A TALENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR

By

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I declare that the thesis hereby submitted for the qualification Doctor in Philosophy at the University of the Free State, is my own independent work and that I have not previously submitted the same work for a qualification at/in another University/Faculty.

………………………..   January 2015

Rose Boitumelo Mathafena

I, Rose Boitumelo Mathafena, concede copyright of this study to the University of the Free State.

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Introduction and background to the study

1. Introduction and orientation

1.1 The importance of talent management

Collings and Mellahi (2009) assert that since a group of McKinsey consultants coined the phrase 'war for talent' in 1997, the topic of talent management has received a remarkable degree of practitioner and academic interest. This relatively recent emphasis on talent management represents a paradigm shift from more traditional human resource related sources of competitive advantage. The traditional approaches to human resources are those that focus on organizational elites and strategic human resources, while the management of talent is specifically suited to today's dynamic competitive environment. According to Powell and Lubitsh (2007), talent management has moved rapidly up the corporate agenda in recent years. Some regard it as a silver bullet and a central theme driving strategic human resource management.

Meyer (2005) highlights that the attraction, growth and retention of talent are key factors for modern organizations which are knowledge driven. To be known as an employer of choice is considered a key organizational goal with direct benefits. South African organizations, both large and small, have an obligation to the country and to themselves to grow the professional and technical skills required for economic and competitive advantage.

Chikumbi (2011) in a quantitative study investigating talent management and staff retention at the Bank of Zambia reveals that successful management of talent and employee retention leads to the organization attaining a competitive edge. The study highlights that improved talent management leads to increased productivity, motivated staff, innovation and high employee contribution towards the organization.

O'Calloghan (2008) advises that talent management offers real and tangible benefits of reducing recruitment costs, effective knowledge transfer, realisation of business strategy, delivery of cutting edge services and products and the creation of a competitive advantage, in spite of the many challenges that organizations face in order to be sustainable. Ashton and Morton (2005) argue that good talent management is of strategic importance and can

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differentiate an organization when it becomes a core competence and its talent significantly improves strategic execution and operational excellence.

Prinsloo (2012), in her study of talent management and the psychological contract, provides evidence that management can use talent management practices to strengthen the psychological contract, leading to lower turnover, improved motivation productivity and loyalty. Through the use of quantitative methods and the application of statistics, Prinsloo (2012) indicates a positive relationship between talent management and the psychological contract.

Bersin (2006) asserts that entry into the new era of talent management was due to more challenging people-related issues requiring tighter integration between human resource silos and the business. As an organization strives to meet business goals, it must make sure that it has continuous and integrated processes for recruiting, training, managing, supporting, and compensating these people, and thus the need for talent management.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2010) informed that human resource functions are seen as owning talent management, through playing a critical role in facilitating the talent pools and energising the talent programmes.

The need for talent, according to Ashton and Morton (2005), is driven by macro trends including the new cycles of business growth, reduction of labor pools, complex economic conditions requiring talent management, talent poaching and changing workforce demographics.

Yapp (2009) strongly warns that inadequacy and failure to invest in talent can seriously compromise the ability of the business to deliver. Potential problems can be failure to achieve projected revenues, lower delivery capacity, project derailment, loss of customers and business, lack of follow-through on strategies due to high staff turnover, and insufficient innovation and creativity to keep the business ahead. Pangarkar and Kirkwood (2008) express that talent management drives the performance management process alongside employee development. The performance management process is advised by business strategic goals of achieving financial, customer, and business productivity, while learning and growth looks at ways of creating value and improving competitive sustainability.

1.2 Challenges in the practice of talent management

Collings and Mellahi (2009) argue that despite the growing popularity of talent management and over a decade of debate and hype, the concept of talent management remain unclear. Furthermore, the current state of talent management literature is exacerbated by the fact that in addition to ambiguities around the definition of the concept, there is also alarmingly limited theoretical development in the area, although of course there are notable exceptions.

Collings and Mellahi (2009) indicated that the highlighted shortcomings in the academic literature concerning talent management have both limited scholarly work on the topic and its practical usefulness.

Additionally various authors have identified the following challenges and gaps in the field and practice of talent management:

- **Skills**

  Meyer (2005) indicates that the purpose of talent management is to ensure that the firm has the right talent with the right skills at the right time. However, what may have been the right skills in the past, may not be all that is required in the future. Many things change, consequently presenting new challenges and requiring new skills. Therefore, talent management ensures the identification of future latent skills linked to the future business strategy and its competitive environment.

- **Retention**

  O'Calloghan (2008) highlights that one of the big challenges facing the knowledge economy is keeping good people for most businesses, big or small. In the twentieth century talent is defined as the new wealth. Key talent is often poached and lured by competitors. Therefore companies have reverted to the proverbial 'golden handcuffs' to ensure retention.

- **Strategy**

  Rosenfeld and McLean (2007) note that the linking of strategy with the development of the right sort of talent remains a key challenge with most organizations. Although talent management is regarded as a strategic issue, the drivers are often short-term and reactive, as the longer term perspective on skills, competencies, and behaviors needed over the long term still appear to be of lesser concern in most companies. With reference to Ingham (2006), talent management has a strategic importance and yet only a few business leaders are currently involved in leading and sponsoring talent

management. This disconnect and gap are results of non-strategic talent management approaches.

- **Line management**

  A concern indicated by Rosenfeld and McLean (2007) is that line management structures do not yet view it their role to develop talent for the organization but rather to support their immediate departmental objectives. Furthermore, the top leadership teams show a lack of interest in looking beyond the current aspiring leader populations and do not want to develop future talent.

- **Approach to talent management**

  The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2010) emphasized a great need for business support across divisions and managers, where there appear to be inconsistencies about the application of the talent management programmes. This inconsistency damages the credibility of the talent management initiatives.

Ntonga (2007) conducted an academic research study with the University of Pretoria titled *The impact of talent management practices on business performance*. The research approach comprised a mixed-methods investigation (combining qualitative and quantitative). The following issues related to talent management practices were indicated in the findings:

- The research participants raised concerns around the instruments that were used to identify potential and how these were used for development purposes and to implement deployment with regard to work assignments;
- There was a lack of transparency around talent management;
- Lack of training for line management to manage talent;
- No rewards and compensation schemes to support the talent management programme;
- Lack of communication about the talent management strategy; and
- No linking of talent management practices to the broader human resource management systems such as training and career discussions.

Chikumbi (2011) identified the following shortcomings in the implementation of talent management:

- There was a concern from the participants about talent planning and the lack of communication about the talent strategy;
- There was no clear succession planning;

- Most of the senior positions or high-level succession positions were filled from an external pool of applicants, and the internal company candidates were not considered and given promotions. This therefore sends a less positive message to internal candidates in that the company does not promote its own employees and would rather recruit externally;
- Skills audits were not conducted to determine current talent pools available within the organization; and
- The company culture did not strongly drive talent management or encourage innovation.

There are various maturity levels of talent management in various organizations. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2006) refers to levels of organizational talent management maturity as follows:

- Poor practices – no talent management strategic policies or formally developed practices. Talent is managed informally and incidentally;
- Fair and basic practice of talent management – talent management is managed tactically, and some pockets of talent management activities are evident. In such a case there are no plans or overall strategy for talent management;
- Good and nearly mature level of talent management practices – the third level is where talent management is integrated and coordinated. However, this is limited to only a section or division of the organization; and
- Excellent and best practices of talent management – the fourth level is where talent management strategy is designed to deliver corporate and human resource management strategies. Often there is a formal talent management initiative linked to the human resources management function and flowing vertically from the corporate strategy-making process. It is not often rare that talent management truly drives and is driven by strategy and all the other business functions, systems and processes are fully integrated to support and be supported by talent management.

Organizations who desire to be the best in people management processes can strive towards the excellent and best practice level as indicated by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2006).

This study will attempt to bring to light critical factors which must be taken into account to ensure that organizations can achieve successful implementation of an integrated, holistic and comprehensive talent management framework. The framework will strive to guide talent management practices within companies in the private sector, and also improve and advance the maturity of talent management application. Owing to a lack of and inconsistent concept definitions around the phenomenon of talent management, the study will inductively and deductively aim towards a clear language of defining talent management and the contents of talent management.

1.3 Problem statement and the research questions

Based on the above section indicating the gaps and limitations in the application and implementation, concepts definition, and maturity of talent management practices in businesses, it is clear that a formal study is necessary to create a deeper understanding of talent management. Furthermore, a comprehensive and best practice talent management framework is essential to guide the planning, implementation, and evaluation of talent management in business. Lemanski and Overton (2011) highlighted that scientists are often more comfortable with the concept of quantitative research than qualitative research methods. The use of qualitative research, analytic induction and constructivist grounded theory in talent management studies are limited. Long (2006) is of the view that understanding the methodology of grounded theory can assist researchers in expanding the knowledge and application of human resource management beyond the bounds of traditional theories and methodologies. Gilgun (2002) warns that analytic induction is not well-known among qualitative researchers, and is still seen as a qualitative procedure which is positivist in nature. Nonetheless, analytic induction may be beneficial for theory building, testing theory, developing typologies and developing descriptions.

The use of qualitative research methodology would be ideal in the facilitation and development of a talent management framework because it is suitable for developing elaborate and comprehensive text information. Furthermore, qualitative research enables the construction of theory and knowledge throughout the data collection and analysis. The collection of extensive and wide-ranging text information is also possible with a qualitative research method.

The Knowledge Infusion White Paper (2006) asserts that talent management has become a mandate for organizations seeking to create competitive advantage through the human capital assets (talent) by proactively improving the current workforce performance and preparing for the future. It is imperative to integrate a highly functional talent management solution across all facets of the business.

The private sector, according to Haufler (2001), is the section of the economy which is established, run and controlled by private groups or people with the aim to generate profit. The state influences activities of the private sector through advocating compliance with its laws and regulations. Companies which are not state owned fall within the scope of the private sector. Lockwood (2006) accounts that in a competitive private marketplace, talent management is a primary driver of organizational success. There is a strong need for a talent management framework in the private sector to ensure overall business success, sustainability and competitiveness in the market.

Broadly stated, talent management is the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by developing improved processes of attracting, developing, retaining and utilizing people with required skills and aptitudes to meet current and future business needs.

1.3.1 The key and central research questions

The primary reason for the study is to develop a talent management framework for the private sector.

The questions below are key to guiding the research and inquiry processes and to ensure that comprehensive and appropriate information is collected to enable the development of a talent management framework:

- What is talent and talent management?
- What does the content of talent management entail?

1.3.2 The sub-research questions

- What are the typical challenges experienced in the implementation of talent management programmes?

- What talent management practices are working, and why are they working?
- What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?
- What are the leading best practices regarding recruitment, deployment, development, engagement, and retention of talent?
- What value does talent management add to the organization?
- How do individual career life cycles influence the approach to talent management?
- What is the link between diversity management and talent management?

The central and sub-research questions above enable and facilitate the exploration of the topic of talent management and provide insights in the development of a talent management framework.

1.3.3 The primary objectives of the study are to:

- Define talent and talent management; and
- Identify what talent management entails in great detail.

1.3.4 The secondary objectives of the study are to:

- Highlight the key challenges that are experienced in the implementation of talent management;
- Identify talent management practices that are working, and explain why these practices are working;
- Understand what can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management practices;
- Discover the leading best practices regarding recruitment, deployment, development, engagement, and retention of talent;
- Highlight the value that talent management adds to the organization;
- Incorporate the career life stages to the talent management approach; and
- To link diversity management and talent management.

1.4 The aim of the study

The primary aim of the study is to develop a talent management framework for the private sector. The study proposes to conduct an in-depth exploration of talent management practices in key and leading organizations already in the mature stages of talent management implementation in South Africa.

The secondary aim of the study is to conduct a modernist qualitative research study in order to explore and gain in-depth knowledge on talent management and what it entails. With the study I hope to further examine effective and leading best practices and challenges in the implementation process of talent management. Analytic induction and constructivist grounded theory will be applied to analyze the data.

More specifically I purpose to achieve the following:

- Bring to understanding the concept of talent management, and develop a talent management framework for the private sector.
- The application of qualitative research, and the use of analytic induction as an overall data analysis strategy, while using constructionist grounded theory to operationalize the data analysis, thus elucidating how these approaches can be used in talent management studies.
- Insights from the research (data inductive and literature deductive) will inform human resource practitioners and business managers on how to plan, implement and evaluate talent management in their businesses in the most comprehensive, systematic, integrated, strategically driven and flexible manner while realising the benefits for the business.

1.5 The value and anticipated contribution of the study

I trust that the study will be able to contribute theoretically and practically to the operation of businesses in the private sector. In the academic sense, the study will add value both methodologically (by utilising qualitative research, constructivist grounded theory, and analytic induction) and theoretically (exploration of the phenomenon of talent management and its content resulting in a talent management framework). The current status of qualitative research, analytic induction and constructivist grounded theory will be expanded in the areas on talent management and human resource studies in South Africa. The application of these

methodologies indicates their value and utility and how they can be applied in various disciplines.

From the theoretical perspective the concept of talent management is illuminated, and knowledge on the field of talent management is extended through the development of a talent management framework. This knowledge extension is a direct result of integrating the literature review and data insights from the research participants.

The practical contribution will be to the benefit of companies in the private sector, because they will have access to a comprehensive and well-integrated talent management framework which purposes to facilitate the implementation and improvement of talent management practices.

The human resource practitioners and talent management specialists will benefit from the developed talent management framework, as it will aid and guide the practice of talent management in companies within the private sector towards maturity and effectiveness in talent management practices. The value add of talent management can be realized only if the planning, implementation, tools, practices, tactics and dimensions of talent management are correctly applied as advised by the research insights.

The topic is relevant, current and topical, and the insights shared will improve talent management practice in the private sector, ultimately leading to competitiveness.

1.6 The brief research approach to the study

The modernist qualitative research methodology will be used for the study. Two private sector companies which are at mature and successful levels in the practice of talent management gave me permission to conduct the studies at the companies. These private companies are among and have for a few years been the top ten best employers in South Africa. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Analytical induction method was instrumental in facilitating the overall data analysis, while constructivist grounded theory assisted with the operationalization of the data analysis. The initial talent management framework resulted from the data analysis process. Follow-up interviews were conducted in the same companies to achieve triangulation, verify the data and to test the initial framework. The final development of the talent management framework was informed

by the data and the literature. This framework can be instrumental in improving the current practices of talent management in companies in an effort to increase effectiveness.

1.7 Personal interest in the study

In 2007 I came to be aware of the new buzzword in the discipline of human resources, namely talent management. The awareness of the concept arose as a result of training and consulting firms approaching and sending me brochures in order to invite me to attend training seminars to learn more about the concept. Curiosity and a deep interest developed about the subject matter. I did not immediately attend the courses I was invited to. Nonetheless I started to do internet searches to read up about what talent management was, how talent management fits into human resource practice, and what talent management specialists do in organizations. Around 2008 to 2009, I became even more aware of job advertisements calling for talent managers, talent specialists, and talent administrators. I carefully studied the specifications of these jobs and the skills, knowledge and competencies required to perform the roles. Secretly I aspired to become a talent practitioner and wished to introduce or transform my workplace role at the time into a talent management function. I purposed in my heart from then to learn, read and study talent management comprehensively.

In spite of the generic material I had read on the subject, I could not quite grasp a solid definition and understanding of this phenomenon and how it works in the practical sense. I had found in some of the readings that talent management was either linked to performance management, succession management, recognition and reward, or recruitment strategy etc. I soon discovered that talent management aspects were almost never presented holistically (encompassing all aspects).

When I finally decided to conduct a doctoral study, I was advised by peers to select a topic I am interested in and truly passionate about, and talent management was at the top of my list of choices. Owing to increased and a more formalized search for knowledge, I discovered that the companies who practiced talent management are mostly those who had been formally certified as employer of choice or as top employers. I was excited and motivated by the possibility of studying talent management in its entirety, through literature reviews and practical consultation with the companies who show best practice in the field of talent management.

1.8 Conclusion and the structure of the thesis

An outline of the remainder of the thesis is provided below to indicate what can be expected in the study. The study consists of eight chapters.

- Chapter 1: Provides the overall orientation and background of the study. The introduction also lays a foundation for clarifying the rationale and need for research on talent management.

- Chapter 2: Mainly outlines the research methodology chosen to conduct the study, i.e. the modernist qualitative research approach. Additionally the research strategy for sampling and data gathering is discussed, as are the reasons for choices made in the research design.

- Chapter 3: The chapter aims to explain and discuss in detail the data analysis strategies applied in the study, namely analytic induction and grounded theory.

- Chapter 4: The data and the analysis thereof are presented. The analysis process reflects initial, focused and theoretical coding steps taken. Importantly, the initial talent management framework is presented and tested through a further data collection process.

- Chapter 5: Contains the literature review conducted after the data collection and analysis process, to ensure that all the relevant theoretical concepts relating to talent management are taken into account in the study.

- Chapter 6: The presentation of the final talent management framework for the private sector is discussed. The framework is constructed from the research data and the literature.

- Chapter 7: I present my personal experiences of the research journey and key learning highlights.

- Chapter 8: This is the concluding chapter consisting of the synopsis of the study, important implications of the findings for the business community and recommendations for future research on talent management.

Chapter 2

Research methodology and application to the study

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will present the research methodology that was applied to guide the study. My scientific values and beliefs will be discussed as they directly influence the selection of the modernist qualitative research approach applied to the study. The research design, steps in research execution, selection of the research participants, data gathering, recording of data and data analysis are also explained in great detail. The applicability and the role of literature in the study are highlighted. Additionally, aspects relating to quality assurance and ethical considerations throughout the study are discussed. Essentially the chapter outlines the process followed in order to implement the research method.

2.2 My scientific beliefs and values

Upon reviewing qualitative research material and having been advised by the promoter, I had to clarify my own scientific values and beliefs to enable proper planning for the research project. Schurink (2012) suggests that researchers first have to examine the foundations of their thinking, as alternative answers exist to each foundational question in their thinking. Essentially I had to clarify my own views on the topic of talent management and also how to best acquire scientific knowledge about the development of a talent management framework in leading organizations within the private sector. Furthermore, Nieuwenhuis (2012) indicates that for research to be constituted as valid, it is important to understand the nature and form of reality (that which can be known). This is called ontology and epistemology, which relates to how things can be known.

My philosophical stance as a researcher is that of the pragmatist. Houghton, Hunter and Meskell (2012) explain pragmatism as a philosophical view that a theory or concept should be evaluated in terms of how it works and its consequences as the standard for action and thought. Pragmatism has many parallels with the post-positivist view in that it has roots in the realist tradition. The realist view is concerned with the notion that reality is multilateral, complex, and multi-faceted and is shaped by experience. Both traditions put forward the theory that we construct our own worldview based on our perception of it. Mouton (2012) is

of the view that realists believe that although there are fundamental differences between the social and natural world, there are also certain similarities, or at least continuities, which justify the adoption of similar approaches in epistemologies and methodology.

According to Barnes (2012), the ontology of pragmatism accepts that both objective reality and people's perception of reality exist, and that it is not only perfectly acceptable to attempt to understand both, but that investigating both leads to a rich understanding of the issue. My ontological understanding of talent management is that it is a practice, consisting of processes and systems to ensure effective implementation of the following elements:

- Recruitment (attraction, employer branding, selection and induction);
- Deployment (job structuring, performance management, competency and assessment review);
- Development (learning and development, leadership development, coaching and mentoring);
- Engagement (quality supervision, organizational values and culture); and
- Retention (remuneration and benefits, grading systems, work-life balance, succession planning, recognition and rewards).

The elements stated above are concrete and objectively defined in organizational practices. Talent management practice is not free from human experiences, as talented individuals are often beneficiaries and participants of talent programmes in their respective companies while management and talent management practitioners design, develop, implement and evaluate talent management practices. As much as talent management systems and processes are objective and rational, they are also lived, experienced, felt, seen, observed and thought of by the humans involved, hence the unity and interaction between subjectivity and objectivity.

Barnes (2012) indicated that, epistemologically, pragmatism views it virtually impossible to be completely objective or subjective and that in reality most researchers fall within the category of intersubjective. For example, positivists inevitably bring some level of subjectivity into the research, even if they do not acknowledge this. Similarly, qualitative researchers are not completely subjective as they bring some level of objectivity in continuously validating and cross-checking their results. Pragmatists argue that most researchers, irrespective of their paradigmatic identity, fall somewhere between objective and subjective. Barnes (2012) highlights that pragmatics in the use of theory in social research often work between induction and deduction, which is commonly called abduction. Bunniss

and Kelly (2010) advise that in post-positivism, objective knowledge of the world is not necessarily fully accessible but seeks to establish probable truth.

My personal epistemology on acquiring knowledge about talent management involves the classical methods of reviewing current theories and literature on talent management and testing these empirically in practice through field research, i.e. through conducting semi-structured and unstructured interviews and through interaction with the key stakeholders directly involved with talent management. The process is approached by moving between deductive and inductive reasoning. It is important to clarify that the research approach is primarily qualitative, and consequently the inductive practice will be dominant in the study.

The reflection on my scientific beliefs and values will be a continuous engagement throughout the research process. Interaction with the research participants, contemplation about the data and consultation with the literature will shape my understanding of the topic of talent management.

2.3 Scientific building blocks

In order to develop a talent management framework I need to integrate the first-order constructs (i.e. participant data) with the second-order constructs (i.e. theory and literature). Mouton (2004) refers to first-order constructs as the ordinary social and physical reality that exists in the world. This stock of knowledge enables people to cope effectively with their daily lives. The knowledge in this world is acquired through learning, experience, and self-reflection. Various terms are used to refer to this body of knowledge as common sense, wisdom, experiential knowledge, self-knowledge, insights, practical knowledge and know-how. Second-order constructs, on the other hand, reside in the world of scientific knowledge, scientific research and scientific disciplines. The body of knowledge is presented in theories, models, typologies, concepts, definitions, and findings from the data. The primary objective of the second-order world is to search for truth and truthful knowledge. Tools such as concepts, typologies, models and frameworks are critical in the development and extension of knowledge.

According to Mouton (2012) at the most basic level, components of social knowledge are based on concepts. Concepts are a link to the social world as they act as carriers of meaning to enable and refer to a social phenomenon. Concepts have to be converted to statements and

empirical propositions, and to be further developed into complex conceptual frameworks which help to understand and explain the social phenomenon.

Typologies are a type of conceptual framework with a classifying and categorizing function based on a single variable. Typologies may be used as a frame of reference for data collection and observations, as possible data commonalities have been systemized into a typology. They provide a description of the typical characteristics of concepts in the data.

Mouton (2012) mentions that a model is used to reveal certain similarities or relationships of a studied phenomenon. A model attempts to represent the dynamic aspects of the phenomenon by illustrating the relationships between the elements in a simplified form. The model is thus used to suggest new areas of research because certain relationships and dimensions of a phenomenon are highlighted.

Theory on the other hand consists of concepts, definitions, and prepositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon. The main purpose of theory is to predict a phenomenon and also play an explanatory role.

Jabareen (2009) defines a conceptual framework as a network or a plane of interlinked concepts that together provide a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. The concepts that constitute a conceptual framework support one another, articulate respective phenomena and establish a framework-specific philosophy. Conceptual frameworks play an ontological, methodological and epistemological role. The main features of conceptual frameworks are as follows: 1) It is not merely a collection of concepts, but a construct in which each concept plays an integral role in laying out key factors, relationships and variables; 2) It provides an interpretive approach to social reality; 3) It provides an understanding of a phenomenon; 4) The conceptual framework can be developed through a process of qualitative analysis; 5) Methods such as grounded theory and analytic induction may be employed to generate a conceptual framework.

In this study I shall make use of concepts generated from the data and theory to develop a talent management framework. The process for framework development will be constituted of both inductive and deductive inputs.

2.4 Qualitative research

- **Introduction**

  I had to carefully consider the most suitable research methodology to guide the study as my study is focused on gaining in-depth insights and understanding about talent management practices in organizations. Though literature was consulted during the initial research proposal phase, the literature was not sufficient enough to address and bring to light practicalities, complexities and realities of talent management in organizations. It was also critical for me to review literature on qualitative research methods.

- **The difference between qualitative and quantitative research methods**

  Before selecting the research approach I reviewed literature on predominant qualitative and quantitative research approaches in relation to the research topic. I also became aware of the mixed-methods approach of combining quantitative and qualitative research methods.

  Creswell (1994) distinguishes qualitative from quantitative research by noting that each research paradigm has its own unique matrix of ontology (element pertaining to being), epistemological (theories of knowledge), axiological (values), rhetorical (language) and methodological assumptions which provide the backdrop and the framework for research. The table below highlights the differences between qualitative and quantitative research.

Table 2.1 Overview of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Purpose	Testing theories Establishing facts Showing causal relationships Predicting outcomes Generalizing results to specific populations	Developing concepts Exploring meaning Describing multiple realities Producing generalizable theory Critiquing multiple perspectives
Design	Pre-determined Structured Unchanging Prescriptive Reproducible	Evolve through the study Continually under review Rigorous application Unreproducible May be unstructured
Sampling	Subjects Large numbers Structured selection Represent population Control groups and placebo	Participants Small numbers Purposive and theoretical sampling No intent to represent No control groups or placebo
Data	Numerical Quantifiable Statistical Measurable Pre-defined variables	Deals with qualities Extensive Wide ranging Text emerges throughout Limited use of numerical information
Methods of data collection	Experiments Surveys Questionnaires Quasi-experiments	Interviews Observation Focus groups Document analysis Theoretical
Instruments and tools	Scales Tests Inventories	Researcher Recording equipment Schedules
Participant relationships	Detached Distant Objective – free of bias No interaction and influence Research done on subjects	Participatory Trusting and close Subjective, biases incorporated Acknowledge influences Research is done with people

Data analysis	Attempt to falsify experimental hypothesis at end of data analysis Deductive Statistical manipulation	Theory builds throughout Ongoing Occurs through-out Repeated reanalysis Inductive
Outcome	Answers specific hypothesis Statistical analysis Compares findings to other studies Often results in guidelines to follow Tests established theory	Critiques problems Narrative/linguistic analysis Words Thick description Development of new theory

Source: Nicholls (2009)

Table 2.1 clearly highlights the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The differences are evident in the data analysis approach, sampling, research design, data collection instruments and also in the relationship with the research participants.

Donalek and Soldwisch (2004) assert that real differences separate qualitative and qualitative approaches. As opposed to qualitative research, quantitative research is deductive in nature. It presupposes a constant, stable, external reality that is measurable and follows discernible rules of science. Its purpose is to measure some portion of the fixed reality. Quantitative research, according to Suppe and Jacox (1985), falls within the positivist paradigm which uses scientific methods to develop general abstract laws describing and predicting patterns in the physical world. Anderson (2006) iterates quantitative research as a hard science seeking explanatory laws in a precise and reductionist manner. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that theory is established deductively through formal statistical testing of the hypothesis. Objective generalizable theory is sought out via stringent control of contextual variables. Donalek and Soldwisch (2004) point out that quantitative research involves elaborate measures to distance the researcher from the subject in order to avoid influence of the research outcomes. Ideally experiments take place in a laboratory.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) advise that the word qualitative implies an emphasis on the **quality of entities** and on the processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured at all in terms of quantity, numbers, amount or frequency. Qualitative inquiry is therefore characterized by the **socially constructed nature of**

reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is being studied, and the situational constraints shaping the study. The emphasis is value-laden, as opposed to value-free frameworks applied in quantitative studies.

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) indicate that qualitative research seeks a better understanding of complex situations and is sometimes exploratory in nature. Observations may be used to build theory from the ground up (grounded theory derived purely inductively from the data). Furthermore, the process of qualitative research is more **holistic and emergent** as interpretation develops continuously throughout the research process.

Researchers enter the research setting with open minds and are prepared to immerse themselves in the situation and interact with the participants. Holloway and Wheeler (1996) state that qualitative research typically studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environments (in situ) and focusing on their meanings and interpretations. The **uniqueness of each situation** is of concern (idiographic). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) mention that qualitative research is committed to an emic, idiographic, case-based position that directs attention to the specifics of a particular case. Quantitative research with its etic and nomothetic commitments is less concerned with detail, as it would be in qualitative research.

Qualitative researchers capture the individual's point of view by getting closer to the actor's perspective through detailed observations and interviewing. Furthermore the researcher needs to make sense of what they hear and see in order to understand the social phenomenon. In this sense the **researcher is an instrument** (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010) and a participant in the research process.

According to Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi and Wright (2010), qualitative research sheds light on issues being studied in the form of words related to a specific phenomenon. The data is in the form of feelings, behaviors, thoughts, insights and actions rather than in numbers**. In-depth exploration and description of a phenomenon** is provided by converting data into a meaningful, dense description. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) confirm that qualitative research secures **rich and thick** descriptions of the social world as they are viewed as valuable.

Vermeulen (1998) advises that qualitative research is part of **inductive reasoning,** as it develops concepts, insights and understanding from the patterns of data. Concepts

emerge from the data, leading to context-bound information, patterns and theories which help to explain the phenomenon under investigation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Data is presented in the form of words, quotes from documents and interview transcripts while the analysis of data happens through extracting themes and categories directly from the data. Johnson and Christensen (2008) emphasize that data analysis occurs through the identification of patterns, features, themes and concepts from descriptive and narrative data.

- **The historical roots of qualitative research**

  Lapan, Quartaroli and Riemer (2012) inform that the proliferation of qualitative studies in current research can be traced to at least one clear historical benchmark, the application to the human or social sciences of the German term 'Verstehen', loosely translated as 'to understand' or 'to interpret' by the German philosopher in the mid-nineteenth century. Dilthey and other philosophers used the term to describe an individual's first-person perspective on his or her own experiences, culture, history and society. Subsequently German sociologists such as Max Weber and George Simmel advocated 'Verstehen' as a mode of social research in which an outsider systematically gathers information on a particular phenomenon from the perspective of insiders, rather than interpreting it in terms of the researcher's outsider view. In the early twentieth century, German philosopher Edmund Husserl's work on phenomenology advanced a research method to capture the process through which humans come to know the world. The growth and pronunciation of qualitative research was in the 1970s. There has been an expansion of the field of qualitative research in the past two decades of the twentieth century. Today there are dozens of journals, handbooks, research texts, conferences, and organizations devoted to qualitative designs and strategies.

  Denzin and Lincoln (2005) identified eight developmental phases of qualitative research as the eight moments of qualitative research, namely:

- The traditional period (in the 1900s): In this period qualitative researchers were objective in accounts of field experiences and were influenced by the positivist scientist paradigm. The concern was offering valid, reliable and objective interpretation of their writings. Accounts were structured by the norms of classical ethnography.

- The second moment or phase was called the modernist phase (in the 1960s): This was a traditional period where social realism, naturalism and slice of life ethnography were valued. Data analysis was guided by quantitative approaches. This was the golden age of rigorous qualitative analysis, where grounded theory and analytic induction were emergent.

- In the 1970s the third phase of blurred genres began, where researchers had full complement of paradigms, methods, and strategies. Theories ranged from symbolic interactionism, constructivism, naturalistic inquiry, positivism and post positivism, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, critical theory, semiotics, feminism and structuralism. Research reporting formats were from grounded theory, case study methods, ethnographic methods, action and clinical research. There were abundant ways of collecting and analyzing data including unstructured and semi-structured interviewing, observations, documentaries, visual and personal experiences. Computers were entering the sphere and supported the analysis of data. There was a call for thick descriptions of particular events in the data.

- Crises of representation ruptured in the 1980s. This called for reflexivity in research. Issues such as validity, reliability and objectivity were questioned. Interpretive theories, feminism and critical theory took prominence.

- In the postmodern period new ways of composing ethnography were found. More activist and participatory research was on the horizon.

- In the era of post experimental inquiry (1995-2000), qualitative writing blurred the boundaries between the social sciences and humanities There was experimentation with autobiographical, visual, performatory, co-constructed representations, the poetic, the visual, and the literary arts.

- The previous moments shaped this moment (2000-2004). It was a methodologically contested period of great conflict and tension.

- The eighth moment is now (2005 to the present day), which is post-modern.

- **Studies where qualitative research is used**
  Leedy and Ormrod (2010) confirmed that qualitative research has been conducted in many academic disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, psychology, biology, history, political science, education, and medicine. There is a wide acceptance of qualitative research as a legitimate research method. Qualitative research must never

be thought of as new, in that most inquiries begin as qualitative, when there is little information and established theory on the subject. Based on the findings of Ridder and Hoon (2009), many qualitative studies are being conducted both locally and internationally within the economic and management sciences sphere, particularly in human resource management and organizational studies.

- **Reason to select qualitative research**

  I selected the qualitative research approach due to the nature of the research process being flexible and emergent. The topic needed further exploration beyond only the theoretical explanations. More insight and knowledge could be gained by interacting and interviewing key stakeholders in organizations and who are knowledgeable about talent management practices. I could not detach myself from the data gathering and the analysis process. Furthermore, I felt that presenting the research finding through numbers is too superficial and thin to capture the richness of insights that could be achieved through the qualitative approach.

  Qualitative research has evolved broadly through traditional, modernist and postmodernist periods. The modernist approach was appropriate for the study, in that it is based on a rigorous, formal and systematic approach to analysis.

2.5 Modernist qualitative approach

To achieve the objectives of the study, the modernist qualitative approach has been selected. The modernist phase of qualitative research, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), is characterized by principles of rigorous qualitative analysis built on the foundations of the traditional period of qualitative research. The mid-20th century methodological discourse attempted to make qualitative research as rigorous as its quantitative counterparts. Causal narratives were central to the project. The multi-method approaches combined open-ended and quasi-structured interviewing protocols with participants' observations, as well as the careful analysis of such materials in standardized and statistical forms.

Rosenblatt (2012) expressed that modernist approaches seem to be about obtaining or supporting facts, truths and broadly applicable generalizations and theories. With modernist approaches there is a real reality, as opposed to post-modernist approaches where findings are provisional.

Morse (2001) found modernism to be supported by a strong belief in human progress that can be achieved by a search for knowledge and truth. There is an assumption that potential for unlocking the secrets of the universe can be found through the pursuit of knowledge in a certain and objective manner.

According to Morse (2001), modernists showed a strong quest for respectability, and this quest was evident in the movement by qualitative researchers towards formalizing their methods. As a result positivistic canons to non-positivist paradigms were considered. Concepts such as reliability, validity, generalizability and objectivity were used to judge the products of qualitative research and processes. The adoption of quantitative analytic techniques to qualitative analysis was another aspect of the quest for respectability. The classic analytical tools are in the form of grounded theory and analytic induction methods. These methods are well thought through, explicitly formulated and make use of systematic procedures for coding the data and testing hypotheses.

The modernist approach supports the data analysis methods of analytic induction and grounded theory which I will apply in the analysis of the research data. Furthermore, the data analysis approach to the study is semi-inductive and semi-deductive. Schwandt (2007) highlights that modernists believed that the source of genuine knowledge was empirical research and logical analysis, and that any knowledge claim must be capable of verification. With reference to Mayring (2000), deductive concept category application entails working with pre-formulated, theoretically derived aspects of analysis, and bringing them into connection with the data. The qualitative step of analysis consists of methodologically controlled assignments of concept categories to data or text, while the inductive process entails the researcher developing concept categories from and as closely as possible to the data.

As far as I could determine, semi-inductive and semi-deductive methods of data analysis constituted the best approaches to obtaining in-depth knowledge about talent management best practices.

Furthermore, the research design would guide the selection of cases where rich and appropriate data can be collected and inform who will be included in the study and to what extend the data will be collected. Case study design assists in setting boundaries in the research process in order to ensure that the research questions are answered adequately.

2.6 Research design: Case study

Moore, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012) defined a case study as an investigative approach used to thoroughly describe complex phenomena such as recent events, important issues, a programme or intervention, in ways that will unearth new and deeper understanding of these phenomena. Specifically, this methodology focuses on the concept of casing. A particular example could be drawn from a class or group of events, issues or programmes and how people interact with components of this phenomenon. According to Bromley (1990) case study research is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest. Nieuwenhuis (2012) mentions that case studies have been used for many years across a variety of disciplines to answer how and why questions. Case studies offer a multi-perspective analysis in which the researcher considers not just the voice and perspectives of one or two participants in a situation, but also the views of other relevant groups of actors and the interactions between them. Mouton (2004) indicates that case studies may be applied in companies or organizations as part of business studies, or in social work research which may focus on communities, households or families.

- **Types of case studies**

  Leedy and Ormrod (2010) explain that researchers may focus on a single case, perhaps because its unique or exceptional qualities can provide and promote understanding or inform practice for similar situations. In other instances researchers study two or more cases, often cases that differ in certain key ways in order to make comparisons, build theory, or propose generalizations. Such studies will be called multiple or collective case studies. Yin (2003) describes four basic types of case study design for case studies: A single case, which is appropriate when it is a critical case for testing a well-formulated theory, and it represents a typical, unique or revelatory case. The second is the case of longitudinal study, whereas multiple case studies can be either holistic or embedded. In holistic design, the global nature of the case, be it an individual programme, community or organization, is observed. The fourth case constitutes an embedded design which involves more than one unit of analysis, and attention is given to subunits.

  Mark (1998) uses a different classification and refers to three types of case studies: intrinsic (solely focused on better understanding the individual case, in which the case is a given), instrumental (a better understanding of the social issues where the

researcher begins with a question and seeks out a case that offers illumination), and collective (is focused on understanding a group of cases). Stake (2006) efficiently explains intrinsic case studies as those which focus on the case being studied, answering questions about that entity only to communicate the illuminated operation to its participants and other stakeholders, while instrumental case studies use case results to support a theory or construct and offer a new way of explaining some phenomenon.

- **Case study boundaries**

  Moore et al. (2012) stated that case study research involves the exploration of something with clear limits or boundaries. The case study researcher carefully defines, clarifies and specifies what elements of the case will be studied, i.e. which portion of the programme or other phenomena is to be the focus of the investigation. The bounding of the study includes identifying the aspects of the study to be studied using the research questions, the time frame to be included and those that will be included in the study. Identifying the study's location, entails the defining of the programme within the facility or location to be observed and the time frame within which the study will be conducted. Focusing, limiting or bounding case study efforts allows the researcher to use valuable investigative time for in-depth observations that produce rich and detailed case descriptions. Baxter and Jack (2008) advocate that the study limits are necessary given the usual time and resource constraints of any researcher's effort. Setting boundaries in the case will ensure that the study remains reasonably within the intended scope.

  Yin (1994) identifies a key strength of the case study method as it allows the use of multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process. The researcher determines the type of evidence that is needing to be gathered upfront as well as the analysis procedure that will be followed to achieve the purposes of the study. The data collection tools can take the form of surveys, interviews, documentation, observations and the collection of physical artefacts.

  A multiple site case study design was adopted as the research was conducted in two different companies, mainly for the purposes of comparison and verification and to observe similarities and characteristics in the data sets collected. The purpose of my study was intrinsic as I focused on talent management practices in these companies.

2.7 Research participants

- **Research participants**

  Botma et al. (2010) acknowledged that there have been arguments regarding the terms that must be used to identify human beings who participate in the research process as a unit of analysis. Previously, 'research subjects' was the term that was often used in research. This changed to 'research respondents', and this term has since been replaced by 'research participants'. Polit and Beck (2008) provided a definition based on roles played by individuals or human beings in particular research. Participants are the individuals who have been invited to participate in the study and who have been well-informed about it, and are willing to take part and give their input to the study.

  The participants identified were human resource practitioners, management members and beneficiaries of the talent management programmes. The selected companies are widely and publicly recognized for having effective talent management programmes. Upon recognizing the companies I desired to engage in the study, I approached the company senior management to grant approval to conduct the study and explained my intentions. Senior management then identified a list of individuals who best met the criteria I had set. I subsequently made appointments with the potential participants via electronic mail and telephone call, and also opted to meet them at their workplace so as not to inconvenience them with a remote venue. In Chapter 4, I discuss in detail the profiles and characteristics of the research participants.

  In Company A, nine participants took part in round 1 interviews, whereas four participants from Company B took part in this round. Round 2 interviews (to test the framework and to collect additional data) were conducted with one person in Company A who issued me with seven documents, while in Company B I interviewed four participants. I was given a list of people to contact as possible participants, but some were not available due to work commitments and extensive travelling. I was thus not able to interview everybody who I was given access to.

2.8 Sampling

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) advise that sampling is an essential step in the qualitative research process. As such, the choice of sampling scheme is an important consideration for all qualitative researchers. Encouragingly qualitative researchers have many sampling

schemes from which to choose. Furthermore, either one or a combination of various types of sampling methods can be used.

Given the limited time and financial resources at my disposal, I could not possibly collect data from every person in South Africa who is knowledgeable about talent management practices. Therefore I had to select (a sample) an appropriate portion of the population to inform the study. Klopper (2008) defines a sample as a subset of the population that is selected for a particular study.

There are different types of non-random or non-probability sampling methods which are compatible with qualitative research, i.e. theoretical, convenient, and purposive sampling. The above-mentioned sampling method is what I selected in order to achieve the research goals.

- **Theoretical sampling**
  Theoretical sampling, according to Marshall (1996), is an iterative process in qualitative research where samples are theory-driven to a greater or lesser extent. Essentially theoretical sampling necessitates the building of theory from emerging data and selecting new samples in order to examine and elaborate on the theory being developed.
  Strydom and Delport (2005) point out that theoretical sampling is important in helping the researcher to define categories, the relevance of categories, interrelationships, and connectivity to the overall theory-generating process. Theoretical sampling is used mostly in grounded theory analysis processes, to guide the study in its obtaining of precise information to shed more light on the development of theory.
- **Convenience sampling**
  According to Botma et al. (2010), convenience sampling takes any case that happens to cross the researcher's path, and which is nearest and most easily available. It entails the use of the most conveniently available people as its study participants. This type of sampling is also called accidental or availability sampling.
- **Purposive or judgemental sampling**
  In this type of sampling the researcher determines the most typical characteristics of the participants that could be included in the sample. Inclusion criteria are created based on the judgement of the researcher and are used to deliberately include specific

participants in the study (Botma et al., 2010). Purposive sampling is sometimes referred to as judgemental sampling. Polit and Beck (2008) shared that this sampling is based on the belief that the researcher's knowledge about the population can be used to handpick sample members. A particular individual is chosen because he or she illustrates some feature or process that is of interest for a particular study because he or she is seen as knowledgeable or an expert about the issues under study or lived experience. Clear formulation of inclusion criteria is of cardinal importance. This is a list of characteristics essential for membership in the sample, e.g. being employed in an organization which clearly practices talent management, or having been exposed to talent management practices either as a manager, human resource practitioner, or a beneficiary of the talent management programme.

Marshall (1996) asserts that judgement sampling is a more intellectual strategy than the simple demographic stratification by age, gender or social status. The researcher needs practical knowledge of the research area available in the literature and evidence of the study.

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) asserted that qualitative research often involves small samples although the choice of sample size is still an important consideration because it determines the extent to which the researcher can make generalizations. Common generalizations in qualitative research are case-to-case transfer, the making of generalizations from one case to another, and analytic generalizations. More specifically, qualitative researchers generalize words and observations to the population representing the underlying context. Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) recommended that sample sizes in qualitative research should not be so large that it is difficult to extract thick and rich data. At the same time, the sample should not be so small that data saturation is not reached. Morse (1995) refers to a concept of reaching data adequacy which is operationalized as collecting data until no new information can be obtained. Flick (1998) simply refers to data adequacy as data saturation. Marshall (1996) advises that an appropriate sample size for qualitative research is the one that adequately answers the research question. In simple research, questions or detailed studies, this might be in single figures. For complex questions, large samples and a variety of sampling techniques might be necessary. In practice, the number of required participants usually becomes obvious as the study progresses seeing as new categories, themes or explanations emerge from the data (data saturation). Clearly this

requires a flexible research approach and an iterative, cyclical approach to sampling, data collection and analysis.

In deciding on the sampling strategies to be used, I considered the advice of Curtis, Gesler, Smith and Washburn (2000), in the form of the following checklist:
1. The sampling strategy should be relevant to the conceptual framework and the research questions addressed by the research.
2. The sample should be likely to generate rich information on the type of phenomenon which needs to be studied.
3. The sample should enhance the generalizability of the findings, e.g. through analytic generalization or case-to-case generalization.
4. The sample should produce believable descriptions and explanations in the sense of being true and real.
5. The sample strategy has to be ethical in that informed consent and willingness to participate are key principles.
6. The sampling plan needs to be feasible in terms of the resource costs of money, time issues and compatibility with the researcher's work style. Additionally, linguistic and communication skills, as well as the ability to relate to the participants and their experiences are key.

The method that I have selected for the study is purposive. Additionally, I made use of convenience sampling with regard to the unsolicited documents issued to me to support the data.

Furthermore, I used theoretical sampling to identify categories and critical themes relevant for the development of the framework. Theoretical sampling guided me to seek relevant and sufficient data in order to reach theoretical saturation.

2.9 Research settings

In Chapter 4, I briefly introduce the selected companies and discuss the overall impressions of each company as per observations I have made.

- **Research site**

The atmosphere of Company A was breathtaking. It was housed in a beautiful building which reflected the prominence and quality of this professional firm. In 2010 the organization employed 2 200 employees, with an annual turnover of R1 633 863,000. The company operates in 31 countries in Africa. The environment spoke of a high level of professionalism and competitiveness. The company attributed its excellence to its high performance culture, flexible working hours, employees being challenged in a caring matter, and limitless opportunities for growth. Company B has a strong global identity. The company uses the success of its international standing and emulates proven business models. In 2010 the company employed 411 employees. The company attributed its success to its people being great, outstanding business culture, an innovative range of products and an environment which supports success for all.

- **Entrée**

    Quandt, McDonald, Bell and Arcury (1999) indicated that developing participation in research requires that the researcher is accepted so that the participant and the researcher can communicate with sufficient ease for accurate understanding of each other. Being successful in entrée opens the way to an in-depth, comprehensive understanding of the research community in its entirety and complexity. This in turn intensifies the quality of involvement of the researcher and knowledge of the community, which increases the overall quality of the research results. It is important for the researcher to tell the research participants who he/she is upfront, as well as what he/she will be doing to address ethical obligations to the research participants. All concerns that participants have must be addressed upfront. Gaining entry is quite an intensive process which requires perseverance, persistence and a lot of planning and communication skills. Additionally, the researcher must keep possible barriers which might arise in mind, e.g. cultural complexities, limited time and structural issues.

Yin (2011) advised that doing research implies interacting with the real world, situations and the people in them. In order to enter and exit research settings some formality is required, particularly in obtaining the necessary permissions to do the study.

I identified the top 10 Best Employers in South Africa in 2010 as potential companies to approach for the research. The Best Employer brand had recently been upgraded to that of Top Employer. The best employers (now called top employers) are awarded certification

through a rigorous accreditation process. These employers have to achieve the highest standards of excellence in employee working conditions. The company undergoing a certification process has to participate in the HR best practice survey where comprehensive human resource best practices and analysis of the environment are undertaken. The certification process, according to Best Employer (2011), involves registration, completion of a comprehensive human resource best practice survey (organization environment, strategy, policy implementation, monitoring and communication of employee conditions and development), data review, validation, systematic and scientific verification, an external auditing process to assess potential errors or anomalies according to audit standards, evaluation (assessment of the attainment of standards), and finally the awarding of the certification which is valid for one year.

After reading about 'Best Employers' I was confident that they were the correct entities to approach to request permission for the study. Through diligent internet searches I acquired the contact details (electronic mail and telephone numbers) of the companies, and found out who the project leaders of the Best Employer certification process were. I sent electronic mail, followed by telephone calls to connect with the correct persons who would give the necessary permission for me to conduct the study. After a few and even several months of trying to access the key persons, two companies indicated their interest. I therefore forwarded an electronic copy to obtain permission. The letter indicated the research topic, explained why I was conducting the study, and stipulated the types of people who could add value to the study. After a few weeks the human resource directors of the two companies put me in contact with human resource coordinators to supply me with a list of potential participants, providing their names and contact details. I then forwarded an email to communicate my intentions about the study, asking if they would like to participate in the study. Those who were interested in participating responded positively. I subsequently scheduled appointments at the company premises for the convenience of the participants. The human resource coordinators assisted with setting up the meeting rooms and confirmed a schedule where I could interview at least five people a day.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the first round of data collection, while the second round of interviews was unstructured and also focused on testing the initial talent management framework I had developed. Secondly, I was issued with unsolicited documents, and conducted some observations of the company environment, e.g. how people interacted and behaved.

Yin (2011) expressed that working in the field requires establishing and maintaining genuine relationships with other people and being able to converse comfortably with them. In the research settings I was introduced to educated, successful people holding management and professional roles in their respective fields. I was continuously conscious of how I interacted, my communication skills, as well as the building of rapport and trust with all the participants. Furthermore Yin (2011) cautions that the researcher will be entering a real-life environment with people carrying out their everyday routines, and that a researcher must be mindful that he/she is entering their space, time and social relationships. I was humbled that busy human resource practitioners, talented employees and line managers agreed and made time to share their knowledge of talent management with me, and that such prestigious and successful companies would grant me permission to conduct the study. This was an exciting and simultaneously nerve-racking part of the journey. Yin advised that one needs to go with the flow, meaning that one has to be adaptive and flexible.

I was aware that I could not afford to repeatedly come to the company premises to meet with the participants as they had busy schedules. I therefore made the most out of the 60 to 90 minutes granted for the interviews per participant.

To recap, my research settings were the two professional companies situated in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. The formal meeting areas were booked for the purpose of the interviews.

2.10 Data gathering

There are various methods for qualitative researchers to choose from in order to collect data from the field. Botma et al. (2010) advised that research design strategy and questions will influence the researcher's decision about his or her choice of qualitative research methods for data gathering. Furthermore, qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data and thus make use of a combination of research methods. The data collection methods refer to interviewing, observations, document collection, field notes and focus groups.

To achieve the objectives and aims of the research, I opted to combine a few methods of data collection. During the first round of interviews I followed a semi-structured approach to interviewing in order to ensure that the open-ended questions were aligned to the research questions and reviewed literature, while allowing much flexibility and additional questions to arise during the interview process. The unstructured and in-depth interview was used during

the second round of interviews to verify the initially proposed talent management framework and the initial data analysis and coding of themes. Furthermore, I conducted informal and unstructured observations of the participants, the settings, environments, and how people interacted in the company environment. The unsolicited documents in the form of internal company publications were issued to me to support the data.

Interviewing

Doody and Noonan (2013) indicated that a range of formats are available from which to choose, including structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, the research objectives largely guide the method which will support answering the research questions.

Patton (2002) placed interviews into four general categories, namely the informal, the conversational, the general interview guide approach, and the standardized open-ended interview. In-depth interviews (unstructured) are typically much more like conversations than formal events with pre-determined response categories. The researcher explores a few general topics to help uncover the participants' views but otherwise respects how the participant frames and structures the responses. The process is focused on the participant's perspective, which is the emic perspective. Holloway and Wheeler (2010) are of the view that an unstructured interview often starts with a broad, open question concerning the area of study, with subsequent questions dependent on the participants' responses. Furthermore, the term 'unstructured' is misleading in the sense that no interview is entirely devoid of structure. If this were so, the data gathered might not be appropriate to the research question. The interview is non-directive and flexible, and the researcher follows an interview guide comprising of themes rather than specific questions. This enables the participant's thoughts and interests to be explored in depth, which in turn generates rich data.

Holloway and Wheeler (2010) identified the semi-structured interview as a common type of interview used in qualitative research, involving the use of pre-determined questions and where the researcher is free to seek clarifications. An interview guide is developed to collect similar types of data from all participants and create a sense of order (David & Sutton, 2004). **Semi-structured interview** questions are developed with the guidance of the initial literature review prior to the data collection (Stringer, Astrakianakis & Haines, 2013).

Doody and Noonan (2013) added that the semi-structured interview can be flexible, with open-ended questions and the chance to explore issues that arise spontaneously. The

researcher is free to vary the wording of the questions depending on the direction of the interview and is also free to ask additional questions.

The researcher's role

Yin (2011) mentioned that the researcher adopts a formal interviewer role, attempting to illicit responses from the interviewees. Another role is that of an observer of the participants, the work environment, and of the general company employees. The role of triangulation is of great importance in doing qualitative research. Triangulation may even be thought of as a frame of mind instead of as a methodological technique; something that keeps the eyes and the ears open for corroboration or conflicting ideas or data. Additionally, I played the role of making and taking notes, as participants did not feel comfortable with the use of a voice-recording device.

Observations

Observations entail the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors and artefacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for the study. Corbetta (2003) suggests that observations may be that of the physical setting, or of how interactions happen, which can be formal or informal, or even non-verbal interactions within the organization. Botma et al. (2010) added that participatory observation yield information that is otherwise unavailable. During the observation the researcher endeavors to become part of the lives and daily routines of the participants although it is important that nothing in the situation should be changed. The focus is on the daily and natural experiences of the participants. The researcher becomes aware by becoming acquainted with people and by being actively involved in participants' situations while observing their behavior and making field notes and recording actions, interactions and events in an unstructured or semi-structured manner. The collection of data is based on the ability to see, observe, smell, listen and inquire.

Field notes

Tjora (2006) highlights that the taking of field notes that are usable for social research seems to require some methodological skills, as well as a level of reflection on the researcher's role. A highly skilled approach has to be incorporated into the development of field notes, thereby producing better input towards the research findings. Botma et al. (2010) defined field notes as a written account of the things the researcher hears, sees, feels, experiences, and thinks about in the course of the interview or focus group. It is more than merely listing occurrences as it is an interpretive and analytical process. Field notes include both the empirical

observations and the personal interpretations of the researcher, as well as pre-conceptions, expectations and prejudices. Field notes are either part of the data or are used for verification purposes. Cresswell (2009) suggests a protocol for recording field notes which is a format for recording the multiple forms of observed data that the researcher gathers. He suggests three sections, namely descriptive notes, reflective notes and demographic information. The description notes include the portraits of the participants, a reconstruction of dialogue, a description of physical settings, and accounts of the participants' events or activities. This should be conducted as objectively and completely as possible. The second section constitutes the reflective notes. These are the researcher's personal thoughts, such as speculations, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions and prejudices. The third section is the demographic information about the time, place and date of the field setting, as well as demographic notes about the participants.

Document collection

Botma et al. (2010) are of the view that the use of documents enables the researcher to investigate people, events and systems in depth, by reviewing the written material. The researcher must be aware of the types of documents that will form part of the data and how each set of documents will be reduced to data. Documents can be either public or private. Public documents are, e.g. agendas or minutes of meetings, internal office memos, financial records, annual reports, newspapers, magazines or other publications, while private documents are personal written anecdotes, private documents, letters, journals and diaries.

I was also issued with unsolicited documents in the form of an internal company quarterly publication which recorded all the company activities, projects, accomplishments and the company vision. These were provided to me by the participants in an effort to substantiate what they had shared with me.

2.11 Data recording and storage

The process that I had chosen to record the interview data was through writing out all conversations, responses and information given by the research participants during the semi-structured interviews. Upon completing each section of the interview I read what I had written down to the participants to ensure that I had correctly and completely recorded what

they had shared. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) advised that in conducting a productive interview, the researcher needs to record all responses verbatim, whether through the use of hand-written notes, short-hand, tape recordings or via direct capturing onto a computer, especially if it is an unstructured, in-depth interview. Furthermore, the researcher needs to ensure that the content is read or played back and needs to ask if it accurately reflects the thoughts of the participants. The researcher must also allow people to choose their own way of expressing their thoughts, and let them say what they want to communicate.

I need to mention that I had taken a voice recorder to all of the interviews, but participants mentioned that they felt more comfortable with me writing interview notes as opposed to voice recording their responses. I understood their discomfort with the tape recorder as these devices are often used in disciplinary inquiries by human resource practitioners and managers. I consulted a study conducted by Al-Yateem (2012) in order to gain insights into the effect of interview recording on the quality of the data obtained as part of methodological reflection. Al-Yateem acknowledged that data obtained from qualitative interviews may be voice recorded, transcribed and inspected for various themes. The recording may be listened to repeatedly to support analysis and to provide a basis for reliability. In the study Al-Yateem carried out face-to-face interviews to collect data, and noticed that the recording affected the ease with which participants exchanged data with him. He raised the following questions:

- 1. Does the recording of interviews have an effect on the interviewee, and hence affect the quality of data collected?
- 2. Does the recording cause participants to be reluctant to express their views and experiences freely or does it cause that these views or experiences are presented in a different way?
- 3. How do researchers minimize the effects of recording on interviews and hence enhance the quality of data obtained?

He further admits that some participants are affected by the use of recording devices, while others do not mind, depending on the sensitivity of the topic under discussion. In his study he followed the lead of the interviewee with regard to the use or non-use of the recording device, in that the participant selects whether or not to use a device.

As soon as I got home after completing a few interviews I typed the hand-written recordings on to my word processor. I ensured that I typed every word I had written down by hand. I

also incorporated the impressions I had about the research participants as well as the overall environment and the feelings I had in the company premises where I was collecting data.

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) indicated that many researchers are likely to use word processing or similar software to record interviews and perhaps some types of data. By storing data on a computer it allows easy access to retrieve any piece of information using a relevant keyword, and data can be sorted quickly and in multiple ways. Furthermore, precautions should be taken to safeguard data by backing data up on a compact disk, flash drive or a storage device that can be kept in a safe place. The data of the present study is recorded in the form of hand-written notes and a word processor. The hand-written documents are filed in an arch lever file, and typed data is stored and saved on a word processor as well as a number of removable storage devices to ensure multiple storage and safe keeping.

Additionally, I was advised by my qualitative research advisor, Prof. Willem Schurink, to keep a research diary. The purpose of the research diary was to record my thoughts, plans, experiences, feelings and observations throughout the research process. I found that the diary allowed me to express my true feelings freely, including joys, victories, concerns, frustrations and disappointments. The diary is mainly hand written, and no attention was paid to orderly writing. However, I can easily follow and understand what I had written. I also kept photos of interesting evens in my life, some directly related and even some that were unrelated to the study.

In the process of data recording I was self-conscious about recording the interview by hand in detail, more specially because I did not use a voice recording device, as per the wishes and to show respect to the research participants. The analysis process began from the minute I started interviewing, because I began to probe for more information, and also compared data received from different participants.

2.12 The role of literature

- Dunn (2010) indicated that research approaches associated with qualitative research often present challenges with regard to addressing when and how to engage with

existing literature for the study. Yin (2011) argues that literature reviews have served as a rather conventional step in conducting most empirical research. An earlier view of qualitative research resisted formal literature review prior to the onset of collecting some field data. The resistance stemmed from the belief that qualitative research attempts most of all to capture the meaning of events, including unique times, places and distinct historical moments. Furthermore, potentially the most desirable meaning would come from those who were part of the unique time and place, not from a researcher's perspective. Although a review of prior research could help to inform a new study, such a review also could hinder if not bias it by creating an unwanted filter or lens. Despite the preceding views, Yin (2011) indicated that some qualitative researchers embark on the literature reviews as they need to show awareness if not adroitness, in identifying specific lines of research and the meanings uncovered under similar circumstances. If a study claims to be unique, a good literature review can also demonstrate a researcher's mastery over the literature as well as presenting the arguments of the lacuna. Thus, conducting some type of literature review seemed to be desirable.

Cresswell (2009) highlighted contexts in which literature may be applied in qualitative studies:

- The literature may be used to frame the problem in the introduction of the study;
- The literature is presented in a separate section as a review of the literature, and this style is more acceptable with traditional approaches to literature reviews; and
- The literature in the study is presented at the end, and it becomes a basis for comparing and contrasting findings of the study (this approach is most suitable for the inductive process of qualitative research, as the literature does not guide the study, but becomes an aid once patterns and categories of data themes have been identified).

Botma et al. (2010) argued that the use of literature in qualitative studies varies considerably, thus there are many different applications depending on the study design. Burns and Grove (2005) emphasized the various purposes of literature in qualitative research as follows:

- Literature may be used to compare and combine findings from the study with the literature to determine current knowledge of a phenomenon;
- The use of literature may be to explain, support, and extend the theory generated in the study.

- The review of literature may be to provide a background for conducting the study, as in most traditional research; and

- The literature review may be used to develop research questions and may also be a source of data. Peirce (1995) assumes the position that theory (implicitly or explicitly) informs the questions that researchers ask, the assumptions we make and the procedures, methods, and approaches we use to conduct the research.

In the present study I have applied the use of literature in the following contexts:

Firstly, to conduct a preliminary literature review of the concept of talent management before data collection; secondly, to understand and inform myself of qualitative research methodology practices and the data analysis methods available; thirdly, I conducted a selective literature study after data collection to support and bring deeper understanding of the collected data. In essence I have opted for a combination of the inductive (deriving insights from the data) and deductive (insights from literature) processes of applying the literature to the study. Reeves, Albert, Kuper and Hodges (2008) supported that many qualitative researchers rely heavily on theory derived from the literature to guide their research process and illuminate their findings. Literature provides complex and comprehensive understanding of things that cannot be pinned down, e.g. how people interact in certain ways, how organizations operate and how societies work. Furthermore, Reeves et al. (2008) indicated that theory gives the researcher different lenses through which to look at complicated problems and social issues, focusing their attention on different aspects of the data and providing a framework within which to conduct their analysis.

2.13 Presenting qualitative data and reporting

Yin (2011) acknowledged that qualitative studies pose a special challenge in presenting their data because the data usually includes narratives from the participants. Despite the reporting challenges, researchers have a variety of presentation choices, ranging from directly or indirectly quoted material to chapter-length accounts. Extensive narrations in the participants' own words may be presented.

Moore et al. (2012) emphasized that it is important for the researcher to keep the purpose and the audience in mind when writing up a research report. The report most often incorporates key elements to communicate the findings to interested stakeholders and audiences. The

reports may vary. It may be descriptive if it includes descriptions, providing detailed accounts of what is happening in a particular programme, and possibly offering explanations in addition to descriptions. The report should have enough details, thus providing a thick description. A good report, according to Moore et al. (2012), helps the reader to understand how the researcher came to the conclusions or assertions found in the study findings. The researcher's position needs to be revealed, along with any biases that may have been introduced as a result. The report should describe how data were collected and how categories were derived in enough detail that the reader can trace the path between the data collected and the findings reported.

Moore et al. (2012) explained that the research reports may include, but are not limited to plays, poems, short stories, movies, videos, live presentations and discussions. Yin (2011) reiterated that, apart from narrative data, qualitative studies can also benefit from the use of many types of non-verbal presentations such as the use of graphics, photographs and reproductions.

Webb (1992) asserted that researchers experience difficulties in having academic papers which are based on qualitative research accepted for publication because the papers have been written in the first person (I). Webb (1992) further argues that the use of the first person is required in keeping with the epistemologies of the research and in the pursuit of reflexivity. A fundamental point that Webb raises in the published paper is that it is acceptable to write in the first person when giving a personal opinion or presenting ideas. Indeed, in such instances not to use the first person is deceptive and biased. The use of the third person is a linguistic device to convey an impression of objectivity in the research process, which is inconsistent with the philosophies of qualitative research, particularly feminist research. The use of the first person is essential to counteract the notion that researchers do influence, exercise choices, and make decisions about the directions of their research and the conclusions that they draw.

In the study I chose to write in the first person where necessary and avoided the use of the third person. I opted to follow a systematic and more formal style of writing as I am conducting a formal study. The presentation of data is mostly descriptive and direct quotations by the research participants are inserted.

2.14 Ensuring the quality of the study

Yin (2011) indicated that the quality of qualitative research is built on the trustworthiness and credibility of the research process. Transparency, 'methodic-ness' and adherence to evidence are the main objectives of building trustworthiness and credibility in qualitative research. Transparency means that the research is done in a publicly accessible manner. It is important to describe and document the qualitative research procedures so that other people can review and try to understand them. All data need to be available for inspection. The general idea is that others should be able to scrutinize the work and the evidence used to support the findings and conclusions.

Methodic-ness is the craft of doing qualitative research methodically. There needs to be adequate room for discovery and allowance for anticipated events. However, being methodic means following some orderly set of research procedures and minimizing whimsical or careless work, thus rigorous field routine. Being methodic also includes avoiding unexplained bias or deliberate distortion in carrying out the research. In essence, being methodic means bringing a sense of completeness to the research effort, as well as cross-checking a study's procedures and data. Furthermore, adherence to evidence refers to the availability of explicit sets of evidence. For many studies where the goal is to have participants describe their own decision-making processes, the evidence will consist of participants' actual language as well as the context in which the language is expressed. Regardless of the data being collected, a study's conclusions should be drawn in reference to those data. Corden and Sainsbury (2006) advocated that presenting the actual textual data on the research report improves and strengthens the credibility of the findings, thus displaying accuracy of the analysis and providing evidence of the audit trail.

Cresswell (2009) refers to reliability in qualitative research as consistency which can be checked by the following indicators: 1) Documenting data accurately and comprehensively; 2) Checking transcripts for correctness, ensuring that there is no drift in the definition of a code while analyzing data; 3) Cross-checking and verifying codes for correctness and accuracy.

Cresswell (2009) refers to the checking of the accuracy of findings by employing certain procedures as validity. Terms such as trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility are used when referring to qualitative validity. Cresswell suggests eight primary strategies for ensuring validity:

1. Triangulating different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build the themes;

2. Using member checking to determine the accuracy of findings. This could be done through a follow-up interview by taking the final report back to the participants;

3. A rich and thick description should be provided by the researcher. This should include a detailed description of the settings and many perspectives of a theme;

4. Clarifying the researcher bias by creating opportunity for self-reflection. Reflexivity must be a key characteristic of a qualitative researcher;

5. Negative or discrepant information runs with counter themes. This is done by discussing contrary information, thereby increasing the credibility of the study;

6. The time that the researcher spends on the field should be sufficient to ensure the development of in-depth understanding of the phenomenon;

7. The use of peer debriefing to enhance accuracy of the account. This is done by locating a person who can ask questions about the study; and

8. The use of an external auditor who is not familiar with the study, in order to provide an objective assessment of the study.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) proposed the following principles for guiding the researcher in terms of quality of research: Credibility is a qualitative parallel to internal validity (the confidence that a researcher has that his or her intervention caused the change in the dependent variable). Credibility is therefore established by sustained involvement in the research settings, peer debriefing, member checks, the use of multiple data sources and monitoring self-perceptions through keeping a journal or notes about thinking, decision making and own beliefs.

Transferability parallels external validity, which means that the results of a study can be generilised to other samples from the same population. Transferability is established by provision of sufficient data, and details about the research participants in that the findings can be applied or transferred to different contexts and groups.

Dependability parallels reliability, which means that there is a consistency in the measurement of the targeted variables. Establishing dependability requires that the researcher performs a dependability audit, showing the points at which changes occurred in the research

process and understanding related to that process. In other words, the research process has to be traceable, and must provide stepwise replication information.

Conformability parallels objectivity, which relates to the absence of personal bias. Conformability is based on the provision of a chain of evidence such that the reader can see the source of the data and illustrate examples from the data that support the researcher's conclusion. This may be referred to as conformability audit through reflexivity and triangulation.

Lincoln (2009) refers to authenticity as providing a balanced and fair view of all perspectives in the research study. Authenticity has the following dimensions: 1) Fairness or balance references the researcher's strenuous efforts both to locate all stakeholders in the inquiry and to persuade them to become full partners in nominating issues of interest that should be investigated; 2) Ontological authenticity refers to the ability of the inquiry, particularly data collection and interpretation, to elicit from the participants constructions that they were unaware that they had held. This takes the form of mental awakening and recognition of feelings, values and beliefs that they never thought they held; 3) Educative authenticity refers to the mandate among qualitative inquiries to make others aware of the social constructions of all stakeholders. Findings must shed new light on the phenomenon and engender sufficient interest with weightiness to prompt positive action towards progress; and 4) Tactical authenticity is about training participants to speak truth to power, and how to utilize recognized policies and procedures to make wishes known to those in authority.

Watt (2007) advised that learning to reflect on your behavior and thoughts as well as on the phenomenon under study creates a means for continuously becoming a better researcher. In qualitative research reflexivity is deemed necessary because the researcher is both an instrument of data collection and also conducts the analysis. Russell and Kelly (2002) contended that through reflection researchers may become aware of what it allows them to see, as well as what may inhibit their seeing. This entails the researcher carefully considering the phenomenon under study, as well as how the researcher's own assumptions and behavior may be impacting the inquiry.

In ensuring the quality of my research through reflection, during the data collection phase I was conscious of writing down exactly what the participants were sharing with me and often I would read what I had captured to them, thereby ensuring the accuracy, correctness and sufficiency of the data. I guarded against using my own words or opinions to supplement

what the participants had said. To ensure correct and credible coding of the data I forwarded a script of the coded data and the proposed talent management framework to the companies for verification and further validation.

The use of literature, the collection of unsolicited documentation, semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews and observations strengthened my position as a researcher to draw conclusions about talent management practices.

I ensured that the data that came from the research participants was rich, sufficient and comprehensive to adequately inform the study. Follow-up interviews assisted in the verification of data and the analysis thereof. With each interview and each company I looked for unique and additional insights and searched actively for contradicting evidence. Prof. Ebben van Zyl played a critical role in giving constructive feedback about the data analysis process, and making sense of the data. Furthermore, the research participants were also electronically mailed the analyzed data for validation and verification purposes.

2.15 Ethical considerations

Yin (2011) asserted that throughout the entire research process the researcher will need to uphold one critical trait, which is to bring a strong sense of ethics to the research by setting and maintaining ethical standards of conduct. Having such a sense is so pivotal because of numerous discretionary choices made by qualitative researchers. The ethical spirit transcends but is directly related to the specific procedures for protecting human subjects. Behaving properly is considered a matter of research integrity which is guided and informed by a code of ethics, ethical standards and guiding principles promoted by academic institutions and professional bodies.

Mertens (2012) highlighted that a researcher has to be guided by six basic ethical principles, namely:

1. Beneficence, in that the researcher should strive to maximize the good outcomes for science and humanity and minimize risks or harm to individuals in the research;

2. Respect – researchers should treat the people in their study with respect and courtesy, with particular concern for vulnerable people such as children and the disadvantaged;

3. Justice – researcher should ensure that the people who participate in the research are those who reap the benefits of the research. They should achieve this by the use of procedures that are reasonable, non-exploitative, carefully considered and fairly administered;

4. Informed consent – voluntary informed consent means that the participants must agree to participate without threat or undue inducement, must know what a reasonable person in the same situation would want to know before giving consent (informed), and must explicitly agree to participate (consent);

5. Researchers are ethically obligated to promise confidentiality to participants in a study, this means that the data will be reported in such a way they they cannot be associated with a particular individual. Qualitative researchers need to be conscious of the implications of ensuring that participants are fully informed and that they consent to participate voluntarily as the richness of data in qualitative research is sometimes possible for readers of a particular study to identify participants who participated, even if the names are not used in the study; and

6. Researcher competency involves a great deal more than knowledge about methods from textbooks. Qualitative researchers need to be able to demonstrate people skills in a culturally appropriate way. Cultural competence refers to the researcher's ability to accurately represent reality in a culturally complex community.

Throughout the research process I was aware and conscious of doing what was right in every aspect of the study. I made sure that no one was going to be hurt either physically, emotionally or in any other manner as a direct or indirect result of my studies. The companies and the research participants where I conducted the studies gave informed consent for me to proceed with the research. I gave full, upfront disclosure of my intention to complete the university studies, the topic of the study, and what sort of questions I would be asking the participants. Private and sensitive matters that participants disclosed to me were kept confidential. I also respected the wish not to disclose the company names and that of the participants. Furthermore, I did not impose the use of a tape recorder on participants as most of them felt uncomfortable with its use.

2.16 Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the research methodology chosen for the study and how it was applied. I indicated how my scientific beliefs in the form of ontology and epistemology guided my selection of a modernist qualitative research design in the form of a multiple site case study. Additionally I preferred to combine both the inductive and deductive approaches of reasoning in analyzing the data collected.

I opted to purposefully select the research participants, and use theoretical sampling as my sampling strategy and procedure. I provided a description of the research settings, entry strategies and how I collected the data through unsolicited documents, semi-structured and unstructured interviews, as well as observations.

The processes of data recording and storage were outlined, and I also indicated that I did not make use of the voice recorder as this was the participants' preference.

Owing to the study being both deductive and inductive, I discussed the role of literature review in the study.

The presentation of the data was such that it was done in a text-rich, dense and narrative manner. Furthermore, I built quality assurance steps and ethical principles in throughout the research process.

In the next chapter I will discuss the process I followed to analyze the data in detail.

Chapter 3

Data analysis methods

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the data analysis strategy applied to the study in detail. For introductory purposes I firstly discuss the basic principles of qualitative data analysis, and the various qualitative data analysis methods available. Thereafter, I present two main approaches of data analysis chosen for the study, namely analytic induction and grounded theory. Broadly speaking, I have used analytic induction, while grounded theory supported the data analysis at the operationalization and basic level. Furthermore, I also review how analytic induction was applied in various studies overseas and locally. I also emphasize the use of both deductive and inductive approaches of analyzing the data in the study.

3.2 Qualitative data analysis and methods

3.2.1 What is data analysis?

Pope, Ziebland and Mays (2000) argued that analyzing qualitative data is not a simple or quick task. Done properly, it is systematic and rigorous, and therefore labor intensive and time consuming. Good qualitative analysis is able to document its claim to reflect some of the truth of a phenomenon by reference to systematically gathered data. In contrast, poor qualitative data analysis is anecdotal, unreflective, and descriptive without being focused on a coherent line of inquiry. At its heart, good qualitative analysis relies on the skill, vision and integrity of the researcher doing the analysis. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) highlighted that since the data consists of words and observations, it requires much creativity, discipline and much of a systematic approach to bring about order and understanding of the data.

Dey (1993) defined qualitative data analysis as a process of resolving data into its constituent components in order to reveal its characteristic elements and structure. Without analysis we would rely entirely on impressions and intuitions about the data as a whole. There is a benefit in more rigorous and logical procedures of analysis. Through data analysis we can progress from initial descriptions, through the process of breaking data down into bits, and seeing how these bits interconnect, to a new account based on our reconceptualization of data. We break data down in order to classify it, and the concepts we create or employ in classifying the data

as well as the connections we make between these concepts, provide the basis of a fresh description. Kawulich (2004) added that qualitative data analysis involves immersing oneself in the data to become familiar with it, then looking for patterns and themes, searching for various relationships between data that help the researcher to understand what they have, and finally displaying the information visually and writing it up.

The core of qualitative data analysis lies in these related processes of describing the phenomena, classifying it, and seeing how our concepts interconnect. Robson (2002) acknowledges that qualitative data analysis can be overwhelming and analytical choices have to be made. These choices entail what data to select, how to summarize and subsequently how to organize these data.

LeCompte (2000) emphasized that for interview, document, and observation data to be useful it needs to be turned into results. For this reason the transforming of data into research results is called analysis. Large amounts of data are transformed into succinct statements that describe, explain or predict something about what the researcher has studied. Since analysis is much like taking apart the pieces of a puzzle and putting them together again, it is important for the data to be complete and any source of bias to be removed.

LeCompte (2000), furthermore, asserted that the analysis process has to be done in a meticulous manner which is based on articulated theories, and must be responsive to the research questions. In order to generate quality research results and findings, the analysis process has to yield meaningful, credible and useful data. Validity is critical to the quality of analysed data in that the results have to be accurate and reasonable to the participants, key stakeholders and relevant professional communities. Lacey and Luff (2009) mentioned that qualitative data analysis must be rigorous in order to yield valid and reliable results. Rigour entails outlining a formal procedure and process for data analysis. Furthermore the presentation of the results must relate to the data gathered.

Pope et al. (2000) iterated that qualitative data analysis does not seek to quantify data. The sampling strategies do not aim to identify a statistically representative set of respondents, and thus expressing results in relative frequencies may be misleading. Simple counts of concepts are sometimes used and may provide a useful summary of some aspects of the analysis. Most qualitative researchers' data are preserved in their textual form and indexed to generate or develop analytical categories and theoretical explanations. Analytical categories are used to describe and explain social phenomena. These categories may be derived inductively (that is

obtained gradually from the data) or used deductively either at the beginning or partway through the analysis as a way of approaching the data. Deductive analysis is less common in qualitative research but it is being used increasingly, e.g. in the framework approach by Pope et al. (2000) discussed below.

According to Pope et al. (2000), the deductive manner of analyzing qualitative data was developed specifically for applied or policy-relevant qualitative research, where the objectives of the investigation are typically set in advance and shaped by the information requirements of the study. For these reasons the framework approach reflects the original accounts and observations of the people studied (that is grounded and inductive) and it starts deductively from pre-set aims and objectives. The data collection seems to be more semi-structured than would be the norm for much other qualitative research, and analytical process tends to be more explicit and more strongly informed by prior reasoning. The analysis is designed so that it can be viewed and assessed by people other than the primary analyst.

The deductive analysis process is described by Pope et al. (2000) in the form of the five stages of the framework approach, i.e.:

- Familiarization – this entails immersion in the raw data or a typical pragmatic selection from the data, and seeking key ideas and recurrent themes;
- Identifying a thematic framework – involving key issues, concepts and themes by which data can be examined. Priori issues and questions are derived from objectives and aims, as well as ideas from the participants;
- Indexing – this is the annotation of the transcripts with numerical codes, supported by short text descriptions to elaborate the index heading;
- Charting – this is the rearranging of the data according to the appropriate part of the thematic framework. This constitutes distilled summaries of multiple views and experiences, with abstraction and synthesis; and
- Mapping and interpretation – this step involves creating typologies, finding associations between themes and providing explanations. All is done by means of research aims and objectives, and incorporating insights from the data.

I have discussed the deductive approach to qualitative data analysis intently, as the larger majority of the literature review focuses mostly on the inductive processes of analyzing qualitative data. It is important also to create an understanding of deductive analysis, due to

the study having features of both deductive and inductive approaches to analysis and reasoning.

Pope et al. (2000) acknowledged that the qualitative data analysis computer packages may be useful in aiding when gathering, organizing and reorganizing data and helping to find exceptions. However, no package and software is capable of perceiving a link between theory and data or defining an appropriate structure for the analysis. The researcher's analytical skills are required in moving towards hypothese

s or propositions about the data. Undeniably, several software packages most widely used, such as ATLANTIS.ti and QSR NUD*IST, are welcome as an important development with the potential to improve the rigorous analysis of qualitative data. In the case of this study I did not use any form of data analysis software as I conducted the analysis manually while capturing the content of the analysis on a word processor (Microsoft Word).

3.2.2 Qualitative data analysis methods

There are various methods of analyzing qualitative data, such as content analysis, narrative analysis, thematic analysis, analytic induction and grounded theory. These methods are mostly inductive in nature. Thomas (2003) defines the inductive approach as a systematic procedure for analyzing data where analysis is guided by specific objectives. Often research findings emerge from frequent and dominant themes inherent in the data. Data analysis is a complex process and before choosing an analysis method for the study, I had to review a few of the data analysis methods available in order to make an informed choice for the present study.

3.2.2.1 Content analysis

Interestingly, Elo and Kyngas (2007) described content analysis as a method that may be used either qualitatively or quantitatively, and in an inductive or deductive manner. In essence, content analysis is a method of analyzing written, verbal or visual communication messages. It was first used as a method for analyzing newspapers, magazines, articles and advertisements in the 19th century. It is also known as a method of analyzing documents. Patton (2002) iterated that the analysis takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to

identify core consistencies and meanings while achieving data reduction and sense making. The main aim of content analysis is to attain condensed and broad descriptions of the phenomenon, and the outcome of the analysis is concepts or categories describing the phenomenon. Usually the purpose of those concepts is to build up a model, conceptual system, conceptual map or categories. A systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying a phenomenon is possible with content analysis. Deductive content analysis is used in cases where the researcher wishes to test existing data in a new context, which involves testing of categories, concepts, models and hypothesis. Zeh (2005) indicated deductive quantitative content analysis as a highly selective and structured method which is based on the principles of the social science of measuring and counting. In the deductive analysis process, structured analysis matrices are developed to guide the data collection and analysis, while inductive content analysis involves open coding, creating categories, groupings and abstraction processes directly from the data without any prior theoretical framing. Interestingly, content analysis according to Berg (1983) and Devi (2009) allows for major elements of written messages to be counted such as words, terms, themes, concepts and semantics. The counting of words reflects the frequency with which a given concept appears in the data, thereby suggesting the magnitude of this observation.

3.2.2.2 Narrative analysis

According to Riessman (2003), analysis of narratives is no longer a province of literary study alone, but has penetrated all the human sciences and practicing professions. Narrative analysis provides a way to systematically study and analyze personal narratives of experience. Additionally, narratives do not mirror, but refract the past. Imagination and strategic interests influence how storytellers choose to connect events and make them meaningful for others. Narrative analysis is useful in research as storytellers interpret the past rather than reproduce it as it was. Bamberg (2010) regards narrative analysis as an attempt to systematically relate the narrative means deployed for the function of laying out and making sense of particular kinds of, if not totally unique, experiences. It further extrapolates and brings a better understanding of a particular experience. In the human sciences narrative analysis refer to a family of approaches to diverse kinds of text, which have in common a storied form. Social movements, organizations, scientists and individuals construct preferred narratives about history. Narratives have both a consequence and sequence, as events are

selected, organized, connected, and evaluated as meaningful for a particular audience. Strategies that may be employed to analyze narratives are:

- Thematic analysis, which emphasizes the content of a text;
- Structural analysis, which focuses on telling a story the way it is told;
- Interactional analysis, which emphasizes the dialogic process between teller and listener; and
- Performance analysis, where the interest goes beyond the spoken word, as the stage metaphor implies, i.e. story telling is seen as a performance by a self with a past. The self is involved, persuades and perhaps moves an audience through language and gesture.

3.2.2.3 Thematic analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) defined thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns and themes within the data. It minimally organizes, describes your data set in rich detail and further interprets various aspects of the research topic. There are many arguments as to whether thematic analysis is a method of analysis, when in actuality it is argued that a lot of analysis is essentially thematic. Thematic analysis differs from other analysis methods as it attempts and seeks to describe patterns across qualitative data in order to find repeated patterns of meaning. Braun and Clarke (2006) provide an outline to guide a thematic analysis process:

- Familiarization with the data by reading and immersion.
- Generation of initial codes, to identify a feature of the data that appears interesting and relevant. The coding can be either theory-driven (deductive) or data-driven (inductive).
- Searching for themes entails refocusing the analysis at the broader level of the theme, thereby sorting different codes into potential themes.
- Reviewing and refinement of themes.
- Defining and naming of themes happens through aligning the theme with the extracts.
- Writing up a report, supported by the data extracts.

Analytic induction and grounded theory are the methods of data analysis that I will apply for the study. I will discuss the two methods in detail in the sections below (see paragraphs 3.3. and 3.4).

3.3 Foundations of analytic induction

Robinson (1951: 812) suggests 'since Znaniecki stated it in 1934, that the method of analytic induction has come into important use'. The use of analytical induction, however, has also involved a number of refinements, including several variations on its style and purpose. The method has been used for various studies such as causes of crime, or to conduct studies about opiate users. Lindesmith (1952: 492-493) described analytical induction as the principle which governs the selection of cases to test a theory in that the chances of discovering a decisive negative case should be maximised. The investigator who has a working hypothesis concerning the data becomes aware of certain areas of critical importance. If his theory is false or inadequate, he knows that its weakness will be more clearly and quickly exposed if he proceeds to the investigation of those critical areas.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) added further refinements to the method by suggesting that it should combine an analysis of data after the coding process with the analysis of data while integrating theory. In short, the analysis of data is grounded to established theory and is also capable of developing the theory. They also recommend the explicit coding and a clear analytic procedure. In essence, refined analytic induction includes: Constant comparison; explicit coding procedures; theory development by integrating theory with data; and systematic generation of theory.

In order to verify and assess the applicability of a given hypothesis, researchers should use the style of negative testing suggested by Robinson (1951), Lindesmith (1952), Denzin (1978), Manheim and Simon (1977). This process of negative case testing essentially involves the following steps:

- Make a rough hypothesis based on an observation from the data.
- Conduct a thorough search of all cases to locate a negative case that does not fit the hypothesized relationship.
- If a negative case is located, either discard or reformulate the hypothesis to account for the negative case or exclude the negative case.

- Examine all relevant cases from the sample before determining whether practical certainty in this recommended analysis style is attained.

3.3.1 What is analytic induction?

Analytical induction, according to Smelser and Baltes (2001), is a research logic used to collect data, develop analysis, and organize the presentation of research findings. Its formal objective is causal explanation, a specification of the individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for emergence of some part of social life. Analytical induction calls for progressive redefinition of the phenomenon to be explained (the explanandum) and of explanatory factors (the explanans), such that a perfect (sometimes called universal) relationship is maintained. Smelser and Baltes (2001) indicated that if initial cases are examined and initial hypotheses are contradicted, the explanation is re-worked in one or two ways. The definition of the explanandum may be redefined so that troublesome cases either become consistent with the explanations, or are placed outside the scope of inquiry, or the explanation may be revised so that all cases of the target phenomenon display the explanatory condition. The strategy is exclusively qualitative, and seeks encounters with new varieties of data in order to force revisions that will make the analysis valid when applied to an increasingly diverse range of cases. The investigation continues until the researcher can no longer practically pursue negative cases.

Tacq (2007) asserted that analytical induction is inductive and not deductive. However, there are deductive elements in the procedure as hypotheses are formulated priori (pre-theorised). Then, through the findings, only explicate what was already implicitly contained in the postulated definitions. The founder of analytic induction, Znaniecki, who is an inductively oriented sociologist, believes that empirical data are the ultimate basis for developing facts. Gilgun (1995) and Miller (1982) confirmed that analytic induction is unlike other qualitative approaches as it begins with a pre-existing theoretical viewpoint, premise or hypothesis that guides the investigator's approach to the cases that are examined.

3.3.2 Types of analytic induction applications and procedures

I will discuss various approaches and available applications of analytic induction by the following analytic induction researchers, namely Znaniecki (1934), Bloor (1978), Cressey

(1950), as well as Goetz and LeCompte (1981). The above-mentioned authors and researchers are key pioneers in the early establishment and development of the analytic induction method.

Znaniecki (1934), in his book *The method of sociology* discusses analytic induction as a sociological research method in the following four steps:

- Discover which characteristics in a given datum of a certain class are more, and which are essential.
- Abstract these characteristics, and assume hypothetically that the more essential are more general, i.e. must be found in a greater variety of classes.
- Test this hypothesis by investigating two kinds of classes, those in which the more essential and those in which the less essential characteristics are found.
- Establish a classification, i.e. organize all these classes into a scientific system, based on the function of the respective characteristics.

Bloor (1978) describes the use of the analytical induction procedure below, as stages in the analysis of field notes in a qualitative study:

- Provisional classifications – for each case or participant categorized according to the disposal category.
- Identification of features of provisional cases – common features of cases in each disposal category identified.
- Scrutiny of deviant cases – include in, or modify to accommodate deviant cases.
- Identification of shared features of cases – features common to other disposal categories.
- Derivations of decision rules – from features common to cases.
- Derivations of a search procedure (for each decision rule).
- Then repeat bullet (2) to (6) for each disposal category.

Bloor's procedure involves an iterative testing and retesting of theoretical ideas using the data. In essence, the researcher examines a set of cases, develops hypotheses or constructs, and examines further cases to test these propositions.

Robinson (1951) discusses **Cressey's (1950)** most explicit and systematic statement of analytic induction as a research procedure as follows:

- A rough definition of the phenomenon to be explained is formulated.

- A hypothetical explanation of that phenomenon is formulated.

- One case is studied in the light of the hypothesis with the object of determining whether the hypothesis fits the facts in that case.

- If the hypothesis does not fit the facts, either the hypothesis is reformulated or the phenomenon to be explained is redefined, so that the case is excluded.

- Practical certainty may be attained after a small number of cases has been examined, but the discovery by the investigator or any other investigator of a single negative case disproves the explanations and requires a reformulation.

- This procedure of examining cases, re-defining the phenomenon and re-formulating the hyphothesis is continued until a universal relationship is established, each negative case calling for a re-definition or a reformulation.

According to **Goetz and LeCompte (1981)**, the process of analytical induction combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all social incidents observed. As social phenomena are recorded and classified, they are also compared across the categories. Thus, hypothesis generation (relationship discovery) begins with the analysis of initial observation. This process undergoes continuous refinement throughout the data collection and analysis process, continuously feeding back into the process of category coding. As events are constantly compared with previous events, new typology dimensions as well as new relationships may be discovered.

The approach of analytic induction according to **Goetz and LeCompte (1981)** is outlined as follows:

- The scanning of data collected in the field to identify categories and attributes;
- Additional scanning of the data for other examples of categories;
- Creating of typologies for categories;
- Determining relationships that exist between categories;
- Creating hypotheses from the relationships discovered;
- Seeking examples that contradict the hypothesis; and
- Continually refining the hypothesis until all examples are accounted for and explained.

It is clear from the above section that there are varying steps, applications and procedures of analytic induction. Nonetheless, with various versions of analytical induction the method remains structured and systematic.

3.3.3 Applications of analytic induction studies conducted internationally

In this section I will review a few research studies that were conducted abroad and where analytic induction was used as a method of data analysis. The purpose of the section was to get a sense of what type of studies was conducted and how analytic induction was applied. It is important to note that analytic induction was applied differently by each researcher, and in some instances it was combined with other qualitative data analysis methods such as grounded theory.

Morrison and James (2009) conducted a study to examine and discover the relationship between acculturation and the family in the Portuguese immigrant population in Canada, where analytic induction together with grounded theory were used to analyze the data. Semi-structured questionnaires were developed in order to guide the interview process. They chose Strauss and Corbin's (1998) procedures for grounded theory to code and categorize the data. The existing literature was examined to gain an understanding of acculturation and family dynamics of the particular cultural group, which guided the transcript selection and coding process. Interview questions were also sensitized by pre-existing theories on the phenomenon. All the quotations from the data were coded and inductively sorted into categories. Through the use of analytical induction and constant comparisons from grounded theory, insights were developed on the phenomenon being studied. These insights have significant applicability to the practice of family therapy. The trustworthiness of the study was achieved through: 1) Interviewing more than one participant to check differences in the data; 2) An expert reviewed codes, categories and a resultant conceptual model; 3) Theoretical validity was used to support the underlying assumptions of the research.

Kharicha, Iliffe and Myerson (2013) applied a modified analytical induction technique based on the accounts described by **Johnson (2004)** to analyze the data on a qualitative study which asked the question 'Why is tractable vision loss in older people being missed?' Data were collected through focus group interviews until data saturation was reached. Analytical induction was used to compare informants' accounts so as to identify similarities and differences and resulting in a construction of the uniformities underlying the defining

emergent themes and categories. The strategically selected number of cases allowed intensive examination of each case so as to empirically establish the causes of a specific phenomenon. Shared features from the individual accounts were used to generate themes/categories. Deviant cases were re-examined to ascertain if recategorization was needed to incorporate them. Rich sources of ideas were derived from the data. The themes were supported by quotes from the data which resulted in and contributed to the development of a model which could assist in clinical decision making.

Rettig (2007) conducted a study *Divorce injustices: Perceptions of formerly wealthy women of the stressors, crises and traumas*. The predominant emphasis of the study by the researcher was to uncover participants' meanings of their experiences and to seek deeper understanding of the social phenomena. The participants' involvement in the study was to seek changes in the legal procedures and judicial deliberations (critical inquiry). The data were collected through the semi-structured interview process. The data were analysed using a combination of analytic induction and phenomenological strategies. These two methods of analysis would first appear to be philosophically incompatible, but Rettig (2007) found them to be effective for the study. With analytic induction it is not possible to suspend all judgements of what is real because there is prior theoretical stance, while phenomenological studies have a history that emphasizes in-depth descriptions more than theories. Rettig's analytical induction involves the following steps:

- The data analysis began with the reading of all the transcripts to gain a sense of the whole, and identify major ideas provided by the participants. The descriptions of the participants' experiences provided a base for preliminary definitions of the phenomenon (hypothesis that could be further tested).
- The second step was to identify the significant statements, which is a process called open coding, identifying meaning units, or dominant themes.
- The third stage of the analysis clustered the significant statements that had been identified.
- The fourth step of the analysis created a collective narrative description by combining the meaning themes from all transcripts, incorporating concepts such as strains, stressors, crises and traumas. Theoretical sampling was used from the text in the open coding phase of the study, thus making the procedure consistent with analytic induction. Analytic induction, unlike other qualitative approaches, begins with a pre-existing theoretical viewpoint that guides the case-by-case examination to accept or

reject the theoretical viewpoint. Furthermore, the interpretation of data was guided by a theoretical framework related to the phenomenon being studied (Rettig, 2007).

Bondas (2006) applied **Johnson's (2004)** analytical induction method to explore why nurses enter nursing leadership and apply for a management position in health care. The reason for the selection of analytic induction was to attempt to generate a theory. Data were collected using a semi-structured self-report developed by a researcher, based on an earlier conducted pilot study. In this qualitative study analytic induction was applied to examine a number of cases to determine the characteristics of a specific phenomenon. Additionally, Glaser and Strauss' grounded theory method was lightly applied through incorporation of a constant comparison process. Bondas (2006) views analytic induction as a set of methodological procedures that attempt to systematically generate theory grounded in the empirical world, and to focus on the variations of a phenomenon and not on its quantity. The analysis was conducted in the following procedural steps:

- The primary phenomenon of interest was identified and named by using a questionnaire.
- The phenomenon was defined, and variations were identified through reading and re-reading of the data, while in-depth comparative analyses were performed. The comparisons were made of different data from the participants, looking for variations and common characteristics. Variations were categorized together in terms of shared features.
- Thirdly, sufficient shared features were clustered together to form a category.
- In the fourth phase a taxonomy of categories was constructed, and case features were elucidated to facilitate the theoretical development and best explanation of the data.

Based on the above, I have observed the diversity and multiple applications of analytic induction to varying studies in differing fields. The applications of various researchers expressed the flexibility and creativity inherent to the procedure of analytic induction, with a strong balance of logic and structure.

3.3.4 Applications of analytic induction in local studies

In this section I purpose to review the local and most recent studies which were conducted in South Africa using analytic induction as a method of data analysis. I focus on how analytic induction was applied step by step, and what the achieved outcomes were.

Nel (2007) conducted a study *A strategic approach to quality assurance in occupationally directed education, training and development*. The purpose of the study was to develop a well-structured and well-executed quality assurance policy and procedure for training in South Africa. Nel (2007) views analytic induction as a holistic tool to direct data collection, overall analysis and a catalyst in generating theory. Interestingly he combined the use of grounded theory and analytic induction to conduct the analysis. Mainly grounded theory was used to do a comparative analysis of current training practices and some training practices in some specific countries within the European Union. Grounded theory assisted the researcher in building theory from the data through identification of key concepts. In this study analytic induction served to develop the results obtained through grounded theory somewhat further. Analytic induction enabled the location of common factors and provisional explanations about the state of quality assurance in South Africa as derived from successive interviews. Furthermore, repeated interviews were conducted to play a confirmatory role, thus enhancing the credibility and validity of the study. The principles of analytic induction guided the data gathering, and shaped the iterative analysis process.

Tlou (2006) conducted a qualitative life history study *Being gay in the management echelon of the South African Department of Defence: A life history*, with the purpose of establishing scientific knowledge on the leadership behavior of gay people in management positions in the military. Tlou (2006) applied analytical induction as a formal strategy for the data analysis of life story research. A general practice of applying parts of the general procedure more casually, and much in accordance with the working hypothesis, was used. In this life history study, Tlou (2006) applied analytic induction in order to illuminate the subject's experiences and thoughts on his leadership responsibilities during his career at the Department of Defence through the development of descriptions of parts of organized activities and their interconnections. Pre-existing formulations of theories were not utilized, nor was any search for universals applied. Owing to the study having only one case, the researcher compares experiences and viewpoints that appeared to be in the same general theme or category. These comparisons assisted in the establishments of similarities and differences among themes

helping to formulate general but provisional hypotheses. Furthermore, the hypothesis was not revised through eliminating negative, disconfirming and deviant cases in an attempt to find a solution to a specific process or problem. Additionally, grounded theory was applied to develop empirical statements or a hypothesis on the phenomenon being studied.

Swarts (2008) completed a doctoral study on the topic of organizational practices enhancing positive job attitudes of expatriates on international assignments. The envisioned result of the study was to identify organizational practices that will facilitate expatriate adjustments during a foreign assignment, thus resulting in the success of the business objectives. Data gathering was conducted through self-administered questionnaires which were electronically mailed to the participants. The questionnaires were semi-structured, and included open-ended questions to allow for comprehensive responses. Textual data were analysed by identifying general themes through analytic induction. The final analysis was done by comparing material in the extracted themes to look for variations and nuances in meaning and to discover connections between the themes. The analysis resulted in the development of a best practice framework. This framework was tested by a few participants for content relevance and validity. Data analysis procedures were adapted from Marshall and Rossman (1995), and entailed:

- Organizing of data;
- Finding and organizing ideas and concepts by generating themes and patterns;
- Ensuring that the data analysis is valid and reliable through testing of emerging hypotheses against the data;
- Finding possible alternatives and plausible explanations for the findings in the data; and
- Recording the data.

The goal of Swart (2008) was to integrate the themes and concepts into a theory that offers an interpretation of the research arena.

A study by **Oosthuizen (2009)** used a modified version of analytic induction, where he integrated Bloor's approach with that of Johnson (see paragraphs 3.3.2 and 3.3.3). The aim of the study was to explore the influence of psychosocial factors on smoking behavior from a consumer behavior perspective, while applying analytic induction. The study was concluded with a comprehensive conceptual model of smoking behavior. The data analysis process followed was as follows:

- Initial interviews were conducted to enable exploration of the phenomenon;

- Analysis began with an identification of the categories of smoking behavior and further interviews were conducted resulting in the alignment of cases with identified categories. Shared and differentiating characteristics were also clustered together;

- With successive interviews, features of categories were assigned and shared and differing characteristics were defined. Participants were electronically mailed identified categories as well as associated characteristics for review. Where necessary, Oosthuizen (2009) made necessary adjustments, resulting in a tentative typology containing category descriptions and assigned characteristics and the associated cases;

- In this step the theorisation was developed through empirical (participants' data) and theoretical (literature) data. Based on these, a model of smoking behavior was conceptualised; and

- Lastly, the developed model was tested against further cases to ensure sufficiency.

Various researchers have used analytic induction in differing ways to support their study objectives and purposes. I deduced from the above that analytic induction may be used as an overall method of data analysis and may also be applied as an overall method to lead the study. Other data analysis methods may be used as a complement to analytic induction, such as grounded theory. I am by no means implying that analytic induction is lacking or insufficient as a method.

3.3.5 Advantages and challenges of analytic induction

3.3.5.1 Advantages of analytical induction

In this section I will highlight the advantages of analytical induction:

- Smelser and Baltes (2001) indicated that analytic induction transforms and produces a sociological appreciation of a phenomenon along recurrent lines. As the explanandum is often defined as a discrete act or event, the targeted phenomenon is progressively redefined to address the process. Explanatory conditions originally defined in the literature and theory allows reconfirmation and redefinition through the interaction with people (deductive data). Tacq (2007) indicated that this method, developed by the Polish philosopher and sociologist Florian Znaniecki, entails a process where research units are examined one by one and in which theoretical saturation insights are adjusted to each

observation. This process of continuous re-formulation of research hypotheses comes to an end as soon as new observations no longer offer new insights.

- Hammersley (2012) advocated that analytic induction is able to generate an explanation for a specific research outcome. It can also be designed to test as well as to develop explanations and theories. Furthermore, it provides the possibility of redefining what is to be explained, i.e. the research outcome.

- Pascale (2010) views the strength of analytic induction as its ability to generate complex, theoretically rich understandings of phenomena. Analytic induction allows theorisation and hypothesis pre-formulations.

- Tacq (2007) views a special treatment of exceptions as positive in that, analytical induction pays attention to exceptions and does not leave them unanalysed. Exceptions stimulate the modification of rules and promotes interesting discovery.

- Smelser and Baltes (2001) highlighted that over 75 years of history, analytic induction has shed a rhetorical claim to priority as the logic that should guide sociological data collection, metamorphosing into a pervasive if typically implicit strategy for analyzing qualitative data.

3.3.5.2 Challenges of analytical induction

The challenges in the application of analytical induction are as follows:

- According to Smelser and Baltes (2001), the logic for analytic induction implies ideal conditions for data gathering that are rarely satisfied. The researcher should never be committeed to the pre-set or conventional definition of the explanandum. This is because the researcher may need to alter the data search as the analysis develops.

- Tacq's (2007) analytic induction fails to predict, and is unable to deal with matters of degree or variations when searching for universal statements. It is also inefficient in that it has procedural variations and fails to produce true causal analysis.

In this section, I gave an overview and background of analytic induction as a method of data analysis, while in the next section I will discuss grounded theory as an additional data analysis method.

3.4 Grounded theory

3.4.1 What is grounded theory?

Charmaz (2006) defines grounded theory as an inductive, iterative and comparative method geared towards theory construction. Glaser and Strauss (1967) created grounded theory when they explicated the qualitative research strategies that they had used in their studies. They intended to achieve the following:

- To provide explicit, systematic strategies for analyzing qualitative data;
- To oppose views of qualitative methods as anecdotal, impressionistic and unsystematic;
- To contest the dominance of quantitative research;
- To demonstrate the significance of qualitative research for theory construction; and
- To challenge the arbitrary division of labor between theorists and researchers.

Charmaz (2006) indicates that grounded theory enables researchers to build successive levels of abstraction that culminate in a theoretical analysis of their data through engaging in categorizing and conceptualising data. Grounded theory provides a tool to make explicit actions, meanings and processes that otherwise would remain implicit. It contains strategies that lead to checking and refining of emerging categories, as well as well-established relationships between categories. Essential grounded theory makes data analysis manageable while advancing the theoretical analyses.

3.4.2 Types of grounded theory

3.4.2.1 Classic grounded theory

Dunne (2010) explained that classic grounded theory was proposed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. Grounded theory constituted an innovative method to facilitate the discovery of theory from the data, and not to test the hypothesis of pre-existing theoretical concepts and frameworks. The use of literature is postponed until the data collection analysis is completed. Glaser (1992) argued that the grounded theorists must learn not to know, which includes avoiding the engagement with the existing literature prior to entering the field. The purpose is to avoid the influence of literature on the data. Corbin and Strauss (2008) developed one widely used approach to grounded theory, entailing the following steps:

- In **open coding** the data are divided into segments and then scrutinized for commonalities that reflect categories or themes. After the data are categorised, they are further examined for properties which are specific attributes or subcategories. Open coding is a process of reducing the data to small sets of themes that appear to describe the phenomenon under investigation.

- **Axial coding** entails that interconnections are made among categories and subcategories. Here the focus is on determining more about each category.

- In **selective coding** the categories and their interrelationships are combined to form a storyline that describes what happens in the phenomenon being studied.

- **Development of theory** means a theory in the form of a verbal statement, visual model or series of hypotheses, is offered to explain the phenomenon in question. The theory depicts the evolving nature of the phenomenon and describes how certain conditions lead to certain actions, or how interactions lead to other actions. In most cases the theory is entirely based on the data.

3.4.2.2 Constructivist grounded theory

The constructivist version of grounded theory was developed by Charmaz (2000) and emphasized the incorporation of flexibility into the method. It acknowledges the viewpoints, positions and situations of the researcher process as well as that of the participants, and moves the method further into interpretive inquiry. The methodological strategies take the form of flexible guidelines to be adapted throughout the involvement with the data in the data collection and data analysis processes. Hence, this approach to grounded theory is less prescriptive and procedural than earlier versions of grounded theory. The data analysis process entails:

- **Coding of data** – entails the naming of segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorises, summarises and accounts for each piece of data. The process of coding begins with **initial** coding also known as **open** coding. In this state the focus is on the data by making comparisons, identifying assumptions, and revealing latent processes and patterns. Initial coding then shifts to more **focused** coding, which entails a more focused, directed, conceptual and selective coding process. Synthesis and explanation of large segments of data begin here.

- **Development of theoretical codes** – this step entails highlighting the relationships between categories. Holton (2007) defines theoretical coding as the identification and use of appropriate theoretical codes to achieve an integrated theoretical framework for the overall grounded theory.

- **Memo writing** – the memo writing process entails the researcher analyzing the ideas about the codes, making comparisons, elaborating on processes, and identifying assumptions and actions that are subsumed under the codes. The researcher may define codes based on analytic properties, make comparisons between the data and codes, or codes and/or with categories. Memos help to provide sufficient empirical evidence to support the definitions of a category and analytical claims about it. Provision is made in memo writing to enable memo sorting. Memo sorting allows for the creation, refinement, abstraction, and systematic comparisons between categories.

- **Theoretical sampling** – this is about seeking and collecting pertinent data to elaborate and refine categories in the emerging theory, until a point of theoretical saturation is reached.

- **Theoretical sensitivity** – according to Charmaz (2006) this means to look for data from multiple vantage points, make comparisons, follow leads and build on ideas. In contrast to the view of Glaser and Strauss (1967), that the literature study may be delayed until completion of the data analysis, Lempert (2007) argues from a constructivist grounded theory stance, that researchers may indeed take advantage of the pre-existing body of related literature in order to discover more. The researchers have to recognize that what may appear to be a totally new idea to them in terms of an innovative breakthrough in their research, may simply be a reflection of their own ignorance of the literature (Lempert, 2007). Corbin and Strauss (2008) supported that the literature may be used more actively in grounded theory studies, as long as the researcher does not allow it to block creativity and get in the way of discovery.

In the paragraphs above, I have reviewed the classical and constructivist types of grounded theories. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) indicated that grounded theory offers more specific guidance in a structured and relatively systematic way of boiling down a huge body of data into a concise conceptual framework that describes and explains a particular phenomenon. Additionally, grounded theory has a semblance of rigour and objectivity that a researcher may find appealing.

3.5 Application of analytic induction and grounded theory methods to the study

The preceding sections indicate varying applications of analytic induction for various studies. Additionally there are instances where analytic induction was applied with flexibility, and in some studies analytic induction was combined with other qualitative data analysis methods for complementary purposes. The creative, flexible and casual application of analytic induction is evident in both local and foreign studies. I therefore opted for a modified analytic induction application.

For the present study I applied Johnson's (2004) analytic induction procedure, as implemented in Bondas' 2006 study, and incorporated the findings of Marshall and Rossman (1995) to cover the data testing, validation and verification phase. In the section below I will discuss the modified analytic induction's practical application to the study as well as the application of Charmaz's (2000) constructivist grounded theory for operationalization of the data analysis.

Steps I followed for data analysis

- Firstly the primary phenomenon of interest was identified and named through the use of a semi-structured questionnaire.
  - Prior to the data collection I conducted a literature review to gain an understanding of existing models, theories and strategies in talent management. Preceding the literature review, I then developed a semi-structured questionnaire to guide and facilitate the data gathering process. The process is classified as deductive. Nieuwenhuis (2012) indicated that a researcher may decide to use existing codes with the data. These codes are referred to as priori codes, and are developed before examination of the current data.
- Secondly the phenomenon was defined, and variations were identified through reading and re-reading of the data, while in-depth comparative analyses were performed. Comparisons were made between the different data derived from the participants, all the while looking for variations and common characteristics. Variations were categorized together in terms of shared features**.**
  - Semi-structured interviews were conducted successively. On day one (25 March 2010), five participants from Company A were interviewed; on day two

(12 April 2010), four participants from Company A were interviewed; on day three (22 April 2010), four participants from Company B were interviewed.

- With the support of grounded theory I managed to operationalize the data analysis in order to get a sense of the data, then progressed from initial coding to a more focused coding. The coding was driven by a combination of priori codes (deductive) and also data derived (inductive). Inductive codes, according to Nieuwenhuis (2012), are developed by the researcher by directly examining the data, thereby letting the codes emerge from the data. I was conscious as to not let the prior literature study cloud the possibility of discovering insights from the data. My mind was not empty or neutral about the phenomenon under study during the data collection and the analysis process, given the fact that I conducted a brief literature study and attended a talent management seminar for work purposes. Charmaz (2000) asserted that constructionist grounded theorists take a reflexive stance on modes of knowing and representing a study. This implies giving close attention to empirical realities and our collective renderings of them, and also locating oneself in these realities. This grounded theory does not assume that data simply await discovery in an external world or that methodological procedures will correct limited views of the studied world. Nor does it assume that impartial observers enter the research scene without any form of frame of reference. Instead, what observers see and hear depends upon their prior interpretive frames, biographies, interests as well as the research contexts. Furthermore, Charmaz (2000) iterated that no qualitative methods rest on pure induction, as the questions we ask of the empirical world frames what we know of it.
- I constantly compared data from participant to participant, from day one to day three of the data collection process, as well as the data between Company A and Company B. I looked for similarities, differences and confirmation but I also probed for deviations and contradictions.

- Thirdly, sufficient shared features were clustered together to form categories:
  - Theoretical codes emerged, with the identification themes, and sub-themes, patterns, concepts and identification of relationships.
  - I developed the initial talent management framework in this phase.

- In the fourth phase I ensured that the data analysis was valid and reliable through testing emerging hypotheses/theories against the data.
  - In March 2013 I had electronically mailed the proposed and initial talent management framework to Company A and B participants, so that they could assess the sufficiency, accuracy and comprehensiveness of the proposed framework in line with talent management best practices and the data that was collected in 2010. I was granted permission by Company B to conduct four unstructured interviews. With Company A, one participant gave me an electronic mail response to verify the model and the data analysis, while with the second participant I conducted an unstructured interview. Furthermore, Company A issued me with seven documents, while Company B, issued me with one document in order to elaborate on the status of their talent management practices. The visits to the companies took place on 2 April 2013.
  - Upon analysis of the unstructured interviews and documentary evidence to support, elaborate and further improve the initially proposed framework, I then conducted a second phase of the literature study to inform myself of the concepts that arose from the unstructured interviews.
  - I applied the principles of coding to organize and arrange themes.
  - I then adjusted and modified the framework.
  - This process of verification was mainly an inductive data analysis process.
- In the fifth phase a taxonomy of categories was constructed, and case features were elucidated to facilitate the theoretical development and best explanation of the data.
  - In this phase I developed a final talent management framework for presentation.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I offered a detailed discussion of the data analysis procedure that I followed to achieve the objectives of the study. The discussion began with a general qualitative data analysis, and moved to commonly used data analysis methods.

Analytic induction and grounded theory are the selected methods for analysis of the data. A slightly modified approach of analytical induction was applied as an overall and overarching

data analysis method. Grounded theory served the purpose of operationalization of the data analysis, more specifically for coding purposes.

Various local and overseas studies that I had reviewed shed light on how analytic induction can be applied in various fields of studies and also combined with other analysis methods.

I also illustrated the movement between deductive and inductive analysis approaches, resulting in the development of the talent management framework.

Chapter 4

Practical Data Analysis: Part 1

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will present exactly how I analysed the data. Firstly, I introduce the research participants, and provide an overview of observations made about the two companies to give context of the research settings. Secondly, I share the questions that were developed from the literature to guide the semi-structured interview process when collecting data from the thirteen participants (nine from Company A and four from Company B). The interviews were scheduled successively over three days. Thirdly, I present the initial coding process where data were clustered based on the questions posed, resulting in the development of the initial codes or themes. Fourthly, the data analysis progressed to more focused coding, which resulted in the development of sub-themes to emphasize important elements of the themes. At a high level the overall theoretical coding process began with the sense making of the data through visual presentations of a table (depicting talent management in a business context), concept matrix (interrelationship between concepts in the sphere of talent management) and a diagram (emerging elements of talent management). Lastly I present the initial talent management framework, which will undergo testing and verification in the second part of this chapter.

4.2 Profiles, introduction of the research participants and the respective companies

Cresswell (2009) highlighted that with a coding process, we need to generate a description of the settings or people as well as themes and categories. The description involves a detailed rendering of information about people, places or events in a setting.

4.2.1 Brief introduction of the selected companies

For purposes of meeting the confidentiality requirements of the study I will refer to the companies as Company A and B.

According to the Corporate Research Foundation (2011), widely known as the CRF Institute, both the companies are listed in the top 10 ranking as best employers in the private sector. The companies who are identified as 'Best Employers' are certified as such because they

meet the requirements of being competitive in the areas of human resource management. They are serious about distinguishing themselves amongst industry peers in the critical areas of pay and benefits, training and development, career opportunities, working conditions and company culture. The companies were scored and audited as 'excellent' on the strength of human resource best practices in both 2011/12 and 2012/13 according to scientific research conducted by the CRF Institute. The CRF Institute research assesses the HR Benchmarks using the following framework:

- Organizational strategy (identification of top business priorities)
- Human resource function (the role of human resource functions in supporting strategy)
- Communication (organizational vision, goals and mission communicated effectively and frequently to employees)
- Diversity management (is diversity management integrated in all people management processes?)
- Corporate social responsibility (does the organization participate in community, socio-economic, environmental and developmental issues?)
- Knowledge management (practices in place to promote continuous improvements and knowledge sharing practices)
- Talent management and engagement (is talent management a key practice in recruiting, developing and integrating highly skilled employees?)
- Employee development (is there a clear competency framework, and relevant learning and development programmes?)
- Performance management (formal and documented performance agreements and annual performance review discussions)
- Reward and recognition (remuneration and benefit practices which are clearly communicated)

4.2.1.1 Overall impression of Company A as per observations

The overall impressions about Company A are as follows:

- Pleasantly designed building and friendly, sociable environment
- Commitment to diversity is evident as I saw food offering in the canteen catering to preferences for halaal, vegetarian, ethnic and general continental style food
- Diversity evident in international, multiple ethnicities and gender diversity

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- Worker types were mostly knowledge workers and professionals

- Flexibility in work arrangements

- Use of sophisticated technology visible (cellphones, laptops and flat-screen televisions for announcements and updates)

- Openness to conducting research and climate studies (best employer survey)

- Self-driven individuals, a certain level of autonomy and results-driven culture

- Open plan office system – meetings conducted in an open coffee area

- Recruitment process happens in the chill-out coffee area

4.2.1.2 Characteristics of the participants from Company A

Lacey and Luff (2009) advised that after having organized the interview data, interviewees will need to be given pseudonyms or referred to by a code number. A secure file will be needed that links pseudonyms and code numbers to the original research participants, and this file is confidential.

Table 4.1 reflects the characteristics of the participants. To respect the confidentiality of the participants, I have used code A1 to A9 to replace their real names. The alphabet letter A represents the company, while the numeric digit (1-9) was chosen and allocated through succession of the interviews. Furthermore, I also used the letter X to indicate if the participant was either on a talent management programme, a line manager, an HR practitioner or all of the above.

Table 4.1 Characteristics of Company A participants

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9
Date of interview	25/03/10	25/03/10	25/03/10	25/03/10	12/04/10	12/04/10	12/04/10	12/04/10	12/04/10
Years of work experience	20	4	7	15	20	11	11	5	20
Academic qualification	Degree	Diploma	Post Graduate	Post graduate	Degree	Post graduate	Post graduate	Degree	Post graduate
Management level	Executive	Junior	Middle	Senior	Senior	Senior	Senior	Junior	Senior
Occupational category	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist
Age range	51-55	31-35	31-35	36-40	36-40	31-35	31-35	26-30	41-45
Language	English	English	English	English	English	Sotho & Zulu	English	English	Zulu & English
HR Practitioner		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Line management	X			X	X	X	X		X
Talent	X	X							
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Male
Race	White	White	Indian	Indian	White	African	White	White	African
Participants	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9

Participant A1 is a strong, capable and competent lady with in-depth experience in human resource and talent management practices within the organization. She is proud of the organization, its culture, and approach to people management practices. Her rank is that of Associate Director and her field of expertise is Human Resources: Remuneration and Benefits and Information Systems. She is a well-established authority in the subject of talent management, is well-informed and a strongly strategic and tactical thinker.

Participant A2 is identified as an employee with high potential and shared that she had received a high performance rating. She also reported receiving strong support from her line manager. Her job title at the time of interview was: Human Resource Business Partner/Projects. She holds a Diploma in Communication and mostly supports implementation of talent management and is currently on the programme.

Participant A3 mentioned that 'the culture in the organization is certainly warm, humane and not harsh, arrogant, cold and stuck up as that of competitors. The environment is people-centric, like a family. Management is tough yet nice people'. This participant was a systematic, structured and bright lady. She holds a Master's degree in Industrial Psychology, and her job title was that of Human Resource Project Manager.

Participant A4 is a Masters Graduate of Industrial Psychology, in her late thirties. The Participant was instrumental in supporting the coordination of the research meetings. Her role in the organization is to facilitate leadership and behavioral competency development at a Senior leadership level.

Participant A5 was warm, open and willing to participate. She came across as solid and grounded. She is a senior manager who is well-read and has a lot of experience. She holds a degree in Human Resource Management, and her title is Human Resource People Leader.

Participant A6 came across as a strong and assertive individual. The first comment she made was to ask me why I was conducting the study on talent management and had not opted to study towards an MBA instead. I gathered that she is hardworking, smart and driven. She holds a Master's degree in Business Administration and her job title is Human Resource People Leader.

Participant A7 was knowledgeable in the area of HR best practices. She is smart, energetic and informative. I sensed high energy and intelligence. She proudly holds a Master's degree in Industrial Psychology and is employed as the Human Resource People Leader.

Participant A8 shared that she had previously worked in the construction industry and had thus come into a different industry. The main focus of her role was stated as systems and processes. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and her role is that of Human Resource Systems Manager.

Participant A9 was the last to be interviewed for the day, and I was impressed with the participant's willingness to fully partake in the interview. He was friendly and energetically engaged in the discussion. This participant holds an honors degree in Human Resource Management. Participant A9 is an experienced human resource practitioner who has been exposed to talent management practices. He holds the job of Senior Human Resource Manager.

4.2.1.3 Overall impression of Company B as per observations

- The building is attractive.
- There are many technological displays and gadgets such as fancy notebooks, iPods, cellphones, etc.
- The staff look is smart and cool.
- There are many meeting rooms with conferencing facilities, mainly to facilitate international or remote meetings.
- Every room has a clear, big plasma screen television and it all looks fast-paced and impressive.
- Focused and smart, energetic young people.
- There is a culture of communication, not social but business, through the sharing of smart ideas and innovation.
- On completing the last interview I went to the work floor area, the work floor area consists mainly of open-plan offices with Directors and partners sitting in the corner of the open-plan offices.
- There was a small meeting room to facilitate confidential communication.
- The staff body is young and vibrant.
- There are small technology gadgets all over the office.

4.2.1.4 Characteristics of the participants from Company B

Table 4.2 reflects the characteristics of the participants from Company B. To respect the confidentiality of the participants, I have used codes B1 to B4 to replace their real names. The alphabet letter B represents the company, while the numeric digits (1-4) were chosen and allocated through succession of the interviews. Furthermore, I also used the letter X to indicate whether the participant was either on a talent management programme, a line manager, a human resource (HR) practitioner or all of the above.

Table 4.2 Characteristics of Company B participants

	B1	B2	B3	B4
Date of interview	22/04/10	22/04/10	22/04/10	22/04/10
Years of work experience	22	11	21	18
Academic qualification	Degree & Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	Diploma
Management level	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle
Occupational category	Specialist	Technician	Technician	Skilled Technician
Age range	41-45	31-35	36-40	36-40
Language	English	English	English	English
HR Practitioner	X	X		
Line management		X		X
Talent				X
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Female
Race	White	White	White	White
Participants	B1	B2	B3	B4

Participant B1 was good at providing a company overview and went into detailed specifics of the talent management programme in the organization. It is also important to note that the participant was the stakeholder who had agreed to organize the interviews and organized all logistics to ensure that the research interviews were successfully conducted. Furthermore, she holds a degree in journalism and a higher diploma in human resource. She is also a good

person to speak to about talent management as she implemented most of the human resource best practices on a project basis. Her role is that of Human Resource Consultant.

Participant B2 was a hardworking and bright man who was thrilled and proud to be on a talent management programme. The participant was employed as a Sales Manager in the information technology department and was on a high potential programme and managed top performers. His areas of specialization were information technology and systems technician.

Participant B3 is an experienced specialist and manager in his field. He was also a manager of high potential direct reports. His role was that of a Senior Consultant in the provision of IT solutions. His highest qualification is a diploma in information technology and systems.

Participant B4 was an assertive, expressive and energetic lady with a strong and compelling personality. I sensed her ambition and sharpness during the discussion. She holds a public relations, advertising and IT certification. The participant is on a high potential and talent management programme, and also manages high potentials. The participant is an Accounts Manager for corporate clients.

From the above participant profiles, it is clear that the participants were diverse in terms of gender, race, management level, work experience and career life stages. I felt blessed for such busy and professional people to make time for sharing their social constructions of talent management with me. The participants were open and shared their knowledge on the topic freely.

4.3 The interview process

To guide the interview process with the participants I made use of the semi-structured questionnaire. I was guided by the prior literature study during the research proposal stages of the study to develop the semi-structured questions. I kept the end in mind when constructing the questions, because I wanted to ensure that they would assist me in achieving the objective of understanding the phenomenon of talent management comprehensively.

Below I have listed the semi-structured interview questions that I used to guide and structure the interview process: (also refer to appendix 1)

Q1. What do you understand by talent management? (aim to attract and keep high performing/future leaders/those promotable)

Q2. What does the content of a talent management programme entail? (train, assess, rewards, coaching, experience training, fast track, one-on-ones) (comprehensive talent management)

Q3. What are the typical challenges experienced in the implementation of talent management programmes and why? (elite club, align to business requirements, could lose well-trained, expensive, policy, IT systems, who is responsible, line manager involvement, sell to the business, measure success)

Q4. What talent management practices are currently working effectively, and why are they working? (what programmes make people stay)

Q5. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?

Q6. What are the leading best practices with regard to recruitment, deployment, development, engagement and retention of talent? (how do we recruit/develop better)

Q7. What value does talent management add to the organization? Which is visibly known?

Q8. How can diversity management be integrated into talent management?

Q9. How to manage talent at early, mid- and late career phase/life cycle ?

Each face-to-face interview with participants was 60 to 90 minutes long. The participants' responses were hand-written. After every interview the notes were read back to the research participants to ensure that what had been written represented and reflected the participants' ideas and views. All hand-written notes for both Company A and B amounted to 69 pages, which I then typed onto a word processor.

4.4 Process of data analysis: Initial coding

Nieuwenhuis (2012) defined coding as a process of reading carefully through transcribed data, line by line and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. When one locates meaningful segments, one codes them. The Centre for Evaluation and Research (2013) confirmed coding to be a process of organizing and sorting data, therefore codes serve as a way to label, compile and organize data. Nieuwenhuis (2012) viewed coding as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or unique identifying names. It simply means whenever you find a meaningful segment of text in a transcript, you assign a code or label to signify that particular segment. The coding process enables researchers to quickly retrieve and collect together all the text and other data that they have associated with some thematic idea so that the sorted bits can be examined together and different cases compared in

that respect. Basit (2003) classifies coding as a categorisation process of data involving subdivision of data, and thereafter labelling and tagging the data.

Cresswell (2009) suggests that codes could be developed on the basis of emerging information from the participants (inductive) or by using pre-determined codes (deductive). Alternatively the combination of both predetermined and emerging codes may be used. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) differentiated pre-set categories as a data analysis process where tags/labels or themes are pre-identified, and are used to guide the data grouping, while emergent theme categories arise directly from working with the data.

According to Lacey and Luff (2009), the initial coding process entails the beginning of identification of themes and emergent concepts, which will later lead to the engagement of re-coding to develop more well-defined categories. Familiarization with the data by reading and re-reading is essential.

In the initial coding process I assigned the following labels, codes or names to similar chunks of data: 1. Defining talent and talent management, 2. Engaging and retaining talent – best practices, 3. Technology and information systems, 4. Organizational climate, 5. Key role players – who is responsible for what?, 6. Challenges in talent management, 7. Business case for talent management, 8. Optimizing talent management, and 9. Career life cycles. Basit (2003) viewed the role of coding as categorizing, tagging and labelling the units of meaning to the descriptive information compiled during the study.

I was continually comparing participant information with that of others, and also checking to see if there were any differences and similarities between participants from different companies. Glaser and Laudel (2011) expressed that much creativity is required from the researcher to search and recognize patterns in the data. The search for patterns can be identified through observing more than once occurring combinations of conditions, processes, accounts and outcomes.

Additionally I paid close attention to compare insights from viewpoints of the talented, the human resources practitioners and the managers. The analysis work began as I interviewed one participant to another. After each day of successive interviews I typed all the hand-written notes into a word processor while my memory was still fresh and I could recall and reflect on what had happened and what was said during the interviews.

The practical steps I had followed to do the initial coding were to: read through the data to get a general sense of what the participants had said. Then I started putting similar ideas together into chunks. The chunks of data were grouped together based on an answer to a particular question, idea or theme. I found that questions from the semi-structured questionnaire shaped the formation of the data because similar data sets were clustered around a particular question. I then decided on an initial label, code or descriptive wording to name the chunks of data brought together. In the initial coding process I came up with nine data labels or initial codes. At this phase I deemed it necessary to indicate whether the participant was a manager, talent or was in human resources. The data segments contain abbreviations of human resources (HR) and talent management (TM).

Glaser and Laudel (2011) proposed that raw qualitative data can be linked in the text to the research questions. This can be accomplished through identification, recognition of and location of parts of text which are relevant to answering the research question. To collect the data I utilized the semi-structured questionnaire. DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) argued that these interviews are organized around a set of pre-determined, open-ended questions. These questions were informed by the research objectives and aims, and guided theoretically by the priori literature study (deductive). Therefore, the responses to the questions posed to the research participants created sets of data that could be clustered together due to similarities in characteristics.

Below I present the initial data coding process in Tables 4.3 to 4.11.

Initial themes:

Initial code 1 – Defining talent and talent management

Q1. What do you understand by talent management?

Q2. What does the content of a talent management programme entail?

Table 4.3 Initial code 1 – Defining talent and talent management

PARTICIPANT A1 – Manager and Talented
- TM is a philosophy of how to manage talented people
- Programme is critical
- It's about attracting and managing the best out of people
- Need to keep them engaged, it's challenging to retain them
- Talent does work for our clients as we sell time, knowledge, service
- People are not machines on a production line
- Time and money must be invested in people to build knowledge and experience
- TM bring profit

PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
- TM is to identify current talent and future talent
- Support them in growing and being happy
- Ensure engagement based on individual needs, constant learning

PARTICIPANT A3 – HR Practitioner
- TM is everything from attracting, selecting, recruiting, retaining, exiting and life cycle of the employee with the company
- Talent – best profile – culture, skills, academic
- TM – learning, acknowledgement, career pathing detailed with timelines, counseling, open communication, performance evaluation
- Talent – good to great people – difference in performance

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- TM – process of acknowledging, recognizing, and investing in people strengths
- Ensuring derived benefit from the programme of training and developing skills
- Opportunity to gain skills and experience
- Be exposed to key leadership in the process
- Mainly focused at managerial levels
- Talent is individuals' potential and performance, ability and aspirations
- Programme is key to retaining knowledge in the organization
- High potential/talent – performance exceeds expectations
- Lives the values
- Demonstrate potential to be a leader or move to a bigger role
- Ambitious to take on more responsibility and challenge
- Motivated
- Very competent
- Engaged on the job – wants to be in the company
- Self-directed

PARTICIPANT A5 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- TM is identifying top achievers who stand out among teams
- Have unique qualities and present themselves differently
- They are highly participative
- Volunteer and go the extra mile
- Cream of the crop
- Know their objectives and know how to go for the best
- Very knowledgeable
- They can work through challenges even in an economic downturn
- They can find creative solutions to challenges in their workflow
- They are flexible and adaptable
- They know current status, reassess goals regularly
- They adjust to change in a mature and cool way

PARTICIPANT A6 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- It's a process of identifying top performers, work output
- Have cognitive ability that goes beyond average
- Where they are treated differently
- Values of talent are team playing, ethics, integrity
- Have leadership values and live them
- They can work with other people
- Interact with other people
- Talent is defined in terms of technical competencies and being a good manager

PARTICIPANT A7 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Talent is defined as performance and potential
- They must be engaged and interested in the organization
- Have aspiration to want to be in the organization
- Loyalty
- Rational commitment to the career

- Have ambition
- They are top 10% in the organization

PARTICIPANT A8 – HR Practitioner
- Talent is potential
- Performance
- Being above the norm (capability) and capacity to grow

PARTICIPANT A9 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Talent is key people in business operations
- This excludes poor performers
- They have a need to succeed
- Are ambitious

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- Talent is ability, skills sets and experience, potential and performance
- Mobility is critical – as people move in 2-3 years, even international
- Aspiration to grow and develop
- We hire for potential – for future positions and different roles
- May be individual contributor (specialist or manager)
- Demonstration of potential to move to higher levels and portability

PARTICIPANT B2 – Manager and Talented
- It's a programme which recognizes high performers and high potential people
- Talented are defined as having strength and passion, are excellent people
- Talented deliver more results, not just a good job
- Programme selection is based on strengths of an individual
- Talented are self-driven and want to develop

PARTICIPANT B3 – Manager
- These are employees who perform well
- Achieve top accolades
- Have drive to develop
- Very driven to perform

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- They are above the rest in terms of potential and performance
- Have capacity to go two levels above
- They are creative and think out of the box
- Interacts well, articulate
- Perfect fit of the job and culture
- Self-driven and ambitious

Initial code 2 – Engaging and retaining talent – best practices

Q4. What talent management practices are currently working effectively, and why are they working? (what programmes make people stay?)

Q5. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?

Q6. What are the leading best practices with regard to recruitment, deployment, development, engagement and retention of talent? (how do we recruit/develop better)

Table 4.4 Initial code 2 – Engaging and retaining talent – best practices

PARTICIPANT A1 – Manager and Talented
- We train graduates in accounting and tax fields for three years
- They work on practical assignments with experienced team leaders
- There is job and assignment rotation
- Transfer of knowledge happens on the job and coaching
- Employees receive feedback on performance after every project
- Performers are identified and are made visible (fair selection criteria)
- Regular career conversation (assess career needs to see how best to address)
- To retain you can throw money at it – but competitor can offer more (competitive pay)
- Keep talented challenged when they get bored – challenging work activity
- Determine projects, experience needed to grow them
- Formal training, study funding, study leave generous
- Gain global and overseas work experience and projects
- Mentorship programme – all talented have a mentor
- Career discussion address – aspirations, objectives, possible opportunities
- Non-performer on performance improvement programme
- Talented are required to be coaches and mentors (build management skills)
- They learn emotional intelligence skills
- Remuneration is competitive – upper quartile
- Incentives are competitive and performance driven
- Profit sharing and gain sharing for high performers
- Well-structured performance management system
- Need to recognize people better (write articles, prize winning, leadership give a phone call to say 'well done')
- All employees have a counselor to discuss performance and career needs
- Manager trains for special and technical skills to early career employees
- Each line manager coaches six people and tracks them for a year
- Induction/on-boarding/orientation – structured, high level, formalized content
- On-boarding – go to person/coach, walk and talk partner
- Training – structure courses per job – compulsory
- Global training, in-house and external training
- Leadership development, technical and soft skills (EQ) training

PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
- Robust performance management – what is expected, what they must achieve, job specifications aligned to business goals, annual plans and strategic link
- Sense of job purpose – importance and how one adds value to bigger picture
- Contribution and purpose-driven job – meaningful work
- Managers evaluate performance
- Career maps – where one wants to be in the future
- Training – learning, experience, and knowledge coaching needed for career development
- Key relationships to be formed for development – shadowing with experts
- Cross-divisional experience and work projects and transfer – growth
- Only performers get bonuses, rewards and promotions
- Bonus structure is transparent – a person knows what they will get
- Bonus depends on business performance and individual performance
- Mobility programmes – work overseas on assignments, get experience
- Rewards, performance management, talent reviews
- Orientation and induction
- One-on-ones
- Career conversations
- Promotions
- Reward not only with money but time off – creative rewards, spa treatments
- Recognition – letting others know success stories
- Motivate emotionally – money does not make people stay
- Deployment – place people in right projects matching their skills and learning needs
- Experience training – young, experienced and semi-experienced are placed in same projects – learning from the best
- Fast-tracking programme for the talented – consider them for growth

PARTICIPANT A3 – HR Practitioner
- Offer value proposition – career, high performance
- Networking events – with guest speakers
- Exposure to senior leadership
- Attending professional conferences
- Training on business skills and leadership skills
- Conversation breakfast
- Train line managers to become counselors
- Stretch experience assignments for fast track
- International consignments and mobility programmes
- Internal and external functions

- Opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills
- Recognition and identification of potential
- Having a mentor
- Careers are supported and extended
- General learning experiences
- Performance management
- Mentorship by profile selection and matching
- Matching people correctly – mentoring – by experience needed
- Mentor preference (skill, experience, age, gender, culture)
- Remuneration, rewards and hygiene factors
- Business schools, short courses
- Ensure sense of achievement, recognition and reward
- Communication
- Treat people fairly
- Fast-track careers
- Train managers to be better managers
- Reward managers for being good managers
- Market-related pay and bonuses
- How job fits to bigger picture – link to strategy
- Individual needs for achievement
- Generational gaps – understand all generations
- Know values of young generation
- Socialize and communicate
- Create a concrete, credible programme
- Satisfaction be insured
- A buddy system when on-boarding

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Providing blended learning – formal learning, on the job training and coaching
- Assist people to progress
- The programme must be inclusive and accommodate diversity
- Identification of coaching and experience needs
- Remuneration plays a critical role in the programme
- In recruiting and deploying, ensure experience, culture, values, diversity, knowledge fit
- Deployment – job description, global competencies
- Deployment – matching of strength of ability
- Executives are trained on coaching skills, EQ
- High potentials' need for decent people management
- Job shadowing, exposure and feedback
- Talent must develop skills that are holistic
- Resilience, EQ, stress management, technical skills and be able to handle change

PARTICIPANT A5 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- The programme is about identifying talent
- Let them know and be known in the organization as talent
- The programme must identify what motivates them
- What are their goals and how can they be developed?
- Expose them to clients for growth
- Various projects to manage and work activities
- They must have position and money
- Create and communicate job opportunities opening
- Identify their strengths and what they are good at – let them do it
- Analyze their capabilities – competencies – assessments
- Teaming dynamics to facilitate learning
- Expose them to experts, mentors and coaches as key project members
- Give performance feedback and share areas needing development
- Provide resources to facilitate and enable development
- Tell talented people the truth
- Give incentives where possible, time off, weekend away

PARTICIPANT A6 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- 360 degree assessments can be used to assess talent
- Fast-tracking is important as they get bored
- They need challenging as they are intelligent
- Will benefit from mentor and coach
- Flexibility in work hours
- Accommodating female gender to work flexibly
- Sabbatical leave to encourage learning
- Shadow executives
- Recognition
- Development
- Identify skills and competencies for talent

- Recruit through headhunting and graduate recruitment
- Utilize relevant assessment tool to determine capabilities
- Induct them as brand ambassadors
- Developing accessibility to the leadership
- Have really dynamic and open-minded leaders who people can talk to
- Allow space to develop, innovate and experiment
- There must be a generic model for talent competencies
- Key competencies, skills that are specific
- The talented must have generic competencies
- Core competencies may be management and leadership skills and values
- Generic competencies transferable across functions
- Allow people to move across business units and functions
- Also have deep focus on field-specific specialization
- Thinking about pay approach
- Need to invest in learning and development
- Focus on high-impact quality programmes
- Recognition

PARTICIPANT A7 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Utilize people according to their strengths
- Know what they want to gain out of a job
- Allow flexibility in development programmes
- Acknowledge, reward and recognize
- They want to be well paid
- Nice safe work environment
- Be part of a work community
- Bonus, salary increases
- Status and prestige
- Opportunity to be promoted and move up the rank
- Exposure to different assignments
- Challenging work
- Fast-tracking process
- Good technology
- Develop technical skills
- Well-rewarded financially
- Coaching must grow the mindset and expand character virtues
- Application of experience is growth
- Provide experience like sitting in Exco
- Develop an understanding of how decisions are made
- Encompass holistic growth
- Combine learning and experience to heighten awareness
- Create an understanding of the business and people
- Programme must be flexible, open
- Master of business administration is another way
- Balance experience and practice
- Theory and experience
- Create a mechanism to enhance performance
- Inspire people towards greatness
- High level of coaching and experience
- Learning – structured and formalized programmes
- Experiencing – engage in challenge and personal growth
- Coaching – grooming
- TM – strength-based recruiting, deploying and engaging
- Find out people's strengths and allow them to capitalize on them
- Use people where they are really good and passionate
- Use a strength finder tool – influence, relationships and execution
- Use a matrix to determine strength in competence and values

PARTICIPANT A8 – HR Practitioner
- Encourage talent to share knowledge as they hold a lot of insights
- Send them to a variety of client- and industry-related conferences
- Create opportunity for them to be subject matter experts
- Reward talent
- In recruiting – define talent – skills, competencies, knowledge
- Focus on developing skills
- Technical and specialist training
- Interpersonal training to develop people skills
- Campus recruitment for graduates and future trainees
- Offer alternative career routes fitting to the individual
- Intensive and structured induction
- Attracting talent – Employee Value Proposition (EVP) – we have this career path, this training…

- Train and develop people
- Transfer to skills from senior managers/line managers
- Give people feedback with purpose of correcting and growing
- Performance coaching
- Open and honest feedback is critical
- Senior leadership must buy in to the programme
- Senior leadership be part of the learning and development
- Promote the talented
- Give more responsibilities
- Create challenging, stimulating and interesting work
- Give complex projects and opportunities for growth
- Having good managers is key to retention
- Every job must have competencies
- Employees must acquire mandatory knowledge and skills for the job

PARTICIPANT A9 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Develop their skills – use internal and external training
- Involve people in key projects
- Create meaningful work
- Have programme for managers, supervisors, executives, advanced management
- Ensure that they have the skills in order to be promoted to the next level
- Develop key competencies for the role and leadership
- Training for both technical and people leadership skills
- Managers play a critical role in training people to be competent
- Communication is critical in influencing and retention
- Give people feedback on development and performance
- Reward performance
- Coaching is critical
- Fairness in measuring performance
- Communication between leadership and employees
- Adjust and be flexible about the programme
- Add fun to the equation
- Interactions and one-on-ones are important
- Treat employees as clients
- Engage, train and mentor people
- In developing people ensure flexibility and individuality
- Identify individual needs for development
- Know what people need in terms of skills, gaps and strengths
- The organization must sincerely want to develop people
- Develop appropriate career plans where there is consensus with the individual
- Recognize aspiration
- Sincerity of communication is critical
- Honest and open feedback is good for people
- Rewards must be individualized where possible
- Deploy people based on their development needs and strengths
- Identify challenging assignments to grow people for future roles

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- There are no ceilings created in that one can either be a manager or specialist
- Opportunity to grow functional knowledge or have a career path as a manager
- Performance ratings are frequently done
- People are ranked on future potential
- Talent pool is determined
- Assessments are based on competency profile per role
- The programme for high potentials in various steps of progression
- Degree of exposure, learning is based on the level (basic, intermediate and advanced)
- Level of the programme determined richness and depth of the programme
- There is a specific training intervention for every level of development
- Coaching and mentoring is a part of the programme
- 70% of training is on the job, 20% classroom, and 10% coaching
- Tools and resources are provided to support people learning
- Talented people drive their own careers
- Career model and framework is established
- There is a competency model for every level or stage that the individual is at
- People have to master a set of competencies before graduating to the next level
- Career discussions take place
- The career level and level of progression impacts the salary band
- Salary level correlates with the career stage the person is at
- Development plans are in line with the person's competency gaps
- Development plans address experience and technical, behavioral gaps
- Where the individual wishes to move, they get necessary exposure and a mentor/coach

- There is a global mentoring programme
- One can request a mentor on line (social media)with a matching profile
- Or may approach a person with a matching profile
- External coaches are available through a service provider
- There are levels of management training (manager of others, manager of managers and manager of executives); the degree of complexity is different
- In the programme people develop skills to care for others, thinking and leading skills
- The skills empower people to have impact, vision and influence others
- People travel overseas sometimes to attend training
- There is an HR factory (soft skills training in the organization)
- There are ongoing strategy workshops
- People also may select courses to address skills needs
- The organization will finance tuition for formal education
- Performance reviews happen twice a year to track performance
- Career discussions are part of the career conversation in a balanced manner
- Rewards and merits are based on performance
- Promotions apply to only high performers
- There are a variety of incentives
- Rewards are balanced between meeting revenue targets and non-revenue targets
- People who are not in sales are also rewarded for achieving their targets; their performance outputs are specific to their roles
- One-on-ones are critical for career and performance discussions
- Performance, career and training implementation and discussions
- Assessments of high potential employees 360 degrees with feedback for development
- Annual reviews of performance feedback
- There are calibration sessions, on round tables to review talent
- HR and line management justify talent ratings
- Ratings are questioned and there are participative, robust discussions
- Talent review process ensures evaluation, checking and consistency of the programme
- Following annual reviews there are rewards and recognition
- Merit adjustments are budgeted for to support performance
- Promotions happen at the end of the year and they are budgeted for
- Salaries are determined by market forces
- There are set guidelines determining promotions and increases
- There are stock awards, and shares awarded to employees depending on the level
- There are rewards and recognition ceremonies where high contributors are awarded funds or shares based on merit and performance
- There are awards dinners and ceremonies held even overseas
- The awards are based on various categories – could be sales, customer relations, financial performance, innovation
- Graduate development programme
- International roles – for exposure and experience learning

PARTICIPANT B2 – Manager and Talented
- A programme must recognize contributors
- International training and exposure
- Train managers on soft/people management skills
- Networking opportunities
- Expand individual competency profile
- Career discussions
- Working on complex projects to generate strategic solutions for the organization
- Learn more about diversity and cultural differences
- Acquiring critical knowledge
- Creative problem solving with teams
- Being empowered on stretch assignments
- Contributing towards strategy
- The programme ensures recruiting right people
- Good fit for the job – who delivers results
- The programme includes bonuses, salary ranking, stretch goals, and achievement incentives
- Create stretch assignments and opportunity to grow
- Succession planning and rewards
- Develop insights and thinking abilities
- Evolve ability, competence and growth
- Have a clear criteria for identifying talent with no subjectivity
- Peer reviews or 360 evaluations on behavior and performance
- Give people time off – as a reward as talented travel and work long hours
- Identify learning gaps and give feedback on that
- Coaching and mentoring
- Provide extra accountabilities for growth purposes
- There is a clear growth path for specialists and those who want to manage others
- Experiential learning is critical
- There must be evaluation after every training session

- As a benefit there is employee assistance programme – they arrange service providers (booking a holiday, tutor children after school, baby sitters)
- There is a gym in the building
- There is a counseling helpline for personal and emotional support of employees
- A prestigious brand makes a difference – people want to join the organization
- Food subsidies – with the canteen
- Secure and beautiful environment
- Opportunity to travel overseas
- Being surrounded by knowledge experts in the field
- Technology that is top edge

PARTICIPANT B3 – Manager
- The programme of managing high potentials is excellent
- It's part of talent acquisition
- The programme has to incorporate diversity to have right mix of people
- Acquiring the right skills supply
- Development through multiple interactions and interventions
- Classroom training
- Conferences
- Internal library system for every possible subject relevant to the business
- Resources – online
- Coaching
- Commitment to train and develop people
- Investing a portion of work hours in personal development
- Rewarding learning
- Learning is measured and is compulsory
- Recruitment can be done by engaging multiple stakeholders to ensure proper selection
- Referrals, agencies and self-applications are methods of recruitment
- Interviews include – business simulations, business role plays, competency-based interviewing
- Interviewing – assessment on presentation of a relevant business topic

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- It can be a specialist or a manager of people, or a manager of leaders
- Exposed to additional opportunities, projects, people and training
- The person drives the learning and performance
- Attending of training courses overseas
- Receiving of 360 feedback on competencies and behaviors
- Feedback and 360 assessment is linked to the job of an individual and is relevant
- Content of assessments – strategic thinking and other skills
- Learning circles – people share learning experiences and have discussions
- Peer coaching – sharing ideas and encouraging development
- All talented are exposed to the executives
- Round table discussions with executives to share the vision of the organization
- Training is 70% on the job, 10% classroom and 20% coaching.
- E-learning is utilized
- Learning is rewarded
- There is a monthly online course to be completed
- Rewards and remuneration are driven by the role and level of performance
- Very good canteen facilities
- Grading process – allows broad banding
- Gym facility to promote wellness
- Functions – social interaction and celebration of success
- Guest speakers invited to address business-related topics
- Remuneration benchmarks are surveyed and benchmarked
- Work-life balance is encouraged
- People may work from home
- Flexible work arrangement
- Career discussions are held
- Management development
- Graduate development
- Performance rating is linked to bonus – calculated on percentage basis
- Performance reviews and commitment to development are reviewed
- Revenue drives the performance incentives
- Counseling helpline to support staff with personal problems
- Health tests and screening services are provided on site for employees at no cost
- Employees have home assistance programme (to source home solution services)
- Recruitment – agencies and personal networks
- Recruit – newspapers and e-recruiting
- Graduate hires/recruitment
- Interviewing process is panel based, intensive to get the right people in
- Recruitment is competency-based

Initial code 3 – Technology and information systems

Q5. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?

Table 4.5 Initial code 3 – Technology and information systems

PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
- Reporting must be compiled to reflect statistics on attrition and diversity balance
- Rate of return on investing in talent is critical – analytics
- Capture results on money spent on talent (salaries)
- Retention statistics are critical – to assesses if we recruit correctly

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Systems assist management to view data on workforce profiling, demographics, gender, talent pools
- Analytics – forecasting people's needs and profiling of talent pool (skills)

PARTICIPANT A5 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Measuring business benefits related to TM is critical
- Measure what is working and what is not working

PARTICIPANT A6 – Manager and HR Practitioner

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- Talent management processes are driven by technology
- The data is reported on an HR integrated system
- There are updated people profiles and analytics
- Tracking of training, competency development and assessments are kept on the system
- There is high potential reporting – nine grid system

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- Online service supporting coaching – virtual coaching
- Learning circles
- E-learning is utilized for compliance and compulsory training
- Learning assessments are tracked online for progress
- A scorecard is kept for training – indicating performance (all been trained)
- Online coaching and mentoring process

Initial code 4 – Organizational climate

Q4. What talent management practices are currently working effectively, and why are they working? (what programmes make people stay)

Q8. How can diversity management be integrated into talent management?

Table 4.6 Initial code 4 – Organizational climate

PARTICIPANT A1 – Manager and Talented
- Flat organization, people work on team-based projects
- After every project employees are evaluated and receive performance feedback (communication)
- Knowledge sharing is a culture in a team context mostly
- We recognize people for learning and gaining knowledge
- Talent undergo life circumstance changes (social/emotional) – we have an employee assistance programme
- Managers are required to recruit diverse people
- Make diverse people feel comfortable and motivated
- Team relations – integrity, honesty, ethics are recognized
- There is trust and respect for people in the culture
- Flexible work – I have kids and family, raised them, and a career
- Accommodating personal wholeness – social and career – play golf
- Results driven not being present at work – flexibility – client not inconvenienced
- Personal crises accommodated
- No micro management
- Honesty and transparency about performance and rewards
- Wellness counseling – talented experience stress, personal and social problems, conflict, work issues. We use an employee assistance anonymous programme
- Line manager – equipped with interpersonal skills
- No private offices – only open plan offices – creating a socially, open and vibrant climate
- Diversity – awareness created about other religions, cultures and practices
- Diversity – canteen caters for various dietary requirements

PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
- Wellness – help with pressure management, as they work long hours (Employee Assistance Programme)
- Flexible work arrangements are critical – as long as one performs
- Culture – right values, career driven, people who like people
- Respect is a core value
- Diversity and inclusiveness culture
- Not political – unlike competitors
- Not hierarchical
- Leaders are visible and accessible
- Happy – not go to work and be miserable
- Happy – know I am needed, appreciated
- Happy – relationships at work
- Not a number – but a person – (humanness at work)
- Happy – caring for people culture
- Happy –appreciate a person's ability and individuality
- Manager sits with teams in open plan offices – no private offices
- Diversity – a near equal split on gender statistics
- Diversity – multicultural, multinational people – international projects
- Diversity – accommodate religious festivals – grant leave (Jewish, Islam, Hindu, Christian and Buddhist festivals)

PARTICIPANT A3 – HR Practitioner
- Career oriented and high performance culture
- Flat structure – team-based work projects
- Open plan offices – social and open communication
- Innovative communication – plasma screen
- Social investments – education, social initiatives

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- A culture of learning, helping people to achieve
- People focused culture
- We work in teams, teaming dynamics are critical
- Team and building relations
- Not hierarchical and hung up on titles
- We work together to achieve
- There is diversity and inclusiveness
- Knowledge management – there is rich experience, knowledge, expertise
- Social networking is critical
- People connect – open plan offices
- Creation of a certain energy in building facilitating networking
- Leadership – approachable

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- Organizational climate is monitored through climate surveys
- Dimensions are work group relations, teaming, management engagement
- Job satisfaction
- Career development opportunities

- Feedback on management
- Pay, productivity, strategy, rules
- Policy and structure
- Enablement to do the job
- Empowerment, technology and performance
- Quality of supervision
- Remuneration and benefits
- Motivation and engagement
- We use a PULSE survey
- Culture is innovative and high performance driven
- There are knowledge workers mainly (R & D, IT specialists and sales)
- People relate informally – communication
- Open plan offices to encourage openness and teaming
- High technology environment
- Almost relaxed style
- Flexible work arrangements – as long as clients are not compromised
- Work-life balance is encouraged – programme to coach people to integrate work better
- No micro management
- Employee assistance to enable – counseling, conflict and family management
- The organization pays for employee counseling up to six sessions
- Organization also has a home assistance programme – to help employees (e.g. manage home tasks, advice on best insurance quotes, where to go on holiday, arrange a plumber at convenient time, etc.)
- Diversity is a focus around gender and ethnicity
- It's a fairly gender-friendly environment
- It's an output-driven environment
- No micro management
- There is a high performance culture
- Long hours, electronic mail is mode of communication
- There is flexibility, work around the clock in common
- Management style is open and straight talk
- People feel welcome and included
- People are both rational and still emotional beings
- Technology is key driver
- Diversity and inclusiveness is developed, and there is an effort

PARTICIPANT B2 – Manager and Talented
- As a benefit there is employee assistance programme – they arrange service providers (booking a holiday, tutor children after school, baby sitters)
- There is a gym in the building
- There is a counseling helpline for personal and emotional support of employees
- A prestigious brand makes a difference – people want to join the organization
- Food subsidies – with the canteen
- Secure and beautiful environment
- Opportunity to travel overseas
- Being surrounded by knowledge experts in the field
- Technology that is top edge
- There is no gender bias in the environment
- There are flexible work hours
- One can work from home as long as there is delivery of results
- Right fitting individual is performance and development focused

PARTICIPANT B3 – Manager
- A climate that is open to diversity of both race and gender is critical
- The culture is driven by performance and results

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- Technology driven
- Fast paced environment with changes and development
- Innovation is a culture – ongoing product development
- Driven to be the first and trendsetters in best practice
- Diversity is a culture (multinational)
- A-type personalities fit the work profile of the organization
- Change occurs frequently
- People change jobs within two years
- High pressure and deadline-driven culture
- Strong performance culture
- The culture and values are honesty, integrity, and ethics
- The culture is also of winning at all costs – business, market, sales

Initial code 5 – Key role players

Q5. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?

Table 4.7 Initial code 5 – Key role players

PARTICIPANT A1 – Manager, HR and Talented
- We rely on managers to coach, transfer knowledge and skills
- Directors have regular career sessions with key talent
- Managers are appraised on people leadership, motivating teams, coaching ability, delegating and knowledge sharing
- Managers ensure performance objectives are aligned to strategy
- HR trains all managers as counselors – be able to coach, communicate and teach

PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
- HR to encourage people to use employee assistance programme
- HR – work-life balance talks
- Leadership – to like investing time, experience, giving and coaching
- Executives –be people's people, do one-on-ones
- HR – diversity awareness training, sensitivity, mutual respect
- HR coaches – on people issues as they arise – interpersonal
- HR communicates – gathers feedback on training reviews
- Line managers know their people and acknowledge them
- Line manager – interested in employee career development
- Director buy-in to TM – the top must understand importance of TM
- Executive can assist middle managers – experience training, coaching, support formal training to prepare for future roles

PARTICIPANT A3 – HR Practitioner
- Line manager to focus on people and business results
- HR activity must be integrated to talent management

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager, HR and HR Practitioner
- We rely on line managers to implement TM
- Line managers are professional experts and have technical knowledge
- Line managers are required to meet regularly with high potential people
- Line managers to have career conversations
- Compile detailed action plans of developing people
- Line managers play a role in enabling talent to succeed
- Executives – are accountable for achieving people objectives
- HR to provide a framework of how best people can be coached, engaged – a tool box to line management
- Talented – are motivated, exceed performance expectations, demonstrate leadership and potential, ambitious, want to grab opportunities, career-minded, are self-directed
- HR to support business strategy in its activities – finding the right people, recruitment, payroll, learning and development
- Executive to recognize – HR as a business partner whose actions impact the bottom line
- Executives to ensure HR has an enabling structure, mechanisms, people, time and funds to commit to TM

PARTICIPANT A5 – Manager, HR and HR Practitioner
- Talented must also identify other talent they are responsible for
- Be top achievers
- Have emotional intelligence, humility and no arrogance
- Talent must achieve targets and perform and develop a balance between technical and interpersonal skills
- Talent to have good people skills
- Work on areas of development, receive coaching and mentoring
- Allow others to help in areas needing development
- The talented need to be tolerant of people who are less talented as they tend to have low tolerance levels
- Line management need to commit to the programme
- Line managers need to facilitate and support TM programmes

PARTICIPANT A6 – Manager, HR and HR Practitioner
- TM is the accountability of business leaders
- Talent must be held accountable for investment in the programme
- Talent must improve the company, bring solutions, improve operations, quality and give back by performance
- HR value not appreciated
- Management not recognizing value of HR
- HR to move from administration to value adding
- HR strategic role is not yet tangible
- HR to know the business – economics, information technology and finance

PARTICIPANT A9 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Management and HR must be seen to build trust
- Be authentic and genuine in guiding and communication
- Management to empower people to do more
- Talented are programme brand ambassadors
- Talented must sell the programme
- Managers and HR play a role of communication with talent
- In retention, communicate to ensure issues and grievances are resolved
- Provide counseling, listen and implement solution
- Line manager to reward and recognize employee's achievements
- It's critical for management to give genuine feedback about people development and communication
- Building trust and ethics are essential

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- There are calibration sessions, on round tables to review talent
- HR and line management justify talent ratings
- Ratings are questioned and there are participative, robust discussions

PARTICIPANT B3 - Manager
- Manager plays a critical role in having real conversations with staff to support and coach them
- Resolving issues which hamper performance – by open and honest conversations
- HR needs to provide the right talent in the recruiting process
- Line management must provide leadership to talented
- Line management to provide stretch work assignments and commitment
- Coach people and give them a sense of purpose
- Managers must provide people with honest feedback on performance
- Manager must be the one to promote and sell their talented people
- Management to deliver on promises made to talent
- Manager to ensure consistent selection of people to the talent pool
- Manager is a promoter, ally and mediator for talented people on the team
- Manager to provide capacity for people to grow – by providing structure, tools and work processes which allow people to work productively
- Manager must nurture intellectual capability, competence by mentoring and coaching on the job, and providing formal training
- Manager must enable networking, enabling relevant relationships, interaction for the employees
- Manager must allow meetings with customers, senior executives and relevant contacts with talent to allow networking and interaction for growth
- Line managers must want to develop people
- Recognize and identify talented people
- Train and promote people
- Line managers to ensure that there is no attrition

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- It is good that people are trained on how to be better managers to secure retention rates, as people leave because of poor management
- HR need to communicate the value proposition – remind people what great things are available in the company
- HR to brand and market benefits of the organization
- HR can assist in recruiting skilled people
- HR – communicate and articulate value proposition to current and new hires
- HR to build broader networks to get the right talent
- HR to better understand the business in order to provide needed support

Initial code 6 – Challenges in talent management

Q3. What are the typical challenges experienced in the implementation of talent management programmes and why?

Table 4.8 Initial code 6 – Challenges in talent management

PARTICIPANT A1 – Manager and Talented
- Paying high remuneration is difficult for business affordability - expensive
- Competitor bonuses are hard to compete with for the company
- Retention is a key issue – young people stay for two years we want five years' service
- Selling the employer branding both internally and externally
- Shortage of African and colored candidates – they are expensive (diversity)
- Independent exit interview to know why talent leaves
- Transitioning in a promotion – emotional readiness issue to be resolved by support
- Talented may be challenged by their colleagues, social isolation of not being liked

PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
- Don't put people in boxes and clusters, manage an individual's uniqueness
- Very few qualified African CA's – diversity challenge
- Individuality – take into account people's needs, context, environment, culture and age

PARTICIPANT A3 – HR Practitioner
- Time and availability to counselors (career and performance) as they are line managers, client facing
- Retention of diversity candidates – poached by competitors for high pay
- Balance of not alienating solid citizens – look after good performers too, and not only focus on high maintenance of the talented as solid citizens are needed
- Disclosing who is on a talent management programme is an issue
- Creating a clear policy – expectation and how
- Hard to commit to career growth – economic cycles, change in market conditions
- Don't box people
- Avoid hype and flavor of the month
- Getting buy-in from line management
- Flexible and adaptable programme to individual needs
- Sell reality of the brand
- Sustainable programme – financial, time, effectiveness, resource availability

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Programme could be defined clearly, as to what it means and how to implement
- There are multiple initiatives to develop people but they are not labeled as talent management
- Recruiting – present the role correctly and honestly and its challenges
- Limited communication – let people know what internal opportunities there are
- Communication – let people know how they are doing and what they have
- Retention – yes people do get disgruntled in the jobs
- Executive focus – be on both people and business targets
- Development should not be an afterthought – but have a talent mindset in every business activity
- Time – executives and managers to track engagement of talented people
- Intensity of one-on-ones and counseling could be improved
- Not always possible to achieve a career plan
- HR – custodian of TM – often the profession in the organization is not seen as talent (creates dissatisfaction)
- Talent management – only extended to functions which directly influence the bottom line – feelings of discontent could arise
- Them and us conflict – those on TM programme
- Non-delivery of TM programme – high promise and low delivery of expectations
- Consistent selection of talented pool – avoid favoritism and subjectivity
- Ethical practice in TM – criteria for engagement
- Elitism concerns – people fear having to explain who was chosen and why – difficult communication process
- Time and availability are an issue in TM
- It takes time to do career conversations, mentor, track progress
- Line management is not rewarded enough for driving people agenda
- Line management is rewarded for business targets, not intangibles
- Line management may see talent management as role of HR
- Is it realistic to expect line management to be people experts? – they are specialist in own fields
- Not a natural thing to nurture people for technically inclined people
- Organization must be committed – put heart into it – funding, time
- TM could be seen as yet another HR programme
- Structure too lean to focus on people issues – people are busy with tight schedules and work programmes
- High potential risks – they handle business pressure, long hours, and do stretch projects – they should not be pushed beyond emotional capacity
- HR tries too hard to implement TM – business may not see the significance
- HR seen as transactional by the business
- HR must be exposed to strategic business issues – to offer better support

PARTICIPANT A5 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- When people are on TM programme the risk of compromising morale of those not on the programme is there
- Costs and budgets are an issue in implementing TM

- Availability of people for training is a challenge as they run tight work schedules
- Managing conflict with team members is an issue to be managed
- Senior management buy-in to the programme is critical
- Managers see this as just another initiative by HR
- Favoritism is not TM – process must be fair and consistent
- Top achievers are high maintenance people in attempting to keep them happy as they want more

PARTICIPANT A7 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Knowledge of TM and understanding
- Not much clarity in the standard and definition
- There is subjective evaluation of who is talent
- Talent is defined by personal filters
- Talent is ability, performance and aspiration – be able to measure that accurately
- Defining talent is not achieved
- TM is a measure and intensity of what makes a difference between good to great – how do you measure that?

PARTICIPANT A8 – HR Practitioner
- Coach talent on derailers that could potentially limit them
- They are smart cognitively but they need social skills
- Talented must have strong interpersonal skills
- Talent must be portrayed as role models to inspire others
- Talent must also grow other people
- They need to bring other people up with them
- Must be able to relate to others
- Talented are in the spotlight and are obliged to be an example
- Not be self-centered
- Be ethical and teach, share and grow others
- Talent has to avoid derailing behaviors
- The talent management programmes must be transparent
- The definition of TM is critical in helping clarify why people are on the TM programme (fast track, accelerated learning, access to executives, having a mentor)

PARTICIPANT A9 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Budgets limit what you can offer on a talent management programme
- Time to coach, go on training, giving feedback is not always available
- Time to train and business profitability must be balanced
- Balance between lost productive hours and return on training is critical

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- The issue of consistency around the talent pool changes
- In spite of the programme attrition still remains a problem
- Competitors often offer high compensation, which the company might not be able to afford
- There have been hard economic times which do not justify high pay
- Pay has to be affordable, sustainable and yet competitive
- Pay is not that highly competitive, however it's fair and market-related
- Skills constraints do influence diversity
- High level of accountability and follow up
- Training around diversity – benefits and variety it brings
- Diversity is beyond ethnicity – sexual orientation, age
- The workforce profile age is around 34/35
- There are very few, if any aging workforce
- Everybody is below forty
- This is a fast paced organization
- No exceptions will be made for aging workforce, same expectation for everyone
- This is for evolving survivors, high learning, and target driven

PARTICIPANT B2 – Manager and Talented
- It's difficult to create a clear concrete or defined career path, with timelines and dates
- There is not commitment plan in career management
- Excellent international training but no learning contract, follow up on training through a discussion and holding a talented person accountable for implementing training
- Training not leveraged after it happens
- Talented people are not known publicly in the organization
- Talented desire to have public recognition as they work hard
- More openness is needed about the criteria for the programme
- The programme can cause a 'them' and 'us' – impact on team morale
- The programme requires investment in time – as people are busy
- It's difficult to have enough time to mentor and coach

PARTICIPANT B3 – Manager
- Supply of good talent is limited due to skills shortages in the industry

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PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- Staff turnover is a problem
- Certain issues impact on job engagement – leadership changes
- Economic variables – and it becomes difficult to meet revenue targets, people then move to an organization that is stable financially
- Owing to few skilled people in South Africa, a few skilled people are offered more money by other companies, or take an offer overseas

Initial code 7 – Business case for talent management

Q7. What value does talent management add to the organization?

Table 4.9 Initial code 7 – Business case for talent management

PARTICIPANT A1 – Manager and Talented
- TM brings profit
- Reason for TM is to capitalize on knowledge they acquire
- Retaining already qualified (CA) is a challenge – if they leave we lose skills and knowledge
- 10% of talented are fast-tracked for future executiveship – retain skill, future leaders, talent pool and pipeline
- Performance management is aligned to business goals (finance, sales, customer relations). People are coached, trained to achieve business results
- Talent does work for our clients as we sell time, knowledge, service

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- A value derived from TM must be defined and articulated
- Long-term sustainability of the business – talent pipeline and supply
- Succession planning and reflect on success

PARTICIPANT A5 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- The question is do we have knowledgeable and motivated people?
- TM must be linked to strategy and support delivery of strategy
- TM contributes directly to the bottom line
- Talented people are high performers and their business performance is measurable on a scorecard
- They contribute to financial results, sales targets and profit
- Retention minimizes turnover
- Talent ensure people supply, no need to replace, retrain and pay recruitment fees

PARTICIPANT A6 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Talented contribute to value and growth
- TM can add value when properly managed
- Talent must be held accountable for investment in the programme
- Talent must improve the company, bring solutions, improve operations, quality and give back by performance
- Talented are future leaders and must be future focused, create opportunities for future stability of the company
- Talented to create competitive advantage
- Talented to take ownership of projects
- Outcomes of talent performance and contribution must be obvious

PARTICIPANT A8 – HR Practitioner
- Illustrated a cycle of employee motivation through talent management – TM, motivation, productivity and high performance and achievement of financial targets
- When people are well-nurtured, they are productive, meet targets and budgets
- Turnover reduced

PARTICIPANT A9 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- In retaining talent you can retain your customers and profitability
- The more knowledgeable one is of the customers' account it becomes critical to keep them on the customers' account
- Organizations need to spend money on the talented people
- The business needs the talented and the talented need the business
- It's not just spending money on TM but an investment – (return)
- TM does add value – return may be calculated in performance, customer service, success of the business
- Return against money spent
- Clients do see when an employee is not happy in the job
- Job dissatisfaction impacts motivation and quality of work
- An unhappy employee compromises customer engagement and professionalism

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- High performers are rewarded and encouraged adequately
- Performance output is directly linked to rewards
- Right behaviors are enforced – customer relations, profit, quality and rewarded and recognized
- TM allows planning for future sustainability (train, develop, plan for future leaders)
- Building people capacity
- If people do not grow the organization will also not grow
- When people are trained, well managed and retained the results will show in sales, profit, customer relations
- It difficult to quantify value added to business but it's evident

PARTICIPANT B2 – Manager and Talented
- High performers impact the bottom line and thus add value to the organization
- It's a long-term investment and not an expense
- Retention is critical to proof against competitor poaching
- Retention secures continued and uninterrupted productivity
- As people skills grow so do their contribution and adding value
- Training of line managers to be better people managers secures retention and thus performance

PARTICIPANT B3 – Manager
- Performance measures which are a part of the talent selection criteria drive behavior
- Behavior to perform in this area contributes strategically, tactically and operationally
- Winning the market share
- Driving customer satisfaction
- Growing the revenue
- Growing and developing people
- Innovation to be ahead of competitors
- We make money from consulting with clients – knowledge is critical
- In interacting with customers knowledge plays a critical role
- People need to be trained, updated and be given knowledge to provide quality service to customers
- Soft skills and coaching does impact on the bottom line
- There is a return on investing in training in the form of high performance
- The organization makes learning mandatory and compulsory
- Learning is rewarded in the organization, as it is fast paced and everything changes fast

PARTICIPANT B4 - Manager and Talented
- Talent management adds value to the bottom line
- Knowledge is the organizational intellectual property
- The retention success saves the company – recruitment fees, time it takes to train the person before they can be productive
- On-boarding time is long and structured because of complexity of the roles
- A lot of information is invested into talent – it's not good to lose the information
- When a person who understands products, customers and the system leaves it's a major loss
- Also they take knowledge and best practice to the competing new employer
- Customer satisfaction is compromised when a new consultant deals with the customers

Initial code 8 – Optimizing talent management

Q5. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?

Table 4.10 Initial code 8 – Optimizing talent management

PARTICIPANT A1 – Manager and Talented
- People leave the organization and then come back (good environment)
- Improve employer branding through recruiters
- Retention risk assessment by conversation with coaches
- Keep employer branding internally and externally – attraction issue
- Recruiting – assessments are used – personality and cognitive
- Recruiting – internal employee referrals – give bonus for successful recruiting
- Too modest in marketing our organization – need to improve image

PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
- Create rich pools of talent
- Investing in bursary and educational development initiatives to develop African CA's – talent pool creation

PARTICIPANT A3 – HR Practitioner
- We need to fix value proposition when recruiting

- Not sell what we think person wants to hear – value proposition
- Value proposition – know what the person wants, status, money, achievement or values
- Branding – to sell culture – people-centric, nice people, family oriented, not arrogant, not snotty, tough managers but nice). We undersell our brand.
- Selling and marketing – we miss out if we don't sell our people-oriented culture, interaction. Other companies are arrogant, stuck up and difficult
- Define culture – EVP purposes, people know what to look for
- Study best practices
- Recruiters must sell the brand correctly

PARTICIPANT A4 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Branding is critical both internally and externally – what people have
- TM must be measured, implemented and defined
- TM success must be rewarded
- Talent can be forecasted
- Profile talent needed – to meet strategic objectives
- In designing TM – consult talented people, assess what they want

PARTICIPANT A5 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Review and improve the layout of the programme continuously
- Assess if the programme is still relevant or needs updating
- What is working and why is it not working?
- Have a generic approach to TM but one size does not fit all
- When recruiting be attentive to individual needs
- Diversity and inclusiveness is critical
- People are not a number – humanness in dealing with people is critical
- Recognize people are different
- Create and attract talent pools wanting to live the vision and are passionate
- Have a well-defined approach to TM strategy yet still be flexible
- Avoid extreme cases of looseness or rigidity and yet be open-minded

PARTICIPANT A6 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- It is critical to define TM programme standards
- What is required in the programme?
- Critical competencies, skills
- Talent as brand ambassadors must advertise both internally and externally (role models)
- Improve internal firm's branding

PARTICIPANT A7 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Assess engagement – energy and drive to look forward to the job
- Engagement – emotional connectedness to the job
- Engagement – Intention to stay – love the job, peers, company, pay
- Commitment to stay with organization
- Signs of disengagement – frustration
- Discretionary effort disappears
- Not engaged – not willing to go the extra mile
- Will only do what the job requires
- Holding back and pulling away
- Retreat
- Not engaged – will no longer actively participate
- Talent management – is aspiration, loyalty, ability and performance
- They are engaged to the organization
- They stand out, are motivated and energetic

PARTICIPANT A8 – HR Practitioner
- Consistent measures to decide who qualifies for the programme
- Ensure that TM is realistic and objective
- TM is sustainable – funding, time, people commitment
- Avoid being too idealistic about the programme, deliver on fundamentals
- Don't create hype of yet another flavor of the month, however, retain realistic excitement for branding and EVP

PARTICIPANT A9 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Decide on what the business needs and future plans for talent
- By proper needs assessment for TM programme the solution can be tailormade
- Strategic leadership is required in attracting talent
- Design and develop talent strategy
- Proper forecasting of talent needs and requirements
- Long-term liaison and relationship building with talent
- Use feedback on success of development programmes
- Evaluate talent management programmes
- Capture learning of what works or is not working
- Treat talent as you would treat a client

- Use a customer-centric model in dealing with employees
- Treat employees as you would customers
- Employer branding must be consistent
- Ensure consistency in what is communicated with people
- The TM programme must be working with internal people

PARTICIPANT B1 – HR Practitioner
- The programme can be improved by executing the management skills learned
- Top management support is critical for success
- Consistency around career and succession management

PARTICIPANT B2 – Manager and Talented
- More visibility be created about 'stars in the business'
- Brand talent programme as prestigious
- Make known who is in the high potential pool
- Create a criteria known to all about the programme – be strength-based
- Clear criteria on talent review process
- Create credibility through criteria of the process
- Ensure that there is diversity in the programme
- Do not put people in a box

PARTICIPANT B3 – Manager
- A strong need to market the employer brand to attract talent
- Work hard on ensuring career advancement and good management to retain talent
- Paying market-related salaries is critical
- Psychometric assessment may be utilized to provide accurate identification of potential
- Social networks are critical – to discuss current business problems and topics
- Sharing of work/business learning is critical
- Having guest speakers to address the talented on a specific topic

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- Line management should be trained to be better managers
- Communication on EVP is not enough, much can be done to market the employer brand
- Internal branding is critical
- An organization must be a market leader, be first to innovate to attract talent

Initial code 9 – Career life cycles

Q9. How to manage talent at early, mid- and late career phase/life cycle?

Table 4.11 Initial code 9 – Career life cycles

Early Career
PARTICIPANT A2 – HR and Talented
Early career – upon graduation may need money, vehicle finance – benefits scheme

PARTICIPANT A4 – HR and HR Practitioner
Early career talent needs structured learning interventions

PARTICIPANT A5 – HR and HR Practitioner
- Provide structured training with high content
- Coaching and guidance is critical
- Continuous training opportunity is critical as the young are curious about learning
- Work-life balance is critical – as they love sports and social activities
- Involve the young in social responsibility projects
- Allow them to organize functions and team-building activities
- Allow flexi work time – upon delivery of performance
- Health and lifestyle center subsidies as they are health conscious
- Remuneration is a huge issue
- Provide both work and fun
- Managers managing them must be open-minded and flexible
- Provide technology driven work tools and equipment
- Give them technology driven projects
- Utilize them in innovation, creative and interesting projects
- Provide opportunities for experience, coaching and learning

- Give them performance feedback
- Prepare them to develop technical and supervisory/managerial skills
- They are super intelligent and think they can do a lot more than they can
- They may have ability, however, they are lacking in experience and life skills
- Most of them lack streetwise survival skills as their parents provided for them
- Assess emotional readiness when promoting
- Coach for more EQ skills – develop ability to handle pressure, difficulty
- Manage expectations and ambition realistically

PARTICIPANT A7 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- Assess what they aspire for
- To students financials are big
- They may have student loan
- Car finance is another consideration
- Survival and hygiene factors are a priority
- Need financial freedom

Mid-career

PARTICIPANT A5 – HR and HR Practitioner
- At this stage they are driven by status, position and money
- Family and marriage are also a priority in some cases
- Remuneration is a key driver – pay competitively
- Assess their career expectations, goals and aspirations
- Provide opportunities for intense stretch goals
- Provide opportunities for them to be coaches and mentors
- Entrust them with challenging and big work assignments
- Provide networking opportunities
- Recognize success and projects done well
- Provide overseas opportunities or leading a business unit
- Executive development opportunities
- Coach on EQ and leadership skills
- Continue with performance coaching in various projects they embark on
- Strategic development initiatives

PARTICIPANT A7 – Manager and HR Practitioner
- They aspire to self-actualization
- Financials are sorted, however, still important
- Purpose, value and role satisfaction is critical
- Additional responsibility and stretch assignments
- Project stretch
- Cross-functional work assignments
- Technical specialty
- Increase in accountability
- Afford opportunity to be mentor and coach
- Allow them to lead others
- Create meaningful work

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- The degree of complexity of training depends on the job, and the level of the individual
- The training may be for leadership development, or management development (advanced, core, fundamental)
- A role determines a set of competencies required and what needs to be developed
- Learning solutions are structured per need and level of the job
- There is a graduate development programme (for the young)
- Young talent programme (been given exposure)
- Future managers programme
- Talent is identified early in the career to be groomed

Late career

PARTICIPANT B4 – Manager and Talented
- There are no older people in the organization. Average age is 35.
- If they worked here it would be expected of them to put in the same effort, fast pace and contribution
- There will be no preferences due to age

PARTICIPANT A4 – HR and HR Practitioner
- Late career talent can contribute by sharing knowledge and experience with the young and inexperienced
- Late career – the programme focuses on young people because they can leave
- Late career – are ignored as they tend to be loyal
- Late career – could contribute by becoming coaches and mentors

PARTICIPANT A5 – HR and HR Practitioner

In the section above I have presented the initial data coding process, and displayed how the research questions assisted with the clustering and grouping of similar data sets. Throughout the interview and data analysis process I discovered that, in most cases, the semi-structured questions posed to the research participants unearthed data responses that were similar and consistent among various participants. Therefore, the questions facilitated and supported the clustering and creation of emerging thematic patterns in the data.

4.5 Process of data analysis: Focused coding

Charmaz (2000) indicated that focused coding is more directed, selective and conceptual than initial coding. I began to synthesize and further analyze large segments of data in order to generate themes and sub-themes or categories and sub-categories, and I compared the data.

Charmaz (2003) proposes that data comparisons be done in the following manner:

- Comparing different people's responses (with regard to beliefs, situations, actions, accounts or experiences).

- Comparing data from one case to another, e.g. Company A and B.

- Comparing specific data sets with the criteria for the category – this entails ensuring that the grouped data matches and is suitable to its label and code.

- Making comparisons about the grouped data, and checking for similarities and differences.

Nieuwenhuis (2012) advised that once initial coding is completed, the next step is to bring some order and structure the data into identified themes or categories. By looking carefully at the themes, identifications, links and connections in the themes can be made which will result in bringing meaning into the text. Basit (2003) views data analysis as the most difficult and crucial aspect of research, while coding is a significant step during the analysis process to organize and make sense of textual data in the actual analysis.

Cresswell (2009) mentioned that themes refer to major findings and are used to create headings in the research report. Additionally themes should display multiple perspectives from the research participants, and be supported by the diverse excerpts from interviews and specific evidence. I have in this section brought together all the relevant themes and sub-themes. All the themes and sub-themes are supported by the ideas and insights as directly derived from the participant responses. Braun and Clarke (2006) acknowledged that the prevalence of themes and sub-themes gets revisited as the refinement of the analysis progresses. I searched for differences, contractions and similarities all throughout the analysis process. Overall, I found more corroborations across diverse participants and the different companies. Braun and Clarke (2006) indicated that sub-themes are essentially themes within a theme, and they give structure to a particularly large and complex theme and also for demonstrating the hierarchy of meaning within the data. The focused themes and sub-themes are a result of a process of refinement of initial themes.

In the section below I present the results of focused coding in the form of Tables 4.12 to 4.21.

4.5.1 Defining talent and talent management

In this table I have clustered all the participants' comments on how they defined talent. There seemed to be strong cohesion and consensus about the definition of talent. No conflicting

views about the profiling of talent, even between Company A and B, were noted. The data were further clustered into sub-themes to highlight the important concepts which led to the overall definition of talent.

Table 4.12 Focused coding theme 1 – Defining talent

Theme: Talent	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	• Talent does work for our **clients** as we **sell time**, **knowledge, service** • People are **not machines** on a production line • **Time and money must be invested** in people to build knowledge and experience • TM **brings profit** (A1) • **Talent –** best profile – culture, skills, academic (A3) • **Cream of the crop** (A5) • They are top 10% in the organization (A7) • Talent is key people in business operations(A8) • This excludes poor performers • May be individual contributor (specialist or manager)(B1) • Talented are defined as having strength and passion – are excellent people (B2)
Sub-theme: Talent	
Potential	• Talent is individuals' **potential** • High **potential**/talent (A4) • Talent is defined as potential (A7) • Talent is potential (A8) • Potential • Demonstration of potential to move to higher levels and portability (B1) • They are above the rest in terms of potential (B4)
Ability	• Ability (A4) • Have cognitive ability that goes beyond average (A6) • Being above the norm (capability) (A8) • Talent is ability (B1) • They are creative and think out of the box (B4)
Performance	• **Talent – good to great people – difference in performance** (A3) Performance exceeds expectations (A4) • They are highly **participative** • Volunteer and go the **extra mile** (A5) • Talent is defined as performance (A7) • Performance (A8) • Performance(B1) • Talented deliver more results, not just a good job (B2) • It's employees who perform well • Achieve top accolades (B3) • They are above the rest in terms of performance (B4)
Competence	• **Very competent** (A4) • Know their **objectives** and know how to go for the best • Very **knowledgeable** • They can work **through challenges** even in an economic downturn • They can find **creative solutions** to challenges in their workflow • They are **flexible and adaptable** • They know current status, **reassess goals** regularly • They **adjust to change** in a mature and cool way (A5) • Talent is defined in terms of technical competencies and being a good manager (A6) • Skills sets and experience (B1) • Interact well and are articulate • Perfect fit for the job and culture (B4)
Values	• Lives the **values** (A4) • Values of talent are team playing, ethics, integrity (A6)
Leadership	• Demonstrate **potential to be leaders**

	• **Self-directed** (A4) • Have **unique qualities** and present themselves differently (A5) • Have leadership values and live them • They can work with other people • Interact with other people (6)
Motivation	• **Aspirations** • Ambitious to take on **more responsibility** and **challenges** • **Motivated** • **Engaged on the job – wants to be in the company** (A4) • They must be engaged and interested in the organization • Have aspirations to want to be in the organization • Loyalty (A7) • Rational commitment to the career • Have ambition • They have a need to succeed • Are ambitious (A9) • Aspiration to grow and develop (B1) • Talented are self-driven and want to develop (B2) • Have drive to develop (B3) • Very driven to perform • Self-driven and ambitious (B4)
Promotable	• Move to a **bigger role** (A4) • Capacity to grow (A8) • Mobility is critical – as people move in 2-3 years, even international • Can move to higher levels (B1) • Have capacity to go two levels above (B4)

The focus of this table is to give a brief definition of talent management as per the participants' data input. The most important view arising from the data is the perception of talent management in the context of the overall employee life cycle (from hiring to exiting).

Table 4.13 Focused coding theme 2 – Defining talent management

Theme: Talent Management	Excerpts from interviews and sources
Sub-theme: Talent Management	• **TM is a philosophy** of how to manage talented people • **Programme is critical** • It's about **attracting and managing** the best out of people • Need to keep them **engaged, it's challenging to retain** them (A1) • TM is to identify current talent and future talent • Support them in **growing** and being **happy** • Ensure **engagement** based on **individual needs, constant learning** (A2) • TM is everything from **attracting, selecting, recruiting, retaining, exiting and life cycle** of the employee with the company • **TM – learning, acknowledgement, career pathing detailed with timelines, counseling, open communication, performance evaluation** (A3) • TM – process **of acknowledging, recognizing**, and **investing** in people strengths • Ensuring derived benefit from the programme of **training and developing** skills • Opportunity to **gain skills and experience** • Be exposed **to key leadership** in the process (A4)
Talent Management	• Mainly focused **at managerial** levels • Programme is key to **retaining knowledge** in the organization (A4) • TM is **identifying top achievers** who stand out among teams (A5) • It's a process of identifying top performers, work output • Where they are treated differently (A6) • We hire for potential – for future positions and different roles (B1) • It's a programme which recognizes high performers and high potential people • Programme selection is based on strengths of an individual (B2)

4.5.2 Talent management programme content

The following table demonstrates the participants' views on what a talent management programme should entail in the best practice environment. The various sub-themes are segmented and supported by the ideas and insights from the participants. The content of talent management and sub-themes are critical in the ultimate formulation of talent management dimensions or elements.

Table 4.14 Focused coding theme 3 – Talent management programme content

Theme: Best Practices of Programme Content	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	- Tell talented people **the truth** (A5) - Accommodating female gender to work flexibly - Recruit through headhunting and graduate recruitment (A6) - Senior leadership must buy in to the programme - Senior leadership must be part of the learning and development - Having good managers is key to retention - Managers play a critical role in training people to be competent - Communication is critical in influencing and retention (A8) - Communication between leadership and employees - Adjust and be flexible about the programme - Add fun to the equation - Treat employees as clients - Sincerity of communication is critical - Honest and open feedback is good for people (A9) - The programme for high potentials in various steps of progression - There are calibration sessions, on round tables to review talent - HR and line management justify talent ratings - Ratings are questioned and there are participative, robust discussions - Talent review process ensures evaluation, checking and consistency of the programme (B1) - Learn more about diversity and cultural differences - Have a clear criteria for identifying talent with no subjectivity - As a benefit there is an employee assistance programme – they arrange service providers (booking a holiday, tutor children after school, baby sitters) - There is a gym in the building - There is a counseling helpline for personal and emotional support of employees - A prestigious brand makes a difference – people want to join the organization - The programme of managing high potentials is excellent (B2) - It's part of talent acquisition - The programme has to incorporate diversity to have right mix of people - Grading process – allows broad banding (B3)
Sub-theme: Best Practices of Programme Content	
Learning, development and competencies	**We train** graduates in accounting and tax fields for three years **Formal training, study funding, study leave generous** - They learn **emotional intelligence skills** - Manager trains for **special** and **technical skills** to **early career** employees **Training – structure courses per job – compulsory** **Global training, in-house and external training** **Leadership development, technical** and **soft skills (EQ) training** **Training –** learning, experience, and knowledge coaching needed for **career development** (A1) **General learning experiences** (A3)

- **Business schools short courses**
- Providing **blended learning** – formal learning, on the job training and coaching
- Talent must develop skills that are **holistic**
- **Resilience, EQ, stress management, technical skills and be able to handle** change (A4)
- Provide **resources to facilitate and enable** development (A5)
- 360 degree assessments can be used to assess talent
- Sabbatical leave to encourage learning
- Development
- Identify skills and competencies for talent
- Utilize relevant assessment tools to determine capabilities
- There must be a generic model for talent competencies
- Key competencies, skills that are specific
- The talented must have generic competencies
- Core competencies may be management and leadership skills and values
- Generic competencies transferable across functions (A6)
- Need to invest in learning and development
- Focus on high-impact quality programmes
- Allow flexibility in development programmes
- Develop technical skills (A7)
- Learning – structured and formalized programmes
- Focus on developing skills
- Technical and specialist training
- Interpersonal training to develop people skills
- Train and develop people
- Every job must have competencies (A8)
- Employees must acquire mandatory knowledge and skills for the job
- Develop their skills – use internal and external training
- Ensure that they have the skills in order to be promoted to the next level
- In developing people ensure flexibility and individuality
- Identify individual needs for development
- Know what people needs in terms of skills, gaps and strengths (A9)
- The organization must want to sincerely develop people
- Assessments are based on competency profile per role
- Degree of exposure, learning is based on the level (basic, intermediate and advanced)
- Level of the programme determined richness and depth of the programme
- There is a specific training intervention for every level of development
- 70% of training is on the job, 20% classroom, and 10% coaching
- Tools and resources are provided to support people learning
- There is a competency model for every level or stage that the individual is at
- People have to master a set of competencies before graduating to the next level
- Development plans are in line with the person's competency gaps
- Development plans address experience and technical, behavioral gaps
- People sometimes travel overseas to attend training
- There is an HR factory (soft skills training in the organization)
- There are ongoing strategy workshops
- People may also select courses to address skills needs
- The organization will finance tuition for formal education
- Assessments of high potential employees 360 degrees with feedback for development (B1)
- Graduate development programme
- International training and exposure
- Train managers on soft/people management skills
- Expand individual competency profile
- Acquiring critical knowledge
- Develop insights and thinking abilities
- Evolve ability, competence and growth (B2)
- Identify learning gaps and give feedback on that
- There must be evaluation after every training session
- Development through multiple interactions and interventions
- Classroom training
- Conferences
- Internal library system for every possible subject relevant to the business
- Resources – online
- Commitment to train and develop people
- Investing a portion of work hours in personal development
- Rewarding learning
- Learning is measured and is compulsory (B3)
- The person drives the learning and performance
- Attendance of training courses overseas
- Receiving of 360 degree feedback on competencies and behaviors

	- Feedback and 360 degree assessment is linked to the job of an individual and is relevant - Content of assessments – strategic thinking and other skills - Learning circles – people share learning experiences and have discussions - Training is 70% on the job, 10% classroom and 20% coaching - E-learning is utilized - Learning is rewarded - There is a monthly online course to be completed - Management development - Graduate development (B4)
Mentoring, counseling and coaching	- **Transfer of knowledge** happens on the job and coaching - **Mentorship programme –** all talented have a mentor - Talented are required **to be coaches and mentors** (build management skills) - All employees have a **counselor** to discuss **performance and career** needs - Each line manager **coaches six people** and tracks them **for a year** (A1) - **Key relationships** to be formed for **development –shadowing with experts** - **One-on-ones** (A2) - **Train line managers to become counselors** - **Having a mentor** - **Mentorship by profile selection and matching** - **Matching people correctly – mentoring – by experience needed** (A3) - **Mentor preference (skill, experience, age, gender, culture)** - Assist people to **progress** - Identification of **coaching and experience** needs (A4) - Expose them to **experts, mentors and coaches** as key project members (A5) - Will benefit from mentor and coach (A6) - Coaching must grow the mindset and expand character virtues - High level of coaching and experience (A7) - Coaching – grooming - Transfer to skills from senior managers/line managers (A8) - Coaching is critical (A9) - Interactions and one-on-ones are important - Coaching and mentoring is a part of the programme - Where the individual wishes to move, they get necessary exposure and a mentor/coach - There is a global mentoring programme - One can request a mentor on line(social media) with a matching profile - Employee may approach a person(potential coach) with a matching profile (B1) - External coaches are available through a service provider (B2) - Coaching and mentoring (B3) - Coaching - Peer coaching – sharing ideas and encouraging development - Counseling helpline to support staff with personal problems (B4)
Leadership, executive and management development	- **Training on business skills and leadership skills** - Opportunity to **demonstrate leadership skills** - **Train managers** to be better **managers** - **Reward managers** for being **good managers** (A3) - **Executives are trained on coaching skills, EQ** - **High potentials'** need for **decent people management** (A4) - Shadow executives - Developing accessibility to the leadership (A6) - Have really dynamic and open-minded leaders who people can talk to - Have programme for managers, supervisors, executives, advanced Management - Develop key competencies for the role and leadership (A9) - Training for both technical and people leadership skills - There are levels of management training (manager of others, manager of managers and manager of executives); the degree of complexity is different - In the programme people develop skills to care for others, thinking and leading skills - The skills empower people to have impact, vision and influence others (B1) - All talented are exposed to the executives - Round table discussions with executives to share the vision of the organization (B4)
Remuneration and Incentives	- To retain you can **throw money at it – but competitors can offer more** (competitive **pay**) - **Remuneration is competitive** – upper quartile - **Incentives** are competitive and **performance driven** - **Profit sharing** and **gain sharing** for high performers (A1) - **Remuneration, rewards and hygiene factors** - Ensure **sense of achievement, recognition and reward** - **Market-**related **pay and bonuses** (A3) - **Remuneration** plays a critical role in the programme (A4) - Give **incentives** where possible, time off, weekend away (A5) - Think about pay approach (A6) - They want to be well-paid

	• Bonus, salary increases • Well-rewarded financially (A7) • Salary level correlates with the career stage the person is at • Merit adjustments are budgeted for to support performance • Salaries are determined by market forces (B1) • The programme includes bonuses, salary ranking, stretch goals, and achievement incentives (B2) • Remuneration benchmarks are surveyed and benchmarked (B4)
Recognition and rewards	• **Performers are identified** and are made **visible** (fair selection criteria**)** • Need to **recognize people** better (write articles, prize winning, leadership makes a phone call to say **'well done')** • Only performers get **bonuses, rewards** and **promotions** • **Bonus** structure **is transparent –** a person **knows what they will get** • **Bonus** depends on **business performance** and **individual performance** (A1) • Rewards • **Reward** not only with money but time off **– creative rewards, spa treatments** • **Recognition – letting others know success stories** • **Motivate emotionally – money** does not make people **stay** (A2) • **Recognition** and **identification of potential** (A4) • The programme is about **identifying** talent • Let them know and be known in the organization as talent • The programme must identify what **motivates** them (A5) • They must have **position and money** • Recognition (A6) • Acknowledge, reward and recognize • Status and prestige (A7) • Encourage talent to share knowledge as they hold a lot of insights • Send them to a variety of client- and industry-related conferences • Create opportunity for them to be subject matter experts (A8) • Reward talent • Rewards must be individualized where possible (A9) • People are ranked on future potential • Rewards and merits are based on performance • There are a variety of incentives • Rewards are a balance between meeting revenue targets and non-revenue targets • People who are not in sales are also rewarded for achieving their targets; their performance outputs are specific to their roles • One-on-ones • Following annual reviews there are rewards and recognition • There are stock awards, and shares awarded to employees depending on the level • There are rewards and recognition ceremonies where high contributors are awarded funds or shares based on merit and performance • There are awards dinners and ceremonies held even overseas • The awards are based on various categories – could be sales, customer relations, financial performance, innovation (B1) • A programme must recognize contributors (B2) • Give people time off as a reward, as talented travel and work long hours • Rewards and remuneration are driven by the role and level of performance (B4)
Experience, work structuring and stretch projects	• They work on **practical assignments with experienced team leaders** • There is **job and assignment rotation** • Keep talented **challenged** when they get **bored – challenging work activity** • Determine **projects, experience needed to grow them** • Gain **global and overseas work experience and projects** (A1) • Cross-divisional **experience and work projects and transfer – growth** • **Mobility programmes –** work overseas **on assignments**, get **experience** • **Experience training –** young, experienced and semi-experienced are place in same projects – **learning from the best** (A2) • **Stretch experience assignments** for **fast track** • **International consignments** and **mobility programmes** (A3) • **Job shadowing, exposure and feedback** (A4) • Expose them to **clients for growth** • **Various projects** to manage and **work activities** (A5) • They need challenging tasks as they are intelligent • Flexibility in work hours • Allow space to develop, innovate and experiment • Allow people to move across business units and functions • Also have deep focus on field-specific specialization (A6) • Exposure to different assignments • Challenging work • Application of experience is growth • Provide experience like sitting in Exco

	• Develop an understanding of how decisions are made
	• Encompass holistic growth
	• Combine learning and experience to heighten awareness
	• Create an understanding of the business and people
	• Programme must be flexible, open
	• Master of business administration is another way
	• Balance experience and practice
	• Theory and experience (A7)
	• Involve people in key projects
	• Create meaningful work (A9)
	• International roles – for exposure and experience learning (B1)
	• Working on complex projects to generate strategic solutions for the organization
	• Being empowered on stretch assignments
	• Contributing towards strategy
	• Create stretch assignments and opportunity to grow
	• Provide extra accountabilities for growth purposes
	• Experiential learning is critical (B2)
	• Exposed to additional opportunities, projects, people and training (B4)
Career and succession management	• Regular **career conversation** (assess career needs to see how best to address) • **Career discussion address – aspirations, objectives, possible opportunities** • **Career maps –** where one wants to be in the future (A1) • **Talent reviews** • **Career conversations** • **Promotions** • **Fast-tracking** programme for the talented – consider them **for growth** (A2) • **Careers are supported and extended** • **Fast-track careers** (A5) • What are their **goals** and how can they be **developed?** • Create and **communicate job opportunities** opening (A6) • Fast-tracking is important as they get bored • Opportunity to be promoted and move up the rank • Fast-tracking process (A7) • Offer alternative career routes fitting to the individual • Attracting talent – EVP – we have this career path, this training • Promote the talented • Give more responsibilities • Create challenging, stimulating and interesting work • Give complex projects and opportunities for growth (A8) • Develop appropriate career plans where there is consensus with the individual • Recognize aspiration • Identify challenging assignments to grow people for future roles (A9) • There are no ceilings created in that one can either be a manager or specialist • Opportunity to grow functional knowledge or have a career path as a manager • Talented people drive their own careers • Career model and framework is established • Career discussions take place • The career level and level of progression impacts the salary band • Career discussions are part of the career conversation in a balanced manner • Promotions apply to only high performers • Career and performance discussions are critical • Promotions happen at the end of the year and they are budgeted for • There are set guidelines determining promotions and increases (B1) • Career discussions • Succession planning and rewards • There is a clear growth path for specialists and those who want to manage others (B2) • It can be a specialist or a manager of people, or a manager of leaders • Career discussions are held (B4)
Performance management	• Employees receive **feedback on performance after every project** • Non-performer **on performance improvement programme** • Well-structured **performance management system** (A1) • **Robust performance** management – what is expected, what they must achieve, job specifications aligned to **business goals**, **annual plans** and **strategic** link • Managers **evaluate performance** • Performance management (A2) • **Performance management** (A3) • Give **performance feedback** and **share areas needing development** (A5) • Create a mechanism to enhance performance • Inspire people towards greatness (A7) • Performance coaching (A8) • Open and honest feedback is critical • Give people feedback on development and performance

	• Reward performance • Fairness in measuring performance (A9) • Performance ratings are frequently done • Performance reviews happen twice a year to track performance • Performance, career and training implementation and discussions • Annual reviews of performance feedback • Peer reviews or 360 evaluations on behavior and performance (B1) • Performance rating is linked to bonus – calculated on percentage basis • Performance reviews and commitment to development are reviewed • Revenue drives the performance incentive (B4)
Placement , deployment and recruitment	• **Deployment –** place people in right projects matching their skills and learning needs (A2) • **In recruiting and deploying,** ensure experience, culture, values, diversity, knowledge fit • **Deployment –** job description, global competencies • **Deployment –** matching **of strength of ability** • Analyze their **capabilities – competencies – assessments** • **Teaming dynamics** to **facilitate learning** (A) • TM – strength-based recruiting, deploying and engaging • Find out people's strengths and allow them to capitalize on them • Use people where they are really good and passionate • Use a strength finder tool – influence, relationships and execution • Use a matrix to determine strength in competence and values (A7) • In recruiting – define talent – skills, competencies, knowledge • Campus recruitment for graduates and future trainees • Deploy people based on their development needs and strengths (A8) • The programme ensures recruiting right people (A9) • Good fit for the job – who delivers results (B2) • Acquiring the right skills supply • Recruitment can be done by engaging multiple stakeholders to ensure proper selection • Referrals, agencies and self-applications are methods of recruitment • Interviews include business simulations, business role plays, competency-based interviewing • Interviewing and assessment on presentation of a relevant business topic (B3) • Recruitment – agencies and personal networks • Recruit – newspapers and e-recruiting • Graduate hires/recruitment • Interviewing process is panel-based, intensive to get the right people in • Recruitment is competency-based (B4)
Orientation	• **Induction/on-boarding /orientation –** structured, high level, formalized content • **On-boarding –** go to person/coach**, walk and talk partner** (A1) • **Orientation and induction** • A buddy system when on-**boarding** (A2) • Induct them as brand ambassadors (A6) • Intensive and structured induction (A8)
Engagement and retaining	• **Sense of job purpose –** importance and how one **adds value to bigger picture** • **Contribution** and **purpose-driven job – meaningful work** (A2) • **Offer value proposition – career, high performance** • **Networking events – with guest speakers** • **Exposure to senior leadership** • **Attending professional conferences** • **Conversation breakfast** • **Internal and external functions** • **Communication** • **Treat** people **fairly** • **How job fits to bigger picture – link to strategy** • **Individual needs to achievement** • **Generational gaps –** understand all generations • **Know values of young generation** • **Socialize and communicate** • **Create a concrete, credible programme** • **Satisfaction** be insured • Identify **their strengths** and what they **are good at** – let them do it (A3) • Utilize people according to their strengths • Know what they want to gain out of a job • Nice safe work environment • Be part of a work community • Good technology • Experiencing and engaging in challenge and personal growth (A7) • Give people feedback with purpose of correcting and growing (A9) • Engage, train and mentor people • Networking opportunities

	• Creative problem solving with teams
	• Food subsidies – with the canteen
	• Secure and beautiful environment
	• Opportunity to travel overseas
	• Being surrounded by knowledge experts in the field
	• Technology that is top edge (B2)
	• Very good canteen facilities
	• Gym facility to promote wellness
	• Functions – social interaction and celebration of success
	• Guest speakers invited to address business-related topics
	• Work-life balance is encouraged
	• People may work from home
	• Flexible work arrangement
	• Health tests and screening services are provided on site for employees at no cost
	• Employees have home assistance programme (to source home solution services) (B4)

4.5.3 Information technology and systems

In this theme the participants indicated how information technology and systems can assist and support the talent management processes and implementation. Having systems and processes will not necessarily make the practice of talent management successful, but will enable effectiveness of the process. These systems are mainly for reporting and data management purposes.

Table 4.15 Focused coding theme 4 – Information technology and systems

Theme: Information Technology and Systems	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	• Rate of **return on investing in talent** is critical – **analytics** (A2) • Talent management processes are driven by technology (B1)
Sub-theme: Information technology and Systems	
E- recruitment	• **Analytics** – forecasting people's needs and profiling of talent pool (skills) (A4)
E-learning	• Tracking of training, competency development and assessments kept on the system • Learning circles (B1) • E-learning is utilized for compliance and compulsory training • Learning assessments are tracked online for progress • A scorecard is kept for training – indicating performance (all been trained) • Online coaching and mentoring process (B4)
E-performance	• Performance assessments are completed on the HR system (B1)
E- Succession planning	• Software utilized to record succession plans and progress (B1)
Remuneration	• **Capture results on** money spent on talent **(salaries)** (A2)
Social Networking	• Online service supporting coaching – virtual coaching (B4)
Data analytics and reporting	• Reporting must be compiled to **reflect statistics** on **attrition** and **diversity balance** • **Retention statistics are critical –** to assess if **we recruit** correctly (A2) • **Measuring business benefits** related to TM is critical (A5)
Talent data	• **Systems** assist management to view data on workforce profiling, demographics, gender, talent pools (A3) • Measure **what is working** and what is not working (A5)

Theme: Organizational climate	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	• The data is reported on an HR integrated system • There are updated people profiles and analytics • There is high potential people reporting (B1)

4.5.4 Organizational climate and culture

In this theme the participants emphasized the importance of the overall culture, values and behavior at work, which set the mood or temperature of the workplace environment. The point that is driven is that it's important to create a healthy and humane work environment where people can look forward to coming to work.

Table 4.16 Focused coding theme 5 – Organizational climate and culture

Theme: Organizational climate	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	• **No private offices – only open plan offices** – creating a socially, open and vibrant climate (A1) • **Happy –** not go to work and be **miserable** • **Happy –** know I am **needed and appreciated** • **Happy – relationships** at work • Not a number – but a person **– (humanness at work)** • **Happy –** caring for people culture (A2) • **Happy with person's ability and individuality** • Organizational climate is monitored through climate surveys • Dimensions are work group relations, teaming, management engagement • Job satisfaction • Feedback on management • Policy and structure • Fair remuneration and benefits • Motivation and engagement • Open plan offices to encourage openness and teaming • High technology environment • Very relaxed style (B1) • Technology is key driver • A prestigious brand makes a difference – people want to join the organization • Food subsidies – with the canteen • Secure and beautiful environment • Opportunity to travel overseas (B2) • Technology that is top edge Technology driven (B3)
Sub-theme: Organizational climate	
Team-based	• **Flat** organization, people work on **team-based** projects (A1) • **Flat structure – team-based** work projects • **Open plan office – social and open communication** (A3) • We work in **teams – teaming dynamics are critical** • **Team and building relations** • **We work together to achieve** (A4)
Communication	• **Knowledge sharing** is a culture mostly in a team context (A1) • **Innovative communication – plasma screen** (A3) • People relate informally – communication • Long hours, electronic mail is mode of communication (B1)
Leadership ethics	• **No micro management** • **Honesty and transparency** about performance and **rewards** • **Line manager** – equipped with **interpersonal skills** (A1) • **Not political – unlike competitors** • **Not hierarchical** • **Leaders are visible and accessible** • **Manager sits** with teams in **open plan offices – no private offices** (A2) • **Not hierarchical** and hung **up on titles**

	• **Leadership** – approachable (A4)
	• Quality of supervision
	• No micro management (twice)
	• Management style is open and straight talk (B1)
Diversity and inclusiveness	• **Managers** are required to **recruit diverse people**
	• Make **diverse** people feel **comfortable and motivated**
	• **Diversity** – awareness created about other religions, cultures and practices
	• **Diversity – canteen caters** for various **dietary** requirement**s** (A1)
	• **Diversity and inclusiveness culture**
	• **Diversity** – a near equal split on **gender statistics**
	• **Diversity- multicultural, multinational people** – international projects
	• **Diversity** – accommodate **religious festivals** – grant leave **(Jewish, Islam, Hindu, Christian and Buddhist festivals)** (A2)
	• **There is diversity and inclusiveness**
	• Diversity is a focus around gender and ethnicity (A4)
	• It's a fairly gender friendly environment
	• Diversity and inclusiveness is developed, and there is an effort (B1)
	• There is no gender bias in the environment (B2)
	• A climate that is open to diversity of both race and gender is critical (B3)
	• Diversity is a culture (multinational) (B4)
Wellness	• **Wellness counseling** – talented experience stress, personal and social problems, conflict, work issues. We use an anonymous **employee assistance** programme (A1)
	• **Wellness – help with pressure management, as they work long hours (EAP)** (A2)
	• Work-life balance is encouraged – programme to coach people to integrate work better
	• Employee assistance to enable – counseling, conflict and family management
	• The organization pays for employee counseling of up to six sessions
	• Organization also has a home assistance programme – to help employees (e.g. manage home tasks, advice on best insurance quotes, where to go on holiday, arrange a plumber at convenient time, etc.) (B1)
	• As a benefit there is an employee assistance programme – they arrange service providers (booking a holiday, tutor children after school, baby sitters)
	• There is a gym in the building
	• There is a counseling helpline for personal and emotional support of employees (B2)
Flexible work hours	• **Flexible work –** I have kids and family, raised them, and a career
	• Accommodating **personal wholeness- social and career –** play golf
	• **Results driven** not being present at work – flexibility – client not inconvenienced (A1)
	• **Flexible work** arrangements are critical – as long as **one performs** (A2)
	• Flexible work arrangements – as long as clients are not compromised (B1)
	• There is flexibility, work around the clock in common
	• There are flexible work hours (B2)
High performance culture	• After every project employees are evaluated and receive performance feedback (communication) (A1)
	• **Career** oriented and **high performance culture** (A3)
	• Pay, productivity, strategy, rules
	• Enablement to do the job
	• Empowerment, technology and performance
	• Culture is innovative and strongly performance driven
	• It's an output-driven environment
	• There is a high performance culture (B1)
	• One can work from home as long as there is delivery of results (B2)
	• Right fitting individual is performance and development focused (B3)
	• The culture is driven by performance and results
	• A-type personalities (ambitious) fit the work profile of the organization
	• High pressure and deadline-driven culture
	• Strong performance culture
	• The culture is also of winning at all costs – business, market, sales (B4)
Learning and development culture	• We **recognize** people for **learning and gaining knowledge** (A1)
	• A culture of **learning, helping people** to achieve
	• **Knowledge management** – there is rich experience, knowledge, expertise (A4)
	• Career development opportunities
	• There are mainly knowledge workers (R & D, IT specialists and sales)
	• Being surrounded by knowledge experts in the field (B1)
	• Fast paced environment with changes and development
	• Innovation is a culture – ongoing product development (B3)
	• Driven to be the first and trendsetters in best practice
	• Change occurs frequently
	• People change jobs within two years (B4)
Values	• Talented undergo life circumstance changes **(social/emotional)** – we have an **employee assistance programme**

	• Team relations – **integrity, honesty, ethics are recognized**
	• There is **trust and respect** for people in the **culture**
	• **Personal** crises accommodated (A1)
	• **Culture – right values, career driven, people who like people**
	• **Respect is a core value**
	• **Social investments –** education, social initiatives (A2)
	• **People focused** culture (A3)
	• **Social networking is critical**
	• **People connect – open plan offices**
	• **Creation of a certain energy in building facilitates networking**
	• People feel welcome and included (A4)
	• People are both rational and still emotional beings (B1)
	• The culture and values are honesty, integrity, and ethics (B4)

4.5.5 Role players in talent management

In this section the participants highlighted the importance of role clarity in the implementation of talent management. Clear accountabilities and deliverables need to be set, as to who does what, and who is responsible for what with regard to talent management.

Table 4.17 Focused coding theme 6 – Role players in talent management

Theme: Role Players	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	• Management and HR must be seen to build trust
	• Managers and HR play a role of communication with talented
	• In retention, communicate to ensure issues and grievances are resolved
	• Provide counseling, listen and implement solution
	• Building trust and ethics are essential (A9)
	• HR and line management justify talent ratings
	• Ratings are questioned and there are participative, robust discussions (B1)
Sub-theme: Role Players	
Line management	• We rely on **managers** to coach, transfer knowledge and skills
	• **Managers are appraised on people leadership**, motivating teams, coaching ability, delegating and knowledge sharing
	• **Managers** ensure **performance objectives** are **aligned to strategy** (A1)
	• **Line managers** know their **people and acknowledge them**
	• **Line manager – interested in employee career development** (A2)
	• **Line manager** to focus on **people** and **business results** (A3)
	• We rely on **line managers** to implement TM
	• **Line managers** are professional experts and have technical knowledge
	• Line managers are required to meet regularly with **high potential** people
	• Line **managers to have career** conversations
	• Compile **detailed action plans** of developing people
	• Line managers play a **role in enabling talent** to succeed (A4)
	• **Line management** need to **commit** to the programme
	• **Line managers** need to **facilitate and support TM programmes** (A5)
	• Management to empower people to do more
	• Line manager to reward and recognize employees' achievements
	• It is critical for management to give genuine feedback about people development and communication (A9)
	• Manager plays a critical role in having real conversations with staff to support and coach them
	• Resolving issues which hamper performance – by open and honest conversations
	• Line management must provide leadership to talented
	• Line management to provide stretch work assignments and commitment
	• Coach people and give them a sense of purpose
	• Managers must provide people with honest feedback on performance
	• Manager must be the one to promote and sell their talented people
	• Management to deliver on promises made to talented
	• Manager to ensure consistent selection of people to the talent pool
	• Manager is a promoter, ally and mediator for talented people on the team
	• Manager to provide capacity for people to grow – by providing structure, tools and work

	processes which allow people to work productively • Manager must nurture intellectual capability, competence by mentoring and coaching on the job, and providing formal training • Manager must enable networking, enabling relevant relationships, interaction for the employee • Managers must arrange for customers, senior executives and relevant contacts to allow networking with talent for growth • Line managers must want to develop people • Recognize and identify talented people • Train and promote people • Line managers to ensure that there is no attrition (B3)
Executives	• **Directors** have regular **career sessions** with key talent (A1) • **Leadership -** to invest time, experience, giving and coaching • **Executives must be people's people, one-on-ones** • **Director buy-in to TM** – the top must understand importance of TM • **Executive can assist middle managers** – experience training, coaching, support formal training to prepare for future roles (A2) • **Executives** – are **accountable** for achieving people objectives • **Executive to recognize-** HR as a business partner whose actions impact the bottom line • **Executives to** ensure HR has an enabling structure, mechanisms, people, time and funds to commit to TM (A4) • TM is the accountability of business leaders (A5)
Human Resource	• **HR** trains all managers as counselors – be able to **coach, communicate and teach** (A1) • **HR** to encourage people to use **employee assistance programme** • **HR – work-life balance talks** • **HR – diversity awareness training, sensitivity, mutual respect** • **HR coaches** – on people issues as they arise – interpersonal (A2) • **HR communicates** – gathers feedback on training reviews (A3) • **HR** activity must be integrated to **talent management** • **HR** to provide a framework of how best people can be coached, engaged – a tool box for line management (A4) • **HR to** support business strategy in its activities – finding the right people, recruitment, payroll, learning and development (B1) • There are calibration sessions, on round tables to review talent (A9) • Be authentic and genuine in guiding and communication (B3) • HR needs to provide the right talent in the recruiting process • It is good that people are trained on how to be better managers to secure retention rates, as people leave because of poor management • HR need to communicate the value proposition – remind people what great things are available in the company • HR to brand and market benefits of the organization • HR can assist in recruiting skilled people • HR – communicate and articulate value proposition to current and new hires • HR to build broader networks to get the right talent • HR to better understand the business in order to provide needed support (B4)
Talented employee	• **Talented** – are motivated, exceed performance expectations, demonstrate leadership and potential, ambitious, want to grab opportunities, career-minded, are self-directed (A4) • Talented must also **identify other talent** they are responsible for • Be **top achievers** • Have **emotional intelligence**, **humility** and no **arrogance** • Talent must **achieve targets** and perform and **develop** a balance between **technical and interpersonal skills** • **Talent** to have **good people skills** • Work on **areas of development,** receive **coaching and mentoring** • Allow others to help in **areas needing development** • **The talented** need to be **tolerant of people who** are less talented as they tend to **have low tolerance levels** (A5) • Talented must be held accountable for investment in the programme • Talented must improve the company, bring solutions, improve operations, quality and give back by performance (A6) • Talented are programme brand ambassadors • Talented must sell the programme (A9)

4.5.6 Challenges in talent management

Participants with exposure to talent management practices have reflected on the potential and the real challenges that come with the implementation of talent management. Issues that

could potentially derail talent management implementation are flagged, thus creating awareness to help to prevent future pitfalls. Much as the companies strive for people management best practices, certain areas still need improvement.

Table 4.18 Focused coding theme 7 – Challenges in talent management

Theme: Challenges in talent management	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	• Programme could be **defined clearly**, as to what it means and how to implement • There are **multiple initiatives** to develop people but they are not labeled as talent management (A1) • **High potential risks –** they handle business pressure, long hours, and do stretch projects – they should not be pushed beyond emotional capacity (A4) • Managing **conflict** with team members is an issue to be managed • **Favoritism is not TM** – process must be fair and consistent (A5) • Knowledge of TM and understanding • Not much clarity in the standard and definition • There is subjective evaluation of who is talent • Talent is defined by personal filters • Talent is ability, performance and aspiration – be able to measure that accurately • Defining talent is not achieved • TM is a measure of intensity of what makes a difference between good to great – how do you measure that? • The talent management programmes must be transparent • The definition of TM is critical in helping clarify why people are on the TM programme (fast track, accelerated learning, access to executives, having a mentor) (A7) • The issue of consistency around the talent pool changes (B1) • Talented people are not known publicly in the organization • Talented desire to have public recognition as they work hard • More openness is needed about the criteria for the programme • Team morale (B3)
Sub-theme: Challenges in talent management	
Management commitment and buy in	• **Individuality –** take into account people's needs, context, environment, culture and age A1) • **Creating a clear policy – expectation and how** • **Don't box people** • **Avoid hype and flavor of the month** • **Executive focus should** be on both people and business targets • **Development** should not be an **afterthought –** but have **a talent mindset** in every business activity • **Time – executives** and managers to track **engagement of talented people** • Intensity of **one-on-ones** and **counseling** could be improved (A3) • Getting **buy-in** from line management • Line management may see **talent management as role of HR** • **Is it realistic** to expect line management to be people experts? – they are specialist in own fields • Not a natural thing to **nurture people for technically inclined people** • **Organization must be committed – put heart into it – funding, time** (A4) • **TM** could be seen as yet another **HR programme** • **HR tries** too hard to **implement TM –** business may not see the significance (A5) • Senior **management buy-in** to the programme is critical • Managers see this as just another initiative by HR • High level of accountability and follow up (B1)
Financial support	• Paying **high remuneration** is difficult for business **affordability** – expensive • **Competitor bonuses** are hard to compete with for the company (A1) • **Line management is not rewarded enough for driving people agenda** • **Line management is rewarded for business targets, not intangibles** • **Structure too lean to focus on people issues –** people are busy with tight schedules and work programmes (A4) • **Costs and budgets** are an issue in implementing TM (A5)

	• Budgets limit what you can offer on a talent management programme (A9) • Competitors often offer high compensation, which the company might not be able to afford • There have been hard economic times which do not justify high pay • Pay has to be affordable, sustainable and yet competitive • Pay is not that highly competitive, however, it's fair and market-related (B1) • Economic variables – it becomes difficult to meet revenue targets, people then move to an organization that is financially stable • Owing to few skilled people in South Africa, the few skilled people available are offered more money by other companies, or take an offer overseas (B5)
Time resource	• **Time and availability to counselors** (career and performance) as they are line managers, client facing • **Sustainable programme –** financial, time, effectiveness, resource availability(A3) • **Time and availability are an issue in TM** • **It takes time to** conduct career conversations, mentor, and track progress in addition to the roles (A4) • **Availability of people** for training is a challenge as they run tight work schedules(A5) • Time to coach, go on training, give feedback is not always available • Time to train and business profitability must be balanced • Balance between lost productive hours and return on training is critical (A9) • The programme requires investment in time as people are busy • It's difficult to have enough time to mentor and coach (B2)
Capacity	• Selling the **employer branding** both internally and externally • Independent **exit interview** to know why talent leaves • **Transitioning** in a promotion – **emotional readiness** issue to be resolved by support • Talented may be challenged by their colleagues, **social isolation** of not being liked • **Hard to commit to** career growth – **economic cycles, change in market conditions (A1)** • **Flexible and adaptable** programme to individual needs (A3) • **Sell reality of the brand** • **Recruiting –** present the role correctly and honestly and its challenges • **Limited communication –** let people know what internal opportunities there are • **Communication –** let people know how they are doing and what they have • **Non-delivery of TM programme –** high promise and low delivery of expectations • **Consistent selection of talented pool –** avoid favoritism and subjectivity • **Ethical practice in TM – criteria** for engagement (A4) • **Having to explain who was chosen and why –** difficult communication process • Top achievers are **high maintenance people** in attempting to keep them happy as they want more (A5) • Coach talent on derailers that could potentially limit them • They are smart cognitively but they need social skills • Talented must have strong interpersonal skills • Talent must be portrayed as role models to inspire others • Talent must also grow other people • They need to bring other people up with them • Must be able to relate to others • Talented are in the spotlight and are obliged to be an example • Not be self-centered (A8) • Be ethical and teach, share and grow others • Talented have to avoid derailing behaviors • It's difficult to create a clear concrete or defined career path, with timelines and dates • There is no commitment plan in career management • Excellent international training but no learning contract, follow up on training through a discussion and holding a talented person accountable for implementing training • Training not leveraged after it happens (B2)
Politics	• HR value not appreciated • Management not recognizing value of HR • HR to move from administration to value adding • HR strategic role is not yet tangible • HR to know the business – economics, information technology and finance • Don't put people **in boxes** and clusters, manage an **individual's uniqueness** (A9) • Balance of not **alienating solid citizens** – look after good performers too, and not only focus on high maintenance of the talented as solid citizens are needed (A3) • **Disclosing** who is on a **talent management** programme is an issue • **HR – custodian of TM –** often the profession in the organization is not seen as **talent** (creates dissatisfaction) • **Talent management –** only extended to functions which directly influence the bottom line – feelings of discontent could arise • **'Them' and 'us' conflict –** those on TM programme • **Elitism concerns –** special people's fear of having to explain who was chosen and why – difficult communication process

	• **HR seen as transactional** by the business (A4) • **HR must** be exposed to strategic business issues – to offer better support • When people are on TM **programme the risk of compromising** morale of those not on the programme is there (A5) • Training around diversity – benefits and variety it brings • Diversity is beyond ethnicity – sexual orientation, age • The workforce profile age is around 34/35 • There are very few if any aging workforce members • Everybody is below forty • This is a fast paced organization (B1) • No exceptions will be made for aging workforce, same expectation for everyone • This is for evolving survivors, high learning, and target driven • The programme can cause a 'them' and 'us' – impact on team morale (B2)
Labor dynamics	• Retention is a key issue – young people stay for two years, we want five years' service • Shortage of African and colored candidates – they are expensive (**diversity**) (A1) • **Retention of diversity** candidate**s – poached** by **competitors** for **high pay** (A3) • **Retention – yes people do get disgruntled in the jobs** • Not always possible to **achieve a career plan** (A4) • In spite of the programme attrition still remains a problem • Skills constraints influence diversity(B1) • Supply of good talent is limited due to skills shortages in the industry (B3) • Staff turnover is a problem • Certain issues impact on job engagement – leadership changes (B4)

4.5.7 Business case for talent management

In this section talent management is not viewed in isolation from the business operations. The importance and necessity of talent management is shared by the participant as a business imperative necessary for continuity and success of the business. The value add of talent management is highlighted below in the sub-themes that arose.

Table 4.19 Focused coding theme 8 - Business case for talent management

Theme: Business case for talent management	Excerpts from interviews and sources
	• It's not just spending money on TM but an investment – (return) • TM does add value – return may be calculated in performance, customer service, success of the business (A9)
Sub-theme: Business case for talent management	
Retention	• Retaining already qualified CAs is a challenge – if they leave we lose skills and knowledge (A1) • Retention **minimizes turnover** • Talented ensure **people supply**, no need to **replace, retrain and pay recruitment fees** ((A5) • Illustrated a cycle of employee motivation through talent management (A8) • Turnover of staff is reduced • Retention is critical to proof against competitor poaching (B2) • Retention secures continued and uninterrupted productivity • The retention success saves the company – recruitment fees, time it takes to train the person before they can be productive • On-boarding time is long and structured because of complexity of the roles • A lot of information is invested into talent – it's not good to lose the information • When a person who understands products, customers and the system leaves it's a major loss • Also they take knowledge and best practice to the competing new employer • Customer satisfaction is compromised when a new consultant deals with the customers (B4)

Sustainability	• 10% of talented are fast-tracked for **future executiveship** – retain skill, future leaders, talent pool and pipeline (A1) • Long-term **sustainability of the business** – **talent pipeline** and supply • **Succession planning** and reflect on success (A4) • Talented are future leaders and must be future focused, create opportunities for future stability of the company • Talented to create competitive advantage (A6) • Organizations need to spend money on the talented people • The business needs the talented and the talented need the business (A9) • TM allows planning for future sustainability (train, develop, plan for future leaders) • Building people capacity • If people do not grow, the organization will also not grow • When people are trained, well managed and retained the results will show in sales, profit, customer relations • It's difficult to quantify value added to business but it's evident (B1) • As people skills grow so do their contribution and adding value • Training of line managers to be better people managers secures retention and thus performance (B2) • Growing and developing people • Innovation to be ahead of competitors (B3) • Knowledge is the organizational intellectual property (B4)
Financial	• TM **brings profit** (A1) • TM **contributes directly** to the **bottom line** • Talented people are **high performers** and their business performance is measurable on a scorecard • They contribute to **financial results, sales targets and profit** (A5) • Talented contribute to value add and growth • TM can add value when properly managed (A6) • Achievement of financial targets (A8) • Return against money spent (A9) • High performers impact the bottom line and thus add value to the organization (B1) • It's a long-term investment and not an expense (B4) • Talent management adds value to the bottom line
Productivity	• Performance management is **aligned to business goals** (finance, sales, customer relations). People are coached, trained **to achieve business results** • Talent does work for our **clients** as we **sell time**, **knowledge, service** (A1) • TM must be **linked to strategy** and **support delivery** of strategy • Talent must improve the company, bring solutions, improve operations, quality and give back by performance (A5) • Talented to take ownership of projects • Outcomes of talent performance and contribution must be obvious (A6) • Productivity and high performance • When people are well-nurtured, they are productive, meet targets and budgets (A8) • High performers are rewarded and encouraged adequately • Performance output is directly linked to rewards • Right behaviors are enforced – customer relations, profit, quality rewarded and recognized (B1) • Performance measures which are a part of the talent selection criteria drive behavior • Behavior to perform in this area – contribute strategically, tactically and operationally • Winning the market share • Driving customer satisfaction • Growing the revenue • There is a return on investing in training in the form of high performance • The organization makes learning mandatory and compulsory • Learning is rewarded in the organization, as it is fast paced and everything changes fast (B3)
Quality work	• Reason for TM is **to capitalize on knowledge** they acquire • A **value derived** from TM must be defined and articulated (A1) • The question is do we have **knowledgeable and motivated** people? • Talent must be held accountable for investment in the programme • In retaining talent you can retain your customers and profitability (A5) • The more knowledgeable one is of the customers' account it becomes critical to keep them on the customers' account • Clients do see when an employee is not happy in the job • Job dissatisfaction impacts motivation and quality of work • An unhappy employee compromises customer engagement and professionalism (A9) • We make money from consulting with clients – knowledge is critical • In interacting with customers, knowledge plays a critical role • People need to be trained, updated and given knowledge to provide quality service to

| | customers |
| | • Soft skills and coaching does impact on the bottom line (B3) |

4.5.8 Optimizing talent management

The participants shared their views on how to further enhance and improve current talent management practices by applying sophisticated measures relating to marketing and communication skills. In other words, talent management needs to be packaged attractively to appeal to the relevant audience.

Table 4.20 Focused coding theme 9 – Optimizing talent management

Theme: Optimizing talent management	Excerpts from interviews
	• Decide on what the business needs and future plans for talent • By proper needs assessment for TM programme the solution can be tailormade • Design and develop talent strategy • Proper forecasting of talent needs and requirements (A9) • Clear criteria on talent review process • Create credibility through criteria of the process • Ensure that there is diversity in the programme • Do not put people in a box (B2) • Work hard on ensuring career advancement and good management to retain talent • Paying market-related salaries is critical • Psychometric assessment may be utilized to provide accurate identification of potential • Social networks are critical – to discuss current business problems and topics • Sharing of work/business learning is critical • Having guest speakers to address the talented on a specific topic (B3)
Sub-theme: Optimizing talent management	
Employer branding	• Improve employer branding through recruiters • Keep **employer branding** internally and externally – **attraction issue** (A1) • **Recruiters must sell the brand correctly** (A3) • **Branding** is critical both internally and externally – what people have (A4) • Talent as brand ambassadors must advertise both internally and externally (role models) • Improve internal firm's branding (A6) • Employer branding must be consistent – internally and externally • Ensure consistency in what is communicated with people • The TM programme must be working with internal people (A9) • A strong need to market the employer brand to attract talent (B2) • Line management should be trained to be better managers • Communication on EVP is not enough, much can be done to market the employer brand • Internal branding is critical • An organization must be a market leader, be first to innovate to attract talent (B4)
Employee value proposition	• Investing in **bursary and educational development** initiatives to develop African CAs – **talent pool creation** • We need to fix **value proposition** when recruiting • Not sell what we think person wants to hear – **value proposition** • **Value proposition** – know what the person wants, status, money, achievement or values (A2) • **Define culture –** EVP purposes, people know what to look for (A3)
Sourcing and attraction	• **Recruiting – assessments** are used – **personality and cognitive** • Recruiting – by **internal employee referrals** – give **bonus** for successful recruiting (1) • **Diversity and inclusive**ness is critical (A5) • Create and attract talent pools wanting to **live the vision and are passionate** • Strategic leadership is required in attracting talent (A9)

Marketing and communication in HR	• Too **modest in marketing** our organization – need to improve **image** (A1) • **Branding –** to sell culture – people-centric, nice people, family oriented, not arrogant, not snotty, tough managers but nice. We undersell our brand. • **Selling and marketing –** we miss out if we don't sell our people-oriented culture, interaction. Other companies are arrogant, stuck up and difficult (A2) • Long-term liaison and relationship building with talent • Use feedback on success of development programmes (A9) • More visibility must be created about 'stars in the business' • Brand talent programme as prestigious • Make known who is in the high potential pool • Create a criteria known to all about the programme – be strength-based (B2)
Customer centricity	• When recruiting be attentive to **individual needs** • People are **not a number** – humanness in dealing with people is critical • Recognize people are different (A5) • Treat talented as you would treat a client • Use a customer-centric model in dealing with employees • Treat employees as you would customers (A9)
Climate assessments	• People leave the organization and then come back (**good environment**) • Retention **risk assessment** by conversation with coaches (A1) • Assess engagement – energy and drive to look forward to the job • Engagement – emotional connectedness to the job • Engagement – intention to stay – love the job, peers, company, pay • Commitment to stay with organization • Signs of disengagement – frustration • Discretionary effort disappears • Not engaged - not willing to go the extra mile • Will only do what the job requires • Holding back and pulling away • Retreat • Not engaged - will no longer actively participate • Talent management – is aspiration, loyalty, ability and performance • They are engaged to the organization • They stand out, are motivated and energetic (A7) • Evaluate talent management programmes • Capture learning of what works or is not working (A9)
Continuous improvement	• Create **rich pools** of talent (A1) • **Study best practices** (A2) • TM must **be measured, implemented and defined** • **TM success** must be rewarded • Talent can be **forecasted** • **Profile talent needed – to meet strategic objectives** • **In designing TM –** consult talented people, assess what they want • **Review and improve** the layout of the programme continuously • **Assess if** the programme is still relevant or needs updating • What is working and why is it not working? (A4) • Have a **generic approach** to TM but **one size does not fit all** • Have a well-defined approach to TM strategy yet still be flexible • Avoid extreme cases of **looseness or rigidity** and yet be **open-minded** (A5) • It is critical to define TM programme standards • What is required in the programme? • Critical competencies, skills (A6) • Consistent measures to decide who qualifies for the programme • Ensure that TM is realistic and objective • TM is sustainable – funding, time, people commitment • Avoid being too idealistic about the programme, deliver on fundamentals • Don't create hype of yet another flavor of the month, however, retain realistic excitement for branding and EVP (A7) • The programme can be improved by executing the management skills learned • Top management support is critical for success • Consistency around career and succession management (B1)

4.5.9 Career life stages

The focus of this section is to assess and determine talent management needs at various career life stages. In other words, what talent management interventions are needed for talent

at various career life stages/cycles? This is extremely important as a blanket approach and one-glove-fits-all approach to talent management delivery must be avoided.

Table 4.21 Focused coding theme 10 – Career life stages

Theme: Career life cycles	Excerpts from interviews and sources
Sub-theme: Career life cycles	
Early career	• **Early career** – upon graduation may **need money**, vehicle finance – **benefits scheme** (A2) • **Early career** talent needs structured learning interventions (A4) • Provide **structured training with high content** • **Coaching and guidance** is critical • Continuous **training opportunity** is critical as the young are curious about learning • **Work-life balance** is critical – as they love sports and social activities • Involve the young in **social responsibility** projects • Allow them to **organize functions and team-building activities** • Allow **flexi work time** – upon delivery of performance • **Health and lifestyle center subsidies** as they are health conscious • **Remuneration** is a huge issue • Provide both **work and fun** • **Managers** managing them must be **open-minded and flexible** • Provide **technology driven work** tools and equipment • Give them technology driven projects • Utilize them in **innovation, creative and interesting** projects • Provide opportunities for **experience, coaching and learning** • Give them **performance feedback** • Prepare them to develop **technical and supervisory/managerial** skills • They are super intelligent and **think they can do a lot more than they can** • They may have ability, however, they are **lacking in experience and life skills** • Most of them **lack streetwise survival skills** as their parents provided for them • Assess **emotional readiness** when promoting • **Coach for more EQ skills** – develop ability to handle pressure, difficulty (A5) • **Manage expectations and ambition realistically** • Assess what they aspire for • To students financials are big • They may have student loan • Car finance is another consideration • Survival and hygiene factors are a priority • Need financial freedom (A7) • The degree of complexity of training depends on the job, and the level of the individual • The training may be for leadership development, or management development (advanced, core, fundamental) • A role determines a set of competencies required and what needs to be developed • Learning solutions are structured per need and level of the job • There is a graduate development programme • Young talent programme (given exposure) • Future managers programme • Talent is identified early in the career in order to be groomed (B4)
Mid-career	• At this stage they are driven **by status, position and money** • Family and marriage are also a priority in some cases • **Remuneration** is a key driver – **pay competitively** • Assess their **career expectations**, goals and aspirations • Provide opportunities for **intense stretch goals** • Provide opportunities for them **to be coaches and mentors** • Entrust them with **challenging and big work assignments** • Provide **networking opportunities** • **Recognize success** and projects done well • Provide **overseas opportunities** or **leading a business unit** • **Executive development** opportunities • Coach on **EQ and leadership skills** • Continue with **performance coaching** in various projects they embark on (A5) • Strategic development initiatives • They aspire to self-actualization • Financials are sorted, however, still important • Purpose, value and role satisfaction is critical

	• Additional responsibility and stretch assignments • Project stretch • Cross-functional work assignments • Technical specialty • Increase in accountability • Afford opportunity to be mentor and coach • Allow them to lead others • Create meaningful work (A7)
Late career	• **Late career** talent can contribute by sharing knowledge and experience with the young and inexperienced • **Late career** – the programme focuses on young people because they can leave • **Late career** – are ignored as they tend to be loyal • **Late career** – could contribute by becoming coaches and mentors A4) • Utilize **aging** workforce as **consultants and business advisors** • **Ease off the pressure**, goals and time • They have **knowledge and can be advisors** • **Recognize** their wisdom • Let them **enjoy the limelight profile** – in doing the activities • **Involve them in project planning** and to give input in **challenging business cases** • Ensure they have **adequate work-life balance** – consider **health issues** • If they are retired they may be consulted to do **short-term projects** • Structure their roles around **training, workshops and knowledge transfer** • Utilize them as **coaches to talented** employees needing **experience** • Offer them **training relevant to their jobs** to enrich and update them • Ensure that their **technical skills** stay updated • **Treat them well with appreciation** • Do **not write the aging workforce off** • Involve them **in meetings** and **business updates** • **Retirement counseling** and **coaching** • Life coaching on **lifestyle adjustment** to **prepare for retirement** (A5) • Create meaningful work • Opportunity to share knowledge and skills • Good to allow them to assist where there are business problems and complex things • They have a maturity and stability in approaching business and dealing with people • They are a voice of reason – let them be recognized for that • Retention is critical to contain knowledge and wisdom • Grey-haired gurus can add values and contribute when allocated to right projects • Consulting roles ideal and project advice • Input to turnaround strategies • Let them coach and mentor the young • Teach vision, persistence and motivate the young (A7) • There are no older people in the organization. Average age is 35. • If they worked here it would be expected of them to put in the same effort, fast pace and contribution • There will be no preferences due to age (B4) • We don't have aging workforce in the company • If we had aging workforce they would be treated the same way (B1)

4.6 Process of data analysis: Theoretical coding (development of the initial framework)

In more sophisticated studies, themes, according to Cresswell (2009), can be connected into a storyline and developed into a theoretical framework. The main purpose for collecting and analyzing the data is to ultimately develop a comprehensive talent management framework for companies in the private sector. In this stage of the research and data analysis I have to find approaches and methods that can assist me in transforming and evolving the data into a talent management framework. Nieuwenhuis (2012) explained that once the analysed data is structured, the researcher needs to develop a visual representation of the categories. There are various approaches for visually presenting the categories. However, the outcome should

result in a structured category system based on what emerges from the data and can be incorporated into a model, theory or framework.

Buzan (1989) iterated that text is a useful vehicle for presenting information, but often pictures can perform the same task more succinctly.

In the paragraphs to follow I will share diagrams that I developed after the data analysis in order to illustrate the relationship and connections I discovered between concepts, themes and sub-themes.

4.6.1 Summary of the contents of talent management

The diagram below (diagram 4.1) gives an indication of the progression of steps towards visualisation of the anticipated talent management framework. The overall impressions from the data analysis indicated talent management as part of the employee life cycle, starting with recruitment, then deployment, development, engagement and ultimately retention of talent. This diagram has deductive elements (priori literature, and pre-set semi-structured questions such as: 'What does the content of talent management entail?' used to illicit responses from research participants), while inductive elements of the diagram arose from the data content, more specifically the focused theme titled talent management programme content. Not all the identified concepts were incorporated into the diagram as this was an attempt to capture and visualize what the data communicated to me as researcher at the time. Basit (2003) argued that qualitative data analysis is a rather dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising. Furthermore, the researcher attempts to gain a deeper understanding of what they have studied and continuously refine interpretations of the data.

The diagram contains the following labeled boxes:

Recruit
Employer brand
Value proposition
Attraction
Selection
Job offering
Induction

Deploy
Job structuring/design
Grading
Performance measurement
Skills development
Competency acquisition
Knowledge management
Job enrichment

Retain
Recognition & rewards
Remuneration & benefits
Employee wellness
Career pathing
Succession planning

Talent Management

Develop
Learning and development
Coaching
Leadership development

Engage
Quality supervision
Ethical leadership
Organizational values
Communication
Social affinity

Diagram 4.1 A summary of the contents of talent management

The diagram above provides a summary of the data analysis, more specifically a visual display of the contents of talent management.

4.6.2 Alignment of talent management to business strategy

Miles and Huberman (1984) advised that, where one deals with complex and voluminous data, diagrams can help us to disentangle the threads of our analysis and present results in a coherent and intelligible form. In a sketch or diagram we can readily recognize the virtues of displaying what we know in the most effective manner.

The table below (table 4.22) is a result of working across the data to highlight what is important, and also to best illustrate the interrelationship between the overall environment in which businesses operate, the business' internal environment and the relationship to talent management. Van Tiem, Moseley and Dessinger (2004) illustrated how the model of human performance technology may assist in assessing, analyzing, designing and developing interventions in the organization at process, organizational, systems or human resource level.

I therefore consulted the model of human performance technology to assess how it could help me towards the development of the initial talent management framework.

I considered the steps of human performance technology as follows (Stolovitch, 2001):

1. Analysis of the organizational vision, mission, goals, strategies and values.
2. Environmental analysis and organizational analysis – this step involves analysis of the internal work environment such as people, resources, culture, workflow and internal climate.
3. Business opportunities are analysed to improve performance at organizational, process and job level.
4. Current performance practices are specified and gaps are identified in relation to desired or exemplary performance practices.
5. Cause analysis is conducted to determine what environmental factors enable or are a barrier in the organization.
6. In this step potential interventions are selected.
7. The appropriate intervention is implemented once designed.
8. The final step is evaluation – this entails monitoring and maintaining performance practices.

When I reviewed the eight human performance steps I was constantly mindful of how these steps may be applied to support the design and development of the talent management framework. I therefore aligned the eight steps of human performance technology with the analysed data. Consequently I developed Table 4.22 which illustrates the alignment of talent management to business strategy.

Table 4.22 Alignment of talent management to business strategy

Business environment	Talent management practices (recruit, deploy, develop, engage and retain)	Business case and value add of talent management
1.What are the overall vision, mission, values, goals and strategies of the business	What are the business objectives and goals with regard to talent management? What is the long-term strategy for talent management? How will talent management be aligned to business strategies?	
2. What type of external environment does the business operate in? 3. How does the business operate internally? (organizational, work, worker environment)	What are external competitor talent management practices? How does the internal environment and climate impact recruitment, deployment, development, engagement and retention of talent?	
4. How does the business perform against set performance targets (budgets, profits)	What is our performance regarding talent management best practice? What is the actual performance target to achieve value adding talent management practices? What is the business case for talent management?	**Organizational:** Creativity Profit Customer care
5. What are barriers and enablers of business performance?	What are barriers to value adding talent management? What are enablers to talent management implementation? 1. Recruitment process 2. Deployment 3. Development 4. Engagement 5. Retention	Continuous improvement Safety Quality
6. How will all the functions in the business be aligned (procurement, sales, marketing, finance, legal and talent management) to ensure synergy?	How are talent management practices going to be implemented? Recruitment (attract, employer branding, selection and induction) Deployment (job structuring, performance management, competency and assessment review) Develop (learning and development, leadership development, coaching and mentoring) Engage (quality supervision, organizational values and culture) Retain (remuneration and benefits, grading systems, work-life balance, succession planning, recognition and rewards)	Cost savings Learning organization Talent retention benefits **Individual:** Career development
7. Implementation of talent management practices and change management	Best practice standards implementation. Senior management held accountable for implementation. Talent management policy communication and implementation guidelines.	Personal growth Job satisfaction
8.Evaluation of success of business practices: (organizational impact, effectiveness of talent management practices, rate or return on investment, lessons learned)	Are talent management practices effective and achieving intended results? Is there return on investment? Lessons to be learned? Further recommendation to improve talent management practices?	

The table above highlights that talent management resides within a business, and without a successful and well-functioning organization/business, talent management is not going to succeed. Furthermore, I attempted to highlight the potential benefits and value add of talent management to the business. The reader will notice that certain sentences in the table appear in question form, indicating that I was asking practical questions as a researcher so as to reflect on what the data were communicating in relation to constructing a talent management framework in a business context.

4.6.3 Interrelationship between talent management concepts

The more I reflected and thought about the data, the more I realized that I had encountered many concepts, ideas, and insights related to talent management. I then embarked on a process of developing a matrix to indicate the interrelationships between various concepts. Dey (1993) indicated that diagrammatic displays are not just a way of decorating our conclusions, but they can also provide a way to reach them. Diagrams are especially useful when we have to think through such complexities as the relationships between themes and categories, and ways in which processes permeate the data. By trying to construct diagrams we can force ourselves to clarify the main points in our analysis and how these interrelate.

The interrelationship between talent management concepts are presented in a matrix(see table 4.23), with the letters of the alphabet indicating the following: (O) indicates no relationship, or less strong relationship; (Y) indicates a strong and significant relationship; while (YY) indicates a highly significant and very strong relationship between the concepts.

Table 4.23 Interrelationship between talent management concepts

CONCEPTS	Organis. strateg	Talent mana	Talent	Recruit/sel	Attract	Capability	Deploy	Develop	Engage	Retain	Assessme	Performance	Remunerat	Recognitio	Career plan	Succession	Coaching	Learning & d	Leadership	Employer bra	Employee valu	Technology	Climate/cu	Supervision
Organis. strat	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Talent manage	Y	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y
Talent	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y
Recruit/select	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	0	0	Y	Y	0	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Attract	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y
Capability	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Deploy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Develop	Y	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	YY	YY	Y	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY
Engage	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	YY	Y	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY
Retain	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	YY	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	YY	YY	YY
Assessment	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	0	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	0	Y	Y	Y
Performance	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	0	0	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remuneration	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	0	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0	Y	Y	0	Y	Y
Recognition	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	0	0	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y
Career plan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y
Succession	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y
Coaching	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	0	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y
Learning & de	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	0	Y	Y
Leadership	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	0	Y	Y
Employer bra	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	Y	YY	YY	Y	YY	Y	YY	YY
Employee valu	Y	YY	YY	Y	YY	Y	Y	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	Y	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	YY	Y
Technology	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	0	Y	Y	Y	0	0	Y	Y	Y	0	0
Climate/cultu	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y
Supervision	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	YY	YY	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YY	Y	0	Y	Y

There are many more concepts in the matrix that are interrelated than those that are not. I found that a matrix succeeded in illustrating the degree of relatedness and connectedness of the concepts much more clearly and precisely. All the concepts reflected in the matrix were selected from the data.

4.6.4 Initial talent management framework

At this point I was progressing towards the theoretical coding process, which is defined by Glaser (1978) as theoretical tools for conceptualising how categories and codes generated from the data may relate to each other as a hypothesis to be integrated into a theory. Theoretical codes give integrative scope, a broad picture and new perspective. Charmaz (2006) indicated that theoretical coding helps to tell an analytic story that has coherence. Holton (2007) identified theoretical coding as the identification and use of appropriate theoretical codes to achieve an integrated theoretical framework for the overall grounded theory. Diagram 4.2 below outlines the initial talent management framework.

External Environmental Analysis

Economics, legal systems,

technological developments,

social and cultural variables,

politics and competition

Internal Organizational Analysis

Reporting relationships

Resources tools, equipment, finance

Information systems

Work structuring and design

Leadership practices

Culture and work behaviors

Business Strategy

Mission, vision,

goals and business objectives

Financials

Customers

Employees

Products/Services

Marketing Strategy (HR)

Internal and external communication, branding

Sought-after employer

Media publications

Educational; and industry involvement

Recruitment agency partnering

Talent researching

Information Technology (HR)

Reporting, analytics

Workforce profiling

Competence matrix

Talent planning & budgeting

E-recruitment

E-learning

Evaluation

Climate surveys

Business performance

Return on investment

Talent retention statistics

Lessons learned

Continuous improvement

Talent and capability pool

Attract	Source	Deploy Transition	Grow Develop	Reward Recognize	Engage Retain
Communication Marketing Employer branding Employee value proposition (EVP) Advertising	Assessments Job profiling Interviewing Appointment	On-boarding Competency Acquisition Performance management Mobility process	Coaching Mentoring Assessments Feedback Leadership Development Stretch projects Growth Experiences	Remuneration Benefits Incentives Bonuses Awards Celebrations	Succession planning Career pathing Networking Talent reviews Retention Assessments

Diversity- Flexibility- Early, Mid- and Late Career Suitability

HR Activities

Climate surveys

Payroll administration

Work force planning

Training

Policies

Recruitment

Wellness programme

Employee life cycle management

Role players

- Human resources
- Management
- Talented candidates

Talent DNA Segmentation

Potential
Ability
Competence
Performance
Values/Ethics
Leadership
Management
Achievement
Driven

Level of engagement

Early career -
Professional specialist development
Basic management skills

Mid-career
Executive development
Advanced management and leadership development

Late career
Professional knowledge updates/ conferences
Knowledge transfer projects
Optimize as coaches and mentors

Diagram 4.2 The initial talent management framework

The initial talent management framework has been presented above. The initial framework

was developed from the data (inductively) and the priori literature study on talent

management as well as the human performance technology model discussed above. Following the steps shown above, is the testing and verification of the proposed framework by the research participants from the companies selected for the study (see practical data analysis part 2).

4.7 Summary of practical data analysis – Part 1

In this first part of the chapter I have presented the data that was collected from the research participants. My efforts to analyze the data through analytic induction and grounded theory are captured. The demographic data and profiles of the participants are presented, as well as the overall brief observations about the two companies. The initially developed talent management framework is introduced without too much elaboration, as further testing and verification of the framework still needs to be carried out in the second part of the chapter.

Practical data analysis: Data verification – Part 2

4.8 Orientation to practical data analysis and verification

In this second part of the chapter I purpose to test the initially proposed talent management framework with the research participants from Company A and B. The data analysis process, being analytic inductive in nature, requires further interviews, observations and the collection of documentary evidence. This section is a continuation of Chapter 4, and it advances the data analysis process from the development of the theoretical codes towards testing the validity of the emerging theory or hypothesis. Rolfe (2006) describes the process of ascertaining the validity/credibility of qualitative research as conducting member checking (returning to the research participants following the data collection process) and making use of an experienced specialist to relook at the data to ensure that the researcher has analysed it correctly.

4.9 Testing of the initial framework

The data collection process was conducted through follow-up interviews, observations and the collection of relevant documents on the 2nd of April 2013. The ultimate purpose was to validate and confirm the proposed talent management framework. Additionally I purposed to triangulate the data that was collected in 2010. Kisely and Kendall (2011) asserted triangulation as a process and strategy of ensuring trustworthiness. The researcher may gain full insight into the complexity of the phenomenon by obtaining information from multiple sources and in multiple ways, e.g. through documentation, interviewing new people, and observation. Additionally, triangulation also happens when data is collected at different times. In this study I achieved triangulation by conducting follow-up interviews at different times, using different sources of data such as documents and interviewing people who were not involved in the initial interview in 2010. El-Kafari (2006) identified two types of triangulation, namely data triangulation or methodological triangulation. Data triangulation may be face-to-face interviews, documentation and observation.

The initially proposed framework was electronically mailed to the identified participants two weeks before the confirmed appointment date. In the electronic mail I had stated that the research participants needed to read and give input about the initial talent management framework. The specific questions I posed were:

- What is missing in the framework?

- What should be added?

- What should be removed?

- Does the framework cover relevant themes in the practice of talent management?

I deliberately sent the framework ahead of time to allow the participants to read it, understand, and reflect thoroughly. It was intended that through pre-reflection on the information the participants could make well-considered input to the interviews.

4.9.1 Sources of data

The sources of data collection were as follows:

- Four one-on-one interviews with participants from Company B

- One interview with a participant from Company A

- Seven documents from Company A

- One document from Company B

4.9.2 Observations and impressions about Company B

I arrived at Company B 20 minutes before the first interview. Immediately upon entering the building I felt a sense of warmth and happiness. The friendly receptionist offered me a seat in the reception area which felt like a living room in a luxury home. A few of the things I had noticed were a large panel screen showing company documentaries as well as the company logo and brand. There were many pictures on the wall reflecting social responsibility projects that the company had undertaken.

Most of these community projects reflected how the company had used their core competencies, namely technology, as a way to invest in the development of poor communities.

The décor and the design of the reception was a blend of corporate, homeliness and techno-modernity. The 'Best Employer' trophy was displayed in a glass cabinet together with other accolades. A minute before the interview was scheduled the receptionist came to collect me to the meeting room which had been allocated for the interviews.

I was feeling blessed and appreciative of the fact that despite the busy schedules of the participants from middle and senior management levels, they had agreed to partake in the research.

4.9.3 Observations and impressions about Company A

I had arrived for the one confirmed interview in the later part of the afternoon. I was rushed in that I had to drive from Company B to Company A in the north of Johannesburg. Despite it being a short distance between the two sites, the heavy traffic extended the journey. I arrived at reception and quickly recorded my details with security, while I was trying to catch my breath. I was asked to wait in the reception area where many internal publications were displayed on the stand. I started browsing through the material while waiting for the participant to arrive. The décor and design were the same as in 2010; not much had changed.

The research participant arrived to collect me after I had waited almost five minutes. We moved into the coffee area where all the company's meetings take place. On this particular day the coffee area was not as busy as it was when I had arrived in 2010. Most things still looked familiar. Almost immediately we got into the interview.

- **Biographical details of the participants from Company A and B**

Table 4.24 Biographical details of the participants from Company A and B

Date of interview	2/04/13	2/04/13	2/04/13	2/04/13	2/04/13
Years of work experience	10	25	14	17	10
Academic qualification	Degree & Diploma	Degree & Diploma	Post Graduate Degree	Post Graduate Degree	Post Graduate Degree
Management level	Middle	Middle	Middle	Executive	Middle
Occupational category	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist	Specialist
Age range	36-40	46-50	36-40	41-45	30-35
Language	English	English	Zulu & English	English	English
HR Practitioner	X	X	X	X	X
Line management				X	
Talent	X				X
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
Race	Indian	White	African	White	Indian
Participants code	B5	B6 (2)	B7	B8	A10

4.9.4 Profiles and introduction of the research participants

Participant B5

The participant is a beautiful and vibrant lady. She is passionate about community development, education and skills development. Repeatedly she mentioned that the company has a drive to improve technological literacy, especially in impoverished communities and amongst women. A strong recommendation was put forward to rather create early identification of talent in schools. She is interested and is a catalyst for social change towards development of the youth. The participant also added that she would like to see skills development and graduate development programmes represented in the framework. From the start she requested not to be tape-recorded and her wish was respected.

Participant B6 (2)

The participant was interviewed in the initial round of interviews in 2010 and was represented with the code B1.

The participant had progressed and moved into a new role with a global focus.

She looked at the proposed framework and said to me 'You have done well with this framework'. The participant was still eager to offer information and partake in the study. Her main passion was about promoting a career in management, and managers becoming coaches and mentors while they also receive coaching and mentoring themselves. Additionally, she emphasized the company measuring management on key people issues such as retention, team dynamics and overall management effectiveness.

Participant B7

The participant started off by mentioning that the framework was comprehensive, stating that members of leadership have a critical role to play and are the enablers of talent management. She also mentioned that the culture of the organization influences people's decision to stay in the organization and that management capability must be developed to be able to implement talent management components.

Participant B8

This participant is one I would classify as cool and smart. She has been with the company for 13 years. Her approach to giving feedback was strategically focused. This indicated the level she is operating in in her current role. She appreciated the fact that systems thinking was

incorporated into the framework, e.g. strategy, markets, customers. She mentioned that talent requirements are largely influenced by business trends, as market requirements change. She further advised that this model should incorporate Drotter's theory (on levels of management and complexity).

Participant A10

The participant arrived after five minutes of waiting at reception. She appeared to have been busy and absorbed in her work. As I saw her I became nervous that she might cancel or postpone the interview. However, the participant quickly greeted me and mentioned that she has limited time and we need to get to the discussion quickly. The discussion focused largely on defining the desired organizational culture suitable to host talent. The participant quickly asked if we could take a walk to the foyer to see cultural icons which symbolize values which employees defined as desirable. It was an interesting and most creative display. I was allowed to take pictures of the artwork provided that it would not be published. The participant also offered me access to the several publications used for communication to stakeholders. These documents came to be coded and labeled as documents AD1 to AD7. The coding is to be read as follows: A represents the company name, D stands for documentation, and the numeric digits 1-7 represent the document sequence.

It is important to note that Participant A1, who I interviewed in 2010, referred me to Participant A10 as the latter had become responsible for managing the entire organization's talent management processes on a full-time basis. Participant A1 also received the focused coding script and the initially proposed talent management framework to do a check if the themes were relevant and aligned to talent management practices. Participant A1 responded by electronic mail to state that she fully supported the way in which the information was presented. Additionally I have included the details of Participant A10 because she contributed to the discussion. I need to mention that Participant A1 is a gatekeeper and an executive in the organization.

4.9.5 Characteristics of the collected documents

The documents collected were internal publications of the companies for the period 2010 to 2013. The primary purpose of the documents is internal communication to employees, management, customers and other relevant external stakeholders. The information in the

documents reflects day-to-day social, physical, economic and business knowledge. Financial and non-financial information was also reported in the documents.

4.9.6 Process of data analysis: Initial and focused coding

As already mentioned, I conducted the semi-structured interviews without the use of a tape recorder as per the requests of the research participants. I carried a copy of the initially proposed Talent Management Framework and allowed the research participants to make comments on what needs to be included and what needs to be removed from the initially proposed framework. As they responded and shared their insights I carefully wrote down the comments received and ensured that I read these comments back to them to ensure the accuracy of my understanding. Upon arriving home I immediately read through the notes and typed them onto a word processor.

Furthermore, I also read through the seven unsolicited documents that were issued to me to support the study. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) advised that the validity of data can be reached by means of triangulation, through the use of multiple data sources with the hope that they will converge to support a particular theory or hypothesis. The use of interview data and documentation served the purpose of triangulation in this study.

As I read through the documents I found specific sections which supported and reflected talent management practices. The purposive sampling method assisted me in selecting relevant and specific information from the documents. Given (2008) mentioned that purposive sampling signifies a strategic choice about what data is selected and how it is selected. The strategy is influenced by the research objectives. In the collected documents I identified sections of data which were relevant, applicable and answered the research questions relating to talent management. These applicable sections on talent management were highlighted and typed onto a word processor. Separating different themes and clustering similar themes was a step towards initial coding. Once both interview and documentary data had been clustered and grouped based on similarities, I then did some focused coding. Focused coding entailed finding a suitable name/code for the grouped data. Please see Tables 4.25 to 4.38 in highlighting the coding process and identified themes.

- **Theme: Business strategy**

  The main focus of this theme falls on the business context in which a company operates and the strategic and tactical plans which are necessary to deliver services and core products to the customer in order to obtain profits and maintain competitiveness. Furthermore, the focus is also on how talent planning links to the overall business strategy.

Table 4.25 Focused theme: Business strategy

DOCUMENT AD2: Companies need to review their own operations from the top down and align their ambitions and their structures to the present and future outlook. Strategy is about which markets should be targeted for our future growth? How should resources best be allocated? Should these markets be developed through organic growth? Acceleration of market access and reinforcements of expertise and capabilities are critical.

The optimal way to deliver goods and services has to be selected, and also identification of facilities needed to accommodate future growth.

Research, development and innovation are key to ensuring that the business ensures development of right products or services at the right prices for markets that promise the most future growth.

DOCUMENT AD4: Align talent with emerging long-term business needs by increasing varied management skills, background and experience. Seek strategic hires to fill gaps at speed and acceptable costs.

PARTICIPANT B6: Align talent process with business rhythm. There must be timelines for delivering talent management key performance indicators.

PARTICIPANT B7: System theory is related. External factors affecting talent are considered. Systems model has been applied (business strategy and external factors and talent strategy).

PARTICIPANT B8: Systems thinking (used in framework). Business strategy is mentioned. Changes in the market. How it affects talent pools. Customer needs to play an important role. External environment (global markets and talent). Local talent is considered. Balance between international and local talent.

PARTICIPANT B8: Values are important and need to be mentioned.

- **Theme: Talent strategy**

  This theme's key focus is on the importance of developing a strategic approach to talent management as opposed to a short-term reactive approach. The activities of forecasting talent are elaborated by the sub-themes of skills forecasting and talent forecasting.

Table 4.26 Focused theme: Talent strategy

DOCUMENT AD1: Recognizing that proactive human resource programmes may be required to get good employees on board in the quest for speed and flexibility.

DOCUMENT AD7: It's important to align talent strategy to business needs by doing the following:

Using greater communication, transparency and employee involvement to retain talent.

Seeking strategic hires to fill skills gaps.

Reassessing management of succession.

Using innovative incentives to retain talent.

Linking remuneration to both risk management and value creation.

Re-skilling the workforce to respond to business model changes.

Improving transparency and frequency of communication with external stakeholders.

Reassessing leadership and management experience, skills and diversity.

Implementing workforce mobility.

Improving diversity.

Sub-themes: Skills forecasting

DOCUMENT AD2: Do senior executives have the right balance of skills and expertise? Should new directors with expertise be appointed? Should the executives be given more say in the strategic direction of the company, or more autonomy?

DOCUMENT BD1: Social responsibility (skills development at community level).

Employees are supported with facilities, equipment and technology to empower the communities through education. Technology usage skills are delivered to under resourced communities.

PARTICIPANT B5: Focus on skills shortages in the South African market. Strategy – Link be made to social corporate responsibility. Begin at schools. Address challenges of diversity and inclusiveness.

Ensure correct diversity representations. At global level, female diversity is limited.

There is a limited number of females, especially in the rural areas involved in information technology. It is critical to provide access of technology to schools in the rural areas.

Owing to poverty, people do not develop information technology skills.

The more people experience technology the more they can develop technical skills.

Culture in homes –how girls are treated in homes, not encouraged to use information technology, especially kids from previously disadvantaged homes.

Only rich kids from private schools in Sandton are exposed to technology.

The company has a strategy to ensure that there is wide access to technology such as smartphones, laptops, and iPods. Youth unemployment is high and we need to empower the youth, thereby educating the nation.

PARTICIPANT B5: Attraction of talent by going to schools. Talking to the girls to select careers in technology-related fields. We

want to go to Soweto. Interest is in more impoverished schools. Career stories of successful employees are shared with the girls.

Sub-theme: Talent forecasts

PARTICIPANT B8: Talent forecasts, what we need as future capability – is reflected in the framework. It's important to forecast talent correctly (capability, based on business needs). This must be done with speed/agility in a new and creative way. Consumer insights change, dynamics are consumer-centred business models and focus changes. Competencies required will be affected by changes in the markets too.

- **Theme: Talent success profile**

  This theme purposes to define and profile talent, and answers the questions of what talent looks like and how talent behaves.

Table 4.27 Focused theme: Talent success profile

PARTICIPANT B6: Talent is determined by: performance, career aspirations, more rapid growth desire, talent can be a manager or individual contributor. Guidelines to who is in the talent pool is based on – strong performance, capability, ability to grow quickly, potential, how they learn and assimilate knowledge and information, fit to the roles. Aspirations – do they want to grow, are they flexible and have mobility, also ambition, and want to grow. Commitment – they are committed to the business, can go the extra mile.

PARTICIPANT B8: Talent – defining mobility, agility, flexibility, potential, learning agility and learning of new things – attributes of talent. Ability to experience different things, do various and different projects overseas. Qualifications are not critical. Potential, intellect and proven record count more than qualifications.

- **Theme: Grow and develop**

The theme grow and develop provides most progressive and robust ways of how to train and develop people. This is beyond usual theoretical classroom learning, but focuses on coaching, mentoring and structuring on-the-job learning.

Table 4.28 Focused theme: Grow and develop

DOCUMENT AD1: Broadening the workforce skills, equipping their teams to be more productive through training, mentoring and sharing knowledge, and improving their internal communication. Employers provide customized training and development.

DOCUMENT BD1: Focus remains on developing leadership qualities within the top talent through a variety of training, mentorship and role-based opportunities irrespective of title. Each employee is encouraged to develop key leadership qualities.

PARTICIPANT B5: Skills development programme – graduate development. We take students to the business and train them, also give them a salary. The job creation project is done in collaboration with government. Africa strategy is to make the smartphone accessible. Plan is to focus on training and development. We train university students for 18 months through the academy.

PARTICIPANT B5: Development programme (graduates). There is a structured 3-months induction where they get trained on what they need to do, E.g. sales skills, organizational skills, communication skills, product training, soft skills, conflict skills, influencing ability, impact course etc. On-the-job training – they get paired up with a buddy or peer. They still have a supervisor/manager who trains them.

Learning is 70% on the job, 10% classroom training, and 20% coaching (peers/mentors).

PARTICIPANT B5: Mobility exposure assignments (development). They travel to Europe, Africa, Middle East.

Networking is important to build relationships. The programme is discipline specific. They learn experientially. They may conduct role plays, case studies and simulations.

PARTICIPANT B5: Career development and coaching occurs / communication. 360 degree assessments are conducted. This is done to help them think about their future in the company. Case studies are done and brain storming sessions are held.

PARTICIPANT B6: Focus on talent strategy should focus on manager excellence. People must be attracted to a career in management. Career can be individual contributor, or manager development framework – career.

PARTICIPANT B6: Manager capability development: There are levels of managers: manager of others, manager of managers – the development framework makes a distinction between the two. The two paths have and require different skills sets. Managers are measured on mandatory and commitment outputs. There are specific criteria for managers, and the training is related to skills sets needed for their performance. Training can be online, or they travel to a specific location, in other words, the classroom.

PARTICIPANT B6: Mentoring and coaching is also used. Managers need a mentor and a coach, but they must also mentor and coach a junior employee. Key talent pool has to be mentored and coached as well. Management capability to support talent.

PARTICIPANT B8: Development – key talent programme has a development element and rewards. Refer to Drotter's model (developing managers where they are in the level). There are individual contributors and managers – so development depends on role complexity.

PARTICIPANT A10: Grow and develop - knowledge communities on the intranet on specific areas/skills. These are knowledge groups on a specific topic in-house, would post articles, comments on a specific topic of interest or project. People can connect on the basis of common interests. It's part of capability building.

PARTICIPANT A10: Graduate development programme is important

PARTICIPANT B8: Development creates engagement.

Theme: Performance management

Performance management is about allowing talented employees to take ownership of strategic elements they are directly responsible for achieving. The process allows improvement of performance and the setting of stretch goals to keep the talented employee focused and adequately challenged.

Table 4.29 Focused theme: Performance management

DOCUMENT AD1: Placing greater emphasis on empowering local decision making, as we need to encourage employees to innovate without active management intervention. High performing companies are more likely to identify talent as one of the critical factors for determining future competitiveness. Access to talent is a reason to enter rapid growth markets. It's important to sufficiently engage with talent to ensure that you really have the right people and you are getting the full benefit of their energy and expertise.

PARTICIPANT B6: Manager performance and feedback (behavioral and technical competencies). Managers are measured by their teams if they are effective managers or not. They are assessed as to what they should stop doing and also continue to do. Managers

are assessed on – do they do one-on-ones monthly, do they help employee grow careers, do they support teaming, do they enable the team to achieve and grow, do they create a healthy work environment?

PARTICIPANT B8: Manager capability- managers are measured on talent management elements (have they retained, attracted, developed talent?). Strength of a manager is rated. Manager receives feedback on how they manage people.

Theme: Talent reviews

Talent reviews are necessary as they encourage and enforce a structured approach to deliberately review talent periodically. Improvements and reconsiderations of decisions on talent can be looked at during review times, as the data is presented and questioned by the review committee.

Table 4.30 Focused theme: Talent reviews

PARTICIPANT B8: Talent review – talent reviews consist of performance review, what you achieved, how it was achieved, the values, and how one adds value back to the business.

PARTICIPANT B8: Mobility – global mobility (2 years in a role); one needs to change and be fluid. Best practices are in place. Smartest people in the company.

PARTICIPANT A10: Talent review – total talent population is on the programme. We look at performance, potential assessment, colleague and manager feedback, 360º assessments, attitude, motivation, clients' feedback, and engagement on the job.

- **Theme: Engage and retain**

  The main focus of the theme falls on elements which assist in retaining and keeping talent engaged in the company and on the job. Aspects identified as important are succession management and job design.

Table 4.31 Focused theme: Engage and retain

DOCUMENT AD4: Provide effective leadership development practices (succession planning, career planning, training, mentoring); build a strong leadership pipeline. Provide alternative innovative incentives to retain critical talent by communication, transparency, secondments, empowerment, flexible work arrangements, and global mobility.

DOCUMENT AD3: High engagement delivers higher retention and improvement of productivity.

Sub-theme: Succession planning

DOCUMENT AD1: High performing organizations are complex and challenging and consequently call for greater skill in their leadership. Importance of leadership is reflected in the strong emphasis on succession planning. Important leadership attributes for successions are:

Can lead in an international business environment, articulates and embodies values and culture of the organization, can command the

respect of colleagues and reports, engages effectively with multiple stakeholders, decisiveness, strikes the right balance between risk taking and caution, has industry expertise, has strong grasp of the financials, is a good risk manager.

PARTICIPANT B6: Succession planning charts - In planning succession, mobility and flexibility of the individual is determined. Succession is usually for roles of directorship, executive levels, and senior roles. Succession management links it to the strategy of the organization.

PARTICIPANT B8: Talent sourcing and succession - Sourcing is 70% internal and 30% external. This is a measure for executing succession management.

Sub-theme: Job design

PARTICIPANT B8: Job design – job specifications are written up capturing the essence of the role. Aspirational elements are considered and built into the role. Meaning is added and also helps people to achieve their aspirations and realize their potential.

- **Theme: Source and recruit**

  This theme recognizes the importance of finding the correctly skilled people through effective methods of recruitment.

Table 4.32 Focused theme: Source and recruit

DOCUMENT BD1: It is important that we continue to ensure that we get the brightest and best people to join us in order to continually reinforce our corporate foundations.

PARTICIPANT B5: Selection and identification of students. Hard to find students. We go to universities in South Africa who offer courses in our field.

PARTICIPANT B5: Assessments in selection: assess the students for selection, assessing the key competencies we need. Methods of assessment are role plays, simulations, presentations, case studies and panel interviews. We give them a topic (e.g. their views on social media, or ask them how they would go about setting up a business). We search for basic skills of presentation, innovation, creativity, leadership, solution creation, flexibility, adaptability, technical knowledge related to our business and acumen.

PARTICIPANT A10: Sourcing and recruiting – role plays, case studies, scenarios, use of assessments tools, skills-specific tools and testing of behaviors.

PARTICIPANT B8: Interview process – interview process is competency-based.

- **Focused theme: Deploy and transition**

  The participants recognize the importance of supporting individuals in their roles to settle into current or new roles, and doing what is necessary to get them to perform and fit into the roles as quickly as possible.

Table 4.33 Focused theme: Deploy and transition

DOCUMENT BD1: We need to focus on capability development. Once we have brought them on board, we need to continue to enable and build on employee capabilities so that we enable growth and make a valuable contribution to the ongoing development of our people and the organization as whole. It is all about making sure that each individual works towards company achievements and goals.

DOCUMENT AD7: We need to strengthen management talent by gaining, retaining and deploying a management team that is capable of addressing the complex market and organizational environment.

DOCUMENT AD3: Building the right local team to activate new operations quickly. Recruiting local marketing and management but also paying greater attention to technical and operational roles.

PARTICIPANT B8: On-boarding – on-boarding is 90 days, has self-paced mode, this is to ensure readiness of employee for the role, job shadowing is a culture.

PARTICIPANT A10: Induction – culture awareness is done in induction. Culture constitutes the values of an organization. The culture is employee selected. This culture defines formulae for success. Accepted behaviors are defined while destructive or limiting behaviors are also outlined visibly. People are recognized for living the values and they are publicly recognized.

Culture contributes towards the retention of people.

- **Theme: Attract**

  The theme addresses tactics to be undertaken to position the company as a desirable employer, in order to attract talented candidates.

Table 4.34 Focused theme: Attract

DOCUMENT BD1: The company brand is already well-positioned in the market, and there is strong awareness of our brand. We are already considered one of the top ten places to work for in the country. The challenge is to maintain the reputation and remain leaders in the space.

PARTICIPANT A10: Attracting - social media is critical in attracting.

PARTICIPANT B8: Branding.

The company brand is powerful and is part of employer branding. Company does not run adverts, but we feature on social media.

- **Theme: Reward**

  Various options are discussed over and above normal salaries, to reward and recognize employees. This extends beyond monetary options.

Table 4.35 Focused theme: Reward

DOCUMENT BD1: Since we want to ensure that we get the best people, they need to be offered the right incentives to join the company and stay with it. Therefore there is a focus on benefits, base pay, shares, performance based incentives and numerous other deal clinchers.

DOCUMENT AD4: Improve the total compensation programme (base salary, incentives, benefits) for effectiveness in recruitment, retaining, motivating and engaging the workforce.

PARTICIPANT A10: Stretch projects are rewards. Mobility assignments are rewards. Promotions are rewards. Examination bonuses for trainees.

Spot rewards – can be movie tickets given by executives, phones, iPods, etc.

- **Theme: Role players**

  The participants recognize the need to keep specific individuals responsible and accountable for talent management. Furthermore, a focus is placed on behaviors and actions required of leadership and management in supporting talent management efforts.

Table 4.36 Focused theme: Role players

Leadership and management

DOCUMENT AD1: Special management skills are needed to maintain the engagement of talent during difficult times in the business cycle.

PARTICIPANT B5: The Y generation has interesting ideas. They think differently. They are not easy to manage. They are high moving and need to be managed differently. Their managers are trained in managing them.

PARTICIPANT B6: Managers can be talent and can also be managers of talent. Twenty per cent (20%) of employees are key talent.

PARTICIPANT B6: Role players - HR supports talent management rhythm with process and audit process. Managers are responsible for running talent management dimensions. Managers are at the coal face. HR helps the managers with guidance.

PARTICIPANT B7: Leadership plays a big role in the process. Leadership capability is important to support. Leadership is an enabler of implementation, and they play a role in planning talent activities. I would recommend leadership to be a standalone – elevated to a high level in the framework. Leadership is to drive talent management. Leadership should set vision for today and tomorrow. Leadership creates value by growing the business. Leaders have to be able to change quickly for impact. Handle economic crises, adapt to the market, consider business factors. Leadership can make or break the business.

PARTICIPANT B7: Management capability

Managers implement and execute talent management activities. Managers enable people to perform. Strong manager is needed.

PARTICIPANT B7: Role players – HR play a critical role.

PARTICIPANT B8: Role players – managers play a key role in review of talent. Executives validate and calibrate talent process/pools.

- **Theme: Evaluation**

Interestingly a need to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of talent management is identified. Evaluation leads to best practice and improvements through reflection.

Table 4.37 Focused theme: Evaluation

Talent scorecard

DOCUMENT BD1: Ensure HR operational excellence through commitment to achieving targets for training and diversity.

PARTICIPANT B6: People matrix and scorecard for talent management. This is to allow senior leadership to measure and audit the talent process. All talent activities that are planned, scheduled and implemented as well as progress have to be reported. Talent reports are critical. Talent matrix can measure diversity, work group health index, performance reviews, attrition rates, succession plans, talent interventions achieved against the plans. It can also measure how effectively people are structured, to eliminate bureaucracy, bottle necks and too many layers of management to ensure there is efficiency and organizational effectiveness.

- **Theme: Internal organizational elements**

Sub-themes such as diversity management, with a specific reference to gender, have been highlighted. Additionally the overall organizational culture is recognized as key to facilitating talent management.

Table 4.38 Focused theme: Internal organizational elements

Sub-theme: Culture

DOCUMENT BD1: Another core pillar is culture - great place to work for concept. It is about creating the right culture and value system; fostering a spirit of winning and ensuring a caring environment. Providing the staff members with an opportunity to work in an environment that enables development and growth.

We want our people to come to work and find it to be an inspirational environment, thereby reducing attrition rates.

DOCUMENT AD6: The organization's culture is values led. External parties recognize this as a core feature of the organization. People demonstrate the importance of the values. Acceptable versus unacceptable values are defined.

PARTICIPANT B7: Culture is an output – it is also important. Culture is how to communicate. Outcomes of culture can be measured in a culture survey. Outcomes from climate survey must be actioned. How the organization should feel is culture. Culture can be performance driven, hard work, people and employee centric culture, care about people, care about the business, people are viewed as intellectual capital. We have specific values and ethics.

Sub-theme: Diversity

DOCUMENT BD1: We need to embrace diversity. We all have a place and a career within the company as there is enough sunshine for everyone. We all have a place and are equally concerned about all staff members.

DOCUMENT AD5: Gender diversity – diversity is measured by tracking a percentage of women executives, utilization of flexible work arrangements, number of women hires and retention of women talent. Senior leadership is held accountable for development

and advancement of women in the organization. The gender diversity strategy promotes:

- Expand and deepen the pool of leadership talent
- Accelerate the movement of women into key leadership positions through structured development, planning and mentoring
- Inspire our women to feel empowered to maximize their own potential
- Promote networking and relationship building
- Increase visibility of role models
- Dispel myths: communicate and inform
- Connect women so they can share strategies and support each other
- Market our activities externally with clients and potential recruits
- The plan for internal forums is to improve career development, creating a supporting network within the firm, skills development, and effective mentoring relationships. External networking is aimed at expanding the network of women professionals as making connections is an important career development tool. Making the difference in communities around us by creating opportunities to support the corporate social initiatives.

PARTICIPANT B6: Diversity – female hiring is a critical issue globally and locally. There is a business case for gender diversity as it enriches the organizational culture and performance.

PARTICIPANT B7: Diversity is important and needs to be visible in the model. Attraction, sourcing, development and performance management of diversity. Diversity needs to be embedded in talent management.

PARTICIPANT B8: Diversity - female diversity is critical as well as inclusion and attraction.

- **Theme: Information technology for talent management**

Reference is made to how to fully optimize technology in supporting talent management processes.

Table 4.39 Focused theme: Information technology for talent management

PARTICIPANT B5: Social media can play a huge role in the talent strategy. Social media is critical to sourcing and brand perception.

PARTICIPANT B8: Information systems – tools for succession management are available. Talent is plotted on a talent chart A database for talent exists. To know which competencies people have. Scenario planning is possible. The tool enables job profiles to be matched with talent competencies: 'hot people hot jobs'. It matches the role to the individual skills. Development needs may be identified and addressed accordingly. The staffing teams update the database regularly.

Data analytics – as it provides a picture of talent available.

In this section I have reflected the data that was derived from the interviews and documentary evidence.

Additionally, I have applied principles of coding (initial and focused) to analyze the data and identify key themes and sub-themes. It is important to note that the content reflects additional

suggestions made by the research participants to add to the initially proposed talent management framework. The purpose of the interviews was to test the framework in relation to the data, and the relevance of the emergent themes to talent management. There were no suggestions to delete or eliminate certain themes, codes and concepts on the proposed model, but rather to add and emphasize specific elements or dimensions.

4.9.7 Theoretical coding

Once the focused coding was completed I had to think about how the new emerging themes would be incorporated into the talent management framework to enhance it based on the documentary data and interview data. Much creativity and practical thinking skills were required to marry the initially developed talent management framework with the new themes/concepts.

4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have illustrated the process followed to validate and verify the initially proposed talent management framework. Semi-structured interviews and unsolicited documents were used as a basis for data collection. Initial coding and focused coding were used to segment the data into emerging themes. The emerging themes will be incorporated into the initially developed framework.

Prior to finalisation of the talent management framework I opted to consult literature related to talent management with the purpose of testing, validating and checking the relevance of data in relation to theory. In the next chapter I will present the literature review related to talent management.

Chapter 5

Talent management: Literature overview

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will focus on the sections of the literature review that I conducted after the data collection and analysis phase (inductive). Though I had also embarked on a brief literature review in the initial stages of the research (deductive), for the purposes of this chapter I will only discuss the findings of the literature review conducted after the data analysis phase. Frankel and Devers (2000) brought to light varying practices concerning the use of literature in qualitative research, in that some researchers believe that a thorough literature review should be conducted at the beginning of the research process (priori), while others believe that existing literature should be reviewed only after the research is underway so that the researchers have an opportunity to gain some understanding of the phenomenon of interest from the research participants' perspectives. More inductively inclined researchers believe that reviewing literature earlier may impede the researcher from truly listening, observing and remaining open to new concepts and ideas.

Wu and Volker (2009) indicated that theory can be applied to qualitative studies at different times during the research process, from the selection of the research concepts to the write-up of the results. In this chapter I will briefly discuss the literature review conducted after the data analysis phase, with the aim of furthering the data analysis and to improve conceptualisation of the talent management framework (inductive). Additionally the literature will assist with checking if there is alignment between the data collected and current formal concepts and theories on the subject of talent management.

In support of the inductive process of research, Goulding (2005) expressed that literature is not exhausted prior to the research, as in many studies. Instead it is consulted as part of an iterative, inductive and interactional process of data collection, simultaneous analysis and emergent interpretation. In other words, theory from the data directs the researcher to appropriate theories and literature that are relevant to the emerging grounded concepts. Nevertheless Glaser and Strauss (1967) indicated that core categories can emerge from the researcher's mind, from his reading, life experiences, research and scholarship. No researcher can erase from his mind all the theory he knows before he begins the research.

Freeman, deMarrais, Preissle, Roulston and St. Pierre (2007) warranted that qualitative research is centred around data but also the use of literature relevant to the study, information by other scholars and other forms of justifiable sources. The legitimacy of research claims depends on how the qualitative researchers use the literature to build arguments. Therefore theory and practice are inseparable. Young, Taylor and McLaughlin-Renpenning (2001) iterate that the interaction between theory and research data is characterized as a mutual dynamic in which research supports theory, while theory evokes research questions.

Goulding (2005) stated the importance of keeping a delicate balance between drawing on priori knowledge while keeping a fresh and open mind to new concepts as they emerge from the data.

It is important to note that I will not be reviewing all the theoretical concepts relevant to the subject of talent management. I have purposefully selected key concepts which will allow further exploration, particularly after the data collection phase. McGhee, Marland and Atkinson (2007) asserted that the crux of the matter in qualitative research is not whether a literature review should be conducted as it must be conducted, but rather when it should be conducted and how extensive it should be.

The available literature will also assist in illuminating the themes and concepts which arose from the data, which will further enrich and enhance the final talent management framework. It appears sensible to me to match the concepts that are provided by the participants with prevailing literature for purposes of validating and verifying relevance and accuracy of the data collected and analysed. Mouton (2004) points out that a literature study can also be organized around a theme or key construct in the study, or central themes of the study.

5.2 Talent management: Overview of the literature

The next section will bring to light key aspects linked to talent management, namely:

- **Employer of choice and best company to work for brand**: Flores-Araoz and Furphy (2012) stated that the best employers have high standards of human resource practices and talent management. These employers provide clear career paths, competitive remuneration, safe working environments, and opportunities for growth and development.

- **Employee engagement**: Tucker and Williams (2011) believe that various actions taken at different points of the talent management cycle boosts employee engagement. A robust world-class talent management process puts employee engagement as a mortar to bring together the building blocks of attracting, developing and retaining talent.

- **Organizational culture and values**: Haid, Sims, Schroeder-Saulnier and Wang (2010) are of the view that the shared assumptions and values of how to behave and carry out work activities in the organization must be aligned to the desired culture to achieve business objectives and also support talent and people management practices.

- **Alignment of business strategy to talent management**: Millar, Armstrong and Zoehrer (2007) asserted that every organization relies on a key cluster of talent in order to be able to execute business strategy. Such talented people have strong skills and deep knowledge, and they are in demand in the job market. This reality necessitates good talent management practice.

- **Career life stages and phases:** Cron and Slocum (1986) examined whether the career state that the individual is at influences job attitude and performance. People move through various career stages, therefore human resources and management need to understand behavior patterns of people at early, middle and late career stages. This understanding facilitates better remuneration, career planning, development interventions and job structuring activities.

- **Multiple generational workforce**: The white paper released by the United Nations Secretariat Headquarters (2006) strongly proposed that managing a multigenerational workforce is a challenging art in itself and that understanding the differences between the generations is fundamental in building a successful multi-generational workplace. Each generation has its own socio-economic experiences which shape their preferences, expectations, beliefs and work styles.

- **Stratified systems theory and levels of work and complexity**: Christian (2010) strongly supports the practice of evaluation of role/work complexity, and also assessing the potential talent's capacity and level of thinking and reasoning skills. This will ensure matching the right talent to the right job level.

- **Ethics in talent management**: Kesby (2008) asserted that it is essential that talent and talent management practices are associated with the highest ethical standards of

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fairness, transparency and challenging of the status quo, thereby resulting in the attraction of ethical talent.

Furthermore I reviewed currently existing approaches of talent management, three being national and two being international.

The data (concepts and themes) collected from the research participants are linked and interrelated to the literature content. The literature will hopefully elaborate, support and create a deeper understanding of talent management in a holistic manner. Additionally the literature will help to verify and substantiate the proposed talent management framework initially proposed in Chapter 4. The process followed in incorporating literature is in sync with the analytic induction and grounded theory process discussed in Chapter 3. The initially proposed framework presented in Chapter 4 was built and developed from the data. The framework was verified, tested and triangulated and subsequent to that the literature is used to confirm the framework.

5.3 Key aspects that are linked to talent management

5.3.1 Employer of choice, best company to work for and employer brand

The branding of a company as 'employer of choice' and 'best company to work for' is important in supporting talent management initiatives, as the company will have a reputation of being a great place to work for (Gatherer & Craig, 2010). According to Looi, Marusarz and Baumruk (2004) 'Best Employers' have common criteria for success in their human resource practices. The best employer organizations that sustained their status of employer branding have the following qualities: they have a common focus on the sustainability of employee practices, they focus a lot of emphasis on doing a few core things well, and they have organizational culture that reinforces adaptability. Eight common themes are identified in the Eight common criteria for human resource success table (see table 5.1), these themes were used in the awarding of best employer brands namely inspired leadership, strategic plans that promote best human resource practices, employee communication, performance management, training and development, benefits based on best practice, physical work space and corporate citizenship.

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Table 5.1 Eight common criteria for human resource success (Love & Singh, 2011)

Inspired leadership	Strategic plan that promotes HR practices	Employee communication	Performance management
Leadership fosters and supports a unique culture that provides distinctive working environments. Visible, committed and transparent. Promotes values such as honesty, integrity, respect, collaboration and trust. Core values connect employees by common purpose. They live and breathe the values. Provide ongoing communication with employees. They promote trust, enjoyment and pride in the organization.	Policies and procedures are based on best HR practices. Practices are designed and developed by gathering relevant employee survey data and understanding their requirements and needs. HR benchmarked practices are incorporated in the overall strategic plan.	Communication strategy is based on open, consistent, ongoing two-way communication. Feedback is collected from employees regularly. Provision of information and regular updates regarding the organization's overall business strategy/results. They get employees to provide thoughts, concerns and recommendations on various HR processes.	There is a formal performance management programme. Employees have clear performance objectives and expectations. The competencies and set objectives that cascade down from the strategic plans are provided. Employees feel accountable and own performance. Performance reviews are conducted on a semi-annual and annual basis. Rewards and recognition programmes are implemented for all employees to reward them through intangible and tangible rewards.
Training and development	**Benefits based on best practices**	**Physical workspace**	**Corporate citizenship**
Training and development is promoted. Comprehensive talent management system is in place. Employees are aware of career paths and development plans. Employees are encouraged to enrol in training and development. Succession planning includes training to develop employees to highest potential. Promotion from within is a high priority.	The benefits are flexible and innovative. Benefits meet individual and personal needs. Promotes a safe and healthy environment. Utilize a design that is based on direct feedback from the employees. Have core foundations based on encouraging and promoting work-life balance.	Physical work space is appealing and comfortable. Work stations are ergonomically well structured. There is natural light, lounge areas, subsidized cafeteria, fitness areas, and other amenities.	Corporate citizenship is promoted. An environment is created for employees to value the organization. There is regular sponsorship to the community. There is a concern and focus on the environment. Employees get involved in charity work, volunteering and community development initiatives.

Li and Bryan (2010) emphasized that in the quest to become employer of choice, organizations need to create and sustain a workplace which brings a deeper understanding of elements contributing to the workplace climate. A strong and positive workplace environment is conductive to productivity, customer service and innovation. Furthermore, a healthy environment leads to attraction, retention, and optimal use of top talent for longer tenure and to plan for succession management. Anderberg and Froeschle (2006) viewed an employer of choice as a firm whose employment policies and human resource management practices give it an edge over its competitors in recruiting and retaining appropriately skilled workers and optimising their productivity while maintaining or increasing their profitability and market shares.

4.3.2 Employee engagement

Caplan (2011) persuasively forwards a case for how employee engagement leads to the success of an organization, thereby referring to a study conducted by Towers Perrin in 2005 which looked specifically at the levels of engagement in fifty large international companies and sought to correlate these with positive financial performance. Effron and Ort (2010) suggested that most talent management practitioners believe that increasing engagement achieves the business objectives of improving key financial and operational results. Furthermore, Caplan (2011) claims a link between talent management and employee engagement in that talent management significantly impacts employee engagement, as they have common and similar indicators like employee development, utilisation of employees' capability, etc.

Harter, Hayes and Schmidt (2002) observed in their study that employee satisfaction and engagement are related to meaningful business outcomes at a magnitude that is important to many organizations and that these correlations are generalizable across companies. The term 'engagement' refers to the individual's involvement and satisfaction with, as well as enthusiasm for work. Engagement occurs when individuals are emotionally connected to others and are cognitively vigilant. Maslach, Schaufelli and Leiter (2001) asserted that engagement is characterized by energy, involvement and efficacy, while the direct opposite of engagement is burnout and its dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy.

Factors which influence engagement are personal job satisfaction, job involvement, pride to work for the company, and the emotional and cognitive engagement resulting from knowing what is expected of employees, having opportunities to improve and develop, trusting team members, having what is needed to support their work, and management support. Hewlett (2007) explained that the urgent and ever-present need to attract, retain and fully engage employees can be tackled by allowing employees to tap into altruism where they can derive meaning and purpose at work, in addition to driving business results, e.g. social events, community projects etc.

Furthermore, Harter et al. (2002) indicated that engagement encourages and improves profitability, productivity, turnover, safety, and composite performance. Cartwright and Holmes (2006) recognized that organizations need to address and understand the deeper

needs of employees in order to retain and keep them motivated as talented people demand meaningful work. Individuals need a sense of purpose, efficacy, self-worth and a set of values to provide goodness. As individuals become increasingly disenchanted and disillusioned with work and fatigued by the constant demand to change and to be flexible in response to organizational needs, employers need to actively restore the balance, recognize the meaning and emotional aspects of work and move towards creating a more energised, fulfilled and engaged workforce. This means not only maintaining a sense of balance between needs and values relating to work but also ensuring a wider work-life balance.

Saks (2006) identified the antecedents of employee engagement as follows:

- Job characteristics: this involves psychological meaningfulness which can be achieved from task characteristics that provide challenging work, variety, allow the use of different skills, personal discretion and opportunity to make important contributions.

- Perceived organizational support and supervisor support: psychological safety involves a sense of being able to show and employ the self without negative consequences. A sense of safety stems from the amount of care and support employees perceive to be provided by their organization as well as their direct supervisor.

- Rewards and recognition: when employees feel that the extent of the rewards and recognition they receive from their role is fair, they are likely to engage in the job and in the organization.

- Procedural justice and distributive justice: it is especially important for organizations to be predictable and consistent in terms of the distribution of rewards as well as the procedures used to allocate them.

Based on the above, the factors that address employee engagement also address certain aspects of talent management.

5.3.3 Employee value proposition

Ulrich (2012) asserted that employees who create and contribute value to the organization should get value back from their organization in the form of the employee value proposition (EVP). Bell (2005) views the EVP as a key differentiator of success for organizations competing to recruit, develop, inspire and retain talented people. Best practice is to develop a convincing, credible and competitive EVP which is responsive to the expectations of talent.

Ingham (2006) identified the EVP as an articulation of what is unique and compelling about the organization that would make people want to join and stay. It therefore partly formalises and articulates the psychological contract between the individual and the organization. The following are tangible and intangible factors of the EVP (Ingham, 2006):

- Compensation linked to performance;
- Understanding how they contribute to successes of the company and wanting to make a difference;
- Friendship with good quality colleagues;
- Flexibility in the work-life balance; and
- Job security.

Bell (2005) acknowledges that remuneration is important though it is sometimes over-emphasized compared to other elements. It is most worthwhile to focus on non-financial factors such as:

- Company attractiveness and good brand;
- Responsible corporate conduct and ethics;
- Respect, diversity and inclusion of all;
- Work-life balance and caring for overall wellness of employees; and
- Opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Gering and Conner (2002) expressed that value proposition puts forward the organization's strengths. It identifies the needs of potential talent that the organization can satisfy. The organization can conduct employee focus groups and/or review exit interview data to determine employees' initial perceived attraction to the organization and whether the perception proved to be true.

With the EVP it is important for the company to live up to what is communicated in a constant and consistent manner.

5.3.4   Organizational culture and core values (healthy climate)

DeLong and Trautman (2011) highlighted that organizational culture can be used to drive talent management as culture is a major factor in determining the success of projects and programmes. You can have the most elegant leadership development plans and talent management initiatives imaginable but if they are not supported by company cultural

practices, norms, values and assumptions, then these programmes will have little impact. Pellant (2011) perceived culture as the way people behave, as culture is in the behavior that is permitted and in the attitudes that are allowed. In organizations, culture exists in how people treat each other, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders. Therefore, a set of behaviors and actions which encourages and supports talent management has to be cultivated and promoted.

Rashid, Sambasivan and Johari (2003) referred to corporate and organizational culture as a set of values, beliefs, and behavior patterns that form the core identity of companies and help in shaping employee behavior. Sadri and Lees (2001) believed that corporate culture could provide immense benefits to the organization, and thereby a leading competitive edge over other firms. However, a negative culture could have a negative impact on the organizational performance is it could deter the firm from adopting the required strategic and tactical changes. When the strategy of talent management is introduced through communication, the process has to ensure positive outcomes, and all negatives undertones have to be capped in the early stages.

Hanges, Aiken and Chen (2008) acknowledged that there are aspects of workplace culture and climate that are valued by employees and positively influence productivity and customer satisfaction. The healthy organization has policies, practices and procedures that create a climate that sends two-way messages to their employees. There has to be a sign of strong concern for employees to suggest things like team work, diversity, and justice, as these are important. Secondly, customer service and quality are cultivated in the culture. Organizations show value to their customers when they do such things as restructure the work environment to improve customer service and offer employee training to improve their skills and competencies in order to better serve the customers. Training, systems, policies and processes have to be established to re-enforce commitment towards talent management implementation.

Sullivan, Sullivan and Buffon (2002) made a call to organizations to clarify individual and corporate values in order to create competitive advantage through people. Values create a win-win outcome for all concerned as employees can find meaning in their work while organizations can, in return, develop committed workforce who can support the organization through change. Values help the organization to engage the hearts and minds of employees in pursuit of the corporate goals. Furthermore, values that people hold in relation to their work relate to taking responsibility, achieving results, developing a sense of worth, recognition and

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being able to use their skills and abilities. Most commonly found values in organizations are integrity, respect, customer focus, involvement, quality, creativity/innovation, accountability and fairness. Values serve the role of driving behavior and motivation. Various means of structured communication strategies such as posters, staff meetings and training sessions may incorporate messages of how talent management is aligned and complementary to company values.

Pellant (2011) stated that culture can create an atmosphere that either enables or undermines the creation of coherent talent environment. Therefore, communication, actions, behaviors, values, processes, systems, and policies need to support and encourage talent management in a positive manner to engender support from both management and employees.

5.3.5   Alignment of business strategy to talent management

Hatum (2010) emphasized the importance of aligning talent management strategies with those of the overall organizational strategy. The firm needs to have ability to deliver a holistic talent management strategy which supports the overall business strategy, and in turn allows the firm to perform strongly in the market. This means that the firm has one coherent plan that brings all areas together in a consistent manner. Internal alignment in areas of information technology, communication, finance, legal, marketing, human resources and talent management are critical in sending clear, reliable and consistent messages to employees.

Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2005) view strategy as the direction and scope of an organization over the long term, which achieves advantage in the changing environment through its configuration of resources and competencies with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations. Furthermore, organizations exist in the context of a complex political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal world. Many of the complex variables give rise to opportunities and others will exert threats to the organization. In view of the above, the talent management must be developed in consideration of complex internal and external variables impacting on the organization.

Kaplan and Norton (2008) identified a six-stage comprehensive, closed-loop management system that integrates management tools in order to support strategy execution. The six stages are as follows:

- The development of strategy;

- Planning of strategy;

- Alignment of organizational units and employees with strategy;

- Planning of operations by setting priorities for processes management and allocating resources that will deliver the strategy;

- Monitoring and learning from operations and strategy; and

- Testing and adapting the strategy.

Johnson et al. (2005) highlighted that organizations need to have strategic capability, which is the adequacy and suitability of the resources and competencies of an organization in order for it to survive and prosper.

Talent management practitioners need to know and understand organizational strategy in order to ensure that talent management is not an entity or operates entirely on its own without an ingrained link to the business.

5.3.6   Career life stages and phases

Knowledge of the various career life stages and phases is important, particularly in relation to talent management processes as it creates an understanding of the particular needs and preferences of the talent, e.g. what learning programmes, reward systems, engagement, branding and attraction tactics can be employed for the talented at various career and life stages (Cron & Slocum, 1989). Hess and Jepsen (2009) acknowledged that there are age-related differences related to differences in individual needs based on their career stage. During the early exploration stage, individuals are concerned with clarifying their career interests and aptitudes in order to make a choice about their career direction and the construction of their career. During the mid-career stage, the individual is established, and their interests lie in consolidating their career choices. Also in the mid-career stage, individuals maintain and hold on to what they have established, while the late career stage is characterized by a decline and disengagement in the individual energy for and interest in their occupational area. McCormick and Barnett (2007) iterated that the exploration phase generally occurs early in the career, but may almost be defined as a phase where the individual is characterized as a beginner, exploring their individual interests and capabilities. During the establishment stage an individual identifies with his or her career, grows in capability, and there is a degree of stabilisation. In the mid-career phase the individual begins

to consolidate their career. The late career stage is about preparation for final disengagement, which occurs when an individual is concerned with finishing his or her career and moving to the next phase in life, typically some form of retirement. Based on the above, employees at various career stages will have varying needs both professionally (ambitions, drive, skills and competence levels, and mobility) and financially.

All employees and talent, despite their career life stages, have to be appropriately remunerated, rewarded, nurtured and developed to ensure retention of their skills. Mehta, Anderson and Dubinsky (2000) mentioned that organizations are under intense pressure to identify and implement programmes that will prove truly effective in improving employee productivity. Reward and remuneration systems are a means of improving employee productivity and motivation. The remuneration policy document of Wilson Bayly Holmes-Ovcom Limited (2013) promotes an integrated remuneration approach which pays attention to and considers employee requirements, competitive remuneration packages in line with market trends, and is driven by the individual performance of employees. It is a known factor that employees place importance and value on various rewards according to their life cycle and career stage. For example, younger employees in the early career stages may have a proclivity for higher immediate compensation and benefits, while employees in the later career stages might prefer stock options and higher contributions towards pension investments. It is important to implement a reward and remuneration system which meets the motivational and financial needs of the talented, and the career life stage they are at needs to be factored into the decisions that get taken.

The focus of talent management is to create a viable and highly functional environment for talent at various life stages. How work is structured has to be revised to suit the stages of life and careers that employees are at. Burgmann (2012) iterated that there is a growing demand for more flexible work arrangements. Work is no longer neatly contained between set hours as the talented have non-work responsibilities and interests which they need to balance with their work roles. Additionally, women professionals may prefer more flexible work schedules and high support towards maternity benefits in early to mid-career stages when they start families.

The specific needs for career development, promotions and success of each career stage need to be identified. In the early stages employees are focused on achievement, getting ahead, personal growth, self-esteem and competence as these are a key priority. Needless to say,

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promotions and career advancement placements have to be objectively conducted (Smith, Wellins & Paese, 2010) to ensure that the person to be promoted has the necessary skills and competence for the identified role, while at the mid-career level professionals have already attained achievement, mastery and success and their main focus is to maintain what they have obtained and the desire for promotions begins to diminish. In the late career stage the emphasis is on preparation for life after work. The organization may assist the late career talented to prepare for retirement through employer sponsored retirement plans (AARP Foundation, 2007) in order to secure long-term financial security.

At various stages of the career the needs for mentoring and coaching differ. Peluchette and Jeanquart (2000) indicated that, usually at the late career stage, most professionals are relatively stable in their careers and are not likely to seek mentors but actually aspire to become mentors themselves. It is critical early in the profession for individuals to have a mentor in order to successfully establish themselves in the chosen profession (Peluchette & Jeanquart, 2000). Mentoring and coaching will benefit the individual's career through growing behavioral and technical competencies.

Talent practitioners need to take heed of the career life stages their talent pools are at, in order to develop and implement talent management initiatives which are relevant and address talent needs appropriately. The following issues need to be considered: flexible work arrangements; remuneration and benefits; promotions; succession management; provision for retirement planning; and need for training, mentoring and coaching at varying career life stages.

5.3.7 Generational theory and multiple generational workforce

Boshard and Louw (2011) projected that half of the retiring Baby Boomers in senior management positions would widen the gap of talent availability and supply, which would result in most companies turning to Generation X and Y employees in search of talent and skills.

McGuire, Todnem and Hutchings (2007) asserted that widespread change in the composition of organizational workforces has placed increasing emphasis on understanding and managing the expectations of different generational groups. More attention needs to be given to the management of generational diversity issues. Organizations must seek to optimize the talents

of all age groups, while reconciling differences in the workplace, educating, and allowing employees to utilize this diversity for individuals and for organizational advantage.

Oosthuisen (2012), in her article titled *Understanding and embracing millenials' mindset at work*, advises companies to realign the way they have done business to accommodate the new breed of employees, namely Generation Y and the Millennials.

Figure 5.1 below indicates the difference between the Baby Boomers and Generation Y and Millennials in how they work and apply technology.

http://cac.ophony.org/wp accessed on 25 April 2014

Figure 5.1 The difference between the Baby Boomers, Generation Y and the Millennials

McGuire, Todnem and Hutchings (2007) acknowledge the generations categories as: the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and the Millenials. Baby Boomers were born in the 1960s, while their core values involve believing in lifetime employment, company loyalty and paying one's dues in order to gain respect and receive seniority. It is assumed that the Baby Boomers are less technologically inclined and less trainable. However, Baby Boomers are committed and maintain high productivity. Lamm and Meeks (2009) perceived the Baby Boomers to be far more competitive, optimistic and resourceful. Their sense of accomplishment comes from winning, achieving, overcoming challenges and high performance. Figure 5.2 below humorously portrays an image held of the Baby Boomers by the newer and younger generations.

Retrieved from http://www.cartoonstock.com 28 April 2014

Figure 5.2 Views held of the Baby Boomers by the younger generations

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According to Hill (2002), those of Generation X are aged in the late twenties to early forties, and they do not share the same loyalty and commitment to organizations as the Baby Boomers. Those of Generation X are instead focused on participation and esteem development, and they value working for themselves and capitalising on job opportunities. Yet, they are highly entrepreneurial and innovative in their approach to work (O'Bannon, 2001).

Feyerherm and Vick (2005) assessed the values of Generation X as being team work, collaboration, quality of life and developing human relationships. Lamm and Meeks (2009) viewed Generation X as somewhat sceptical and cautious, and they would rather not place their destiny in an organization but instead sought balanced lifestyles. Generation X members value work as a challenge, and as a result use leisure and recreation as an escape.

Figure 5.3 highlights the vast difference in values between the generations. Those of Generation X are portrayed as cautious and more sceptical, while the Millennials are more caring and embracing as they grew up with much support and involvement of their parents, who offered much encouragement.

The Generation Gap Is Larger Than You Think Posted on April 30, 2013 by http://echosent.wordpress.com. Retrieved on 27 April 2014

Figure 5.3 Differences in values between the generations

Martin (2005) describes Generation Y as a generation which seeks flexibility and autonomy in task achievement and which possesses the real advantage of being technologically literate and highly educated. Though those of Generation Y have an independent spirit and are non-conformists, they still need clear direction and management support. Manuel (2002) maintained that with regard to learning, those of Generation Y reject traditional educational interventions in favour of active, kinaesthetic learning environments.

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Figure 5.4 reflects the impact of the era of advanced technological communication devices on Generations X, Y, and the Millennials.

Figure 5.4 Impact of the era of advanced technological communication devices on Generations X, Y, and the Millennials

Conradie (2012) asserts that companies need to be aware that Generation X and Generation Y represent the biggest turnover risks, with only a small proportion of them indicating intention to stay in their current employment. Yu and Miller (2005) maintained that retention of Generation X and Y employees is a challenge as the younger workforce is mobile and not as loyal. A unique talent management process needs to be in place which takes into account all the generational differences in order to engage talent successfully. Oosthuisen (2012) advises companies to create work environments where there is high interaction with the utilisation of technology, and where the technical competence of the talented can be tapped into and fully unleashed. Furthermore, team work should be harnessed through collaboration in project work. The old sink-and-swim method of training does not work with the new generation because they need ongoing mentoring and coaching.

Zemke, Raines and Filipczak (2000) refer to Generation Y as Millennials who were born between 1981 and 2000. Interestingly this generation regard their organizations as a means to an end and not an end in itself. Millennials are flexible, fun and team oriented. They display citizenship behavior in their lives but not necessarily in the workplace. Additionally they are strongly ambitious, optimistic, over-confident and have a narcissistic outlook on life. Figure 5.5 demonstrates the overly optimistic and ambitious outlook of the younger generations on career progression.
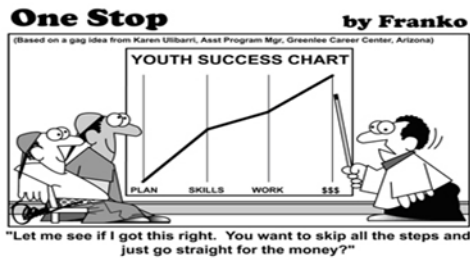
Figure 5.5 Overly optimistic and ambitious outlook of the younger generations on career progression

The mere understanding of generational differences in the workplace is not enough but is only the beginning of the journey. Conradie (2012) is of the view that managing a multigenerational workforce once again emerges as one of the increasingly complex challenges for most organizations. In developing talent management interventions the need for stability and security of the Baby Boomers needs to be attended to. Generation X focuses on free agency, and independence must be factored into work design, while the fast emerging cohort of Generation Y whose social activism, tolerance for diversity, and propensity for social networking and collaboration are beginning to define the workplace more and more.

5.3.8 Stratified systems theory, levels of work and complexity

Talent management goes hand in hand with placing high potential employees on highly critical work projects, and also progressively growing and promoting people. Careful thought has to be placed on the complexity of the role against a set of skills and competence possessed by the employee at a particular career and life stage. Stratified systems theory and levels of work and complexity theory help to shed light on identifying the required skills for each complex role. Greene (2010) shared that managers go through key transitions in their careers when they move up the organization ladder. The scope and complexity of work increases at each work level, requiring new skills, time applications and work values.
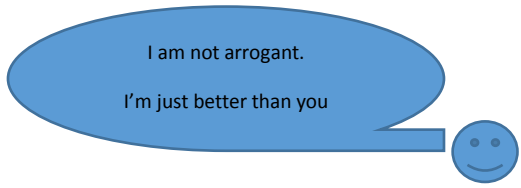
King, Solomon and Cason (2004) referred to Elliott Jaques' Stratified Systems Theory (1989) as essential in assessing managers, and their potential and capabilities at various organizational levels. Different managerial and leadership capabilities are required at various levels. Elliott Jaques' Stratified Systems Theory (1989) refers to four major sets of factors that are in relation to each other:

- The capability of the individual in terms of modes matures throughout life at a series of higher and higher levels of capability;

- A series of higher and higher levels of inherent complexity in work which corresponds to the levels of capability in individuals;

- A series of higher and higher levels of organizational structure which reflects both levels of work complexity and of individual capability; and

- Wide range of processes, including managerial leadership practices with accountability and consistency.

De Meuse and Dai (2011) recognized that moving up the corporate ladder is increasingly complex, as people have limited cognitive and social resources to handle increased role complexity. It is therefore important to develop learning interventions to support succession and talent management initiatives. Table 5.2 below indicates the key focus areas and skills required when the transitioning of an employee occurs due to a promotion, placement or succession management.

Table 5.2: Adaptive approach for leaders (De Meuse & Dai, 2011)

Transition from supervisory/specialist to middle management: People management	
Ability to plan and carry out sequential projects while considering contingencies and alternatives.	
Key focus areas:	**Skills:**
Managing vision and purpose	Managerial courage
Hiring and staffing	Delegation
Grading and assessment of roles	Comfortable around senior management
Building effective teams	Motivating others
Developing others	Communication skills
Giving feedback performance and behavioral feedback	Leading and managing others
Motivating others	
Delegating	
Operational knowledge	
Transition from middle management to executive/senior management: Business and strategy	
Ability to manage multiple, interdependent serial projects. Balance resources among a number of departments.	
Key focus areas:	**Skills:**
Strategic agility	Strategic agility
Business acumen	Intellectual horsepower/cognitive ability
Broad perspective	Managing complexity
Creativity/innovation	Leading change
Managing vision/purpose	Customer orientation

Political savvy	
Cautionary derailing behaviors when a managers climbs the corporate ladder	
Lack of patience Less approachable Poor listening skills Less caring and fairness toward direct reports Diminishing humour and humanness More self-centredness and less sensitivity to others	I am not arrogant. I'm just better than you

The table above illustrates the growing complexity of each level of management and the growing skills and competence requirements.

Understanding the stratified systems theory supports talent management practitioners in identifying specific performance requirements of each level of the job, and also assesses people based on an objective criteria linked to competencies and finally to facilitate better development plans (Greene, 2010).

5.3.9   Ethics in talent management

Rose (2007) views ethics as a key branch of philosophy concerned with analyzing what is right and wrong in people's behavior or conduct. Ethics and morality are terms that are often used interchangeably in discussions of good and evil. Talent management as a practice needs to incorporate a moral and ethical stance while adding value to the organization. A high degree of standards, credibility, fairness, justice, taking responsibility and professionalism have to be exhibited in all activities related to talent management. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of ethical conduct informed by Feeney and Freeman (2005) advised that ethical conduct offers guidelines for responsible behaviors and sets forth a common basis for resolving the principal ethical dilemma that may be encountered in practice.

Taylor and Strickland (2002) indicated that accountability structures are critical and essential in organizations and institutions. Taylor and Strickland conducted a study to define and identify ethical conduct. The survey respondents ranked ethical characteristics as follows: 1. Honesty, 2. Fairness, 3. Reliability, 4. Competence/professionalism, 5. Integrity, 6. Trustworthiness, 7. Respect, 8. Caring, 9. Compassion, 10. Decisiveness, 11. Morality, 12. Openness, 13. Sensitivity, 14 Creativity, and 15. Humility.

Talent management programmes have to be managed in an ethically responsible manner through the incorporation of moral values. In every decision-making process employees and the talent pool have to be considered with regard to consequences of decisions and actions taken. Rose (2007) highlighted that organizations are bound by law to treat people fairly and not to discriminate against identified groups. Legislation is a codification of accepted moral principles and acts to moderate standards within a community. Conformity to all legal requirements does not necessarily ensure the best treatment of employees. The law itself may not be fair, it may cover eventualities, and it may not offer a clear guide to action. Therefore an appeal is made to talent practitioners to integrate values and ethics in all processes of managing talent, the talented are human beings and need to be handled with dignity and respect.

5.4 Literature review – Talent management approaches

5.4.1 National talent management approaches

5.4.1.1 Component in the process of talent management (Gatherer & Craig, 2010)

Diagram 5.1 below depicts the various components involved in managing talent.
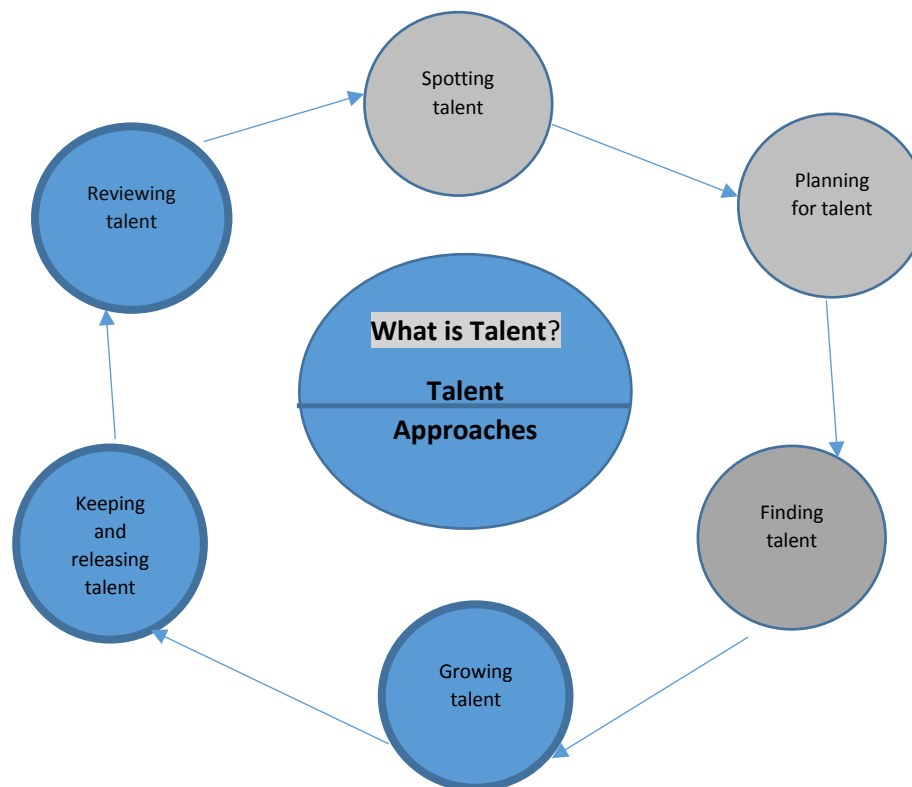
Diagram 5.1 Components in the process of talent management (Gatherer & Craig, 2010)

The approach starts off by emphasising the importance of consistently defining and identifying the traits of talent. Talent management efforts are directed to a highly critical position only, thus rendering this a selective and exclusive talent management approach. In-depth analysis of talent skills needs and gaps is conducted, and a strategic effort is taken to address the gaps. Talent career aspirations are balanced sensibly with that of organizational performance requirements. The approach of developing talent is based on thorough assessment of learning requirements for both the organization and the individual. Retention is highlighted as important to leverage the efforts invested in talent management. There is a rather holistic approach to retention which purposes to improve the culture of the company, creation of great jobs, great leadership, great rewards, great company and great development opportunities. The talent review process not only addresses the talent calibration but also the evaluation of the entire talent process to test how challenges pertaining to attraction, development, deployment and retention are addressed.

Effective talent management ensures operational continuity and sustainability by seeing that the right people with the right skills are in the right jobs at the right time, to guarantee successful business results. Talent management entails the people value chain processes of recruiting, training, managing performance, rewarding, retaining and releasing talent**.**

Gatherer and Craig (2010) indicated the following components as part of the approach:

Spotting talent has to do with identifying talent, by considering a combination of ability, attributes, track record, behavior, engagement, and aspirations.

Planning for talent usually happens at a talent forum where managers can begin to identify potential successors for their own and other leadership and critical positions. Succession planning usually focuses on mission critical positions, and finding a pool of talent from high potential, and high performing employees. At a glance an organization can assess its risk areas and gaps, and make strategic decisions to find or grow more talent to fill those gaps.

Finding talent – organizations are continually looking for talent to fill skills and performance gaps, therefore strategic relationships with suppliers of talent, including learning institutions, recruitment agencies, search companies and professional bodies or other industry-specific organizations are established.

Growing talent entails various development actions for the talent pools aimed at addressing the talent gap, including the performance development of talent (i.e. providing opportunities for talent to advance in their skills and competence) and career development (i.e. providing opportunities for talent to advance in their career paths through applied, on-the-job learning). Development activities can include self-study, coaching, and mentoring, differentiated development programmes for leaders, technical specialists as well as external management development programmes.

In **keeping talent** in the current world of scarce skills, it is critical that organizations do whatever they can to retain key skills and talent. They need to demonstrate to current and potential employees that they have a value proposition that is better than that of competitor companies. The value proposition must communicate great aspects of the company such as high quality culture, jobs, rewards, leadership and development.

Releasing talent – high performing organizations make an effort to manage poor performers, thereby managing people up to satisfactory performance or out of the organization. Careful assessment of performance is necessary in cases of poor performance, which could result in re-skilling, demoting, sideways moves or a move to disciplinary action.

Reviewing talent is where annual strategic talent issues are discussed, including challenges of attracting, developing, deploying and retaining key talent and ensuring that succession plans are in place for mission critical positions. Candidate profiles of those identified as key talent, and successors include qualifications, accomplishments, strengths, development areas, career history and performance record.

The approach provides a strategy to make provision for skills demands and supply dynamics. It provides guidelines for identification of various categories of important talent. The future may be planned through succession planning, to attract and find the right skills and to develop and deploy people for the duration of their careers. Furthermore, provision is made for releasing those who do not contribute sufficiently to the organization.

5.4.1.2 The building blocks for strategic talent management (Veldsman, 2011)

Diagram 5.2 below highlights the dynamically interconnected approach to talent management with the focus on the what (strategy), the how (process) and the where to (the plan and its outcomes).
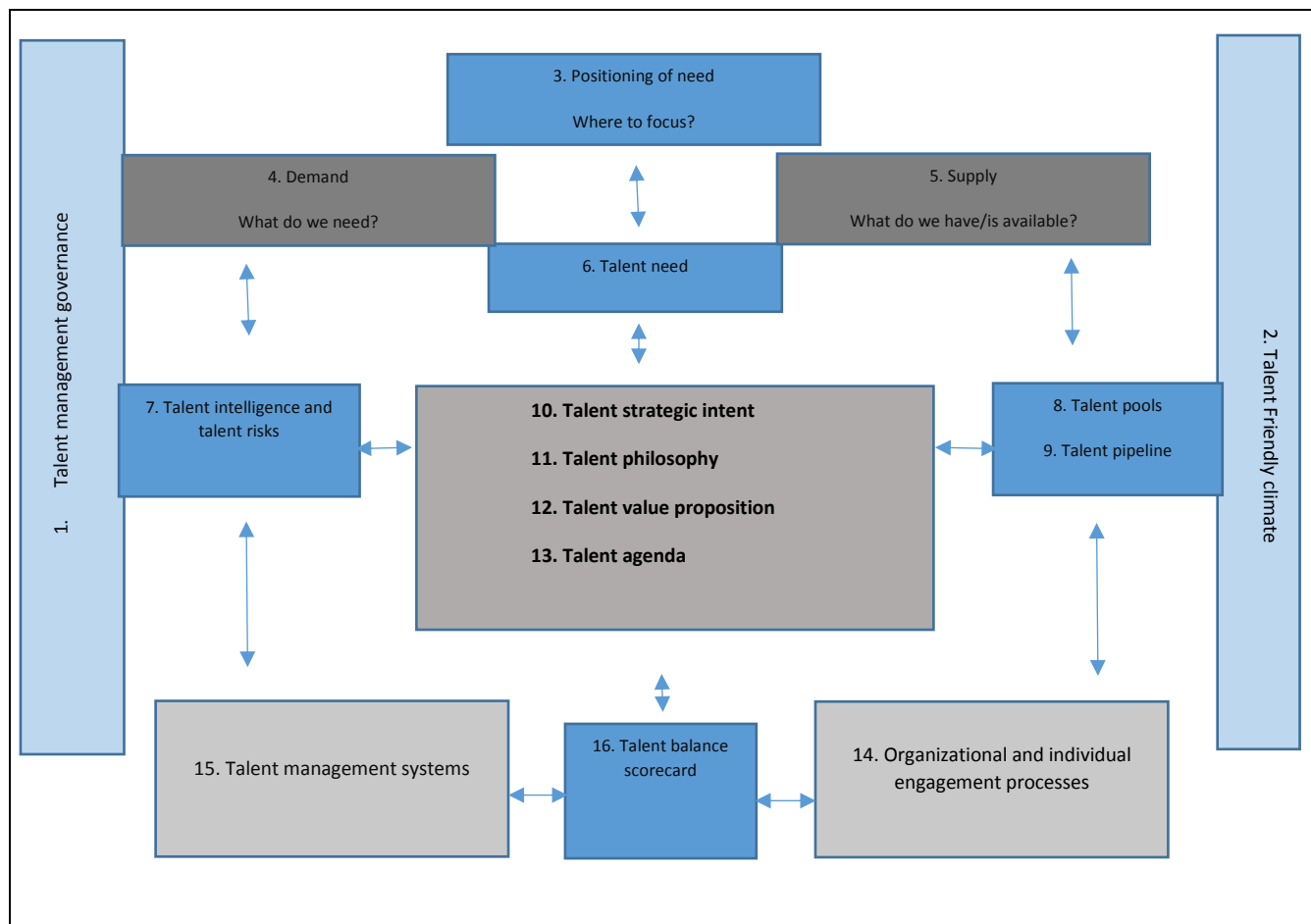
Diagram 5.2 The building blocks for strategic talent management (Veldsman, 2011)

The approach provides an integrated overview of the building blocks of strategic talent management, in the form of a talent management landscape. The landscape of the approach has three interdependent dimensions of strategic talent management: the what (strategy), the how (process) and the plan resulting from the what and the how. This plan leads to the outcome or results. The outcome of the strategic talent management process is a strategic talent plan which serves to direct and guide talent management in the organization. This plan is closely aligned to and in direct support of the business strategy.

Veldsman (2011) indicated the following components as part of the approach:

Talent management governance, a context-setting building block, to oversee building blocks within the talent management landscape.

Talent-friendly culture, a context-setting building block, which infuses the within-talent management building blocks with an organizationally shared way in which to see, interpret and take action with respect to talent management in the organization.

Deciding on the organization's talent positioning (i.e. its desired talent profile) relative to the **demand** for and **supply** of talent, and also the resultant talent need of the organization.

Talent intelligence providing quality information about external and internal trends regarding talent, forming the basis of good talent decisions, as well as the **talent risks** that are active or probable in the talent markets in which the organization is active.

The talent needs status of the different talent pools required by the organization, e.g. succession pools, high flyer pool, and how these will need to be managed in the form of an integrated **talent pipeline.**

Crafting a talent strategic intent and agenda to give direction and focus to talent management in the organization, supported by a **talent philosophy** and winning **value proposition**.

The organizational and individual engagement process which covers the end to end process of talent attraction, engagement, and retention, both from an organizational and individual view, with their commensurate activities.

Fit-for-purpose **talent management systems** to enable talent management within the organization such as succession planning and career pathing.

A **talent balance scorecard** contains core talent management measurements and metrics, to track and monitor the state of talent and its management in the organization, and shows how talent management is contributing to organizational success.

The approach highlights the sequence of action to be undertaken in executing talent management. Additionally there is clear interconnectivity of the building blocks which is necessary to ensure alignment of all activities.

5.4.1.3 Best practice for talent management adapted from Joubert (2007)

The purpose of the best practice approach is to identify and maximize individual and organization talent for personal, organizational, investor and stakeholder benefit. A deliberate practice and process of talent management comprises the six stages of creation, calibration, cultivation, leveraging, caring and coaching. These practices can be considered key

performance areas. Collectively they ensure the maximum availability, optimal leverage and wellness of great talent.

Table 5.3 Best practice for talent management adapted from Joubert (2007)

STAGE 1 **CREATING TALENT**	Planning future talent supply Employer of choice through employer brand Young talent sourcing – career exhibitions Tutor coaching Young professional exposures and career exhibitions and expos Hiring for technical and behavioural skills Leveraging referral recruitment Sharing best practices which work
STAGE 2 **CALIBRATING TALENT**	Measuring talent – developing talent specifications for positions and careers Developing and capturing the talent profiles of employees Forced ranking – identify talent levels and build talent equity Deployment of best talent/people to most critical jobs Be creative about assignments, teams and jobs provided by the organization
STAGE 3 **CULTIVATING TALENT**	Cultivate leaders and managers as mentors in leadership development Holding management accountable for talent management Accept only high standards of performance Rewarding outstanding achievements and breakout achievements Forced ranking Career planning towards supporting individual development plans Firing poor managers
STAGE 4 **LEVERAGING TALENT**	Motivating employees Employee involvement in validating the talent requirements of the organization Deploy talent to achieve organizational requirements Share credit and acknowledge the achievement of employees
STAGE 5 **CARING FOR TALENT**	Focus on personal wellness Employee engagement by cultivating emotional bond between employee and the company Inspiring talent to fuel achievement Building vital inner circles as a source of wisdom, support and inspiration Proactively address talent retention issues
STAGE 6 **TALENT COACHING**	Personal mastery Philosophy of life as a journey Circuits of personal success

Joubert (2007) indicated the following components as part of the approach:

Creating talent: talent comes to the fore when we demand, identify and reward it. The organization can create opportunities for self-actualization of talent by providing education, training and development opportunities. In return, organizations need well-developed people

who will perform and compete effectively in order to secure income and sales of their product and services.

The future impact of the business is assessed in order to accommodate business growth plans and secure the supply of human capital needs in the short-, medium- and long-term. Demand and supply of talent is forecasted. In high economic activity more people will be needed to build capacity for creation of enterprises. Analysis is conducted to determine demand of talent in terms of tracking investments, technological changes, industrial change, innovation and market dynamics. Proactive steps of conducting internal learnerships, graduate development programmes, and awarding of bursaries are key initiatives for building a future supply of talent.

Proactive companies strive to be an employer of choice by crafting a compelling employment brand. Often a company must ask a question – why must great people want to work here? If an organization obtains awards as 'best places to work', this optimizes public relations.

The organization must strive to attract young talent, especially at university career exhibitions. This is an excellent way of sourcing outstanding talent in the most cost effective manner. Furthermore, organizations may invest in sponsoring schools to begin early in the development of talent. Professional exposure seminars for young people makes it possible to attract and identify talent early and transparently.

The hiring process must be holistic and seek to assess behavioral skills and competencies required for a job and also secure a fit with organizational culture and the personal style of an individual. This step is necessary to eliminate job dissatisfaction and mismatches.

Referrals in recruitment, specifically from that of high performers, are often desired. Good employees will often recommend qualified, competent and high performing candidates.

Human resource practitioners need to assess sections of the organization where there are talent management practices and share this with the rest of the organization so as to ensure a wider knowledge-sharing of best practices.

Calibrating talent: Organizations need to measure the quality and quantity of talent they employ. Talent specifications need to be set utilizing an instrument. The instrument ensures alignment of individual talent with organizational needs in a consistent manner. The specifications define the ability of the person, passion and interests, as well as experience and survival or coping skills.

Talent databases have to be developed and updated. Talent profiles are stored in databases to reflect the skills, experience, ability and knowledge of an individual. This data is critical when vacancies arise.

Forced ranking is utilized for identifying talent levels and building talent equity. High flyers must be identified through a systematic, tough, and responsive talent calibration process. High flyers will be allocated to critical and high value, equity yielding projects. The top talented have to be assigned to most significant tasks, as bureaucratic allocation of work is a death knell for managing talent. High creativity is required in selecting types of assignments, teams and jobs the organization provides. In the cultivation of talent, different assignment exposures must be used to push talent to connect and collaborate with colleagues. Talent must be challenged to break vertical silos, thinking horizontally, and promoting cross-functional activity. Action learning initiatives through task teams and special projects pay great dividends for both the individual and the organization.

Talent cultivation entails the cultivation of leaders and managers as mentors as part of their leadership development. Brave leaders trust employees with new initiatives. They allow people to take ownership of projects. Great leaders empower and excite employees by labeling tasks according to people's names. Great leaders create excitement by offering challenging work and eliminating monotony. Coaching, advising and mentoring constitute the roles of a leader and manager. Additionally, leaders foster positive behaviors and facilitate mindset change.

Management must be held accountable for talent cultivation. This enhances talent management as a best practice. Managers are responsible for developing their employees, for promoting knowledge sharing and collaboration and for making good hiring decisions. Executives are responsible for the strength of talent pools, for the development of depth of bench strength and enabling the availability of strong employees for assignments. Accountability is critical in developing and enhancing a culture of high performance. Employees must be held accountable for their own professional development and ongoing learning.

Poor managers must be fired in performance-leading organizations. It is unfair to retain poor performers as it discourages those who work hard. Performance is measured rigorously and consistently in performance-leading organisations.

Scorecards must reflect measurements that maximize achievement and talent creation, calibration, cultivation, leveraging, caring and coaching. An organizational culture must cultivate commitment to supreme standards of talent management.

Rewarding outstanding and breakout achievement is an imperative. Some people contribute greater value with their achievement, in that they should receive greater rewards, recognition and growth opportunities. Incentive policies must exist to recognize and reward high achievement and performance.

Force ranking of employees has many benefits, in that people exert different degrees of personal impact and make varying value contributions during their careers. When talent is assessed this leads to self-improvements. Best talent can be placed to leverage upon and exploit best opportunities.

Career planning to support individual development plans ensures that employees know where they stand in terms of the weaknesses, strengths and competencies they need for further development. People can access their career maps to take part in new activities which will help them in their growth.

Leveraging talent entails that employees are optimally deployed and engaged to have a maximum impact and effect in implementing strategic organizational goals and objectives. Leveraging talent takes place through performance management and projects. Deployment of talent must also be optimal and be linked to accelerated economic growth and workflow. Employees have to be involved in validating the talent requirements of the business. Strategic intent, market dynamics and industry can influence talent requirements. Employers have to be involved in assessing the talent impact on the organizational vision, mission and goals and determine if the talent programmes have many benefits to the business.

Deployment of talent to achieve business and organizational goals is critical to ensure ownership and high participation. The balance scorecard is necessary to ensure that the organization concentrates on the drivers of performance in key areas of emotional satisfaction particularly for the customer, employee, management and investor. Bestowing ownership of a project or task on individuals ensures accountability and stimulates their inspiration.

Credit must be shared to acknowledge the achievement of employees in creating talent and sharing it with all people, particularly leadership. If talent management is a core strategic goal then contributors should be rewarded.

Talent caring entails rewarding talent management. Engagement and output are enhanced by focusing on the personal wellness of employees, especially potent employees with a wide spread of intelligences. Well-designed achiever wellness programmes will ensure that a star performer stays healthy, inspired and involved. Health and wellness must be promoted by correct nutrition, as well as physical, emotional and spiritual exercise. Coaching in wellness must cover the vital practices that govern wellness.

Employee engagement is an indicator used to monitor talent management. Engagement is an emotional bond between employee and employer. Engagement is more than emotional satisfaction and it is derived from the importance of the job, clarity of expectations, the opportunity for learning and career improvement, provision of regular feedback, and enjoyable working relationships with colleagues and managers. Engaged employees provide discretionary effort in work projects.

Talent needs inspiration as this fuels achievement. Caring, coaching and non-financial rewards and information are key contributors to inspiration. This could take the form of nominating an employee of the month, or birthday cards from top management. People must be provided with the information needed to do their work and assess their position in the company. Regular feedback to staff is key. Additionally, employees must feel that their information is considered when decisions are made.

Employees must be informed of their value in the inner circle as sources of wisdom, learning, and inspiration as well as moral and financial support.

Manager and employee relationships are the crux of retention. Each employee has different needs, motivations and requirements, and retention must be addressed proactively and not only after a resignation. A gap between passive discomfort and active disengagement must be managed.

Talent coaching ensures that new employees who start their careers are acquainted with the realities of organizational cultures, competitiveness of people and contests they are exposed to in life. Employees must be supported to master a profession, and to ensure sustained progression, meaningfulness and competence. Coaching must support workplace experiential learning, development of specialized skills and must empower individuals to execute tasks. Organizations must train managers and leaders to become coaches.

The approach assumes a people-centric approach to talent management in that it intends to inspire managers and coaches to cultivate talent more proactively and prioritize talent management in the organization. Furthermore, Joubert (2007: v) mentions that talent management has to be practiced as a deliberate professional craft to liberate and maximize a person's talent. Talent management empowers people to gain personal mastery in those skills and virtues that nourish their truest interest, feelings of personal fulfillment and ability to arouse emotion.

Organizations create space and attraction for talent. They create opportunities for self-actualisation. They also function as the wellsprings of talent because of the education, training and development opportunities they provide. They need people with developed talent to perform and compete effectively, but they also need people with developed talent and secure incomes to buy their products.

A systematic, tough and responsive talent calibration process should be used by organizations to identify talent for the critical roles and achievements that impact the organization. An action learning process can be used to accelerate development through team connection, collaborations and great projects. Talent cultivation can be achieved through mentoring, coaching, performance management, rewards and supporting individual growth needs. The best way to leverage talent is to involve talent in strategic initiatives, goals and objectives. Management has to ensure that talent is held accountable for direct business results, and reward performance and success consistently .

5.4.2   International talent management approaches

5.4.2.1 Executive framework for talent management (DeLong & Trautman, 2011)

Effective talent management strategies require a customised, multi-faceted approach and long-term commitment. The framework has seven critical success factors that will determine how successfully the organization maximises investment in talent management. The framework highlights the importance of aligning strategy with the talent management initiatives. Attention is brought to identifying real capability gaps and their strategic, tactical and operational talent-related risks. The framework also advocates for the development of a strong culture and leadership behavior which are supportive of talent management drives. In order to ensure that effective implementation performance measures for talent management

activities are set, roles are also allocated to be performed by identified individuals in the organization.

5.3.2.1 Executive framework for talent management (DeLong & Trautman, 2011)

DeLong and Trautman (2011), indicated the following components as part of the approach:

- **Align business and talent strategies by clarifying the big picture:**

A detailed understanding of evolving strategic context in which the firm is operating (big picture) need to be clearly identified and defined early in the process. Clarity on the alignment of business strategy and talent management processes is essential. The complexities brought by increased globalisation, rapid technology improvements and the changing talent pool make alignment an ongoing challenge that cannot be ignored.

- **Identify and prioritize capability gaps and talent-related risks:**

Important is the need for the organization to know specifically where to focus its talent management resources. Prioritising these investments can only occur after specific talent-related risks are exposed and evaluated. Risks have to be accurately identified and managed appropriately, e.g. replacing the capabilities of an aging and retiring workforce, minimising the loss of technical experts to competitors, correcting low productivity as a result of new

hires, and addressing thin or lack of pipeline of future leaders and successors. This step is essential in ensuring that talent management activities support strategy.

- **Evaluate current initiatives and identify innovative solutions**

The step of evaluating the current state of talent programmes is an obvious one that should be undertaken more frequently. Leaders need to be constantly aware of the latest thinking about creative solutions being used by best companies. Critical evaluation questions to be asked are: How effectively are new hires on-boarded? How is mentoring and coaching conducted? Are talent management programmes coordinated and well-integrated? Are executives working actively with human resources to improve talent management initiatives?

- **Cleary state cultural norms that should drive talent initiatives**

This powerful step entails articulating the existing cultural norms that influence talent management outcomes. Only when cultural expectations are communicated, can talent solutions be checked to ensure that they support the organizational culture.

- **Promote holistic integrated talent initiatives**

Different activities must work together in order to achieve the desired talent management outcomes. Activities such as recruitment, development, retention, performance management, and compensation systems have to be aligned and well-integrated. Other factors to be taken into account are internships, collaborative idea sharing, problem solving platforms, rotational assignments, mentoring, external training opportunities, and the hosting of industry events. One-time solutions and working in silos does not support integration and synergy in managing talent processes.

Talent management inventory need to clearly indicate practices, initiatives, processes and systems in order to enable full integration of initiatives. In Table 5.4, DeLong and Trautman (2011) provide an example of a talent management inventory.

Table 5.4 Talent management inventory (DeLong & Trautman, 2011)

Talent acquisition	Talent development	Talent retention	General
Recruitment On-boarding Outsourcing Intern programmes	Training Peer mentoring Career development Performance management Social networking and web applications Leadership development Succession planning High potential talent pools Lesson learned Career mentoring Communities of practice	High potential programme Rotational programmes Career counselling Diversity programmes Phased retirement Affinity groups	Information technology Engagement of high performance culture

Talent management inventory DeLong and Trautman (2011)

- **Seek useful, valid performance measures**

  Executives need to play a key role in setting expectations about how the effects of talent management initiatives should be measured. Questions such as 'how will the investments in talent management improve the ability of the participants to understand and do their jobs and deliver on the organizational strategy?' need to be asked.

- **Implement talent solutions: sustain urgency and clarify roles**

  One of the key tasks of any leader is to clearly define their involvement in sponsoring a particular talent management programme. There must be a project owner who is accountable for deliverables, and someone who runs talent initiatives. Often talent programmes fail because there is a lack of sustainable urgency around the implementation of talent management.

Ultimately every organization's approach to managing talent will involve a unique combination of processes, practices and policies. Success relies largely on how effectively leaders execute the seven steps outlined in the framework.

5.4.2.2 Strategic talent management programme (Ingham, 2006)

The key focus of the approach is more strategic than operational, tactical and implementation-focused. The approach is suitable where high-level decisions need to be made about talent management practices in the organization. It emphasizes the steps of analysis and diagnosis of practices, and subsequently the planning of talent management activities.
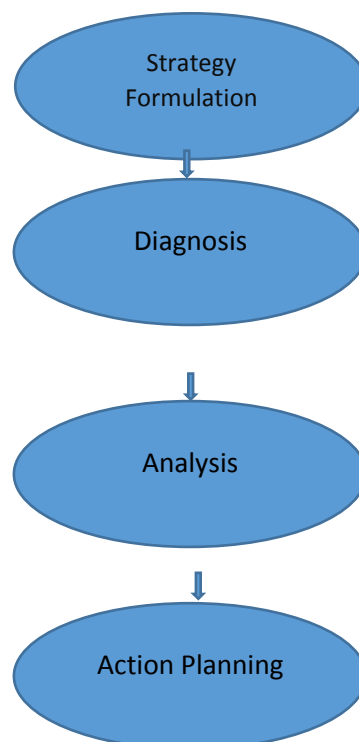
Diagram 5.3 Strategic talent management programme (Ingham, 2006)

Ingham (2006) indicated the following components as part of the approach:

- **Stage 1: Strategy formulation**
  The stage involves understanding the current business context and its challenges followed by developing objectives and processes for the talent programme. Meetings with senior managers are used to elicit their views and experiences of existing methods for recruiting, developing and engaging talent and to understand demands for change. Further supporting input can be provided through reviews of competitor activities and benchmarked practices in other leading organizations.

- **Stage 2: Diagnosis**

  The next step is to hold interviews and focus groups with current managers of those identified as talent. The main focus of the diagnosis understands how well talent management is working in providing them with what they need to run the business, and in particular what attributes they believe the talented need to exhibit. These attributes can be documented in a high-level talent framework. The diagnosis stage is an assessment of talent against the framework. Head-hunters can be included in the process and internal talent can be compared to people outside the organization who might also display the attributes identified in the talent framework. This comparison can provide information on internal talent strengths, weaknesses and further development or replacement needs.

- **Stage 3: Analysis**

  Based upon the results of the diagnosis, the future talent management processes can be mapped out. This involves workshops and interviews with those people identified as talent. The understanding of what talent needs are for the business is moderated by what the organization believes it can provide as talent management. The developments from the analysis can be documented at an organizational level.

- **Stage 4: Action planning**

Recommendations to build upon existing talent management processes can be made based on the above data. Strategic value adding actions that may arise to close the implementation gaps are:

- Pre-recruitment actions: The organization has the opportunity to ensure that they recruit the best people. Employees on the succession plan can also be identified before embarking on an external recruitment process.
- Employment actions: Identified talent have to be assigned to high value strategic roles and assignments. Experience confirms that key development opportunities for talent lie within the roles that the talented occupy and the element of stretch that those roles provide. Comprehensive formal executive educational programmes can address specific development needs and produce better performance. Through enabling open, honest conversations, these employers of choice need to encourage their talent to review their long-term career development needs and how these needs can be met by the organization.

- Departure-related actions: Most leading organizations already maintain ongoing contact with departing talent for about a year following their exit, in case their new career proves not to be successful. Another common approach involves developing alumni networks to encourage talent with further appropriate development experiences outside of the organization.

The approach is suitable for the planning stages of talent management as opposed to the operational and tactical activity of implementation.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the literature concerning the concepts and key aspects which are linked to talent management. The key aspects linked to talent management are: the 'employer of choice' and 'best company to work for' brands; employee engagement; organizational culture and values; alignment of business strategy to talent management; career life stages and phases; multiple generational workforce; stratified systems theory and levels of work and complexity; and ethics in talent management. These key aspects linked to talent management cannot be excluded in the planning and development of talent management initiatives due to their critical importance and relevance.

Since I am developing a talent management framework, I looked at approaches of talent management in both the national and international literature. I found that the literature illuminates, tests and confirms the currency and relevance of the data derived from the participants and the initially proposed framework. Additionally, I discussed the reasons for applying the literature to the qualitative study.

Chapter 6

Presentation of the talent management framework

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I purpose to present the talent management framework which was built from both concrete and first-order constructs brought forward by the research participants as presented in Chapter 4, as well as the theoretical concepts derived from the literature review (see Chapter 5). Additionally I have applied the logic of scientific building blocks being concepts, insights and prepositions as discussed in Chapter 2 to develop the framework. The framework is both inductively (insights being data driven) and deductively (existing theoretical concepts) constructed.

Presentation of the talent management framework is the underlying reason for the study. I therefore contemplated that a compelling final talent management framework would be comprehensive, systematic, integrated, strategically derived, process driven, holistic, fluid and dynamic. Soanes and Stevenson (2008) provided guidelines for the meaning of the concepts below:

- **Comprehensiveness** is about dealing with all aspects of a phenomenon;
- **Systematic** is operating in an organized and well-planned manner;
- **Integrated** is bringing all parts together to make a whole complete;
- **Strategic** is about forming a long-term plan to achieve a goal;
- **Holistic** is completeness through a collection of parts;
- **Fluid** is the ability to flow easily; and
- **Dynamic** is a process that is characterized by change, energy and new ideas.

In developing the talent management framework I strived to incorporate the above-mentioned guidelines.

6.2 Steps in the construction of the talent management framework

In this section I shall give an orientation of the steps I took to construct the talent management framework.

Step 1 The data collection process

In the initial stages of the study, when compiling the proposal, I had conducted a brief literature study about the talent management phenomenon. Deductively I then developed a semi-structured questionnaire aligned to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, which I used as a basic guide for the discussions with the research participants during the data collection phase. I have listed the key questions below:

1. What is talent, and talent management?
2. What does the content of talent management entail?
3. What are the typical challenges experienced in the implementation of talent management programmes?
4. What are effective talent management practices which are working, and why are they working?
5. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?
6. What are the leading best practices regarding recruitment, deployment, development, engagement and retention of talent?
7. What value does talent management add to the organization?
8. How do individual career life cycles influence the approach to talent management?
9. What is the link between diversity management and talent management?

In total I visited two companies within the private sector and which had been classified by the Corporate Research Foundation (2011) as amongst the top ten best employers in South Africa. They were certified as being excellent in competitive human resource areas such as pay and benefits, training and development, career opportunities, working conditions, company culture and the elements of talent management and engagement. I interviewed nine participants from Company A, and five participants from Company B. The participants were purposively selected because they worked in human resource departments, were members of management, or were beneficiaries of a talent management programme. Furthermore, the participants had knowledge and experience of the talent management phenomenon (Chapter 4).

Step 2 Data analysis process

Because the interviews followed on one another I applied the principles of modified analytical induction in identifying commonalities and similar patterns in the data and across the two companies (see Chapter3). The modified constructivist grounded theory supported the operationalizing of the data analysis. The result of the data analysis was the emergence and identification of themes and sub-themes. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) recognized that the analysis process involves careful reading and re-reading of the data in order to identify themes, patterns and concepts.

With the initial coding process, I realized that the research questions also aided the clustering and grouping of similar data sections (see Table 6.1 below):

Table 6.1 Summary of the initial coding process

Initial theme	Research questions
Defining talent and talent management	Question 1 and 2
Engaging and retaining talent – best practices	Question 4, 5 and 6
Technology and information systems	Question 5
Organizational climate	Question 4 and 8
Key role players	Question 5
Challenges in talent management	Question 3
Business case for talent management	Question 7
Optimising talent management	Question 5
Career life cycles	Question 9

The initial coding process achieved the clustering of similar data sets, and also the naming of these. Once the initial coding was completed, I then progressed to the focused coding where I further de-layered the dense data into simpler and more specific sub-themes. These sub-themes are substantiated and supported by excerpts from the interview scripts. A summary of the focused coding process is presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Summary of the focused coding process

Focused theme	Sub-themes
Defining talent Talent management (content and talent best practice)	Potential, ability, performance, competence, values, leadership, motivation, and promotability
	Learning and development and competencies, mentoring, counselling and coaching, leadership, executive and management development, remuneration and incentives, recognition and rewards, experience, work structuring and stretch projects, career and succession management, performance management, placement and deployment, orientation, engagement and retention
Engaging and retaining talent – best practices	Learning and development and competencies, mentoring, counselling and coaching, leadership, executive and management development, remuneration and incentives, recognition and rewards, experience, work structuring and stretch projects, career and succession management, performance management, placement and deployment, orientation, engagement and retention
Technology and information systems	Electronic: recruitment, learning, performance, succession planning, remuneration, social networking, data analytics and reporting, talent data
Organizational climate	Team-based, communication, leadership ethics, diversity and inclusiveness, wellness, flexible work hours, high performance culture, learning and development culture, values
Key role players	Line management, human resources, talented employees
Challenges in talent management	Management commitment and buy-in, financial support, time resources, capacity, labor dynamics
Business case for talent management	Retention, sustainability, financial, productivity, quality work
Optimising talent management	Employer branding, employee value proposition, sourcing and attraction, marketing and communication in human resources, customer centricity, climate assessment, continuous improvement
Career life cycles	Early career, mid-career and late career

During the focused coding stage I reduced the data even further to identify and develop relevant sub-themes.

Step 3 Towards the development of the initial talent management framework

Theoretical coding (Chapter 4) consequently led to identification of the interrelatedness and the relationships between the concepts, themes and sub-themes leading to the development of the initial talent management framework presented in Chapter 4. Paull, Boudville and Sitlington (2013) identified sense-making as a process of understanding information, and putting it into context to make even more sense of it. Furthermore, sense-making occurs at the sub-conscious and conscious levels. Craig-Lees (2001) explained that sense-making at the sub-conscious level is a more instantaneous process to organize understanding of what is happening in order to create plausible explanations. During the data collection phase and data

analyses stages I was continuously asking myself what the data were saying, and how this data could lead to the development of a talent management framework. I believe that this asking of questions about the data constituted my own sense-making process.

Furthermore, I need to declare that the sense-making of the data which resulted in the initial and proposed talent management framework was supported and influenced by a combination of prior knowledge (deductive) as well as emergent insights (inductive) from the data. Thomas (2006) refers to inductive analysis as a detailed process of reading the data to derive concepts, themes, models and frameworks. Thomas (2006) views deductive data analysis as set out to test and illuminate consistency with prior assumptions, knowledge and theory.

The initially proposed talent management framework was constituted of the following concepts, as summarized in Table 6.3:

Table 6.3 Summary of initially proposed talent management framework

Concepts	Explanation	Source
External environmental analysis, internal organizational analysis, business strategy	Internal and external issues which influence the business	Deductive
Marketing strategy – internal and external communication for human resources	Branding and communication – sought after employer	Inductive and deductive
Information technology for human resources		Inductive
Evaluation of talent management	To assess effectiveness	Inductive and deductive
Talent capability pool: Attraction, source, deploy, transitions, grow, develop, reward, recognize, engage and retain	Content of talent management	Inductive and deductive
Human resources activities	Routine human resource practices to support talent management	Inductive and deductive
Role players – human resources, management and talented candidates	People who take responsibility for talent management	Inductive
Talent DNA and segmentation – potential, ability, competence, performance, values, ethics, leadership, management, and achievement driven	Defining talent	Inductive
Levels of engagement for early career, mid-career and late career	Aligning a career stage with relevant interventions	Inductive and deductive

In the table above I have summarized the key concepts and themes which are contained in the initial talent management framework. Furthermore I have indicated what informed the concepts used to build the initial framework with regard to deductive and inductive process.

Step 4 Validation, verification and triangulation of the initial talent management framework

Following the analytic induction process I then visited Company A and B to verify, test, triangulate and validate the initially developed framework through unstructured follow-up interviews with the five participants (see Chapter 4). The initially proposed talent management framework was electronically mailed to the participants in order for them to advise on whether the framework could be improved, and to indicate the aspects needing improvement. The sixth participant opted not to have an interview but confirmed via electronic mail that the framework and the analysed data constituted a true reflection of what was discussed in the initial round of interviews conducted in 2010. Out of the six participants, two took part in the initial interviews in 2010, and could confirm and validate the data in comparison to the initially proposed framework. While the other four were not involved in 2010, they could comment mostly on the comprehensiveness and relevance, and could also advise on what concepts should be incorporated into the initially proposed framework to improve it further.

In addition, the two companies offered me eight documents in the form of internal publications. The offering of these documents was completely unsolicited. I therefore applied initial, focused and theoretical coding principles to analyze the unstructured interviews and the documents.

Step 5 Summary of the literature review

Following the principles of qualitative research I subsequently conducted a detailed literature review (see Chapter 5) to check if the outcomes of the data analysis were aligned to current publications in the domain. Once I had reviewed the literature I incorporated the insights from the follow-up interviews and the literature to the initially proposed talent management framework. I offer a brief discussion of the key learnings from the literature below:

- Employer of choice and best company to work for brand sets a foundation for supporting talent management. Activities of building the brand ensure best human resource practices.
- Employee engagement ensures that the organization seeks to satisfy and delight employees within an employment relationship through tangible (financial) and intangible (job satisfaction, learning, growth) rewards.

- Organizational culture and values create a climate for either a healthy or unhealthy workplace. Humans generally prefer to work in a nurturing, caring and supporting environment, whereas dysfunctional undertones in a work environment only create dissatisfactions.

- Alignment of business strategy to talent management will ensure effective planning and implementation of talent management. Communication processes, budgeting, information systems, and human resources activities have to be harmonized to talent management.

- Career life stages and phases should be acknowledged in planning talent management, as each person in each career life stage has various training, remuneration, and career growth needs.

- The realities of a multi- generational workforce create many challenges and complexities in the workplace if these are not managed skilfully. Therefore, any organization which is keen on talent management needs to understand the behavior patterns of the various generations, namely the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and the Millennials in order to manage them successfully and benefit from this diversity.

- Stratified systems theory is critical in matching employees' capability with that of a role. The theory ensures that the complexity of each role is assessed so as to recruit, deploy and allocate work projects to the strength and the level of skill of the employee. This will ensure successful recruitment.

- Ethics in talent management is critical to ensure the credibility of talent management in organizations. Therefore, talent management practices need to be fair, transparent and consistent.

Furthermore I have reviewed five talent management approaches, three being South African and the other two international. The approaches have confirmed and verified the relevance of the concepts, themes and sub-themes I derived from the participant data. I have completed a table to present similarities between the approaches reviewed.

Table 6.4 Comparison of the talent management approaches

Components in the process of talent management (Gatherer & Craig, 2010) Local (South Africa)	The building block for strategic talent management (Veldsman, 2011) Local (South Africa)	Best practice for talent management (Joubert, 2007) Local (South Africa)	Executive framework for talent management (DeLong & Trautman, 2011) International	Strategic talent management programme (Ingham, 2006) International
Identifying talent (spotting talent) Traits of talent, e.g. ability, potential			Identification and prioritize capability risks	Diagnosis – assessment of talent available
Planning for talent – critical positions	Positioning of talent needs Demand – what do we need?	Creating talent		
Finding talent (sourcing talent)	Supply of talent		Talent acquisition process	
Growing talent – learning opportunities		Talent coaching to develop personal mastery for personal success. Leveraging talent through deployment into critical assignments	Talent development	
Keeping talent – retaining talent	Organizational and individual engagement processes Talent value proposition	Caring for talent – inspiring, supporting and cultivating emotional bonds	Talent retention	
Reviewing talent	Talent pools and talent pipelines	Calibration of talent		
	Talent governance (procedures) Talent balance scorecard, and talent management systems		Holistic and integrated talent management initiatives. Setting performance management measures Evaluating effectiveness of talent initiatives	Action planning for talent management processes.
	Talent-friendly environment – culture		Identification of cultural norms to drive talent management initiatives	
	Strategic intent, talent agenda, and talent philosophy		Align business strategy	Strategy formulation

Table 6.4 indicates that there are more similarities in the approaches than differences. Each approach has core focus areas, or priority elements. I found more similarities in the concepts and themes relating to identification of talent through defining talent, the importance of strategic alignment, the need to plan all talent activities. The sourcing/supply of the right talent seem to be a common challenge. While a key need for talent development/growth is core and mandatory in all talent management activities. Retention initiatives are highlighted as essential and also an emphasis is on an integrated and holistic talent management process.

6.3 A talent management framework for the private sector

As a result of the five steps above I then developed the talent management framework below (diagram 6.1):

Planning

External Environmental Analysis
Economics, legal systems
Technological developments, social and cultural variables
Politics and competition
Customer needs
Business trends and markets

Business Strategy
Mission, vision, values
Goals and business objectives
Financials
Customers
Talent planning
Products/Services
Social responsibility

Talent Strategy
Forecast skills, capability needs
Talent forecasting
Detail competencies needed
Source externally or develop in-house
Cost estimations
Social responsibility – skills development at schools
Plan talent activities

Talent Success Profile
Potential
Ability
Competence
Performance
Readiness
Values/Ethics
Leadership skills
Management skills
Achievement driven
Experience and qualifications
Mobility/agility

Dimensions of talent management

Attraction	Sourcing & Recruitment	Deployment & Transition	Grow & Develop	Performance Management	Talent Reviews	Rewarding & Recognizing	Engage & Retain
Communication Marketing Employer branding Employee value Proposition Advertising Social media	Assessments: Business case studies, games, simulations, role plays Job profiling Interviewing Panel interviews Appointment	On-boarding Orientation Competency Acquisition Culture awareness On-the-job training	Coaching Mentoring Assessments Feedback Leadership Development Stretch projects Growth Experiences Qualifications Classroom training E-learning Knowledge networks Graduate development	Business objectives Key performance areas Objectives setting Performance evaluation Measure behavioral and technical deliverables	Talent reviews Talent calibration Criteria: Potential Ability Readiness Performance Experience Qualifications Values Promotability Leadership and management skills Mobility	Remuneration Benefits Incentives Bonuses Awards Celebrations Share options Gift vouchers	Succession Planning Career pathing Networking Retention Assessments Job design Knowledge management

Implementation of the dimensions of talent management is informed by the career stages of the talent pool

Early career (Generation Y)
Professional specialist development
Basic management skills

Mid-career (Generation X)
Executive development
Advanced management and leadership development

Late Career (Baby Boomers)
Professional knowledge updates/ conferences
Knowledge transfer projects
Optimize as coaches and mentors

Role Players (Implementers)

Human resources management
Talented candidates
Leadership
Key performance indicators
Reward system

Best-Practice Enablers (tactics, practices & tools)

Talent Management Communication Tactics
Internal and external communication, branding
Sought after employer
Media publications (electronic social media and print media)
Educational and industry involvement
Recruitment agency partnering
Talent researching - insights

Internal organizational practices
Reporting relationships
Resources tools, equipment, finance, budgets
Information systems
Work structuring and design
Leadership practices
Culture and work behaviors
Diversity-gender
Wellness programmes

Information Technology for Talent Management (tools)
Reporting, analytics
Workforce profiling
Competence matrix
Talent planning and review and budgeting
E-recruitment
E-learning
Social media
Remuneration
Performance management
Talent budgeting

Evaluation of effectiveness
Climate surveys
Business performance
Return on Investment
Talent retention statistics lessons
Learned continuous improvement
Talent scorecard

Evaluation of Effectiveness: Plans, talent dimensions, tactics, practices, tools and peoples' actions are evaluated

Diagram 6.1 A talent management framework for the private sector

6.3.1 Elements of the talent management framework

Broadly, the talent management framework consists of the following major elements:

- Planning – consists of external environmental analysis, business strategy, talent strategy, and talent success profile.
- Dimensions of talent management – consists of attraction, sourcing and recruitment, deployment and transition, grow and develop, performance management, talent reviews, rewarding and recognition, engage and retain.
- Implementation with reference to career stages – early career (Generation Y), mid-career (Generation X), and late career (Baby Boomers).
- Best-practice enablers – this section focuses on talent management communication tactics, internal organizational practices and information technology for talent management.
- Role players – this section focuses on the responsibilities of human resources, talented candidates and leadership.
- Evaluation of effectiveness – this section is about evaluating how well talent management is being implemented in the organizations.

The up-down arrows on the diagram portrays the relationships, connection, interdependence and interrelatedness of the elements of talent management. Notably the planning process is important in the effective operationalization of the dimensions of talent management. In order for the dimensions of talent management to be implemented solidly, it is advisable to allow the process to be informed and customized through the talent pool's career life stages. Importantly, the role players are critical in ensuring that the planning, operationalization of the dimensions and the implementation are executed by means of best-practice enablers such as tools, tactics and practices. Furthermore, all the elements of talent management from planning to operationalization of the dimensions, implementation and best-practice enablers are also evaluated. Continuous evaluation will ensure overall improvement in achieving the desired and successful maturity level of talent management implementation in an organization.

In the section below I discuss in detail the elements of the talent management framework.

6.3.1.1 Planning

Planning according to Robbins and Coulter (2010) involves the process of defining goals, establishing a strategy for achieving those goals and developing the plans to coordinate and integrate the activities.

External environmental analysis: The process of environmental analysis by the organization begins before a tangible plan is developed in order to identify external variables like economics, legal systems, and technological developments, as well as social and cultural variables which directly or indirectly impact on the business. Most of the external variables, like politics, are outside the influence and control of an individual organization. Nonetheless the organization needs to be knowledgeable about external dynamics to allow change and adaptation in order to stay abreast and survive in the dynamic and complex environment. Therefore, variables such as competition, business trends, markets and customer needs need to be continuously analysed.

Business strategy: Once the organization has analysed all the external variables it can begin to devise an informed business strategy. This strategy defines the purpose and reason for being of the organization, often expressed in the form of a mission, vision and values. Decisions such as pursuing specific market segments, product lines, types of customers, service offerings, overall business objectives and financial goals are clearly articulated. Importantly, talent planning will naturally flow within the business strategy. Furthermore, decisions on social responsibility initiatives can be strategically planned.

Talent strategy: The talent strategy only emerges from a firm knowledge of the overall business strategy, to ensure alignment. Such a practice ensures that the talent strategy is strategically derived. Where the business has articulated which markets, products, and services they need to pursue, it is only then that a decision can be made about the type of skills, capability and core competencies required in order to drive strategy. A stock of current internal talent pools is taken to realistically assess actual versus needed and required skills to support the business now and in the future. Forecasting of skills, capability needs, and talent forecasting will lead to detailing of competence needs and planning for talent activities.

Financial planning and cost estimations need to be factored into this step as the procurement of talent is costly, but necessary. Decisions need to be made concerning external sourcing or in-house development, or both. Furthermore, social responsibility initiatives can be

incorporated into the talent strategy through proactive investment into young talent in schools and universities for talent future supply and broader skills development.

Talent success profile: The question of how talent will be defined needs to be raised in order to arrive at a clear and concise identification of the talent needed in the organization. The talent success profile provides a blueprint of the makeup and characteristics of talent in attitude, behavior, actions, achievement, and capability. Articulation of the talent profile supports and informs the design of training and development interventions, recruitment and selection criteria, competency-based assessments and other dimensions of talent management. Therefore, talent is identified with reference to potential, ability, competence, performance, readiness to grow, living the values, having ethics, display of leadership and management skills, being mobile and agile to move within an organization or a geographical location, visible ambition and achievement drive, as well as relevant experience and qualifications.

6.3.1.2 Dimensions of talent management

Once the organization decides on what talent strategies they are going to pursue, it becomes even more critical to develop action plans for implementation purposes. The process entails how activities will be carried out to support the plans.

Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2011) view implementation as a plan to translate the formulated strategy into workable strategies and tactics filtering down through the organization. Robbins and Coulter (2010) indicated that implementation includes conveying the decisions and plans to those affected by it and getting their commitment to carry it out.

Attraction: The employer needs to develop practices and talent managing activities which are valued and desired by talented candidates internally and externally. Having a compelling employee value proposition vision is the basis for attracting key talent. As much as employee value proposition can be articulated, marketed and published, it will be of no use if it is not delivered, practiced and lived in the organization. What is promised through the employee value proposition needs to be seen, experienced, confirmable and credible. Becoming the best employer brand/employer of choice is also one of the major and significant ways of ensuring the delivery of human capital best practices relating to how people are treated in the organization. The ultimate aim of the attraction activity is to interest the external candidates

and woo them to join the organization, while creating a long-term intention to retain and encourage their intention to stay with the organization. The same rigor that is applied to market and sell products and services must be applied in marketing and advertising the employer brand and value proposition for current and future employees. Social media may be utilized as a tool to communicate, do the marketing and build the employer branding concept.

Sourcing and recruitment: There is a big opportunity for companies to use the internet and social media for sourcing talent and managing the recruitment processes of job profiling, advertising of vacancies, and managing of job applications. Technology tools are now readily available to remove and eliminate tedious, old and lengthy paper-driven processes of recruitment. The costs and turnaround time for filling vacancies can be significantly reduced as the middleman (i.e. employment agencies or external recruiters) is removed from the process in some but not all types of jobs. The use of electronic processes and technology will largely be influenced by the type of role, the seniority level of the position and the likely career life stage of the desired talent profile. It is to be noted that most talent in the late career stages might not be tuned in with online and electronic recruitment processes. Therefore, in order to attract senior and late career talent, conventional methods such as newspaper advertising, word-of-mouth referrals, approaching professional bodies and the utilization of executive search firms may be utilized. Nonetheless the younger generations are au fait with online and social media optimization in seeking career opportunities. Since tools such as short messaging, electronic mail, twitter, and Facebook and WhatsApp are at the disposal of young people and also largely influence their social habits, the company recruitment approaches may be opportunistically aligned to the current trends. The blended approaches to recruitment are recommendable depending on the case and specific situations, e.g. executive searches may be useful for searching for a senior executive role because the process is handled discretely and with high-level professionalism. Sourcing of the right talent at the right time and for the right job is important to supporting organizational objectives. Classical recruitment and sourcing activities entail:

- The identification of appropriate channels which may be used for supplying talent are employment agencies, executive search firms, employee referrals, self-referrals, career and industry professional bodies, university campuses, career fairs, social networks, talent databases, social media and online job portals. The above variety of channels highlights

available and diverse tools which may be used to the advantage of and in favor of the recruitment process.

- The recruitment process always begins with the identification of a need for talent either for succession purposes, when late career talent pools are nearing retirement, when there is a new business project which requires specific skills and technical competencies, or when there is a need to build up the talent pool and increase the talent pipeline.

- The job requirements such as experience, knowledge, qualifications, behaviors and competencies should be clearly defined according to job specifications highlighted on a job profile. The job specifications and job profiling are triggered by the business objectives and the talent skills forecasting.

- With the current technological tools and media, the advertisements can be launched internally and externally, regionally, nationally and internationally, depending on seniority and scarcity of the skills, using more than one communication media to reach the masses.

- Having a talent success profile ensures that applications from potential talent candidates are thoroughly screened against objective and specified job requirements. This practice leaves little room for subjectivity and wrong selection decisions. The shortlisting activity can be carried out by automated ranking tools and systems which are able to match the job recruitment against the content of the curriculum vitae electronically. Most of the career and job search websites have such software capability built in.

- As much as we all like to outsource and automate the activities of recruitment, we cannot avoid the face-to-face interview process. It is preferable to conduct panel interviews in order to get diverse ideas and input from managers of cross-disciplines and functions. The advantages of using the panel interview process are that it eliminates bias, and promotes critical and objective assessments of candidates. Video conferencing technology such as Skype may be utilized in the interviews if the potential talent candidate is in a faraway location and a face-to-face meeting is not possible due to distance.

- When the candidate is successfully assessed and screened through the interview process, the verification of credentials such as criminal record, experience, track record, and qualifications has to be conducted. This step is essential in order to manage and reduce risk to the business, as ethical checks are part and parcel of the recruitment process.

- Additionally, parallel psychometric assessments with a cognitive and behavioral dimension may be conducted. The classic cognitive assessments commonly used in most

businesses are verbal, numerical, mechanical, checking and abstract reasoning, while the behavioral assessments are focused on universal competencies that are desired of an employee, e.g. communication, problem solving, initiative, thinking style, management style, leadership style, proactivity, values, principles, motivating factors, organizational skills, planning skills, values and ethics, etc. Usually the assessment batteries and tools are matched with the job level, the role complexity and the nature of the role. It's becoming a trend to use business case studies, games, simulations and role plays to assess particular observable skills and behaviors in candidates. In South Africa, specifically, the application of psychometric assessment is regulated by the Employment Equity Act of 1998, in that psychological testing and similar assessments are prohibited unless the tests have shown to be scientifically valid and reliable and are proven to be applied fairly and consistently and are not biased against any groups. Such tests and assessments have to be certified by the Health Professions Council of South Africa, or any other international body which may be authorized by law to certify tests or assessments. This indicates the importance of conducting an external environmental analysis to ensure that the organization is aware of the laws and regulations within the legal systems in order to comply with and overcome legal challenges.

- Once the candidate is deemed suitably qualified for the role in line with the job specifications, an appointment is finalized when the job offer is extended to the talent candidate indicating and specifying working conditions, a probationary clause, job title, job grade, job activities outline, the total remuneration package and a reference of policies, procedures and the code of conduct.

The section of recruitment and selection entails a list of important activities that should be carefully executed to ensure that we balance the rigour of the process with the management of the human beings who are interested in applying for opportunities in the company. Absolute fairness, communication and professionalism are critical in sending the correct image about the organization to the external job market.

Deployment and transition: The purpose of this dimension is to ensure that the new recruits become familiar with the new organization where they are employed quickly, through a socialization process. Furthermore, the employees can effectively transition into the new role whether it's an internal transfer, a new recruit or a recent promotion. At this early stage the

new recruit can be strongly influenced to form a positive image and good impressions about the organization. It is also recommended that a social mentor be appointed for the new recruit in order to assist with maneuvering through the organization in dealing with offbeat, difficult people, politics and sociocultural nuances. Dealing with the social and cultural aspects of the orientation is referred to as cultural awareness. It has to be honestly acknowledged that most organizations, no matter how healthy and mature their culture, will still have some degree of dysfunctionality in their systems, processes and practices because they are run by imperfect humans.

- Within the first two to three months of the appointment into the role/job the employee has to be on-boarded and oriented to the organization and the job in a structured and systematic manner. On-boarding and orientation are critical in ensuring that the employee settles in quickly, adapts and feels secure in the new environment. The direct supervisor has the responsibility to make sure that the role clarification, responsibilities and expected behaviors are articulated early in the process, in order to avoid learning of, or bringing undesirable habits and behaviors to the workplace. The documented job profiles, job descriptions and performance contracts can assist in guiding the discussion around job accountabilities, competencies, and key outputs of the role, thus achieving competency acquisition.
- On-the-job training can be conducted by various experienced individuals such as supervisors and skilled peers or fellow employees.
- Generic and formal organization orientation and on-boarding mostly focus on corporate policies, business vision, strategy, operating markets, product lines and organizational structure, values and cultural imperatives. Often such formal on-boarding presentations are conducted by top and senior management, and are stored as audio-visual technologies such as podcasts for easy access and quick reference. Human resources may play a key role in the on-boarding and orientation process of communicating about learning and development opportunities in the form of course catalogues, performance management systems and how rewards and benefits are structured. Internet technologies are used for the purposes of storing human resources policies and procedures, to ensure wide accessibility by all the employees.
Various tools and methods can be used to facilitate the quick transitioning and deployment of new employees to the job and the company. Tools such as job descriptions or job profiles, corporate videos, online electronic learning modules, face-to-face

meetings with peers and management and visits to other departments should be blended and used correctly to achieve desired results.

Grow and develop: The area of learning development in managing talent must never be viewed as an expensive luxury but rather as an investment in people. Often when organizations consider cost-saving initiatives they make the mistake of compromising on high quality training interventions, by opting for cheaper, less or no training at all. No organization can guarantee productivity, sustainability and continuity without serious investment in the training and development of employees. Training is beneficial only when it is linked to the overall business goals and it supports the achievement of business objectives like improving quality, increasing productivity and improving customer service, otherwise the training becomes an expensive hobby for the organization. Line management, in collaboration with human resource or talent management specialists may design learning and development programmes which address the knowledge and skills needed currently and in the future by the organization, e.g. graduate development programmes.

- The process of learning and development begins with defining the business skills needed to support and execute organizational strategy. Such skills may be, e.g. product knowledge, systems and technology training, legal compliance, leadership and management development skills, job-specific technical skills, project management, communication, marketing and sales skills, financial and budgeting skills. Knowledge networks provide a good platform for industry experts in conducting talks on technically related topics.

- The steps to assess the current skills and competency levels within the organization are essential in determining the gap between the required skills against actual available skills. The skills gap identified then become the learning needs of individuals collectively. It is recommended that each individual's learning needs be assessed against job requirements or future skills needs, or to support the career and succession planning process. Only when the organizational learning needs are known can a realistic training budget be compiled to source the appropriate learning solutions.

- Various learning interventions and solutions may address various skills and competence needs, e.g. formal tertiary education, technical training, job-specific training, management training, leadership development, coaching, mentoring, on-the-job training. etc.

Furthermore, there are many modes and vehicles for the delivery of training, e.g. electronic learning modules, self-study options, classroom training, formal qualifications, distance education, practical job exposure through stretch projects, formal presentations, learning by doing and growth experiences. Appropriate learning intervention delivery has to be identified, taking into account the preferences of the target audience, complexity of the learning content, various learning styles of individuals, and the most effective and efficient mode of delivery of training.

The development of complex skills can be achieved through observations, stretch projects and experiential learning. This approach to learning prompts the organization to invest in training technicians, line management and specialists as mentors and coaches to secure a transfer of knowledge and skills ability. Mentoring and coaching practice can be formalized and well structured with specific learning outcomes. It is ethical practice to give people feedback following assessment with the intention of giving them tools to grow and develop.

- There is no one-glove-fits-all approach to learning, thus the need to integrate and use blended learning solutions to create a learning organization. Electronic learning modules are cost-effective and allow the working adults to learn at their own pace and when suitable. Electronic learning modules are suitable for legal compliance training, but may not be suitable for developing behaviorally based skills like communication or leadership skills, where human interaction is necessary.

- When the learning and development interventions have been implemented, the training specialists have to evaluate if the desired and required learning objectives and performance improvements have been achieved.

Performance management: Performance management is a vital part of the process of development and the identification of talent. It is a fully participative process in goal and objective setting in alignment with the interpretation of the business strategy. The communication and giving of feedback constitute the leading ingredients of performance management, which leads to continuous improvement in the organization. This participative communication is between the employee and the immediate supervisor or line manager.

- The first step of performance management practice begins with knowledge and interpretation of business and strategic objectives, which are then cascaded down into individual key performance areas. Personal individual goal and objective setting flows

down in the form of key performance areas from top and senior management (in the form of business strategy). The targets which are set to be achieved are aligned to improve customer satisfaction, increase productivity levels, quality improvements and attainment of financial success. The performance management process is a way of directly measuring and evaluating the impact of talent performance on the overall business strategy and value add. Key principles governing the performance management process are listed below:

- The process is a two-way interaction and is not unilateral, where the manager dominates and dictates. Thus, the objective setting practice is between the manager and the employee. Both managers and employees have to be trained in their roles in actively participating in a meaningful performance review discussion.

- Good communication and feedback skills are key, as both good and undesirable behaviors and performance have to be raised in the discussion. Most people shy away from having to give negative feedback. However, this is a skill to be acquired and learned.

- Performance evaluation is where the employee assesses own performance, and the manager acts as a moderator, evaluator and validator. This process of evaluation has to be carried out fairly, objectively and accurately through evidence of the documented reports of results (sales results, customer feedback, production output sheets).

- The learning needs and strengths of employees are assessed and identified through the performance management review and evaluation process.

- When performance management is conducted professionally and correctly it will often result in a satisfied and engaged employee.

- Performance management information systems play the role of recording, filing, and providing reporting data on performance management. The automated systems are much preferable to the paper-driven processes and systems.

- High performers are initially identified objectively through the activity of performance management.

- Importantly, the high performers must be rewarded according to their performance results, as this encourages employees to strengthen their performance. Additionally, desired behaviors and technical deliverables may be communicated through this process and are also affirmed by rewards.

Talent reviews: Talent reviews usually constitute a meeting between human resources and senior management to discuss all matters relating to talent management. The conversations are structured around overall high performance and high potential (capability to grow into a senior role) of individuals in the talent pool. Furthermore, individuals admitted to the talent pool must have relevant experience, qualifications, outstanding performance track record, and demonstrable capability and potential to be promoted to a senior or highly critical role within a specified timeframe. The following activities support the talent review process:

- During the talent review process critical and high capability business areas are identified. Usually these areas of work require a high level of specialization and skill (technical, research and development hubs, new product development, technology, portfolio management, and senior executive roles). The skills and competencies needed for these critical business roles are articulated and defined.

- High potentials and high performers are identified (via a name list) against set criteria such as ability, work experience, education, qualifications, competencies, leadership, motivation, values, mobility and promotability.

- The talent pool is discussed in greater depth and much focus is given to performance, ability and potential. Talent calibration processes are open and fair as each talent case is presented by the responsible line manager to the senior management panel from various departments. In other words, the panel of senior management critically questions the line managers on their selection and identification of talent in their work areas. Often talent assessment tools are employed to additionally assess learning potential, leadership and management capability of the identified talent candidates.

- Talent is also ranked to indicate the readiness timeframe for mobility into the next suitable senior level role, e.g. 12, 18, 24 months.

- Career aspirations and the training progress reviews of talent are also monitored.

- Learning needs of talent are deliberated and this may provide an intervention to grow and develop leadership and management skills (from basic, intermediate and advanced skills levels).

- Human resources often facilitate and provide tools and systems to successfully have an engaging talent review session.

Talent reviews are about who is in the talent pool, and how are they progressing, as well as what interventions can be put in place to grow and develop talent. The process also looks at what is working well and what is not working well in talent management, and at what can be improved.

Rewarding and recognizing: Importantly, remuneration strategies have to be tied to overall business objectives. The business rightly pushes for high performance in areas of financial performance, increased sales, cost-saving initiatives, and customer satisfaction. When the objectives and targets are achieved, the high performers who contributed to the success have to be rewarded and recognized according to their value add. Often pay and remuneration levels are influenced by market conditions (supply and demand), therefore the firms need to be aware of pay trends in the market, especially those of competitors. In addition to market-related pay issues, industry legislation drives minimum pay principles which have to be adhered to. After considering all the factors involved, the business has to draft a remuneration plan and tactics which are aligned to market, legislation and best practices (fair and equitable). What the business can afford is also a major consideration. In developing the remuneration philosophy, the below elements need to be considered:

- Annual salary benchmark needs to be conducted within relevant industry;
- The company's financial budget and affordability have to be considered;
- Make no mistakes by attempting to control costs by paying less than competitive rates as this only leads to staff attrition;
- Pay scales need to match the role and the job grading levels;
- Skills, knowledge and capability need to be taken into consideration when reward decisions are made, in other words the company needs to pay more for critical and scarce skills;
- The performance management process has to be directly linked to reward, remuneration, recognition systems such as share options, conferment of awards for best performers and celebrations;
- Fairness, equity and transparency needs to govern the compensation practices and policies;
- Information technology is key in facilitating payroll, reward and remuneration processes;

- Importantly, benefits such as medical aid, life insurance, retirement funds, housing and vehicle allowances have to be factored into the total cost of employment and package calculations;
- To further reward high performance, bonuses, long- and short-term incentive schemes, and share options may be considered. Profit sharing schemes also encourage high performance and the loyalty of individuals.

  Apart from the monetary and financial rewards, specific recognition programmes may be initiated to support the high performers such as issuing of exclusive training opportunities, exposure to exciting and interesting work projects, being coached by a high-level executive, or even travel vouchers and/or gift vouchers to express appreciation for hard work.

Engage and retain: Successful retention of the employees is really determined by how engaged the employees are with the job, role and the overall organizational activities. In order to determine factors which enhance employee engagement, the employer needs to run an assessment and get input from the employees about the matter. An engaged employee is energized and willing to go the extra mile for the organization, also learns continuously and performs exceptionally. Financial rewards are not solely responsible for enhancing employee engagement, yet they are still important. A blend of financial rewards, with creation of a sense of purpose and meaning about the job, giving direction, communication and fair human resources practices improves engagement substantially. People are willing to commit to a compelling course and vision like directly contributing to strategy and the success of the business, also knowing that their career goals and aspiration are taken care of. Career pathing, succession planning and management are important in improving both retention and employee engagement. The below considerations need to be made when contemplating succession and career pathing implementation:

- Succession planning can feed from the talent pool identified through talent reviews and talent calibration processes, meaning that succession planning processes can be linked and aligned to the talent review process, and the two practices need not to be separated.
- In succession planning, specific senior roles are mapped out clearly and current talent is identified as the future replacement for senior leadership roles. Often this practice is referred to as creation of the leadership pipeline, or potential leadership pool. Human

resources and management are tasked with ensuring that the leadership pipeline or pool is trained and adequately skilled to improve readiness to move to the next level or future role within a reasonable time.

- Succession planning meets long-term business strategic needs as risk of skills loss is minimized, and retiring, resigning executives can be replaced quickly at low costs by the leadership pipeline developed internally.

- Succession planning also ensures commitment and satisfaction of the employees who believe that the organization cares about their career aspirations and intends to grow and develop them.

- Another important element of engagement is to ensure that the jobs are designed in a manner which makes them interesting and challenging and not tedious. Knowledge management systems may be developed to support continuous improvement processes.

- Talented individuals often enjoy and are fulfilled by professional networking groups to discuss professional development matters. These networks may be in the form of online communities or face-to-face meetings like alumni events.

A holistic approach to engagement and retention is important in that not only one aspect can be focused on. A blend of talent management approaches is needed, e.g. learning and development opportunities, fair rewards and remuneration, job satisfaction, opportunity to acquire meaningful skills, networking opportunities, and knowing that there is a commitment towards career growth and promotion possibilities.

Assessments in the form of surveys may be conducted to test the levels of employee engagements and matters relating to retention. These assessments may help improve on matters which enhance and improve retention and employee engagement.

6.3.1.3 Implementation of the dimensions of talent management which are informed by the career stages of the talent pool

In implementing talent management dimensions across the organization in various functions, the managers and human resources need to be aware of the needs and characteristics of specific talent pools in relation to their career life stages. Interestingly, the generational theory comes to the fore as people in the early career stages will mostly be Generation Y, while those in mid-career stage will be Generation X, and obviously most executives and

senior managers are Baby Boomers at the late career stage. The dimensions of talent management, i.e. attraction, sourcing and recruitment, deployment and transitioning, growth and development, performance management, talent reviews, reward and recognition, engagement and retention, will still be applicable and relevant to the entire multi-generational and varying career stages of the talent pools. However, sensitivity is needed in customising specific practices. See the examples below:

Early career stage:

- Provision of intensive and structured learning interventions to support professional specialist development and growth. Basic management skills are often beneficial early on;
- Job design and structuring of work allows working in highly interactive teams and intensive use of new technology;
- Remuneration is market-related with relatively high cash components; and
- Learning solutions are flexible and untraditional.

Mid-career stage:

- The female talent pool is provided with flexible work arrangements and fair maternity benefits to be able to have both a career and family;
- Relevant leadership development interventions such as executive development, advanced management and leadership development programmes to support succession and career pathing plans for upward mobility into senior management roles may be implemented;
- Creation of meaningful and purpose-driven work and careers (allow opportunity to drive strategy and strategic projects);
- Allocate to critical jobs, projects and assignments both locally and internationally; and
- Rewards may be linked to profit sharing and share option schemes to create a sense of ownership.

Late career stage:

- Provide more counselling to help the employee to prepare for retirement;
- Reduce the involvement in projects requiring an investment in long hours;
- Allow flexible work hours;

- Remuneration may be structured to increase the savings towards retirement plans;

- Appoint and optimize this talent pool towards mentoring, coaching, knowledge transfer projects and in an advisory capacity; and

- To keep the individuals engaged and interested, they may be afforded conferences and professional knowledge updates.

6.3.1.4 Role players

Role players are the key stakeholders in the business who are responsible for the development, planning, implementation and improvement of talent management projects in the organization. It is therefore critical to set key performance indicators for all the role players which pertain to talent management activities, and set reward systems which encourage strong performance.

Management: Line managers are directly responsible for identifying, selecting and recommending the high potential and high performing talented employees in their teams to become part of the official talent management pool. They have a much greater responsibility in the recruitment, supporting, on-boarding and induction to new roles, managing performance, and identification of learning and development needs. Retention of employees is highly influenced by the quality of direct line management, as employees interact frequently with the direct line manager. To the employee the immediate line manager creates the impressions about the company culture, values, and practices. Line management needs to assume responsibility and accountability for the outcomes of managing talent in their respective units and departments. Career and succession planning, coaching, communication and feedback to the employee are to be carried out continuously by the direct manager with the employee in a professional, open and honest manner.

Talent pools: Talented employees have an active role to play in order to ensure that they acquire necessary skills, knowledge and experience to assist their career growth aspirations. They have to be agile, flexible and mobile in their approaches to work and conduct. Furthermore, talented employees need to partake in stretch projects, management and leadership development programmes and must travel to some extent. Continued high performance is important as it will ensure them a place in the talent pool, as well as career growth.

Leadership: Organizational leaders are solely responsible for developing strategic initiatives which drive the business, and ensure that it is cascaded to the implementers. These strategic initiatives include giving direction to human resource leadership in aligning talent management strategies and tactics to that of the business. Furthermore, the leadership team needs to hold management accountable for the delivery of talent management initiatives. Leadership has to ensure that talent management strategies are effective, support the business objectives and add value to the business imperatives. If the leadership is not involved actively in being a sponsor of talent management initiatives, the talent management practices will not take priority in the organization – it will just be one of those human resources activities.

Human resource: The senior human resource executive is responsible for developing the talent strategy in line with the business strategy, as well as guiding management and the leadership team in applying the tools, systems and processes of talent management. Human resources executives will most likely lead and facilitate the talent review meetings and conduct audits in the organization to drive the implementation of talent management dimensions and tactical plans. It is a human resource deliverable to procure assessment tools and information systems, to monitor culture, to improve the employer brand and to champion talent-centric practices in the organization. Talent-centric practices are reward programmes, the creation of a healthy work environment, learning and growth initiatives, etc.

Organizations need to go as far as allocating talent management activities, tasks and deliverables to the performance management process, in the form of key performance indicators. When the talent management key performance indicators are met, then the role players must be rewarded to support and reinforce commitment and implementation.

6.3.1.5 Best-practice enablers (tactics, practices and tools)

Talent management communication tactics

It is important to communicate the purpose of the talent management programme to all stakeholders clearly when making it known, in order to create openness and thus develop acceptance and support of the programme by employees, line managers and executives.

A talent management driven organization needs to have formal internal and external communication channels. Various modes may be used to deliver the communication messages, depending on the purpose of the communication. Formal road shows and staff

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meetings may be used by senior management to communicate the organizational strategy, mission, values, talent management initiatives and business goals. Because communication is not only one-way, employees also need to contribute towards giving feedback and various methods may be considered for this, e.g. blended methods such as the use of surveys, focus groups, suggestion boxes, face-to-face meetings and social media such as twitter, Facebook, electronic mail and blogging forums. Other ways of periodic communication include monthly company magazines, updates on the intranet, posters, video clips and social communication forums.

Examples of the use of effective communication activities:

- Utilization of social media such as twitter, Facebook and websites on the internet to communicate about company direction, production, mission and customers in order to get the key and critical messages out.
- Printing of high quality brochures to highlight open vacancies and bursary offerings, and placing these on high-traffic billboards and notice boards. Any form of print media communication needs to be packaged in a manner consistent with good branding practices.
- Allow interactive communication where customers, employees and external candidates can give feedback to the company, e.g. customer call centers and social media devices can be utilized.
- Sharing the company values and corporate social responsibility activities, to indicate how the company invests in local community development and educational activities.
- State to potential employees/talent what kind of positive and unique experiences are evident in the company. These could be good career opportunities, competitive remuneration, learning and development offerings and/or pleasant culture to work in.
- Launch various campaigns to attract talent at various career life stages (using the radio, newspaper adverts and video clips).
- Employment agencies may also be utilized in partnering with the company to develop talent searching insights, and also to promote and market the company's employer brand.

The use of electronic media may be optimally explored to promote the employer brand both internally and externally. Networking opportunities and involvement with industry bodies, educational institutions and other public stakeholders are various mechanisms of

communication. All forms of communication needs to promote an image of a sought after employer by key external talent.

Internal organizational practices

In order to achieve the successful implementation of talent management, various practices in the organization need to be reviewed to ensure that they enable, allow and support talent management.

- **Culture is one of the most powerful enablers of talent management**
  Organizational culture is critical enough to influence whether talent management practices will be a success or not. Culture is a collective behavior within an organization, driven by core values. It simply is a personality of the organization. Positive cultural values have to be taught, encouraged and rewarded to all. Any organization with an unhealthy, toxic and disempowering culture does not attract talent. Efforts should be made to develop a people-oriented culture, as people are not mere factors of production. Important values can support both business objectives and people's inspiration levels. Examples of good values are the following:
  - Ethical behaviors by both employees, management and the leadership team;
  - Team work is promoted, where individual success and competitiveness is valued and rewarded, but not to the detriment of the team and it efforts;
  - A technology driven culture, where technology is integrated into work processes and technology is used in promoting effective communication practices;
  - Innovation and continuous improvement by employees are welcome, and mediocre performance is not rewarded and encouraged;
  - Diversity is valued, not only in terms of race, gender, belief and ethnicity but also in the diversity of ideas and ways of working;
  - Results driven culture, where people are held accountable for delivering high-level performance and productivity; and
  - Mutual respect is valued, and where team members treat each other ethically and with fairness.

  A dysfunctional organizational culture and unethical behaviors in the workplace often lead to high attritions rates as people seek healthier and more constructive environments.

- **Practices of setting up financial resources and a talent management budget**
  - A decision needs to be made on how much financial resources will be invested in talent management processes, systems, tools and interventions;
  - Cost estimations on funds to be spent on talent management need to be calculated upfront as talent management is costly; and
  - Management and leadership need to approve the talent budget upfront to illustrate commitment and buy-in. The budget will consist of item expenditures such as remuneration, recruitment, employer brand communication, psychometric assessments, talent management systems, learning and development, appointment of talent management staff, improvement of organizational culture initiatives, the costs of training managers and talent attraction campaigns, etc.

Without financial resources being made available it will be practically impossible to successfully initiate and implement talent management programmes.

- **Employee wellness as an organizational practice**
  Workplace wellness plays an important role in encouraging healthy behaviors in the organization and place of work. The employers with wellness programmes are seen as caring for the welfare and wellbeing of their employees. Wellness activities incorporate blended methods for employee health improvements such as:
  - Medical aid sponsorships;
  - Wellness facilities (gym, spa, sonars);
  - Educational programmes (where psychological, emotional and physical wellness education is provided);
  - Provision of onsite medical screenings such as blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol testing;
  - Stress management and support;
  - Health awareness electronic publications on various topics outlined on the health calendar;
  - Counseling services are provided (legal problems, financial counseling, drug and substance abuse avoidance, emotional and psychological counseling);
  - Weight control coaching;
  - Flexible work hours and arrangements to allow work-life balance; and
  - All-encompassing employee assistance programmes.

Most employers of choice or best companies to work for often provide comprehensive employee wellness programmes to assist employees to cope with challenging life and work demands.

Other internal organizational practices

- Reporting relationships must be managed professionally, ethically and fairly. Much responsibility is placed on the direct supervisor or line manager to create a healthy way of relating to employees, while balancing task requirements with that of relating to people.
- Leadership need to provide direction and a compelling vision to inspire and motivate employees continuously. For example, it is good leadership practice to communicate, give feedback and share future plans.
- Resources, equipment and tools are needed to carry out the responsibilities of talent management, e.g. purchasing assessment tools, learning resources, upgrading of systems and processes as well as hiring of talent specialists, etc.
- Information systems are to be seriously considered in order to support and manage talent. The systems could be a procurement of knowledge management systems to support professional development.
- Work structuring and design is pertinent in engaging and keeping talented individuals on work projects. The job needs to be challenging, stretching, provide opportunities to solve problems, apply creativity, and allow interaction with knowledgeable colleagues.
- In building the talent pool there has to be a mixture of cultures, gender, age, experience and knowledge levels, in order to create a diverse and inclusive culture.

Information technology for talent management (tools)

Talent management information systems are critical in supporting the alignment, coordination and integration of the entire talent management process from start to end. The use of the system may vary from data input, electronic filing, information processing to providing management reporting and data analytics.

The business should be willing to invest in an integrated talent solution. Advanced talent management systems contain the following electronic modules:

- Electronic recruitment: Provides functionalities for job advertising, job application response handling, automated psychometric assessments, shortlisting of curriculum vitae against the job profile, online rapid assessments, curriculum vitae database storage, scheduling of interviewing processes via short messaging system (SMS sent to the applicants), etc.

- Competency matrix: All the leadership competencies, technical knowledge, managerial, job-specific skills and behaviors are set as criteria for every role and uploaded on the system. This process enables automatic generation of job profiles, job-appropriate assessments, and job matching of candidates.

- Job profiles and job descriptions: Can be system generated, filed and updated.

- Online assessments: Assessments can be conducted on the remote site, off the employer premises specifically for job applicants through connection to a website link.

- Electronic learning modules: This module is to support training and development interventions. Functionalities include but are not limited to booking a course, processing of training invoices, doing online learning, reading of course material electronically and conducting computer-based examinations, etc. Courses and lectures may be attended through virtual campuses by joining in on a teleconference.

- Performance management process will be supported through electronically setting targets, work objectives and key performance areas. The performance reviews are enabled where the employee and manager can assess and agree on the overall performance score of an employee. Because the system is integrated, talent review information on performance can be accessed for reporting as well as the identification of high performers. Furthermore, the information can be used to calculate remuneration increases and performance-based rewards for the employees.

- Remuneration and payroll: It has been proven greatly successful to run payroll and remuneration via an integrated system.

- Talent planning and reviews: The identification of high potential and high performers is supported by the talent system. Employee information on job experience, skills, competencies, potential levels, performance reviews, assessment results, remuneration, career discussions, feedback from work peers, training attended as well as coaching and mentoring progress reports are retrievable to support the talent reviews where talent is justified to senior management.

- Workforce profiling, talent planning and reviews may be conducted on the systems, and this could well support the talent budgeting process.

- Succession planning: Critical positions are ring-fenced, indicating competence and skills requirements. Talented and succession candidates are ranked and plotted against a particular role. Readiness levels are also recorded to indicate who is ready to step into a critical role immediately, as well as within the short-, medium- and long term. Action plans and progress reports on the upskilling of individuals are also updated.

- Career planning: Continuous discussions about career opportunities and interests between the employee and line management are recorded on the system. Skills, courses and experience-based training are recorded.

- Social media is used to facilitate internal and external communication (e.g. twitter, video conferencing, Facebook, instant messaging, electronic mail, knowledge libraries and databases). This is used to keep all employees updated on business information. The system also allows employees to give feedback to senior management electronically.

- Knowledge databases: Where knowledge resources can be stored while talent has access and can even contribute towards knowledge extension.

- Climate surveys: Culture surveys are completed online to enable the organization to identify areas of strength and the areas needing urgent attention with regard to culture, values and the scoring of results are easily accessible for interpretation.

- Data analytics and reports: statistical data on headcount, retention, attrition, cost of talent management and other relevant data can be stored, retrieved and analyzed as desired. This means that up to date information is readily available for decision-making and reporting purposes without much manual intervention.

The automation of all human resource and talent management processes has many advantages in that some packages can be integrated. Current information systems can support the entire employee life cycle in the organization. Human resource modules can be tailored according to business needs and processes. Many information system offerings include modules such as recruitment, online recruitment, assessments, personnel administration, training and development, performance management, talent management, succession management, payroll systems, employee and manager self-service as well as social networking. With the comprehensive people management modules, information can be updated, stored and easily accessed. Reporting and data analytics are more accurate with aligned and integrated systems.

Information gathering and lengthy data analysis need not be a chore with the tools and systems currently available. Technology is critical in supporting the analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation of all the talent management processes.

6.3.1.6 Evaluation of the effectiveness of talent management practices, processes and systems

Evaluation, according to Pearce and Robinson (2009), is concerned with application of greater objectivity and rigor to analyze the company's internal capabilities in relation to strategy implementation. Evaluation allows realism in assessing how well the current strategy is working, and identifying internal strengths and weaknesses, thus deciding if the chain of activities add value or not, and what improvements can be made.

Talent management, like all other strategic initiatives, should be evaluated to test if talent management activities add value to the organization and if there are tangible and intangible benefits brought by the activities. This is good practice for bringing about improvement and reviewing practices that do not yield the desired results.

I therefore propose certain criteria be used to evaluate the effectiveness of talent management programmes and activities in the organization by critically and objectively answering the following questions:

- Does the external environmental analysis inform the overall business strategy and the talent management strategy?
- Is the talent forecast for skills and capability needs derived from business requirements?
- Can the characteristics of talent be clearly defined for the organization?
- Are we successfully developing and implementing the dimensions of talent management?
- Are key role players actively supporting and successfully implementing talent management activities?
- Is there awareness and education in the organization about the impact of career life stages on the individual's preferences and do generational differences influence the behavior of individuals at work?

- Are talent management strategies, tactics, practices and processes well-communicated and understood by all stakeholders in the business?
- Do the organizational culture, values and systems support and enable the cultivation of talent management best practice?
- Are talent management activities well-aligned, integrated and coordinated?
- Is there willingness and openness to continuously improve talent management practices?

Talent management needs to be evaluated against a set of criteria in order to track success as well as areas needing improvements. Furthermore, talent management can be evaluated to see if it yields any contribution towards direct business results. Employees are key in giving feedback about the overall performance of talent management activities through the use of climate surveys. The above criteria of evaluating talent management effectiveness may be incorporated into a talent scorecard.

The rate of return on talent management is measurable through reporting on savings achieved through retention, thus avoiding recruitment, and new employee costs, etc. Additionally, the question could be asked if successful business performance can be attributed to talent, e.g. whether having a talented business development consultant is increasing sales and retaining customers.

The other measures for testing the effectiveness of talent management are through monitoring talent retention statistics and acquiring lessons/narrations for the state of statistics. The evaluation process may be used as a basis for continuous improvement.

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the talent management framework and discussed it in great detail. The framework has the following elements: planning; the dimensions of talent management; implementation of the dimensions of talent management as informed by the career stages of the talent pool; the role players who are the actual implementers; best-practice enablers (tactics, practices and tools); and the application of evaluation to talent management practices. Additionally, I have outlined the steps that were followed to construct the talent management framework. These steps are empirically data derived (inductive) and theoretically derived (deductively) through the application of literature. The application of

modified analytic induction and constructivist grounded theory enabled and facilitated the steps of constructing, verifying and testing the final talent management framework with rigour.

The sole purpose of talent management is to support and deliver the business strategy. Talent management is not implemented for the sake of meeting fashionable trends. Instead it is a core aspect and its design is influenced by the vision, mission and overall objectives of the business. How talent is forecasted, deployed and performance is managed directly impacts on business deliverables, sustainability and success.

An organization needs to deliberately and consciously take a stand to create and offer a positive and attractive employee experience from recruitment to the later days of the employment life cycle. Employee engagement begins with talent knowing that the organization cares, and is interested in their growth and development. This serves as a psychological contract, as opposed to a mechanical employer and employee relationship.

In the next chapter I will present the personal research journey I underwent while conducting the study.

Chapter 7

My research journey

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I portray the personal reflections on my research journey and experiences gained throughout the study. I will discuss and elaborate on each phase of the research process from the initial phases up to the conclusion of the research. Ferdinand (2009) views auto-ethnography as a way of writing that privileges the exploration of self in response to questions that can only be answered that way, through the textual construction of and thoughtful reflection about my lived experiences. I have written the chapter in a form of a personalized narrative with the main features of auto-ethnography. Photo 7.1 is of myself, Rose Boitumelo Mathafena, taken in Turkey in 2011. The photo reflects my love for nature and my enthusiasm for exploration.
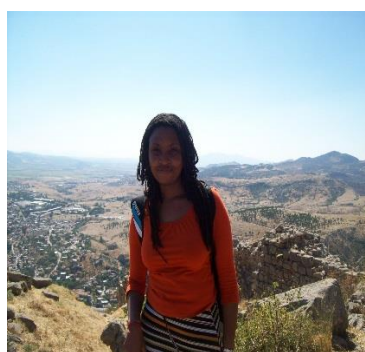
Photo 7.1 Myself in Turkey, September 2011

Holt (2003) indicated that emergent ethnographic writing practice involves highly personalized accounts, where the author draws on their own experiences to extend understanding of a particular discipline or culture. According to Ellis and Bochner (2000), the texts of auto-ethnography are written in the first person and may feature dialogue, emotion and self-consciousness in particular contexts. In essence I will present my personal story about the way in which I conducted the research for the purpose of completing my doctoral degree. Furthermore I will make mention of the personal challenges and events I have encountered along the route.

This chapter also plays the role of facilitating the assessment of the quality of the research process through reflection and by doing an internal audit trail. I will discuss key developmental phases of the study in the following order:

- The context of the study

- Personal reflection on the challenges and lessons learned

- Preparation for the research process

- Execution of the research

- Ensuring the quality of the study

The next section gives detailed discussions of each research phase.

7.2 The context of the study (reasons for the study)

My interest in enrolling for a doctoral study began in September 2008 after attending a five-day doctoral research training programme hosted by Stellenbosch University. After week-long interactions and immersion in research methodologies, I then decided that I wanted to embark on a doctoral journey. By this time I had already become fascinated with the concept of talent management and knew that it would make an interesting study. Stellenbosch University granted all the course participants access to academic journals and databases for a period of three months in order to support those who wanted to take the step of writing up a research proposal to support their applications for the doctoral programme. I immediately jumped at the opportunity and wrote a motivating essay for the application and the initial research proposal.

Owing to work commitments and mainly for financial reasons, I decided not to enrol with Stellenbosch University but investigated other tertiary institutions, one being the University of the Free State (UFS). I then sent my initial proposal to the UFS, which ended up on the desk of Prof. Ebben van Zyl, who at the time was supervising a Master's degree student researching talent management. Photo 7.2 is of Prof. Ebben Van Zyl who is my study leader and research supervisor.

Photo 7.2 Prof. Ebben van Zyl

In early 2009 I was admitted into the doctoral programme of the Industrial Psychology department under the supervision of Prof. Ebben Van Zyl. At this early stage I had planned to embark on a quantitative study and had a few discussions with my study leader on various quantitative approaches that could be followed. The initial research proposal was developed purely to support the quantitative research approach.

My study leader assessed my research proposal in conjunction with Prof. CL Bester, who made valuable inputs towards approaching the study via a purely qualitative methodology. At that stage I was slightly frustrated because I had already set my mind on conducting a quantitative study. I quickly overcame my frustration by beginning to familiarize myself with qualitative research, and adapted my research proposal according to the recommendations made.

I came to a resolve that perhaps doing qualitative research was meant to be, or that it was my destiny. My first real encounter with qualitative research was in 2008 at the doctoral research training programme mentioned above. The session on qualitative research which I deemed too radical for my considerations, was presented by Prof. Willem Schurink, who is a key leader and pioneer of qualitative research in South Africa. Interestingly, after the session Prof. Schurink came to speak to me in order to encourage me to consider using qualitative research methods, and vowed that I would enjoy this avenue of research. Interestingly, I dismissed his counsel as I had then perceived qualitative research to be too radical an approach.

Ironically in 2009 I attended a qualitative-only research conference at the University of Johannesburg in order to familiarize myself with the methodology, as qualitative research was going to be my main approach. Surprisingly I found myself attending a session presented by Prof. Willem Schurink and his wife, Mrs Evante Schurink. This time I was receptive,

embracing and found the session helpful and informative. The concepts of ethnography and auto-ethnography were taught at the seminar.

I need to indicate that I found these initial stages exciting, frustrating and yet, motivating. Prof. van Zyl kept communicating with me via electronic mail and telephonically to address the structure and content of my research proposal. The communication was not face-to-face, mostly due to my residing in Johannesburg.

7.3 Personal reflections on the challenges and lessons learned

In the past five years of my research journey I have experienced many challenges which I believe directly or indirectly impacted the execution and timing of the study. Most of the stressors I experienced are related to life changes and workplace complexities. I have often heard people say 'oh, when you do your doctoral studies life happens to you'. Indeed I can say that life happened to me.

Between 2009 up until today I have encountered and reported to at least five line managers and four functional leaders in the workplace. The average lifespan with one leader is about twelve months. This was a challenge to me as I constantly had to adapt in these five years to changing styles of leadership, management and directional requirements. There were also some positive experiences as I learned valuable life lessons and sharpened many skills due to the influence of the leaders. However, I also experienced some painful and hurtful moments in the workplace. I will not discuss these unpleasant experiences in any detail.

Additionally, my workplace was impacted by reorganization activities and I served on the team responsible for their implementation. This is never an easy process though I had learned a lot about restructuring processes, project management and labor law practices. Throughout the process I was never sure whether my job was secure or not, but I was determined to see the process to its end.

During this period I also had to ensure that I delivered key performance areas required of my job role. There were many times where I had to work extended hours to ensure I fulfilled my work responsibilities. Perhaps to some degree I did this to my own disadvantage in relation and neglected keeping a balanced approach to life.

I admit that there was a period in the five years where I neglected myself spiritually (relating to God), physically (lack of balanced nutrition and physical exercise), and socially (spending time with my family and relatives).

All the above challenges made it difficult for me to properly focus on my studies in order to produce a good research product. One needs a balance across the emotional, social, occupational, spiritual and intellectual dimensions of one's life. Owing to the imbalanced life I lived, I neglected my studies to a large extent and lost momentum for many months.

With an effort to get the balance back I embarked on travel indulgences, where I visited India, Mauritius, Thailand, Indonesia, Turkey, Zambia, Lesotho and Botswana. Recently I also discovered the joys of hiking around Hartebeest, Magaliesberg, Drakensberg and Johannesburg.

Owing to social, emotional, occupational and spiritual challenges, as well as the imbalances in these mentioned above, I experienced personal crises and was not sure whether what I was experiencing was normal or peculiar to me only. As a result I read the autobiographies of many women, young and old, and from various religions, cultures and countries. I found this activity of reading quite helpful and therapeutic as I realized that most of the emotions, thoughts, feelings and ideas I had were shared by many other women.

Motho ke motho ka batho (A person is a person through others). Photos 7.3 are those of my close family members who provide care, love and support.

Nnake Neo le Motlogolo Tshiamo (My brother Neo and nephew Tshiamo)

Rre Caly, Mmamogolo Dolly, Mme Nora, Malome Humiki le Motswala Keabetwe. (Rre – Father, Mmamogolo – Aunt, Malome – Uncle, Motswala – Cousin, Mme – Mother). Keleboga le Malome Rakhole, le batswala Kagiso le Mpho.

Mme Nora le Tshiamo

Nna Rosa le Tshiamo

Photo 7.3 Motho ke motho ka batho

It took some faith in God and also encouragement from some of my family members, as well as academic support from people such as Mrs Schurink, Prof. Schurink, Prof. Kotze (Departmental Chair of the UFS's Industrial Psychology Department) and my study leader, Prof. Ebben van Zyl, to counsel me towards feeling positive and motivated to keep on going forward with my studies. At times I battled to see the reasons for continuing in my studies. I often wondered if it would make any difference in my life. I suppose that when one is not experiencing joy or you're undergoing a difficult phase, it is hard to see things in a balanced and purposeful manner. When Tshiamo (my nephew) was born I was so overjoyed and got even more motivation to study, as he represents hope, life and the goodness of God.

Photo 7.4 is of Prof. Tina Kotze (second row from right), Prof. Willem Schurink and his wife, Evante Schurink (front left), myself and the academic staff of the UFS's Department of Industrial Psychology.

Photo 7.4 Qualitative research workshop in the Department of Industrial Psychology in Bloemfontein 2012

7.4 Preparation for the research process (study leaders, proposal and familiarization with the research topic)

In 2009, shortly after official registration with the UFS, I focused on crafting my research proposal and identifying an appropriate title, with much support from Prof. van Zyl and Prof. Bester. At that stage it was definite that the study would be qualitative, and I still had to study and explore possible qualitative data analysis approaches.

Photo 7.5 below is of myself in Zambia at the Victoria Falls about to bungee jump. Making the decision to undertake a research project is similar to doing a bungee jump. It's exciting

and frightening because you do not know what to expect. A research projects requires one to be equipped with skills, courage, strength, resources and that you are surrounded by the right people to guide and offer support.

Photo 7.5 Bungee jump

Towards the end of April, Prof. van Zyl informed me that I needed to set time in the next few weeks to fly to Bloemfontein to discuss the research strategy, and then also to present my proposal to the faculty panel. On the day prior to meeting with the panel on the 4th of June 2009, I had a meeting with Prof. Bester and Prof. van Zyl to receive guidance and ask questions on technical aspects of the research process. The professors also encouraged me and said I needed not to panic about the presentation of the proposal to the panel. Despite their counsel I was still nervous and concerned.

On the 5th of June 2009 I waited at the faculty tea room before I was called into the lecture hall, and was introduced by Prof. van Zyl to around eight faculty members. I was nervous and intimidated by a congregation of accomplished academics to whom I had to present my humble work. I was encouraged by the fact that I knew my proposal intimately. The audience listened to the presentations, asked relevant questions and made recommendations which I was only too happy and grateful to quickly scribble down. All suggestions and recommendations made by the panel were immediately considered for incorporation into my proposal when I arrived back in Johannesburg.

A week later I received official communication from Prof. van Zyl that my research had been granted the go-ahead. I was excited and encouraged. Towards the end of 2009 and early in 2010 I familiarized myself with qualitative research and the topic of talent management. I soon realized that most companies who practiced talent management were not registered as employers of choice, or as best employers. During September of 2009 I started to set questions that I could use for data collection purposes. I also acquired a list of the 2009/2010

Best Employers in South Africa via internet searches, with the purpose of approaching them to conduct the study. Out of the top 10 Best Employers, only two companies agreed to support the study. This took some effort in the form of continuous phone calls and follow-up electronic mails to secure the appointments for data collection interviews. At this stage I was concerned about securing entry into the companies and being successful at conducting the actual interviews. In March 2010 I managed to secure and confirm appointments with the companies to interview the relevant research participants. During the process of negotiating entry into the companies I sent them the information, and disclosed all the details of the study.

7.5 Execution of the research

The **data gathering** process happened at two different companies, which allowed me to compare and verify similarities in the data that was provided by the research participants.

Purposive sampling was the main method I used to select and identify the research participants. The research participants had to have knowledge and experience on the subject of talent management. Thus, the required participants were human resource practitioners, line managers and beneficiaries of a talent management programme. The two companies provided me with a name list and contact details of the potential participants with whom I had to confirm the initial interviews.

The research participants for the initial interviews in March and April 2010 came to a total of thirteen, of which nine were from Company A and four from Company B. I was impressed with the professional profiles and academic accomplishments of the participants. All the participants were in managerial and specialized roles, and were also in possession of tertiary qualifications and some weighty work experience. I was blessed to have diversity representation in the form of gender, race and religion. All the interviews were conducted in English. I found the participants to be articulate and informative in matters relating to talent management. They also communicated with great ease and provided views from management and human resource perspectives, and as talent management beneficiaries.

The initial **interviews** in 2010 took place on the actual company premises for the convenience of the research participants. On the 25th of March 2010 I interviewed the first five participants at Company A, followed by the remaining four on 12 April 2010. The four

participants from Company B were interviewed on 22 April 2010. I used semi-structured interviews to collect the data. With the first set of interviews I was tense, and did not really know what to expect. The use of an interview guide with pre-set semi-structured questions really provided the process with some structure and direction. After a few interviews I began to gain some confidence, and even began to probe for more clarifications on the emerging data themes. The participants requested that I refrain from using a tape recorder, and felt more comfortable with me taking down hand-written notes. I spent at least 60 to 90 minutes with each participant. The space of time between interviews provided an opportunity to type, read and reflect on the data. With each successive interview I could begin to identify similarities and variations, if any, and made comparisons from one interview to another and also between the two companies. Cognitively this was the beginning of the analysis process though I did not realize this at the time.

The **data analysis** process was revitalized and energized in 2012, after I had become partially inactive in my research due to personal circumstances already mentioned. Going forward, Prof. van Zyl collaborated with Prof. Schurink, an expert in qualitative research, to guide the data analysis process as a consultant. At this stage Prof. Bester had already retired in 2010. Photo 7.6 below signifies the collaborative effort between Prof. van Zyl, Prof. Schurink and myself to focus on the qualitative research methodology and analysis process.

Photo 7.6 A collaborative effort with regard to research methodology

I need to mention that though I did not make much progress with producing written accounts related to the research, I still maintained the reading activity about qualitative research, qualitative data analysis methods and talent management. The data analysis process proved not to be an easy and quick activity. In 2012 and 2013 I found myself moving between analyzing the data I had collected and referring back and forth to the literature on analytic induction and constructivist grounded theory. I often pondered about how to ensure that I

correctly apply analytic induction and grounded theory to the data. At this stage I was frantically and desperately trying to retain the natural and creative spirit of the data, but also wanted to ensure procedural correctness of analysis.

Naturally, the more time I spent reading the data and thinking about it, the clearer it became to do the analysis. The analysis entailed comparing and identifying commonalities and noting the differences in the data by the participants. Grounded theory helped me to cluster and group similar data features and also to label them accordingly. With time the themes and sub-themes began to become clearer to me as I interacted with the data.

Development of the initial talent management framework happened after the data analysis process was nearly complete. Mentally I began to put all the pieces of information from the data into a nearly complete picture. I found the drawing of diagrams helpful to assist with making sense of key elements or critical themes which were in the data. After drawing many tables and diagrams, and making notes on the flip chart, I would hang them in the hall at my home. Eventually one day I had a creative flow of ideas and began to put together the initial talent management framework that I shared in Chapter 4.

Photos 7.7 below reflect the process notes of ideas and thoughts jotted on the flip charts and my notebook.

Photos 7.7 Process notes recording

Once I had presented the initial talent management framework, I embarked on a process **to test the validity of the proposed initial framework through triangulation.** In April 2013 I set up further follow-up interviews at the same companies where I collected the initial data in order to test the validity of the proposed framework. In Company B, four participants agreed to contribute to the follow-up interviews. Only one participant was involved in the first round of interviews conducted in 2010, while the other three were new to the study. In Company A, one participant who was not part of the first interviews in 2010 was identified to participate in

the research and to do a follow-up interview because she was appointed as talent manager. Furthermore, one participant from Company A and who was part of the initial interviews opted to rather respond to me via electronic mail to give input on the validity of the framework in relation to the data that was collected in 2010. The follow-up interviews and data collection happened in the following fashion: I had emailed the copy of the initially proposed framework to the research participants two weeks before the appointments and asked them to identify elements that must be added or removed from the framework, and also to check the validity and relevance of the proposed framework.

The interviews proved fruitful, because of the valuable input, as well as the commentary made by the participants. Similar to the first round of interviews, participants opted for no use of a voice recording device. I respected their request and did not use the voice recorder, happily writing down their comments and inputs relating to the initially proposed talent management framework. Additionally, the participants offered me unsolicited documents to support and confirm the talent management practices in the respective companies. In Company A I received seven documents and in Company B I received one document. These documents are in-house publications detailing the company's plans, objectives and events. Amazingly they contained rich evidence of talent management practices in the companies.

Once I got home after the follow-up interviews and data collection, I read through the additional data of both the second-round and follow-up interviews as well as the unsolicited documents. The analysis process began with initial coding and was followed by focused coding. From the data I focused mainly on the additional information and themes which were recommended to improve the initially proposed framework. The participants did not dispute any themes or concepts of the initial framework, but rather recommended that certain aspects be emphasized and added. The triangulation process was fulfilled through the obtaining of information from additional participants who were not involved in the first round of interviews. Furthermore, those who were involved had the opportunity to confirm if the framework represented was what was originally shared with me in 2010. Moreover, the unsolicited documentation gave much confirmatory evidence of talent management practices in the companies, which strengthened the triangulation and validity process.

The **theoretical coding process** naturally began when I started marrying the additional themes from the follow-up interviews and the documentary data to the initially proposed talent management framework. I must say it was not an easy process, as I took many days

contemplating how to incorporate the new input into the already existing talent management framework.

Following the theoretical coding process, was the **literature review I embarked on.** I reviewed the literature with the purpose and intention of further testing, validation and checking the relevance of the collected and analysed data in relation to the theory of talent management. I found out that the main sources of information on the subject of talent management are found in business- and human resource-related and journals and guides. I therefore invested a sum of money on buying a couple of talent management resource guide books. Additionally I searched for electronic academic journals through an off-campus library weblink, and the most valuable journals were from Ebscohost, Emerald, Springer, Science Direct, Wiley Blackwell, JSTOR Collection and Google Scholar.

Photo 7.8 below indicates the journals and books used for referencing.

Photo 7.8 The literature review materials

I went through vast amounts of literature sources and many topics related to talent management. However, the literature review helped me to affirm the fact that the themes which arose from the data were relevant and aligned with trends and practices of talent management. It was quite a challenge to decide which sections and elements relating to talent management I was going to report on formally for the literature review section. Initially I had a lengthy and overly comprehensive literature study chapter. However, Prof. van Zyl advised me to condense the chapter and limit it to what is absolutely important. I therefore took a decision to only report the literature that would absolutely illuminate and complement the information derived from the data. I had no intention to replicate what was already well-portrayed in the data. I found this to be a complex chapter to write and compile. It was hard to decide what to include. Prof. van Zyl offered much needed guidance to ensure that I completed the chapter correctly.

The ultimate purpose and objective of the study is to deliver a **Talent Management Framework for the Private Sector.** Upon completing the literature study I was constantly making notes and diagrams in my notebook where I jotted down all my ideas and thoughts and recorded anything noteworthy to incorporate into the research. I was trying hard to reflect on integrating the literature, the initial framework and the theoretical themes arising from the literature study. I was nervous at this stage as to whether a compelling talent management framework and supporting narrations would emerge from the study and whether all the processes I had undertaken to develop the talent management framework would produce fruit. Nonetheless I persisted in putting together a framework from the data (inductive) and the literature (deductively) and bravely sent it to Prof. van Zyl for assessment. After a week, Prof. van Zyl gave feedback to me to rather communicate the framework in a structured, logical, well-reasoned and clear manner. Though I had many things to correct, I was pleased with the fact that he did not reject the content, but rather recommended clarity and completeness in the writing style.

The study has made **key contributions** towards the use of qualitative methodology, practical application of talent management in the private sector and also knowledge and theoretical extension about talent management. In the concluding chapter I shall discuss in detail the key contributions, recommendations and implications of the study.

7.6 Ensuring quality of the study

In conducting the study I had to ensure that I was improving the quality of the study in every step of the research, while also adhering to ethical conduct and standards.

Trustworthiness of the study: During the interviews, when writing down the participant's inputs, typing the data on the word processor and also analyzing the data, I was careful in ensuring that the insights were that of the research participants and not my own. I truly aimed to present realities and truths of the research participants and not my own. To increase the credibility of my study, with each successive interview I had conducted I identified and documented recurring features, patterns, themes and concepts as communicated by the research participants with the aim of verifying the data.

I studied qualitative methodology procedures and data analysis methods in detail, in order to ensure scientific credibility when conducting the study.

I applied triangulation through collecting data from two cases or companies as a basis for comparison. Furthermore, I conducted the second round of interviews at the same companies with a mix of old and new participants. Additionally, unsolicited documents were also used as a source of triangulation, verification and validation of the data, as well as testing the proposed talent management framework.

In relating to the **research participants** I maintained professionalism, yet without coming across as cold and unapproachable. I made sure that they were well-informed about the research project and purpose. Every participant was treated with utmost dignity and respect. Additionally I protected the **identity and confidentiality** of the two companies and their participants by using name codes instead of real names.

Research audit trail

Kock (2006) suggested that the trustworthiness of the study can be established if the reader is able to audit the events, influences and actions of the researcher. Rice and Ezzy (2000) iterated that maintaining an audit trail for methodological and analytic decisions allows for assessment of the quality of the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed the six categories of information that need to be collected to inform the audit process:

- Raw data
- Data reduction and analysis notes
- Data reconstructions and synthesis products
- Process notes
- Materials related to intentions and dispositions
- Preliminary development information

I have met the above audit requirements by keeping and filing the hand-written notes, and typed notes of the data from the research field. The data analysis process and notes are reflected in Chapter 4 indicating the constructivist grounded theory step-by-step application to the data. The development of the initial and final talent management framework is a clear result of constructed themes and sub-themes from the data, leading to the synthesis product represented in Chapters 4 and 6. Most of the process notes and material related to my intentions and dispositions were recorded in my notebook and on flip charts where I recorded most of the ideas relating to the research. The preliminary development information is found

in my research proposal, the semi-structured interview questionnaire used for the first interviews, research project timelines and interview appointment schedules recorded in my diary.

While collecting the data and analyzing it, I was working hard to ensure that I treated the input of my research participants fairly. I opted for objectivity and suspended my own personal assumptions about talent management, allowing mainly the data and the literature to build and inform the main findings. Most of my thinking and the decisions I made about the research process are recorded in my research diary or what I refer to as the notebook.

The research documents are stored on the word processor I used, and also on the two memory sticks as back-up files. The hand-written interview notes from the interviews are filed in a safe place to enable retrieval.

Advice and input from Prof. van Zyl helped substantially to improve the quality of the study. I would refer to feedback and input from Prof. van Zyl as a peer review process.

7.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I reflected on my personal journey and the experiences I encountered while conducting the study. The process was exciting, but mostly stretching and demanding of my time and personal discipline. This is certainly not an easy process, but worth attempting. Often throughout this journey I would pray to God for his grace, mercy and guidance.

The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in a song. Psalm 28:7

Chapter 8

Synopsis, contributions and recommendations

8.1 Introduction

In this final chapter I offer a synopsis of the entire research project. Secondly I discuss key contributions towards qualitative research, knowledge development and I share implications for the practice of talent management in business practice. I furthermore offer recommendations on how the framework may be utilized in order to improve the practice of talent management in businesses in the private sector. Thirdly, I present a summary of the study's notable limitations, and, finally, I put forward certain recommendations for future research in the field.

8.2 Synopsis of the study

In Chapter 1, I began by orientating and giving context about the need for talent management in organizations and also indicated potential business limitations that can be experienced if talent management is ignored as a practice. I highlighted the benefits of talent management to the overall business. Despite the obvious advantages and growing popularity of talent management, there are many challenges in the talent management field and in its actual practice. Importantly I contrasted poor talent management practices with best practices that healthy organizations should aspire to.

The problem statement arose from the gaps and limitations in the definition of talent management, a lack of maturity in practice, as well as poor application and implementation processes. The overall aim of the study is to develop a talent management framework for the private sector. The framework will thus guide the implementation of talent management in the private sector.

In order to develop a talent management framework for the private sector I formulated key and central research questions:

- What are talent and talent management?
- What does the content of talent management entail?

The sub-research questions

- What are the typical challenges experienced in the implementation of a talent management programme?
- What are effective talent management practices which are working, and why are they working?
- What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?
- What are the leading best practices regarding recruitment, deployment, development, engagement, and retention of talent?
- What value does talent management add to the organization?
- How do individual career life cycles influence the approach to talent management?
- What is the link between diversity management and talent management?

The primary objectives of the study are to:

- Define talent and talent management
- Identify what talent management entails in great detail.

The secondary objectives of the study are to:

- Highlight the key challenges that are experienced in the implementation of talent management.
- Identify talent management practices that are working, and explain why these practices are working.
- Understand what can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management practices.
- Discover the leading best practices regarding recruitment, deployment, development, engagement, and retention of talent.
- Highlight the value that talent management adds to the organization.
- Incorporate the career life stages to the talent management approach.
- Link diversity management and talent management.

Chapter 2 focused mainly on the applied research methodology to guide the overall research. I shared my scientific beliefs and values as they are a basis for my approach and the thinking that guided it. My philosophical stance is that of a pragmatist and a realist, in that objectivity (concrete facts) and subjectivity (lived experience and perceived by people) must be merged

and united. Talent management may be a hard, concrete and objectively defined practice, but people in organizations experience it, live it, see it and feel it.

I have found the qualitative research method to be appropriate for acquiring in-depth insights about talent management. A review of the historical roots of qualitative research provided much appreciation for the evolution phases that qualitative research underwent. Being a pragmatist I found that the modernist qualitative approach is adequate to support the systematic and rigorous data analysis methods I opted for. The data on talent management practices was collected in two different companies, thus rendering my study a multiple site case study.

Purposive sampling was the main method I used to identify and select the research participants. The participants had to be employed in a private company which has best practices with regard to talent management and they either had to be a manager, human resource practitioner or a beneficiary of a talent management programme. Additionally I used theoretical and convenience sampling.

For the convenience of the participants I arranged to conduct the initial and follow-up interviews at the company premises. Being at the chosen research site allowed me to observe and document observations about the atmosphere and to get impressions of the site. I employed a semi-structured interview approach for the initial interviews, and more unstructured interviews when I conducted follow-up interviews. In all cases I respected the wishes of the participants to not voice record our interviews and discussions. With all the interviews I wrote all the inputs and responses down on paper. Chapter 2 is a reflection of the literature study I embarked on to learn about qualitative research. Following the research methodology protocol ensures and improves quality of the study. Throughout the entire research process I was conscious and engaged in self-reflection to ensure that the data were a true reflection of the participants' views, ideas and expression.

Chapter 3 is mainly about the data analysis strategy I applied to the study. The overall method of data analysis is modified analytic induction, while constructivist grounded theory supported the operationalization of the analysis, specifically the data coding steps. I chose to familiarize myself with the various qualitative data analysis methods available, such as content analysis, narrative analysis, thematic analysis, analytic induction and grounded theory. I explored the foundations of analytic induction, the various applications of analytical induction, and previous studies conducted locally and internationally using analytic

induction. Constructivist grounded theory complemented the modified analytic induction method used in this study. Throughout the chapter I highlighted the inductive nature of the analysis (deriving insights from the data) and also the deductive features traceable in the study (priori knowledge derived from literature, e.g. semi-structured questionnaire).

Chapter 4 details the entire process of data analysis through analytic induction and grounded theory. The profiles of the research participants are discussed together with a brief introduction of the participating cases or companies. In collecting the interview data I used a semi-structured questionnaire which I designed from the literature review (deductive) to guide the face-to-face interviews. I operationalized the data analysis using constructivist grounded theory by doing initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding. The data coding process resulted in the development of the initial talent management framework (inductive). Guided by the analytic induction process and quality assurance, I purposed to test, verify, confirm and validate the proposed and initial talent management framework. I therefore arranged follow-up interviews at the same companies where I collected the initial data. As already indicated there were a few older participants, and some new participants. I sent an electronic copy of the initial framework to the participants for them to review and to give their input. I specifically asked them to comment on improving and testing the framework. I secured five unstructured interviews as well as eight unsolicited documents which helped to triangulate the data. I found it necessary to re-introduce the companies as three years had lapsed since the first round of interviews. The participants were also introduced as I had new people involved, and some of the former participants' positions had changed due to growth and progression in the company. To analyze the unstructured interviews and documents I used the steps of constructivist grounded theory. The participants gave comprehensive advice on which concepts and themes should be added to enhance the initially proposed talent management framework. I then began to think and plan how to marry the new insights from the follow-up interviews with the initially proposed framework.

In Chapter 5 I discussed the literature review conducted on talent management. Guided by analytic induction, I determined to consult the literature to test, validate and check the relevance of the data in relation to the theory. Referring to the literature and theory of talent management entailed a deductive research process. I wanted to derive insights from the literature in order to incorporate these into the final talent management framework. In the chapter I reviewed the following aspects related to talent management:

- **Employer of choice and best company to work for brand**: The employer of choice and best employer brand sets a solid foundation for good people management practices and the supporting of talent management initiatives. Employer of choice companies promote a good and healthy culture of diversity and employee satisfaction leading to strong success in retention. There is often a strong focus on development, induction and professional development. Other strong focus areas are fair remuneration, strong performance drive, graduate development and innovative roles.

- **Employee engagement**: Employee engagement is a critical activity and outcome of talent management. All people management processes must be performed with the intention to motivate, cultivate loyalty and commitment as well as drive people to be positive about the organization.

- **Organizational culture and values**: Core values and collective behaviors in the company set the climate for how people behave and act at work. Desirable values and behavior are open communication, honesty, and understanding of vision and business direction. The roles and responsibilities of people are clearly articulated and there is good quality management and leadership.

- **Alignment of business strategy to talent management**: Talent management will most likely be planned, supported and soundly implemented only if it is in harmony with the business processes and activities.

- **Career life stages and phases**: It is important to understand the impact of each career life stage an employee is at in order to develop correct and relevant interventions that are better suited to the particular stage. For example, in the early career stage the primary drive is to develop career and occupational skills, while those in the mid-career stage are focused on growing into more complex leadership and managerial roles characterized by decision making. In the late career stage employees have a need for stability and to make bigger contributions for the greater good of all.

- **Multi-generational workforce**: In developing talent management initiatives the understanding of multiple generations behaviours and values will assist management towards effective leading and supervising of direct reports. It is challenging to manage multiple generations and one has to understand the different generational views on issues of technology, career goals, key motivators, dress code and work environment.

- **Stratified systems theory and levels of work and complexity**: This theory is critical in supporting recruitment and deployment decisions for talent. Positions, skills, competencies and knowledge may be assessed with regard to the degree of complexity in decision making and the level of thinking skills required. Such knowledge will ensure that suitable candidates with the correct skills and who are competent are appointed in order to avoid mistakes.
- **Ethics in talent management**: For talent management to earn credibility, its practices and activities must be embedded in the principles of fairness, professionalism, transparency and consistency.

Furthermore, I reviewed various talent management approaches, both nationally and internationally. The concepts which emerged to be critical are the identification of talent, planning for talent activities, sourcing and supply of talent, learning and development, retention and strategic alignment. Furthermore, integrated talent management activities of attraction, recruitment, learning, performance management, remuneration, retention, work experience and talent reviews were emphasized by the approaches as essential.

I found the literature to have supported, verified and substantiated the relevance of insights from the data collected from the participants.

Chapter 6 presents the final talent management framework for the private sector. I hoped to produce a framework that is comprehensive, systematic, integrated, strategically derived, process driven, holistic, fluid and dynamic. The framework was developed both inductively (data/participant insights) and deductively (literature review). The talent management framework guides the planning of talent management strategy and the implementation of talent management dimensions in the organization. The critical implementation dimensions of talent management are attraction, sourcing and recruitment, deployment and transition, growth and development, performance management, talent reviews, reward and recognition, engagement and retention.

The planning for talent management focuses on deriving the talent management strategic agenda from the overall business strategy. Importantly, a consistent and definitive talent success profile is outlined as a collection of the following traits: potential, ability, competence, performance, readiness, values/ethics, leadership skills, management skills, achievement driven, experience, qualifications as well as mobility and agility.

Career stages of the talent pool are to be considered when implementing talent management. Key role players, namely leadership, management, human resource practitioners and the talent beneficiaries in talent management implementation are identified, with specific role clarifications. Best-practice enablers are discussed, e.g. communication tactics, culture, financial resources, employee wellness, and information technology. Furthermore, the effectiveness of talent management practices, processes and systems is discussed in order to continuously improve talent management practices in a company or organization.

The talent management framework is able to guide and support the implementation, development and planning of talent management practices in private companies or organizations.

In Chapter 7 I reflect on my personal experiences of the research journey. Reflection played the role of internal audit for me as the researcher. I discussed the steps I took to ensure quality and ethics while doing my research. I also shared details on the execution phases of the study. In writing this chapter I referred to the notes and scribblings I made throughout the process in order to highlight the key decisions, thoughts, ideas and emotions I experienced.

8.3 Key contributions and implications/recommendations of the study

8.3.1 Qualitative research

- The use of modernist qualitative research methodology in the field of human resources and talent management in South African companies has promoted, created awareness and raised consciousness about the relevance and utility of the methodology.

- I have completed a detailed and informed presentation of constructivist grounded theory in operationalizing the data analysis. In the study I practically illustrated a step-by-step process of the initial coding and focused coding of the data as well as the development of theoretical themes. I trust that the literature study on grounded theory and the illustration of how to apply it practically in a research project can be used as an example for future studies.

- I have raised awareness about analytical induction as an overall method for guiding data collection and analysis. The method is key in identifying and defining the phenomenon (talent management) under investigation. Analytical induction facilitated

an in-depth comparative analysis of the data from one participant to the other, and also from one case (company) to the other. I could systematically identify variations and common characteristics of the data from the semi-structured interviews. Emerging insights from the data could be tested, triangulated and verified through the method, thus improving the credibility of the study.

- The study clearly illustrates that a combination of analytic induction and constructivist grounded theory can be used in the field of talent management to conduct qualitative research yielding knowledge enhancement in the form of a talent management framework for the private sector, which is the ultimate outcome of the study.

8.3.2 Knowledge development

- I have created awareness about the importance and the need for talent management in the private sector, as well as its results of value add and competitive advantage.

- I have promoted a quest for excellence in the practice of talent management. This entails a strategically driven talent management plan which is derived from business deliverables, and is implemented in a well-coordinated and integrated manner.

- Through an inductive process (insights from data) the study provided consistent and detailed information about the concept of talent and talent management. Characteristics of what talent management entails and what it involves have been comprehensively illuminated.

- Through deductive (literature) and inductive (insights from the data) processes I have developed a talent management framework for the private sector. Organizations may use this framework as a guide and implementation tool to either begin, improve or perfect talent management practices in organizations.

- I have indicated the importance of striving for achievement of 'employer of choice' or 'best company' brand as a foundation for supporting talent management initiatives. These employer branding initiatives promote best people management practices that are credible and auditable through set standards and criteria.

- In the literature review I identified a relationship and link between generational theory and career life cycles in that most Baby Boomers may be in the late career stage, while those of Generation X may be in the mid-career stage and Generation Y in the

early career stage. It is important to understand these links in order to better understand the talent needs of each generation and career stages in order to design relevant and fitting talent interventions.

- I have recommended that stratified systems theory and levels of work and complexity, developed by Elliott Jaques (1989), be taken into account when planning the development and promotion of talent. The theory cautions that the complexity and skills requirements of each role be measured in order to facilitate the allocation of aptly skilled individuals.

- Ethics has been highlighted in this study to be critical in the implementation of talent management. Therefore, talent management practices have to be known to be of a high standard, fair, just, consistent and professional.

8.3.3 Practice in business

The study has been able to deliver a talent management framework that will guide and support the elevation of talent management practices in organizations in the private sector. The framework is comprehensive enough to cover all key and core dimensions of talent management practice. Despite the level of maturity an organization is at with talent management, be it basic, intermediate or at the mature stages, the framework is still relevant. Ultimately the framework is developed in such a way as to lead to best practice.

In defining talent, a clear and precise guideline has been provided by the study as a talent success profile. These talent success profiles leave no room for organizations to fail to identify what talent is and what its characteristics are. Such criteria may be used in activities to attract, assess, select, recruit and conduct talent reviews.

There are opportunities for human resources management and executives to elevate the standard of talent management from operational and tactical functioning to that of strategic significance. When human resource practitioners learn and understand the business strategy fully, then a true talent strategy can be developed to support real business objectives. Human resources may project future skills and capability needs, and develop and action learning interventions, which addresses the competence requirements of the business.

The study has mapped out key dimensions which are essential for the implementation of talent management. The dimensions of talent management are attraction, sourcing and

recruitment, deployment and transitioning, growth and development, performance management, talent reviews, rewarding and recognizing, engagement and retention. With each of the above-mentioned dimensions I have specified activities that are to be carried out to achieve the outcome of each dimension. Therefore, human resources and talent practitioners have a reference guide to draft their job descriptions and work scopes pertaining to talent management activities.

Role clarifications pertaining to talent management responsibilities and accountabilities are not quite clear or spelled out adequately in most instances. Often talent management is pushed to human resource departments to sort out, with this move not always offering solutions. In the framework I propose and recommend that human resource practitioners as well as leadership and management at all levels (executives, senior, middle, first line) be given set key performance indicators in order to take an active role in talent management and that they must be rewarded for effective implementation of talent management. Furthermore, I propose that talented individual also be correctly inducted and be made aware of the needed active participation in the talent management initiatives. Early identification of key role players and articulation of their duties will lead to people taking ownership and assuming accountability for the success of talent management.

I strongly recommend that companies need to invest in good information technology to support talent management activities. A good information system will perfect the integration and coordination of talent management activities. Furthermore, comprehensive, accurate and readily accessible data and information facilitates correct decision making by management structures. Reporting and information analytics from an integrated system make it possible to track progress on talent management activities as opposed to manual information collation which may lead to errors and takes time to put together.

I further appeal to all the role players in talent management, be they human resource practitioners, management and leadership or the talented candidates themselves, to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of each activity with the aim of improving and raising the level of talent management practice in the private sector companies.

The talent management framework may be utilized as a tool and guide to develop and enhance policies, procedures, processes and practices relating to talent management and human resource aspects.

8.4 Notable limitations of the study

There was a significant time lapse between the initial data collection in 2010 and the follow-up interviews which were conducted in 2013. Though this time lapse constituted a major problem for me I used the follow-up, unstructured interviews in 2013 to verify, validate, triangulate and receive recommendations about the initially proposed talent management framework. Furthermore, for the confirmation and validation of the actual data that was collected in 2010, only two participants from 2010 were available to contribute, while the rest were new participants. Nonetheless the new participants in the 2013 follow-up interviews brought fresh ideas which led to the development of the final framework. To counteract the time lapse I embarked on a further literature study during late 2013 to ensure that the study was current and relevant.

The purpose of the study is to develop a talent management framework for the private sector. I recognize the private sector to be vast and largely diverse across multiple industries. Owing to time and financial constraints, it was not possible to engage in a study to cover all companies and entities representative of the private sector. Trochim (2006) iterated that in qualitative research transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. Therefore, the description of the research settings, assumptions and contexts has to be well-described to enhance transferability. Shenton (2004) highlighted that for attempts for transferability to be made, the following information has to be given from the outset:

- Stating the number of organizations taking part in the study, and where they are based
- The type of people who participated, and the number of people
- The data collection method
- Number and length of time of the data collection sessions

In insuring this I made it possible for the results of the study to be understood within the context of the particular characteristics of the organizations. I indicated that I purposefully conducted the study in companies which practiced talent management and are officially branded as best employers. The total number of participants in the first round of interviews was thirteen, while in the second round interviews or follow-up interviews it was five, supported by eight unsolicited documents. Observations and impressions about the companies and participants have been discussed in great detail in Chapter 4. Based on Guba and Lincoln's (1989) criteria to meet transferability, I have provided sufficient details about

the research settings, context, environment and the participants. Given the procedurally scientific qualitative research principles I have applied, the research insights and findings may be applied and utilized as a guide to companies in the private sector environment. Additionally, Hammersley (1992) and Manson (1996) asserted that the analytic induction developed by Znaniecki (1934) claims a strong possibility for generalising research outcomes. The ability to generalise is based on the premise that analytic induction allows for thorough identification of the characteristics of the phenomenon under investigation due to iterative and repeated testing of the hypothesis. The data verification continues until data saturation is reached or a hypothesis is disconfirmed. Therefore, the study's transferability is supported by analytic induction.

Furthermore I would have preferred to have included a much bigger and broader sample (participants) and more cases (companies in the private sector) but this was not possible. The study is not rendered invalid and insufficient because of the elements stated above. With the few participants and two cases consulted in the study I have managed to collect comprehensive and detailed data, referred to as 'thick' descriptions. During the interviews and the data analysis process I realized and confirmed data saturation and sufficiency, as concepts, themes, and patterns were repeated by the participants.

8.5 Recommendations for future research projects

I suggest the following future research projects to be conducted in the field of talent management:

The involvement of organizational leadership and management may play a key and significant role in the achievement of successful talent management practices in organizations. Talent management is often not actively supported and sponsored by key decision makers such as senior business executives who have much influence and authority to drive strategic initiatives. When senior executives are involved in the initial planning and development of the talent management strategy the implementation is highly likely to be implemented successfully and evaluated for further improvements. The research topic proposed below seeks to investigate how human resource practitioners may encourage the active involvement and commitment of senior executives in talent management practices in the organizations.

- Gaining authentic involvement of senior executives in talent management from the planning, development, implementation and evaluation phases of talent management.

Varying organizations are found to be at different stages of talent management practice maturity. Talent management, being a critical contributor to business competitive advantage and sustainability, warrants investigation in the sense that questions need to be asked as to why some organizations have not caught up with other leading organizations with relation to talent management best practices. It is important to shed light on why the organizations which seem to be lagging behind are in that state, and what can be done to change this.

- Investigate the reasons why some organizations are lagging behind in the functions of talent management?

Anecdotally it is known that talent management is a valuable best practice to have in an organization. It would be of substantial value to have a set, defined, specific and consistent formulae to calculate the real economic value of investing in talent management activities quantitatively. Often the investment in certain assets or finances spent in business activities is justified by possible financial and economic benefits that might be realised, and these financial returns are easy to track. Therefore, the practice of talent management will benefit from the ability to report on the actual economic value realised. This capability will improve buy-in and a willingness to invest in high quality talent management initiatives and resources.

- Development of an accurate model and system for calculating the real economic value of investment in talent management by companies.

I have conducted a qualitative study to develop a talent management framework for the private sector and it will be of benefit to conduct a quantitative study to further extend and refine the talent management framework presented in this study. This will make a significant contribution toward advancement of the field and practice of talent management.

- A quantitative study to further develop and extend the talent management framework (presented in the present study) for the private sector.

Organizations often conduct long-term strategic plans and in these plans it is important that they incorporate the forecasting of future skills needs way in advance. This will trigger proactive activities that will encourage collaboration between business and the learning institutions such as high schools and universities to train and develop key and critical skills

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that will be needed in the future by the private sector. Learning institutions are a major talent feeder for organizations, and this provides opportunity for the alignment of learning objectives between the learning institutions and organizations. The alignment will provide a focused competency curriculum that is specific, targeted and relevant to the future skills needed to support economic activities.

- Strategic forecasting of future skills needs: A collaboration between high schools, universities and companies towards sustainable talent development through a focused competency curriculum to address critical skills demands.

In the paragraphs above I have discussed proposed future research projects that may be conducted to advance the field of talent management.

8.6 Concluding note

I hope that the present study will influence and inspire the organizational leaders towards realising the competitive value add and strategic significance of talent management. Future business growth and performance need the ideas and inputs of highly competent and skilled talent to drive strategic investment initiatives. For the sake of sustainability and expansion of the South Africa private sector, I therefore appeal to organizations to prioritize efforts towards firming up talent management practices within the organizations. I sincerely believe that an organization which genuinely values its talent as demonstrated in its processes, systems and culture is most likely to attract and retain the best and high performing talent.

In the final note I would like to acknowledge that God has been instrumental in supporting and encouraging me up to this stage. The biblical scripture below expresses my gratitude to God as found in Zechariah 4:6 *'Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, 'says the Lord Almighty'*.

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Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview questionnaire – 2010

Initial interviews process

Introduction:

- Talent management is a crucial management practice which has an impact on the success and sustainability of the business. Dimensions of talent management has been defined in literature, however not much emphasis has been placed on how talent management can be implemented systematically, comprehensively and holistically, thus taking into account internal and external organizational factors in the academic sphere.
- The purpose of the interview is to explore what talent management entail comprehensively.
- Furthermore this research form part of the doctoral research project, registered with the University of Free State.

Prior to starting with the interview I would like you to tell me about yourself or personal experiences in relation to talent management ?

I would please like to record information about you in order to appropriately contextualize your information.

Personal information:

My name_____   Date: _____

Company _____   Region: _____

Job title_____   Field of specialization _____

Industry_____   Years of working experience _____

Highest Qualification obtained _____

Management level (supervisor, middle, senior or executive) _____

Age _____   Gender _____

Please indicate which category you represent below:

Manager	HR Practitioner	Talented employee

It is important to mention that as a researcher I have an ethical responsibility to ensure confidentiality by protecting your identity. Due to the style of this research, data will be presented in the form of quotations and excerpts from the interviews.

Themes:

The typical interview questions will be:

Q1. What do you understand by talent management? (aim to attract and keep high performing/future leaders/those promotable)

Q2. What does the content of a talent management programme entail? (train, assess, rewards, coaching, experience training, fast track, one-on-ones)

 (How to make it comprehensive)

Q3. What are the typical challenges experienced in the implementation of talent management programmes and why? (elite club, align to business requirements, could lose well-trained, expensive, policy, IT systems, who is responsible, line manager involvement, sell to the business, measure success)

Q4. What talent management practices are currently working effectively, and why are they working? (what programmes make people stay)

Q5. What can be done to improve the effectiveness of talent management programmes?

Q6. What are the leading best practices with regard to recruitment, deployment, development, engagement and retention of talent? (how do we recruit/develop better)

Q7. What value does talent management add to the organization? Which is visibly known

Thank you for participating in the study. Your participation and contribution is valuable.

Cellular contact no: _____

Telephone no: _____

Email address: _____

Follow-up questions – As a result of need for clarification from the initial pilot interviews

1. **What are best practices of managing diversity and within a talent management framework (generational differences, culture, race and gender)**

2. **How to best manage talent at various career life cycle or phase (early, mid-career and late career)**

3. **Which stakeholders are responsible for implementing talent management ?**

4. **How important is data analytics in talent management ?**

5. **How can synergy be achieved risk, marketing, finance, HR functions to support talent management ?**

6. **What role do ethics play in talent management?**

7. **Does holistic people development play a role in talent management with reference to spirituality, social, physical and emotional wellness ?**

8. **How can HR be empowered to play a strategic role ?**

9. **How can talent management be aligned to strategy ?**

Thank you for participating in the study. Your participation and contribution is valuable.

Cellular contact no: _____

Telephone no: _____

Email address: _____

SUMMARY

Talent management is increasingly becoming a strategic priority for many profit-generating organizations in the private sector. The success of knowledge-driven organizations largely depends on their ability to attract, grow and retain their key talent in today's dynamic and competitive business environment. The need for talent management is also triggered by a need to align and integrate people management practices with those of the organization in order to achieve strategic execution and operational excellence.

This study identified a strong need for the development of a talent management framework in the private sector with the aim to address the gaps and limitations in the definition of concepts in this field, as well as in the application, implementation and maturing of talent management practices in the organization. Thus, the primary aim of the study was to develop a talent management framework for the private sector. The research proposed to conduct an in-depth exploration of talent management practices in key and leading organizations already in the mature stages of talent management implementation in South Africa.

The modernist qualitative research approach was applied to the study. A research process which is flexible and emergent was essential to ensure further exploration of the phenomenon of talent management beyond the theoretical explanations. A modernist approach supported and facilitated the rigorous data analysis methods such as analytic induction and grounded theory, which were applied in the study.

The research was conducted in two different companies, thus classifying the study as a multiple site case study. The selected companies are widely and publicly recognised as having effective talent management programmes.

Purposive sampling was used to identify the research participants. The participants were human resource practitioners, management staff and beneficiaries of the talent management programmes. More insight and knowledge were gained by interacting and interviewing key stakeholders in organizations who are knowledgeable about talent management practices.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the first round of data collection interviews, while the second round of data collection interviews were unstructured and focused on testing the initial talent management framework that was developed. Analytic

induction and constructivist grounded theory were implemented to analyze the dense and thick narrative data that were collected.

The concepts generated from the data (inductive) and theory/literature (deductive) were critical towards the development of a talent management framework. The literature study supported, verified and substantiated the relevance of insights that were gained from the data collected from the participants.

The study was able to deliver a talent management framework that will guide and support the raising of talent management practices in organizations in the private sector. The framework is integrated, holistic and comprehensive enough to cover most key and core dimensions of talent management practices. Ultimately, the framework was developed in such a way as to lead to best practice and the advancement of talent management maturity when implemented. The framework highlights the major elements, namely planning, key dimensions, implementation with consideration of career life stages and multiple generations, best-practice enablers, role players and the evaluation of effectiveness.

The study mapped out key dimensions which are essential for the implementation of a talent management system. The dimensions of talent management are attraction, sourcing and recruitment, deployment and transitioning, growth and development, performance management, talent reviews, rewarding and recognizing, engaging and retaining. With each of the above-mentioned dimensions, there are specified activities that can be carried out to achieve the outcomes of each dimension. Therefore, human resource departments and talent practitioners are provided with a guide to drafting their job descriptions and work scopes pertaining to talent management activities.

OPSOMMING

Talentbestuur is toenemend besig om 'n strategiese prioriteit vir baie winsskeppende organisasies in die privaat sektor te word. Die sukses van kennisgedrewe organisasies is grootliks afhanklik van hulle vermoë om sleuteltalent te lok, te ontwikkel en te behou in vandag se dinamiese en mededingende sakeomgewing. Die behoefte aan talentbestuur word veroorsaak deur 'n behoefte om mensebestuurspraktyke in ooreenstemming te bring met dié van die organisasie ten einde strategiese uitvoering en operasionele uitnemendheid te bewerkstellig.

Hierdie studie het 'n sterk behoefte geïdentifiseer om 'n talentbestuursraamwerk in die privaat sektor te ontwikkel met die doel om die gapings en beperkinge in die definisie van begrippe in die veld, asook in die toepassing, implementering en groei van talentbestuurspraktyk in die organisasie, te vul. Die hoofdoel van die studie is dus om 'n talentbestuursraamwerk vir die privaat sektor te ontwikkel. 'n Diepgaande ondersoek is gedoen van talentbestuurspraktyk in vername en toonaangewende organisasies wat reeds in die volwasse stadia van talentbestuursimplementering in Suid-Afrika is.

Die modernistiese kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering is in die studie toegepas. 'n Buigbare en opkomende navorsingsproses is noodsaaklik om talentbestuur as verskynsel verder as bloot die teorie te verken. 'n Modernistiese benadering het die streng data-ontledingsmetodes soos analitiese induksie en gegronde teorie wat in die studie toegepas is, gesteun en gefasiliteer.

Die navorsing is gedoen in twee verskillende maatskappye. Die studie word dus as 'n veelvoudige terrein-gevallestudie geklassifiseer. Die geselekteerde maatskappye is wyd bekend vir hulle doeltreffende talentbestuursprogramme.

Doelgerigte steekproefneming is aangewend om die deelnemers te identifiseer. Die deelnemers is menslikehulpbronpraktisyns, lede van die bestuur en begunstigdes van die talentbestuursprogramme. Meer insig en kennis is verkry met behulp van interaksie en onderhoude met vername belanghebbendes in die organisasies wat op hoogte is van talentbestuurspraktyk.

Semigestruktureerde onderhoude is in die eerste rondte van data-insamelingsonderhoude gevoer, terwyl die tweede rondte ongestruktureerd was met die fokus om die aanvanklike

talentbestuursraamwerk wat ontwikkel is, te toets. Analitiese induksie en konstruktivistiese gegronde teorie is geïmplementeer om die digte en ryk narratiewe data wat ingesamel is, te ontleed.

Die begrippe wat uit die data (induktief) en teorie/literatuur (deduktief) gegenereer is, is kritiek vir die ontwikkeling van 'n talentbestuursraamwerk. Die literatuurstudie ondersteun, bevestig en staaf die relevansie van die insigte wat uit die data van die deelnemers verkry is.

Die studie het 'n talentbestuursraamwerk gelewer wat die verbetering van talentbestuurspraktyk in organisasies in die privaat sektor sal rig en steun. Die raamwerk is geïntegreer, holisties en breedvoerig genoeg om die meeste sleutel- en kerndimensies van talentbestuurspraktyk te dek. Uiteindelik is die raamwerk op só 'n wyse ontwikkel dat dit tot beste praktyk en die bevordering van talentbestuursvolwassenheid sal lei. Die raamwerk beklemtoon die vernaamste elemente, naamlik beplanning, sleuteldimensies, implementering met in ag neming van loopbaanlewenstadia en meervoudige generasies, faktore wat tot beste praktyk lei, rolspelers en die evaluering van doeltreffendheid.

Die studie gee 'n uiteensetting van die sleuteldimensies wat vir die implementering van 'n talentbestuurstelsel noodsaaklik is. Die dimensies van talentbestuur is aantrekking, verkryging en werwing, ontplooiing en oorgang, groei en ontwikkeling, prestasiebestuur, talentbeoordeling, beloning en erkenning, betrokkenheid en behouding. By elk van bogenoemde dimensies is daar spesifieke aktiwiteite wat uitgevoer kan word om elkeen se uitkomste te bereik. Menslikehulpbrondepartemente en talentpraktisyns kry dus 'n gids waarvolgens hulle posbeskrywings en werksomvang kan ontwerp wat met talentbestuursaktiwiteite verband hou.