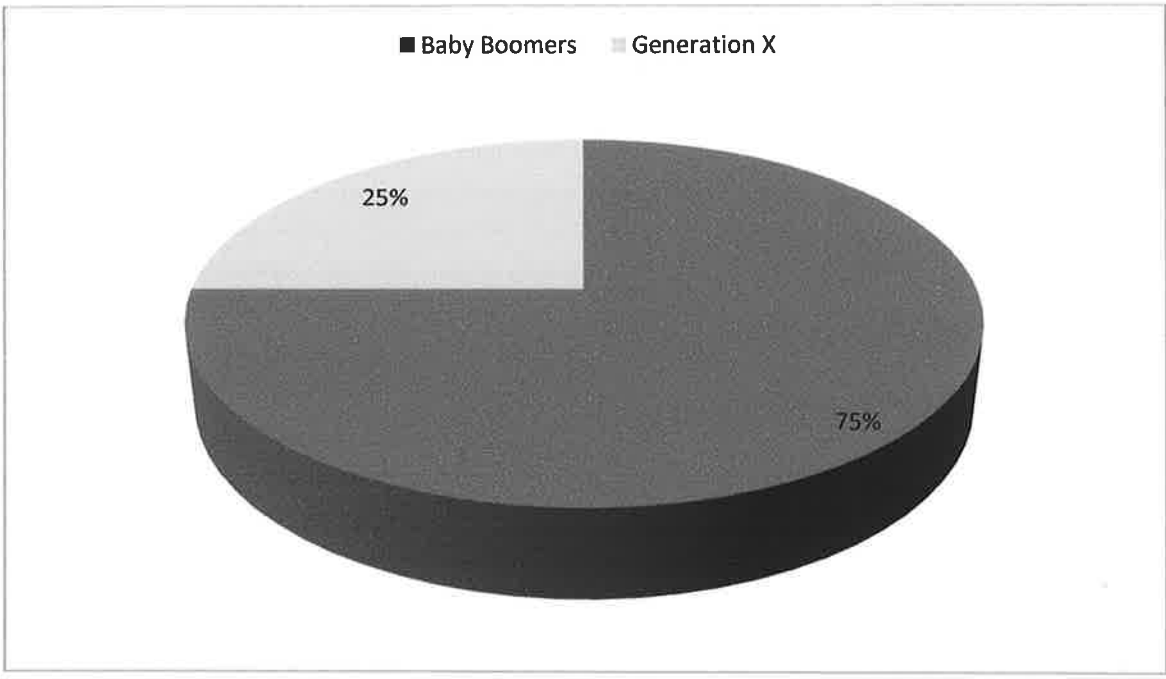
5.1.1 Data Collection and Data Analysis

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with eight participants. An Interview Protocol Template was developed as depicted in Appendix 8.2: Interview Protocol Template, page 105, which was used as the template during the interviewing process. Having a prepared template proved to be very useful during the interviewing phase due to the continuous assessment and comparison of the narrative after each interview.

All of the eight participants possess either a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelor of Science (B.S.C.) degree in Information Technology or Computer Science, with five of the participants having achieved the academic status of Masters in Business Administration (M.B.A.). The level of seniority of each of the participants allows them to architect technology with business systems thinking at an enterprise level. It became very clear during the interview process that this is their chosen career, and one which they want to remain building and growing.

Appendix 8.3: Background Information of Participants, page 110, highlights the participants' length of service for their current employment, job level, education, demographics, gender and race. This background information is the only personal information that was obtained from each of the participants. This analysis is depicted in Illustration 8: Demographic Background of Participants Interviewed, page 73.

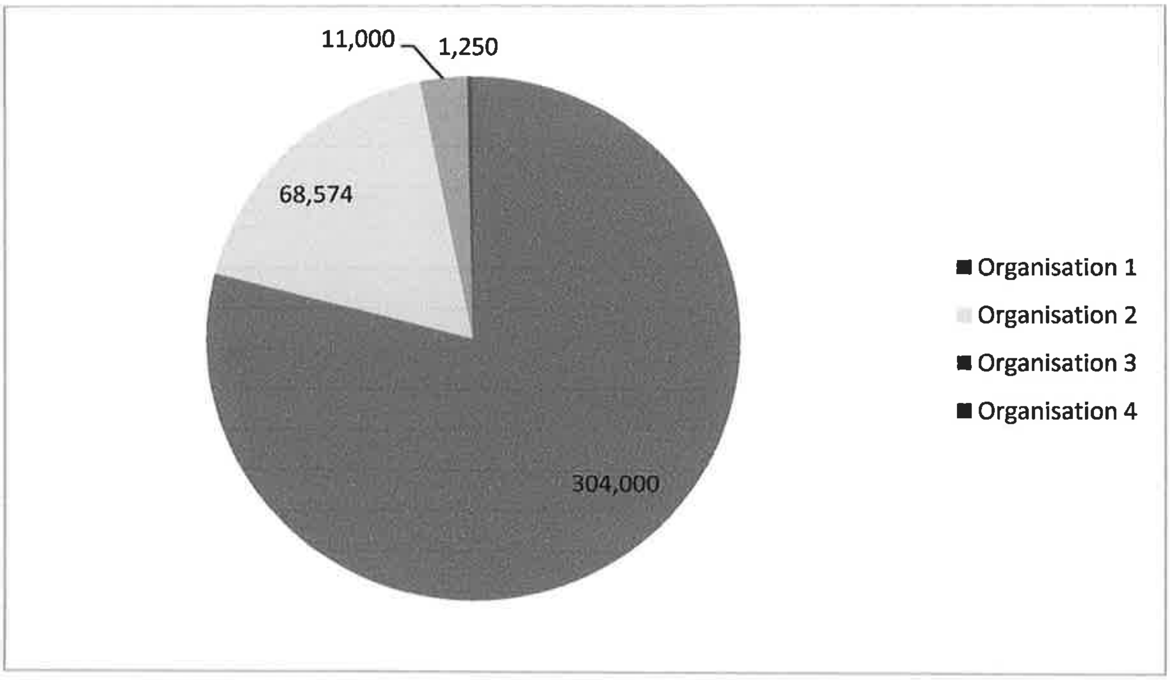
Illustration 8: Demographic Background of Participants Interviewed



Six of the eight participants fell into the category of 'baby boomers' and two into the category of 'generation X'. There were no 'veterans' or 'generation y' interviewees within the population sample.

All participants came from an Information Technology or Computer Science industry background along with a strong business background in a number of industries, mainly government, financial services and manufacturing. The following illustration depicts the number of employees in the participants' respective organisations. Illustration 9: Participant's Organisations by Number of Employees, page 74, further shows the achievement of a varied selection of participants from a small sample for the collection of empirical data through the recommendations of each of the participants.

Illustration 9: Participant's Organisations by Number of Employees



Organisation 1, four of the participants worked for the same global multi-national organisation. Organisation 2, two participants from another global multi-national organisation, and the other two participants worked for two separate global multi-national organisations, Organisation 3 and Organisation 4.

5.2 The Coding Process

Appendix 8.5: Narrative and Coding Template, page 113, depicts the template used to collect, analyse and code the interview narrative taken from the eight interviewees. Appendices 8.6, 8.7 and 8.8: Interview Narrative and Coding, pages 114 to 126, for Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4 and Interviewee 5, provides for a sample that depicts the actual narrative and coding taken from three of the eight interviews.

The narrative was read and re-read after each of the interviews, prior to moving onto the next interview to draw out the key aspects or codes that were discussed. This is referred to as constant comparison, for the purpose of generating and sensibly suggesting the many codes, concepts and categories leading to the theory, and the results created from the issues raised during the interviewing process Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Cameron and Price (2009).

5.2.1 Open Coding

Appendices 8.6, 8.7 and 8.8: Interview Narrative and Coding, pages 114 to 126, shows two columns, the first column depicts the actual narrative taken from the interviews, and the second column is referred to as code. The open coding process is central to analysing data within grounded theory analysis. It is the first stage of the analysis, and is where you analyse, retrieve and label the key aspects from the data. These are referred to as codes which communicate the meaning or inference that as the researcher have drawn from each of the interviews. The same process was followed for all eight interviews including the pilot interview.

This process is time consuming which is why a half-day between each interview was required to allow for analysis and constant comparison as depicted in Appendix 8.4: Interview Administration Process and Timetable, page 111. This analysis requires reading the narrative word for word, reflecting on what is occurring using and listing words of no more than three to five in the code column. It is very important that these words accurately convey the ideas and thoughts of the participants (Allan, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2007; Cameron and Price, 2009).

The coding process involves constant comparison between the narrative being coded and previously considered text and codes. This approach helped to create insights into the categories used for the next phase of coding. At the bottom of each interview narrative a section called 'notes' was developed. The purpose and value of the notes section helped with regard to recalling the thoughts that occurred during the interviewing process, and how the codes related to the narrative data, or to the analysis of the narrative data from previous interviews.

Open coding is the first step of data analysis and is a requirement prior to moving to the next stage of the coding process looking for concepts. Concepts are at a higher level and are created by pulling together codes that are related. The concepts are created using a process called axial coding (Allan, 2003; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007; Cameron and Price, 2009)

5.2.2 Axial Coding

Axial coding takes open coding to the next level. Appendix 8.9: Axial Coding, page 132, depicts two columns code and concept, which includes the codes taken from all eight interviews. The code column is taken directly from the analysis of the original narrative in the open coding process as depicted in Appendices 8.6, 8.7 and 8.8: Interview Narrative and Coding, pages 114 to 126. The codes were further condensed, and where there was duplication the code was added once. Axial coding is a concise analysis taken from the narrative of the eight interviews through continuous assessment and constant comparison, and from where the codes and concepts evolved. The code listings are alphabetical; there is no ranking or priority given to any of the codes.

This form of analysis is time consuming, but necessary to help draw and build out the concepts, again using continuous assessment and constant comparison as part of the analysis. The process helped ensure that the concepts produced are grounded in the issue or issues raised by the narrative data taken from each of the interviews. Axial coding can be seen as a filter which acts on two levels, the first level is where the codes are initially devised through the open coding process, then grouped into concepts which are a much smaller condensed number derived from the condensed codes.

5.2.3 Concepts and Categories

At this stage the narrative has been read many times, codes have been condensed and concepts created that originated from the narrative of the interviews expressed during the interviewing process. The outcome was a number of concepts, but much smaller in number than the original codes developed. The purpose was to identify additional limited groups, referred to as categories as depicted in Appendix 8.10: Concepts and Categories, page 138. The concepts identified were analysed through continuous assessment and constant comparison referring back to the narrative and to the previous concepts. These categories identified provide a representation of the important aspects drawn from the narrative data and the concepts. As mentioned earlier, all eight interview narrative data were condensed into this analysis, all codes, concepts and subsequent categories were derived from this original data. As depicted in Appendix 8.9: Axial Coding, page 132, the codes feed into the concepts which then feed into the categories as depicted in Appendix 8.10: Concepts and Categories, page 138.

At this stage of the analysis all the data has been condensed which allows for the movement onto the next phase as the categories were saturated. Data saturation occurred because all the codes and concepts were considered, and the results were placed in one or more categories which led to no more categories being required.

5.2.4 Selective Coding

This is the final stage of the coding process where all the important issues have been identified, and now forms the basis for theory and results. This final stage required judgement as to which of the categories identified contributes to the theory or the results. Illustration 10: Category and Theory, page 79, lists the categories and theory from which to build the arguments and discussions aimed at answering the research question. This is the point at which the research produces 'an explanatory theory' (Saunders et al, 2007).

Illustration 10: Category and Theory

Category and Theory	
Category	***Theory***
Learning and development and the components in support of this category were a significant theme. There was a strong feeling that top talent required this type of organisational environment framework to enable them to be successful in their chosen career. They saw this as a given or mandatory retention driver.	Learning Organisation
Clear and direct comments around trust and being empowered, they felt both were the same. As top talent this was seen as a basic driver for them to perform their work.	Trust
Clear and direct comments around status, job level, recognition and being valued were constant and consistent themes required by top talent at the individual level, comments also included organisational prestige.	Prestige

The logical breakdown of processes for coding allowed for condensing a large amount of narrative data from the eight interviews into the codes, concepts, categories and subsequent theory that were salient to the participants involved during the interviewing process.

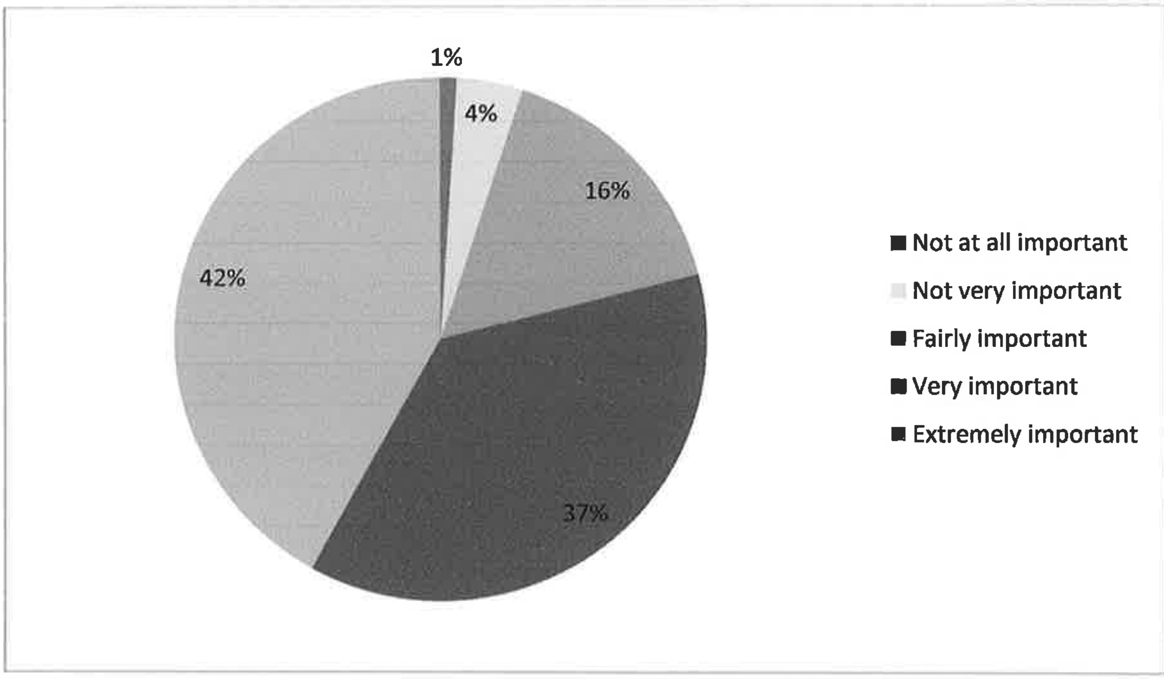
In presenting the findings in Chapter 4, Findings, page 58, which discusses the themes, and illustrates the points by taking direct quotes from the interview narrative of all eight interviewees provides for further validity of the narrative data gathered during the interviewing phase of the research.

5.3 Secondary Data

Secondary data was researched, reviewed from many sources providing added value through references from the corporate website of the participants' organisations, academic journals, recent surveys, professional human resource journals, National College of Ireland (NCI) many on-line website (and helpful library assistants), the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) website, Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) website, Central Statistics Office (CSI) website, The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) website, Harvard Business Review website and McKinsey website, newspapers and journals.

Respondents who are responsible for recruiting in a recent survey were asked; How Important is Employer Branding for your Organisation?' The results are depicted in the following Illustration 11: How Important is Employer Branding for your Organisation?, page 81.

Illustration 11: How Important is Employer Branding for your Organisation?



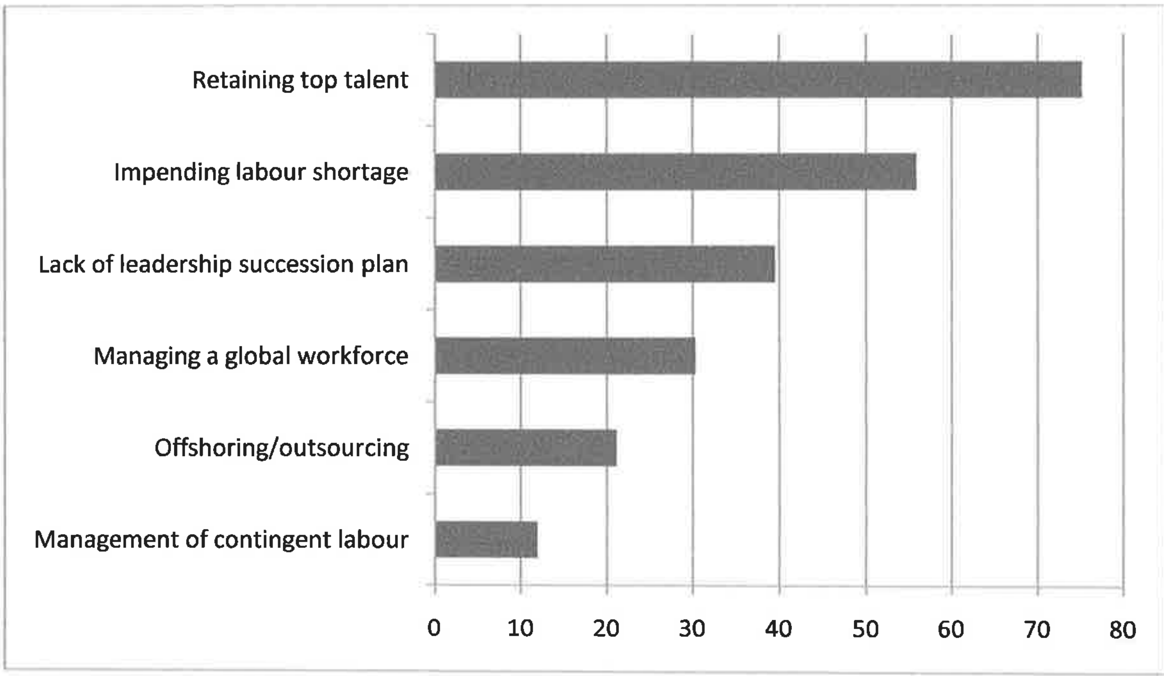
Source: Willock (2005) and (Tansley et al (2007).

This analysis indicates that employer branding is seen as being an extremely important aspect to their organisations. This supports the category of prestige (organisational) that which is one of the theories that make up the theoretical model.

A number of potential challenges will face leadership and human resource practitioners in the coming years, these challenges will mandate that organisations put strategic initiatives in place to counter impending threats towards the retention of top talent. This question was posed during a recent survey on the 'Top Future Workforce Challenges' which of the following issues are you most concerned about regarding your workforce of the future? 75.2 percent of respondents mention *retaining top talent* as the most critical component in building their workforce of the future.

It makes sense that by reducing turnover and holding on to top talent reduces the burden on recruiting. A key factor in achieving success in both attraction and retention is gaining an understanding of what is important to employees. Illustration 12: Top Future Workforce Challenges, page 82, depicts the overall categories covered during the survey.

Illustration 12: Top Future Workforce Challenges



Source: IDC's Talent Pulse Survey, May 2006

Illustration 13: Reasons Employees are Attracted to and Remain with Organisations, page 84, depicts the categories covered during a recent survey. When respondents were asked the question, what is the main reason employees are attracted to and remain with your organisation? the number one answer was that the organisation is an *employer of choice'* (29.4 percent).

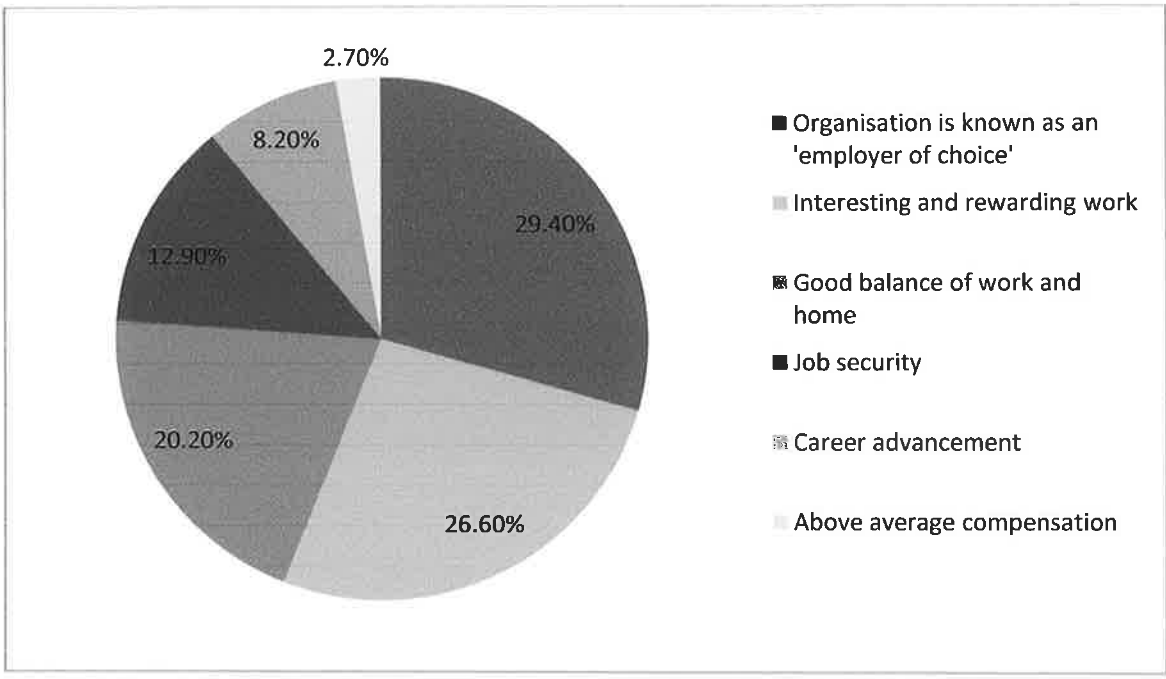
With many of the participant organisations being very large and well known, this apparently is not an unusual finding as it was the organisation answering the question. It is important to note that there may have been a bias towards this being an answer, albeit an important one as it did come up in the interviewing phase of this research.

The second reason was *interesting and rewarding work* (26.6 percent). This again supports the analysis from the primary data collected, as the majority of the participants stated that interesting and challenging work is one of the motivators that they choose to stay with an organisation.

Work-life balance came third (20.3 percent). This concept also came up in the interviewing phase and was noted during the coding process. Although perceived to be important it was not seen as a priority, and would only became an issue if there was no give and take around this aspect from an organisation perspective.

The other three categories that were covered in the survey; Job Security and Above Average Compensation were vaguely mentioned during the coding process, however Career Advancement was seen as important as is included as one of the aspects under a learning environment.

Illustration 13: Reason Employees Are Attracted to and Remain with Organisations



Source: IDC's 'Talent Pulse Survey, May 2006

5.4 Summary

A grounded theory analysis approach helped produce the analysis of the narrative data that was genuinely driven by the views and opinions of the interview participants. This approach reflected their concerns, explanations and opinions rather than the researcher or academic literature in the field. This approach provided a depth of information drawn from the feelings, attitudes and the behaviours of the participants being interviewed. Therefore, this analysis is a genuine reflection of what their thoughts and perspectives are with regard to the retention phenomenon. During the interview process, the data was collected and analysed, and as the codes, concepts and categories developed, additional data was collected and analysed, to further clarify, develop and validate the theory.

By using grounded theory analysis, there is little danger that the literature will provoke a different set of results as they have been produced using grounded theory analysis and a rigorous coding process. However, results from the literature review may be used as follows:

- To see if the results are similar to the results of other research or where the results differ

- Help broaden the understanding of the codes, concepts and categories highlighted from the narrative data and the coding process

- Where the literature models and concepts throw light on the theoretical model that has been produced

With the theoretical model in place, the literature review commenced in support of the model developed.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

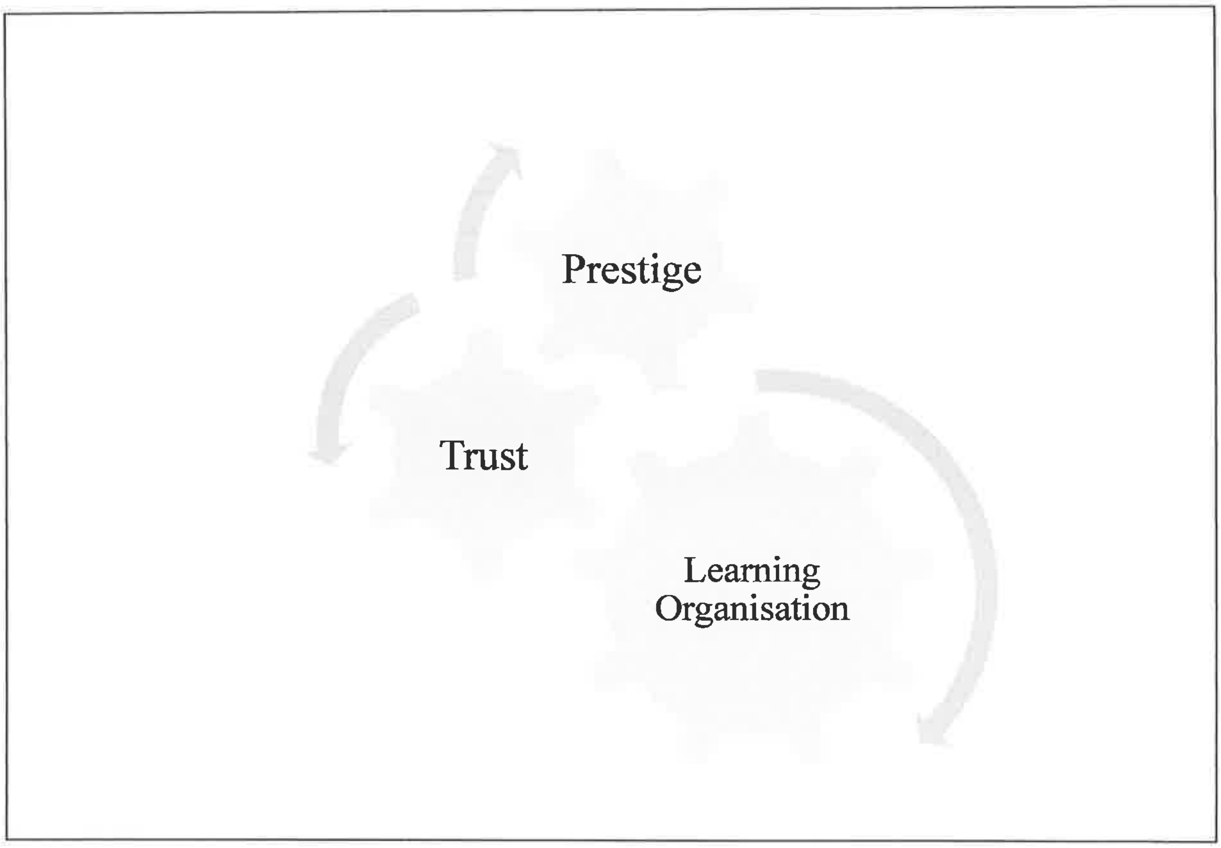
This chapter concludes the research undertaken as follows: Section 6.1, Theoretical Implications, page 86, discusses the theoretical implications that arose through the research process. Section 6.2, Practical Implications, page 88, discusses the practical implications that ought to be considered by organisations. Section 6.3, Conclusions, page 89 discusses particular scenarios that provides for reflection drawn from the research journey with a final closing conclusion bringing a closure to the research.

6.1 Theoretical Implications

The conceptualisation of the retention of the theoretical model, depicted below, Illustration 14: Theoretical Model, page 87, evolved during the empirical research process are central to the discussions that are taking place with leadership and human resource practitioners globally.

A particular concern for an organisations leadership and human resource practitioners (which includes the research problem) is the need to consider differentiating retention strategies to safeguard the retention of top talent. During the finding and analysis phase of the research, it was clear from top talent that if another organisation offering better retention drivers than they currently encompass, they are likely to leave their current employer.

Illustration 14: Theoretical Model



The arguments posited are drawn from empirical research and the literature review demonstrates that resources can be viewed from different perspectives and differ in the goals they pursue. Research findings support the claim that top talent maintain implied retention drivers regarding how they are influenced by their role in an organisation, and what they are looking for in an employer. It is apparent that top talent desire a basic premise or framework such as a learning organisation to work in. This type of organisation influenced their behaviour on whether they should stay with or to leave their employer. The journey of discovering the theoretical model had a positive influence with regard to key retention drivers deemed a necessity by top talent. Through the findings and analysis top talent are intrinsically motivated to learn and develop on their own.

However, they wanted more than this, they desire to work in an organisation where there is trust, that they are valued not only for their own skills and knowledge but the value that they bring to an organisation. There were clear and definitive findings perceived by top talent, along with the basic premise of not engaging them through recognition (prestige), and the value that they provide they would seek work elsewhere. The findings highlighted the importance of relationships which involved trust in both the work place and with clients. In addition, when top talent reported the importance of having a strong work relationship with individuals or communities, trust was again highlighted as an imperative.

While a learning environment is perceived to foster risk-taking and innovation it must also facilitate a trusting environment. Top talent perceived that a learning environment provides and encourages calculated risk taking. They do not appear to be too concerned with failing as failure is often associated with incompetence which detracts from any desire they might have to engage in learning.

6.2 Practical Implications

The results of the research has implications to an organisations' human resource strategies by providing a possible explanation for how these strategies, and the down turn in the economic climate can help control retention drivers. In understanding how retention drivers influences top talent, organisations are in a better position to develop and implement human resource strategies that have the intended effects of retaining their top talent e.g. when top talent perceive the environment encourages teamwork and collaboration, they are more engaged with the organisation.

Excellent human resource strategies that reinforce a learning environment is recognised as a prestigious company that can identify the value top talent brings to the success and growth of an organisation. These strategies help encourage and promote the collaboration required throughout all levels of an organisation. A learning environment facilitates the development of strong peer and leadership relationships, enabling the development of common goals that facilitates recognition and trust. In contrast, human resource practices that reinforce individual performance can foster healthy competition.

Innovation and creativity are necessary for organisations to survive, to have leadership and excellent human resource strategies that not only recognise success, but also recognise the benefits of taking risks and failing. A learning environment can provide for a framework that allows that failure is often required in their employees, especially top talent to be seen as risk takers. The definition of pay-for-performance may need to be re-considered and redefined as a tool. To recognise when employees meet their performance objectives, but also to recognise when employees took a risk, failed, and then applied what they learned from that failure to improve their performance with their next risk (Beersma, Hollenbeck, Humphrey, Moon, Conlon and Ilgen, 2003 and Swift, 2007).

6.3 Conclusions

The result of the research adds to the growing literature in support of the theoretical model, through the insights presented by retention drivers as seen by top talent. Taking into account top talent's own and their organisations psychological climate, the relationship between top talent and retention drivers contribute to a better understanding of what top talent perceive as retention drivers.

The results of the research highlight the complexities associated with understanding the retention drivers and how organisations may consider and take on-board these drivers in the current economic climate. Hopefully, the research will stimulate others to undertake further research that focuses on top talent; specifically the retention strategies that organisations need to consider differentiating to preserve their top talent in this global contest for talent. Along with the globalisation of the workforce, changes in workforce practices and the demographic changes that are taking place.

The theoretical model developed may further stimulate research into why organisations need to understand their top talent desires, and to ask top talent the over-riding research question, 'what are the organisational retention drivers top talent chooses to stay with or to leave their employer?. Organisations can then decide to take advantage of the responses to this question therefore ensuring that top talent is valued and respected within their organisations. Establishing an organisational climate that encourages, develops and provides an environment for top talent to grow and add value, not only for them but for the greater excellence of the organisation is therefore a key human resource issue for organisations to address.

The current global economic downturn may require some modifications to organisations retention drivers, and then of course the opposite needs to be considered when the economic climate is buoyant. In today's fast changing increasingly complex and competitive business environment, retaining key talent is important not only organisational success but also to survival. Demographics make it clear that retention will become more critical in the years ahead. Yet retention alone is not enough, organisations need to motivate and develop their key talent and fortuitously, retention strategies are capable of reinforcing motivation and development.

In the final analysis the biggest key to retention is honest and open communications about what top talent desire and what the organisation can and cannot provide (Bryson and McKenna, 2002). Organisations need to create an environment where the development of top talent is supported and has clear links to the corporate business strategy. Top talent desire opportunities to expand their learning experience, therefore human resource practices and processes necessitate combining the different elements of corporate business strategy with human resource strategies.

Traditional ideas about career progression continue to be challenged as top talent are taking a greater account of the ways in which their employer supports the development of their skills and capabilities. This is seen by Verhaar and Smulders (1999) as part of the 'employability' component in the new psychological contract between employers and their employees. The implicit deal is that those selected for talent development programmes maximise their learning opportunities for the benefit of the organisation as well as themselves. This approach was consistent with the empirical research with all participants being interviewed

An additional way to retain employees is to obtain a level of fit between an organisation's values and those of the employee. This can be achieved at the recruitment stage, by appointing staff with similar values to those of the organisation, and through focused training and development along with a strong performance management practice (Edwards, 2005 and Tansley et al, 2007).

The challenges perceived from an organisational context are the key influences on an organisations approach to attracting, developing and retaining top talent.

The importance of employer branding in the pursuit of external talent is gaining increased recognition. There is a growing recognition of an explicit strategy on how to attract, select, develop, retain and manage top talent.

The success of retention strategies is dependent on the visible support from the senior leadership team. The contributions of directors and senior managers are a critical factor in gaining the engagement of all the parties involved and the value they attach to any interventions. Once top talent retention strategies and practices are introduced their success is heavily dependent on line managers. Line managers have a pivotal role in identifying and nurturing talent, but they can also constrain talented individuals unless fully committed to talent management practices (Tansley et al, 2007).

This approach places investment in top talent on the corporate strategic plan, which requires a focus on human resource strategies that contribute to all corporate strategic objectives such as a learning organisation, high-performance workplace and being an employer of choice.

In addition, effective top talent development programmes have a positive meaning for resource management. It creates a talent pool for future leadership and key organisational roles providing a source of talented individuals to undertake special projects, change initiatives and strategic placement in different functional areas of the business and different countries. This approach utilises and develops internal talent and reveals new talent not previously identified within an organisation.

Retention of top talent remains a key issue for organisations and may have an economic impact on the business. Demographics have indicated that the proportion of working-age people to retirees is decreasing.

Organisations need to prepare and plan for how they are going to resolve the possibility of this potential scarcity of top talent. A key to helping resolve this resource issue is to understand where the next generation of high potentials exists in the organisation. Research has indicated that employee shortage and skills are real with the most notable shortages being felt in the information technology and healthcare industries.

During the interviewing phase, the participants' valued contributing to the development of and implementing the corporate strategy, being part of a learning environment that provides them with interesting, varied and challenging work that allowed for growth and advancement in their chosen career. Participating in an environment where there is trust at all levels was seen as being very important, along with being recognised for the value that they bring to an organisation for both themselves and the organisation. It was noted during empirical research that none of the participants' organisations appeared to have a focused view on retention practices or motivators to retain their top talent.

By way of conclusion this research provides for a number of avenues for further research:

- The power and effective use of 'B' employees (employees who are considered high-potentials)

- The impact on employees who are not seen as top talent, but are providing value to their organisation

- The correlation between top talent, corporate strategy, a learning organisation, trust and prestige

- Next generation of top talent development programmes that anchor the strategic direction of the organisation

- Support, communicate and engage with employees through the uncertain economic climate

- Attention to organisation's skills shortages and the development of different possibilities for building up knowledge and experience

- Keep top talent and high-potentials motivated and committed

From a human resources perspective, the research has shown that top talent has the knowledge and skills to work effectively and successfully in any industry. They have the know-how to connect with their organisations stakeholders. However, human resource strategies are required to match the motivations and career aspirations of their top talent and the organisations strategic direction.

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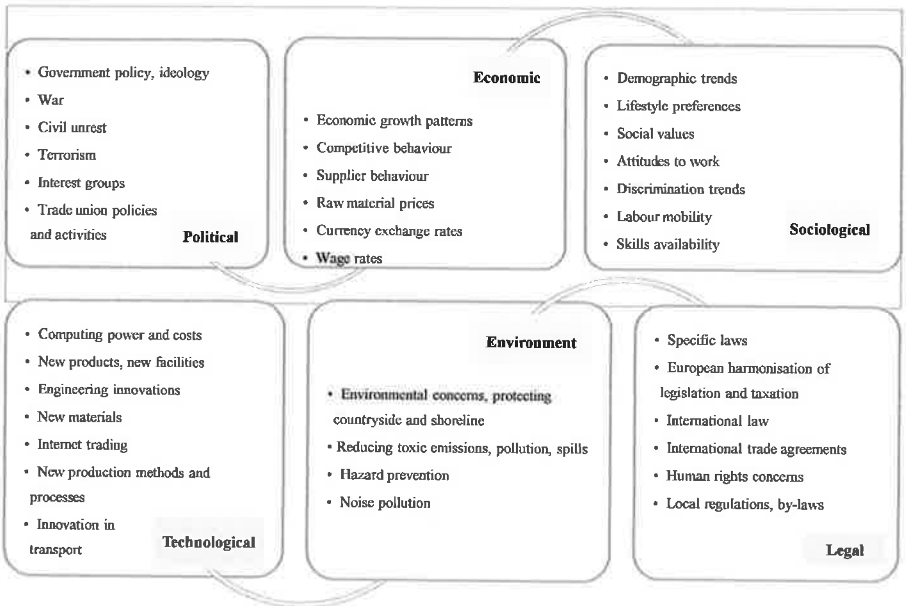
CHAPTER 8: APPENDICES

Appendix 8.1: Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Ecological (PESTLE)

Organisations do not operate in a void; they are influenced in diverse ways by the wider context as represented by the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Ecological (PESTLE) issues that affects an organisation and its members. The rationale of sharing this method in this context is that the leadership team and human resource practitioners in an organisation have many considerations to reflect on at a macro perspective. Both groups have an onus to ensure that their organisations are protected. Organisations cannot ignore these external factors; if they do they will run into difficulties.

Illustration 14: PESTLE Factors Affecting the Organisation



The implications of this analysis can affect all levels that require an organisation to function; strategy, structure, management style and working practices. The time spent on these analyses has to be balanced against the need for a rapid response to the organisational trends and developments being considered.

Appendix 8.2: Interview Protocol Template

As the interviews are semi-structured and will not be organised in a rigid manner, the purpose of the interview protocol template is to act as a guide. The template helps ensure that there is an introduction and reassurance has been covered with the interviewee with regard to honesty, confidentiality and privacy and to ensure an appropriate closure to the interview. The purpose of the development of this template will act as a guide and memory prompt to ensure that all areas have been covered during the interviewing process.

Introduction and Purpose of the Research

Good morning/Good afternoon. I want to thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. As mentioned in the recent interview invitation email, I am exploring what the organisation retention drivers on why top talent chooses to stay with or leave their employer. Research has highlighted a potential gap from the perspective of why employees leave their place of work.

Research Title:	Should I Stay or Should I Go? Retention of Top Talent in the 21st Century
Research Problem:	The need for organisations to consider differentiating their retention strategies to safeguard the retention of their top talent
Research Questions:	Why do you stay? Why would you leave or consider leaving?

The main research questions will be presented from the perspective of top talent.

Confidentiality and Ethical Issues

In the spirit of honesty, confidentially and privacy and having reviewed 'The Data Protection Act, 1988', all participants will be provided assurance in this regard. The confidentiality clause was stated in the email inviting participants to contribute to the research. This is a further reminder of the confidential practices that will be used during the research to ensure honesty, confidentiality and privacy:

- State that the interview narrative, including voice recordings will be kept secure until submission of the thesis, thereafter will be destroyed by shredding all paperwork, and deleting files held on the computer and the Apple iTouch voice recorder
- State that the interviewee names and the names of their organisations will be replaced with codes
- In the spirit of honesty and verification, participants will be provided with the narrative from their interview including the analysis when completed. The purpose of including the analysis is to ensure that the validation of the analysis represents their genuine feelings and thoughts

The ethical issues of honesty, confidentiality, privacy and non-abuse of power issues are to be explained and followed during the process of the research. Check any concerns that the participants may have and offer any necessary reassurances.

Explain the Interview Process

Check the interviewee is happy with the voice recording method and that the recording is in the interests of accuracy, but it is completely up to participants whether the voice recorder is used. State that the timing for the interview will be no more than one hour. If the interviewee agrees to a recording, make it clear that it can be switched off at any point.

Some points to remember during the interviewing process:

- Establish rapport to put the interviewee at ease
- Focus on the participant speaking
- Try to see the meaning behind their words, look for threads in the way they are answering the question
- Remember what they have said
- Listen to what they are not saying, so that a probe or a prompt could be used to bring out their thoughts and ideas

These points are important as the narrative that will be transcribed provide the basis for the findings and analysis of the empirical research to enable the development of a theoretical model.

Seek Background Information

- Length of service
- Job Title
- Education
- Male/Female
- Demographics (Veterans, Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y)

Secondary Questions in Support of the Main Research Questions

Main Questions	***Secondary Questions in support of Main Questions***
Why do you stay?	• Why did you choose to work for your current employer? • What could have kept you at your last company? • What aspects of your work do you enjoy?
Why would you leave or consider leaving?	• What would cause you to take work with another company?

Use of Probes and Prompts

Below is an example of several probes that may be useful during the interviewing process, especially if the interview is taking a different perspective than anticipated. These can be used to reflect on what the interview has said, perhaps rephrasing the sentence that they used slightly.

Example of Probes

Characteristic	***Probe***
Clarity	Can you give me an example of this? What do you mean? Can you explain that again?
Relevance	How do you think that relates to the issue? Can you explain how these factors influence each other?
Depth	Can you explain that in more detail? Can you give me more examples?
Dimension	Is it possible to look at this another way? Do you think that is a commonly held opinion?
Significance	How much does this affect you? What do you think is the most important? Would you change your opinion if X was to happen?
Comparison	Can you give me an example where this did not happen? Can you give me an example of a different solution? In what way does your opinion differ from the view of other people?
Bias	Why do you hold this opinion? What might happen that could change your opinion?

Source: Collis and Hussey (2009)

Overview of Research Outcome

- Offer the participants a copy of an overview of the outcome from the research.

Express Gratitude

Express gratitude for the participants help, concentration and thoughtfulness. Ask if they have any questions about the interview process.

Appendix 8.3: Background Information of Participants

Background	**Industry - Information Technology**
Length of Service - Current Position	
Interviewee 1	6 years
Interviewee 2	4 months
Interviewee 3	1 year
Interviewee 4	4 months
Interviewee 5	24 years
Interviewee 6	10 years
Interviewee 7	1 Year
Interviewee 8	26 Years
Job Level	Senior Professional
Education	B.A. and M.A.
Demographics	
Interviewee 1	Baby Boomer
Interviewee 2	Generation X
Interviewee 3	Baby Boomer
Interviewee 4	Baby Boomer
Interviewee 5	Baby Boomer
Interviewee 6	Baby Boomer
Interviewee 7	Generation X
Interviewee 8	Baby Boomer
Gender	Male

Appendix 8.4: Interview Administration Process and Timetable

Business Day	Activities
Saturday 27th March 2010	*Interviewee 1* Pilot Interview
Monday 31st May 2010	Emailed Interviewee 1 (Pilot Interviewee) to ask for recommendation for a name for Interviewee 2
Wednesday 2nd June 2010	Having established a name for Interviewee 2 and made contact to arrange and confirm an interview. The same process was following for the remaining eight interviewees via email; explaining the research objective, arranging an appropriate time for the interview, .stating confidentiality, contact details; phone number, both landline and mobile, and Skype account number.
Monday 7th June 2010 10:00 am 15:00 pm	*Interview 2* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison *Interview 3* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison
Tuesday 8th June 2010 10:00 am 16:00 pm	*Interview 4* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison *Interview 5* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison

Wednesday 9th June 2010 09:00 am 14:00 pm	 *Interview 6* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison *Interview 7* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison
Thursday 10th June 2010 10:00 am 15:00 pm	 *Interview 8* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison *Interview 9* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison
Friday 11th June 2010 11:00 am	 *Interview 10* Transcribed narrative - continual assessment and constant comparison
13th June 2010	Sent individual email thanking all interviewees for their participation in the interviews and for their interest with the empirical research
13th June 2010	Individual email to Interviewee 9 and Interviewee 10 thanking them for being ready to assist, and to share with them that I did not require their participation at this time
13th June 2010	End of interviews and completion of the continuous assessment and constant comparison of the narrative data

Appendix 8.5: Narrative Data and Coding Template

Interviewee: ____________________ Date: ______ Time: _______

Background Information		
Length of Service	***Previous***	***Current***
Job Title		
Education		
Male/Female		
Demographics Veteran: 1925-1945 Baby Boomer: 1950-1956 1957-1964 Generation X: 1965-1972 1973 – 1980 Generation Y: 1981 onwards		

Open Coding	
Narrative Data	***Code***
Why do you Stay? Why would you leave or consider leaving?	

Axial Coding	
Code	***Category***

Selective Coding	
Category	***Theory***

Appendix 8.6: Narrative Data and Coding - Interviewee 3

Background Information

	Previous	***Current***
Length of service	3 years	1 year
Job Title	Client Technology Officer (CTO)	Global Head of Architecture and Strategy
Education	MBA	
Male/Female	Male	
Demographics Baby Boomer	 1950 – 1956 X	

Open Coding	
Narrative Data	***Code***
Open Conversation It worked, it was a good bunch of people who trusted each other, nobody tried to trump each other, they would come and help and if somebody asked you to do something you had no problem helping. Not ego, more self belief, willing to share. Could not take yourself too seriously, they would laugh at you. The people were recognised as adding value.	Trusted each other Help and support Self belief, willing to share Adding value

Open Coding	
Narrative Data	***Code***
Why do you stay? People were recognised as adding value and people always asked from people from the AO. It is the way the company values the contribution that you are making, the opportunity to make a difference by applying the expertise that you have. Being recognised, that the area of your chosen career, (for me it is technology) actually does matter. Recognition for the contribution that you are making, we are not there anymore sitting bashing a keyboard. After the electricity, the next thing people notice going wrong is the systems going down as nothing will get down without, this is not recognised. It is more important for the traders or the accountants or someone else; in fact in what we do in our career is impacting at every level in an organisation. Recognition of the role that your profession plays within the organisation, the contribution that you are making to the success of the organisation. The ability to develop as an individual and be engaged in what you are doing, seeing the difference that your work is making to the success of a company as a whole. It does matter, it really does. And the money, feeling that there is equitable reward for your contribution. You have to feel first of all, that the money side gets sorted out, willing to do it for that money but if you then are in the organisation and if you have been sold a pup, if you then see within the organisation areas that are perhaps not making the same contribution and are rewarded far better, it can be a growing sort of dissatisfaction. Take the sales guy and the emphasis on the sales guy and the salary are disproportionate. They leave or move on and other people have to pick up the pieces.	Adding value Values Applying skills/expertise Being recognised Recognition Contribution Recognised Recognition Contribution Learning and development Success Contribution Contribution

Regarding the job in Germany, it was not to do with the people not being compensated it was the lack of support and lack of recognition, that you had leadership riding rough shot over. Some of the leadership should have stood up to the plate and did not, their behaviour let everybody down. Trust is very important and one of the great motivators for staying somewhere and retaining people is exactly what we had in the Architects Office, we had a sense of belonging, support, mutual respect and recognition. When people feel valued they never minded going out and rolling their sleeves up, getting down and getting dirty, working hard as you felt it was needed.	Recognition Leadership behaviour Trust Sense of belonging Mutual respect
Why would you leave or consider leaving?	
If there is a break in the trust then different factors come out. One of the things is unrealistic expectations and lack of the necessary resources to deliver what is expected to be deliver, it comes down sometimes to budget, people's willingness to support change, one thing you are coming in to support change and then not allowed to do. Or it can be for example, before my cancer, I had been at Company X for 4 years and then there was a merger forced by the Japanese government with Company Y, when that happened the company that came out of it was different, the people were different, there was a substantial change from the environment that you bought into and you cannot support this change, could be a motivation for leaving. There is also the view if there is never a merger of equals, there is a superior and inferior partner in a merger. If you are the inferior partner you are not viewed in the same way as being valued or as the key person as before. You are not viewed as being dependent on the culture taking over not for your skills are not valued by the other company. For example, what they did when I came to Company X, what I valued was the collaborate nature of the Architects Office, not the Company itself. Although you are working for a company, you are more affected	Change Change and Merger Being valued Culture Skills not valued Value

by the people around you rather than the company itself, the people who you are interacting with. If I had being there at the time and seen the dismantling of the Architects Office; sometimes you are in a situation that the change is the right thing, if you see something that is being changed that you think is wrong this could be a huge motivator to leave, and to take oneself out of the situation. Betrayal of trust and also there is the importance motivator of empowerment. Being brought into a situation where you are actually able to make a difference, you have the ability to see something through, if there is changes of management the new leader coming in may want to micro manage, I don't do it to other and I don't like it being done to me. Lack of trust can completely undermine your ability. A wider area of responsibility possibly, the opportunity to participate in the success very directly in what you are building so instead of being an employee. If I was given the opportunity to be involved in equity and had some type of ownership, also if there was some sort of new business area emerging that there was the dotcom type of opportunity that could be a motivator, along with the offer of a better work-life balance. My level of frustration with the amount of travel at this point is high on this side. And also I think as you go through life, having had the cancer changes your perspective, makes you more tolerating of something and less on others. Having different interests helps, if the job and the demand it bring too much of a conflict, if you are being forced to give up one thing for the sake of work, although it was still well paid, it was not allowing you to be you would be another motivator. There is a difference between employed and indentured slavery and some organisations do not understand that they are not buying your body and soul. It was the opportunity to apply the skills that I had to an interesting business area, where I felt that there was a good opportunity to make a difference, plus the money and a 12% tax regime in Hong Kong. That makes a big difference. Prestige matters also, both for the	Change Trust Empowerment Make a difference Changes Trust Success Work-life balance Applying skills Prestige

organisation and for myself, along with empowerment, it can be status but outside the organisation no one knows, the titles generally brings with it the empowerment, biggest source of status. It's the empowerment and that is the biggest source of belief is if you are empowered and then you find out you are not.	Empowerment Status
Organisation prestige and that I was getting the recognition, of what you have achieved through your career to date. Last job was an advisory work. Went in to that job with a specific piece of work to do, the only thing that would have kept me there if the	Organisation prestige
incumbent CTO left. The appropriate management support. I did try and make it really clear, and to be honest, it was lack of leadership support. I still hold very fondly the time that I had at Company X, sound like a huge contradiction but I could not get the attention of the leadership, could not find another way of doing it.	Recognition
Maybe they were not empowered; maybe they were unable to do anything. Not a question of being too difficult, don't think they	Empowered
had the authority to do anything, there was a lack of trust or even trying to help. And sadly the thing turned into a bit of disaster, the contract was lost because they were not delivering on the technology front, and the reason why they took it back is because they did not do the things that there told to do by the Architects Office. A bit of old boys' network, trying to get their old mates back in as CTO. Position of power, Using the situation for their own advantage, not the organisation. I was not going to do it for the long term. It was the dishonesty, lack of trust, the trust had gone. You have to have trust, if things go wrong, you will work and work to get things done if there is a feeling of trust, once the trust of gone, it is probably one of the major motivators for people not to carry on in a situation; I don't trust you anymore. I did a lot to help the guys in Company X and they did not even reply to the email, those sorts of things that are so cheap.	Trust and dishonesty

I did quite a lot to help Andy, and afterwards, I sent a nice email with congratulations hoping all goes well, and not as much as a thank you, that was bad, not the experience of the Architects Office. We had good times, it was like family, you get up in the morning and your sister annoys you, it really felt like family. It was being part of a family and to be able to achieve that and that level of trust and mutual respect is no mean feat. That is something that would maintain some trust and mutual respect. The interaction with the business and the application of experience to aid in the success of the business and effectively making peoples' lives better. That does not matter to others but it matters to me, it's the relationships, I might not be in Company X, I could ring up anyone, it's the relationship. That's a sign of real friendship; it is as if you talked to them yesterday, friendship, maturity and wanting to help and the willingness to help. I am now part of leadership; I think it is empowerment, recognition, providing the necessary environment and resource for people to succeed. Helping people succeed and be successful, a level of transparency and honesty. There are times when you let people work away on something that is never going to happen, it is easier that saying we are changing direction, we don't have the money and not telling the true reason. It can come down to we can't afford it. If you are brought inside and understand the process and the rational rather than be told we are not just not doing, both involvement and communication. There has to be trust. People knowing that they are not going to be hung out to dry, it's the consequence of failure should not be catastrophic and I always say, bad news does not get better by keeping it. People do not go into work to do a bad job. Talking about people surviving, they don't want to get any nasty surprises. To hear we are splitting or selling the company that you can do without, share what you know don't waste my time. Although there are sometimes that you have to have confidentially, for legal reasons or for financial reasons, but something is coming,	Trust and mutual respect Continuous learning and development Relationship and friendship Empowerment Recognition Learning and development Honesty Change Involvement Communication Trust

cannot discuss it yet, we will tell you as much as we can. People are actually ok with that. Arbitrary and unofficial deadlines are bad. This is really the mobile age, because people expect you to be constantly available and accessible, when you left the office at 6pm you went home, emails, video conference, everything. People expect you to be there and are expected to cope. I think in some organisations there is not enough of looking internally and use people across the organisation in different areas. It is easier to bring someone in who has done it before and there is a perception that is all that the person could do. And I think that there was significantly soft skill evident in having to look at roadmaps, and where the company is going than we necessarily saw from salespeople. We did tend to take the wider view.	Mobile age Learning and development

Notes:

Interviewee 3 was very clear on the motivators that would cause him to stay or leave an organisation, the following classifications came out very strong after the narrative was analysed. He wants to apply his skills and knowledge and to be recognised for the value and contributions that he brings to an organisation in his chosen career. He wants to make an impact and therefore to make a difference. Having a sense of belonging to an organisation, along with mutual respect and trust being an overriding motivation. Trust and empowerment he felt were the same. Being successful, being able to make a difference through change was also important, status and prestige along with organisation prestige were also important factors. Due to a serious illness, he now talks about work-life balance which he would not have talked about before. Being part of an organisation where there was a focus on continuous learning and development was a basic premise that he felt created the motivational framework; for trust, empowerment, success, status, progression and succession, being involved in strategic decisions and communication were all bundled together. Pay and benefits were an important factor, however he felt that these aspects were something that were decided on before working with an organisation and therefore were not a motivator for staying or leaving. The words that are highlighted in the second column 'Concepts' are the words that appeared most when undertaking the analysis for Interviewee 3.

Appendix 8.7: Narrative Data and Coding - Interviewee 4

		Current
Length of service		24 years
Job Title		Account Chief Technologist
Education	BSC	
Male/Female	Male	
Demographics Baby Boomer	1957 - 1964 **X**	

Open Coding

Narrative Data	***Code***
Why do you stay? I think for me which are probably standard reasons that there is the career development which is about the organisation roles and responsibility that they have. I joined Company X because I wanted to join a large multi-national and there was a development programme for recent graduates who come from multiple disciplines. Personal aspirations, enterprise architecture and being an EA, have to be with a company that understands and values that role, alignment of personal goals and ambitions, personal interests, you think is important and the company moving along a path to enterprise architecture was important and convinced by Company X, and an important role to make the company successful also. Recognition, benefits and opportunities, combination of these things, good opportunities and a good job value and recognised my efforts.	Career development Organisation roles and responsibilities Development Programmes Personal aspirations Learning and development Progression within the company Recognition, benefits and opportunities Being valued from efforts

Prestige is part of the recognition, being an EA and Account Chief Technologist in a large organisation for both organisation and myself. A big fish in a big pond is no easy to achieve and to have the most prestige for me by proving yourself. Trust is a difficult one, it is one of those personal relationship types of things, I have a new manager and have never met him yet, and I deal with on a day to day basis, the Operations Delivery Manager that I work with and others in the team that mostly I do trust personally. More difficult to judge, do I trust my bosses, my boss's boss by their actions, COO of the Company do I trust him to do what is important for the company's shareholding, balance between shareholders and the clients being happy. Does he need a committee or experienced team to do that, I have just lived through an integration, forced redundancies, job elimination, personal friends who have left the company I trust that he thinks is doing the right thing. Scale of trust, support that you get from a large organisation you know that if you ping out an email to the EA community, 2/3 or more answers will come back immediately, good quality answers that they will answer and who are part of the quality, depends on the community of practice, network or practice, you now recognise experience, knowledge and weakness under any topic under the sun. This is part of why would you work for a big company, get more of the network, and re-use, more powerful. There is always that potential ring with your dream job, 10 min down the road, pay you twice as much, it's the ideal role for your next step in your career. You have spent the last two years travelling x number of days, work life balance – can never say no, you see the job advertised, it ticks all the boxes. It can't always be about money. If about the amount of money, how long would you put up with it, maybe for awhile, but not just always about better benefits.	Prestige is part of recognition Prestige by proving oneself Trust – management is a difficult one? Trust in the team – yes Trust in leadership? Scale of trust Email out to the community, quality of reply you trust Communities of practice Networks Ideal role in your career Work-life balance Not always about the money

Diverse, why you stay in your company, you both are in agreement, value it, if there is a change in that relationship, bought by another company with a different perspective, not valued and not considered important not putting the effort in that would be a reason for saying there is not a job for me anymore. There is always that relationship for the company, recognition breaks down, time to leave. Its today's roles and responsibility, or a life changing event, I am going to be the landscape gardener, taking a career change. But not personally, always clear about my career, challenge. Move on if you need to. Trust aspect, breakdown in trust, you are just not managed as a person, not caring for me as a person, with a complete breakdown in relationships. Try and send me to Newcastle for the next x years, doing a low grade job, if I think it is important great, what you are doing is not valuable to you to so do this instead. Last year, not getting them offering to fulfil other roles, no I don't send them to Southampton. Value and recognition that does not come from the relationship stops.	Diversity Not being valued Not considered important Recognition breaks down Life changing event Clear about career and challenges Breakdown in trust Not cared for as a person Breakdown in relationships Value and recognition
Why would you leave or consider leaving? You find another company that is a better match, quite important, someone might rank more highly, much more valuable to them, Prestige, and recognition. SED programme, there was a number of things, Company X had a fantastic openness about the people there were going to take on, somebody who we think we can push forward in their careers. Very open to offering different people from different educational backgrounds, take good people from different backgrounds. At the time there was worry about promissory notes, suffering bad press, culturally strange, it was their openness, very much a community based, work hard get the results and you will get on. New company into the UK, expand hard and fast, lots of opportunities. There were lots of opportunities to do stuff.	Prestige and recognition Development programme Career focus Strong culture Community based organisation Lots of opportunities to do stuff

Always knew that I was going to get a job in IT, did not work in an IT department of Govt, true IT core capability, IT career whose business was IT. I think it is obviously the variety of the work that we get to do as architects, gets lots of different roles lots of challenged, dedicated to an account, training programmes, being a valuable resource, looked after and challenged, intensity can be a bit weary sometime, if I am going to work the whole weekend, you could recognise those who were on the SED programme who would get on and do it. Getting into the culture of the company, This kind of the behaviour is instilled, culturally. Empowerment seniority and taking additional responsibility, it is quite funny coming from chief technologist and because CTO command and control, more collaborative, go away and do it. The CTO told you to do, will you go and talk. There is the additional responsibility, empowerment. The thing for me there is within Company X is that we taken a big leap back into the 1990s, they kind of get it around having technical architects on projects, but they don't get this EA piece, and I think that is part of this getting the management to recognise having an EA, potential technologist, providing oversight, sorting. Re-building that understanding, why you should value us, coaching and development. NGA got pushed down to the Industry CTO and Account CTO are talking to them, getting the right experience, it has become very much again back to a good Account or Industry CTO, time and willingness, where is your next opportunity or lost that capability, centre of expertise, feeling bad and recognised. I guess the other thing why joined, obviously growing within the company; create lots of opportunities, some cultural transformation, change management, new people to do things the Company X way.	Chosen career Variety of work Challenges Training and development Seen as a valuable resource Looked after and challenged Culture and behaviour Empowerment Status Collaboration Empowerment Recognition Value Coaching and development Where is next opportunity Growing within an company Lots of opportunities

Notes:

Interviewee 4 believes his motivators for staying or leaving an organisation are standard reasons such as career development, which is about the organisations roles and the responsibility they have. He joined as he wanted to work in a large multi-national and liked the idea of being a little fish in a big pond, building up prestige, status and credibility in a large global multi-national. He is happy with his chosen career and is not looking to change that, it's about progression within a company, working in an organisation that has or encourages a learning environment. His motivators are three things; recognition, benefits and opportunities. He wants to be valued for his efforts where prestige and recognition play a strong part. Prestige is by proving himself within the organisation. Trust he finds a difficult but important motivator, can he trust management and his leadership, he does not know, but trust with his team must be yes. He feels that there is a scale of trust, for example, sending an email out a particular community asking a particular question, and knowing that the answer and the quality of the answer that comes back is reliable and trustworthy. This trust is very important in communities of practice and networks. He wants a work-life balance, and feels that it is not always about the money. If it is about the money, how long would you put up with a situation where you are not happy? He believes in diversity as being important along with not being valued. A life changing event would make him think of leaving, he is clear about his career and the challenges he is looking for. He wants to be cared for as a person and if this was not happening there would be a breakdown in trust and therefore in work relationships. Being valued and recognised along with prestige with a career focus are his motivators, and regards being in a supportive and learning environment is the framework that organisations should be working within. He wants to be in an environment where there are lots of opportunities for his chosen career. Training and development, being seen as a valuable resource, being looked after and being challenged. A collaborative environment with a strong culture and organisation behaviour in support of this. He sees growing within a company, looking for your next opportunity, being empowered, with lots of opportunities as his motivators.

Appendix 8.8: Narrative Data and Coding - Interviewee 5

	Previous	*Current*
Length of service	24 years	4 months
Job Title	Client Technology Officer (CTO)	Director and Chief Information Officer (CIO)
Education	BA in Information Technology Technical Consultancy Programme (TCP)	
Male/Female	Male	
Demographics Baby Boomer	 1957 - 1964 X	

Open Coding	
Narrative Data	***Coding***
Why do you stay? To be seen and be a part of the leadership team, being recognised. You think you work hard, have certain skills, I worked for something, and don't want to be treated like everyone else. That is a very bad situation. I was on the senior leadership board, not even informed about the leadership changes. In order to get a career the only way was to go back into the management chain. The challenge that you have on the job content, because you do something and your innovation, you continue with fairly easy to stay in one domain for the long time, I need to work in a broad domain, each day needs to be different and it should be very broad.	Prestige goes with recognition Continuous learning Challenging work Job content Innovation Continuous learning Content and variety

I was a DBA before but don't ask me to become a DBA, it has to do with the content and variety and this is the big underlying reasons, your thoughts will be how to analyse this, but you do need a challenge, otherwise your energy level drops, you go to automatic pilot and your energy level drops and it becomes a machine type efforts so you do need challenges, need to discover new things, it does not have to be more complicated, jumping from one job to another the Peter principles. Yes I agree with extending the challenge and if you are feeling good and need to be able have those challenges, now I have more than enough, financial services is a new business domain, but somewhere up there are a lot of things available. Why do I feel good is to be part of the senior leadership globally. When I went for the interview they completely covered the job, she said that very caring there are so many senior jobs available, don't think this is the last job in Company X, lots of CIO/CTO positions residing under the Company, enough to move and evolve to in the future. They took my wishes into consideration, the respect that you get and there are a lot of goodies. It is very important for me to be part of the leadership team. Because of my age and the thirst for recognition, now I am an EA and CTO, and before one of the 30,000 architects in Company X. I have the title of Director and am responsible for a large domain and broader in scope. People forget how important, for myself, is that it is important part for me to have this recognition and status. Company that you should be proud of, really proud of was Company X, I always being enjoyed being part of that company, would not go to a Mickey Mouse company. I have seen some of them, no real background or education, at least we had an environment that made us become experts, the type of company is very important for me.	Challenges Challenges Discovering new things Challenge and feeling good Recognised globally Progression in chosen career Space to move and evolve Prestige and recognition Recognition and status Prestigious company On-going training and development

Why would you leave or consider leaving?	
Me personally, I was unhappy with the job content, you had to create the challenge for yourself. From a job content still Company X, I needed something more.	Job content, recognition, prestige, challenge
I need to be part of leadership and have the recognition and status and to be part of this team – the status. Has to do with the same thing, the only reason would be the challenge, I have seen it with myself, why did I leave it was not the pay it was the challenge, the status, something that I want believe in, we trust you, we are in a mess, improve all areas come and help us. It is to do with the content and recognition (not remuneration but increased responsibility).	Challenge and status Trust, job content and recognition Challenge and status
The challenge and level offered to me by the company. Swedish companies are more social as companies as opposed to Company X. Most important was the challenge for me. Level and recognition – technical job family versus leadership career. The last day before I give commitment that I would sign with Company X, it was escalated to senior level that I was leaving, a bit of panic in Belgium, conference with five senior leaders. Talked with Mr X, I liked him a lot.	Job level Recognised in chosen career
One of the senior leaders I did not like him at all, he called me to offer me a job opportunity a salary increase, I said that I was not looking for a salary increase, I had been well taken care of, then he offered to make me CTO for Apps Delivery.	Senior position offered to stay
I needed a complete new challenge, taking up CTO role with a complete different content. All the three factors mentioned before. That made me doubt it the offer to stay, no trust, the credibility, gone because – CTO for EMEA not the way it works, annoyed me a lot, considered of the top architecture, achieved my Distinguished ITAC, got recognition for what you do externally and get demoted internally.	New challenge with new job content No trust, credibility was gone
I would have been preparing – for Fellow, they said that we will support you there, no guarantees though said X and the Senior Leader. At the last minute they had changed, it was too late, if it had happened three weeks before, I might have considered the offer.	Tried to demote previously No guarantees

I gave my word, and as I am from the old school, trust and commitment is very high for me. Retention and the value that you give the credibility and trust. It's the business side, no one is the construction, you are building up foundation for the IT aspect of the company, building coaching people, I make big advances for the people, I really take this organisation a couple of levels on certain aspects, I learn a lot in both direction, My magic, by direction and can anticipate a lot . I get a respect from my colleagues, all the regional CIO, the boss is the global CIO, respect and trust. Having the financials the luxury position if I make a business case, and I get my resources from the regional CIO and works until now, when things get a lot better, if it works then I am pretty good with. Things that I can change is the maturity of the organisation, we are going to change the process, change and stick to the change, the leadership that I am in, freedom to implement things, prestige and regulations I am now in the position to change it pragmatically, report to the leadership, the value that we get out it. With Company X free format, made some publicity to the Mr X's of the world, the development methodology and the one that I implemented for the X Government, I got away with 14 models, look how I used it and how great it is, here is the added value, and I don't have to go through 500 pages, makes it easier to be part of the implementation. Winning in all directions, good corporate citizen, understanding, it is good being part of a learning organisation is really what it is about, doing it not talking about it, being part of the learning and growing. Progression and succession management. Clear communication – no problem issues exist but explain and define assumptions. Need progression perspective, that was so great, first interviews, this is not your end, and there is a lot of opportunity, progression perspectives, too.	Creditability, value and trust Building and coaching people Respect from colleagues Respect and trust Mature organisation Leadership changes Freedom to implement Can make pragmatic changes Value Recognition and value Winning in all directions Good corporate citizen Understanding Learning and growing organisation progression and succession management

Did not consequently, name it as having the perspective rather than a position, and that one should work you should always own your successes and nice to be a hero or the number one but need to make room for others, a lot of colleagues that I really took and looked after I made sure that they could almost do what I did. Make them feel confident, letting them make mistakes, create your succession, the entire view or the vision, a pragmatic approach. Because otherwise, very rapidly ending story that I want to see on progression, so rewarding to see them there, guys calling to say that I am first on the list. I learn from you every day; you have to become like me. I have the same challenges. Take the risk, it's full of risks, I don't know about this, talking about agriculture, see technology, we do recognise the cross through so have - satellite pictures. This is technology; you have to take the risk. They will pick it up. Provide it too them. Some people will never take a risk. Help them take a calculated risk, willing to try sometime. Trust is what I need trust 100 per cent, I function 50 percent in trying to prove or gain the trust. Key bottom is that need for trust, I would malfunction, because it would kill me. I go in trusting people.	Need a progression perspective Hero, prestige, value Status Room for others to develop Create your succession Pragmatic approach Rewards Risks and challenges You have to take the risk Calculated risk Key bottom line is trust I would malfunction because it would kill me
Notes: Interviewee 5 had been with one company for a very long time, changes came via a merger and there was a culture change. He had a prestigious job and was recognised as the go to person in his previous company. He had seen how a learning organisation could bring about job satisfaction, job content and provide for challenging work due to the culture that sits within a learning organisation. He wants to take risks and encourages others to take risk, and to have job content and variety in his work. His job level and status are as important of the job content, recognition, prestige and the challenges that go with it. He enjoys innovation and discovering new things, this makes him feel good along with respect from colleagues.	

Recognition and status are very important motivators along with trust, this is very important and in his words 'he would malfunction without trust, it would kill him'. He feels that progression and succession within a company is not only important for him, but for others and he wants to help them, and this helps the organisation as well, they need to take the risk, try something new in a safe environment. By providing on-going support, coaching and training and development provides for this progression. It is the management of progression and succession that he wants to see imbedded, and not finding this level by chance. One needs a progression perspective. Need to have an environment for others to develop with a pragmatic approach. The key top motivator is a need for trust. Salary was not an issue as he had been well looked after; he is seeking the recognition, prestige, status and being able to implement change in a pragmatic way whilst also being able to help others to develop.

Appendix 8.9: Axial Coding

Axial Coding	
Code	***Concept***
Ability to grow and do something new Applying skills and expertise Boredom, doing routine work Breakdown in relationships Building and coaching people Can make pragmatic changes Career development Career focus Career planning and progression Challenge and complexity Challenging work Challenging and stimulating Challenge and variety Clarity with performance and annual bonus Coaching and development Collaboration Community based organisation Content and variety Contribution Continuous learning and development Continuous learning	Learning and Development

Culture and behaviour Development programmes Don't want to get stuck in a rut Discovering new things Diversity Encourage and aid growth Freedom to implement Good corporate citizen Growing within a company Help and support Hygiene factors Interesting work Involvement Job content Learning and supportive work environment Learning environment Learning and development Learning and growing organisation Lots of opportunities Looked after and challenged Management of progression and succession Mature organisation Need challenges Need room to develop others Not cared for as a person On-going training and development	Learning and Development (Continued)

Open and flexible organisation Opportunity to change Opportunities and range of tasks Opportunities to move on Organisation culture Organisation roles and responsibilities Organisational knowhow People company Personal aspirations Progression within the company Provided challenges and opportunities Progression perspective Relationship and friendship Respect from colleagues Seen as a valuable resource Seeing people grow Space to move and evolve Success Top talent retention Teamwork Training Use of community to develop ideas Use of skill base Useful to the organisation and yourself Variety of work and task Where is your next opportunity	Learning and Development (Continued)

Working environment	Learning and Development (Continued)
Achievement Ability to influence and lead Acknowledged for what you do Adding value Being valued Being recognised Being treated as a commodity Being valued for my efforts Brand name Credibility Globally recognised Influence on a large scale Job level Mutual respect Not considered important Not being valued Organisation prestige Prestige Prestigious company Prestige and recognition Prestige within an organisation Recognition Recognition breaks down Self belief Sense of belonging	Recognition and Status

Status Value and recognition	Recognition and Status (Continued)
Being empowered Being recognised Being in a position of prestige Breakdown in trust Communities of practice Credibility gone Empowerment Empowering people Empowerment and trust Key bottom line – trust Lack of trust Network Scale of trust Trust Trusted each other Trust and mutual respect Trust and dishonesty Trust and respect	Empowerment and Trust
Being involved in strategic direction Calculated risk Entire view of vision Innovation Potential shift in organisations, to survive they need to adapt Problem solving Risks and challenges	Strategy and Vision

Strategy Need to be part of mission, goals and direction Part of decision making Strategy, innovation and risks	Strategy and Vision (Continued)
Communication Willing to share Clear communications Sharing knowledge	Communication
Leadership issues Old boy's network False promises Leadership behaviour	Leadership
Benefits Not always about the money Salary out of line with the marketplace Money	Rewards
Work-life balance	Work-life balance

Appendix 8.10: Concepts and Categories

Concepts - Categories	
Concept	***Category***
Career planning and progression – A major theme with a significant number of components - must be taken forward	Learning and development
Recognition and status – A major theme with lots of components – must be taken forward	Prestige
Empowerment and trust – A major theme with lots of components – must be taken forward	Trust
Strategy and vision – A medium theme with lots of components –important, many comments and needs to be recognised but not to be taken forward	Strategy
Communication – important, only brief comments	
Leadership – important, only brief comments	
Reward – important, only brief comments	
Work-life balance – important, only very brief comments	