

The role of small group communications in a corporate working environment

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of small group communication, investigate to what extent small groups communicate within their mini-business areas within a mining group. The communication role and the influence it has within an organisation, and what structure it takes within the bigger scheme of the organization were also investigated. Many people and organisations form small groups to perform certain jobs, but they do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes a group, essentially what is it that a group can and cannot do.

Small groups are always present and employees are always members of one or more small groups. Establishing a precise definition of a small group that is generally accepted by everyone has proven to be a challenge as most scholars come up with different interpretations and definitions of small group communication.

A quantitative research method was used for this study as it was deemed suitable for this type of research, but one of the shortcomings of this method is that the data obtained through this method of research is not suitable for generalisations to any population. It is therefore emphasized that it is not the objective of this research to generalise the results of the study, but that it is applicable to the small group communication within the mining group investigated. The sample and data collected were small.

A total of 150 questionnaires were sent to two De Beers' mines, Venetia Mine in Limpopo Province and Voorspoed Mine in the Free State Province, requesting employees via their supervisors and line managers to participate in the small group communications survey. The survey revolved mainly around the company's overview of its Continuous Business Improvement (CBI) business system which involved small group initiatives and communication.

Key words: small group communication, continuous business improvement, mining communication, barriers in communication

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Groups can make poor decisions, especially when the leader of the group takes a clear line that he or she is the one in charge and unwilling to accept any challenge or advice from his or her co-workers (Hartley, 1997:3). Hartley states that this mistake can be avoidable if the group pays more attention to the way they work together.

Gragan, Wright and Kasch (2009:1-2) are of the opinion that high performing groups do not just happen; it takes a lot of work, more than one would expect. They further that projects rarely fail due to technological reasons, but due to poor communication. For a team to successfully deliver the full potential of a small group and reach the desired outcomes of increased quality, membership satisfaction and consensus, it is important to understand the basics of team dynamics.

In support of Gragan *et al.* (2009), Hamilton (2008:5) concurs that whether you are communicating with one person, a small group, or many people, the same basic process occurs, and the same misunderstandings can arise. Hamilton (2008:6) furthers that successful business and professional communicators owe a large part of their success to their ability to minimise potential misunderstandings.

Although we communicate all the time, people seldom communicate effectively (Wood, 2009:4). Wood (2009:7) goes further stating that people or small groups who have inadequate communication knowledge and skills are hampered in their efforts to achieve personal, professional and social goals. On the other hand, those people and small groups who communicate well have an advantage in accomplishing their objectives.

This study explored the effectiveness of small group communication and the role of small group communication within De Beers' Diamond Dream Business Systems. The study does not include

the elaboration of communications within a group, but the understanding of groups and its parts, and the influence that small groups have in the organisation in general and in this mine programme specifically.

Constructs

- Group dynamism
- Definition of small groups
- Types of groups
- Norms, roles and cohesiveness of the small group
- Size of the group
- Why use small groups
- Groups, teams, and organisational effectiveness
- The role of teams in management of change
- The structure of a small group

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Companies all around the globe find themselves in a different world from nearly a decade ago. The market has different demands, a workforce with different needs, and a global game with different and new players. De Beers Consolidated is no different: five of the seven mines were running at a loss in 2006 and the company needed all its workforce to get involved in turning the company back to its former glory.

The study focuses on the De Beers Consolidated Mines' overview of the Diamond Dreams Business System. This programme was introduced within the company as one of its strategic pillars for continuous business improvement. This strategy encourages each department to run/operate itself as a mini business area (MBA) that fits into the bigger business.

One of the fundamentals of these MBAs is small group activities, to get every employee to think about improvement, throughout the organisation. Small group activities are small problem solving groups, comprising people from all levels and functions of the organisation. It could be a group of three to five operators brainstorming about a specific issue that they faced on the previous shift, or it

could be a small group of people from different levels thinking about a new way of caring for the machines within the organisation.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Continuous improvement, in regard to organisational quality and performance, focuses on improving customer satisfaction through continuous and incremental improvements to processes, including removing unnecessary activities and variations. This includes retrenchments of people.

Since the inception of the Diamond Dream Business System and the establishment of the small group communication via the mini business areas, the business has continuously changed and been restructured. This has resulted in a lot of uneasiness from some sections of employees. They were not sure if these initiatives will secure their jobs, and therefore, their future. Management is concerned whether the employees are fully engaged and committed to the business.

This particular study will investigate the effectiveness and to what extent the small groups communicate within their MBAs, and what role they are playing in turning the business around.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Primary objective

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of small group communication, and investigate to what extent small groups communicate within their MBAs.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

- to understand the influence that small group communications have within an organisation;

- to understand the role that small group communications play with regard to day-to-day running of an organisation; and
- to understand what structure the small group communications take within the bigger structure of the organisation.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study centres on the Diamond Dream Business System, how the company uses small group communications to get all the employees involved in business to bring it to its former glory.

Some of the questions that the study asked are:

- Should a group have good communication skills to discuss issues?
- Do they focus on information?
- Does the group share information clearly?

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research method was used for this study as it is deemed suitable for this type of research. It is a scientific investigation that includes both experiments and other systematic methods that emphasize control and quantified measures of performance.

A survey method was chosen where a questionnaire was designed to illicit the particular information from the respondents. A letter was sent to two De Beers mines asking employees via their supervisors and line managers to participate in this small group communications survey.

This was followed by the questionnaire (Appendix A) being disseminated to 150 employees.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to the investigation of the effectiveness of small group communication within the Diamond Dream Business System strategy. The sample size was limited to Voorspoed Mine in the Free State province and Venetia Mine in the Limpopo province.

1.8 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

The study consists of four chapters structured as follows:

CHAPTER 1: NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This chapter introduces the reader to the objectives of the study, the problem statement, methodology and the scope of the study.

CHAPTER 2: SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION

Chapter 2 provides a literature review on small groups and communication from previous studies as well as the history of small group communications.

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL STUDY

This chapter covers the empirical study undertaken, and the interpretation of the survey results.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 4 draws conclusions from the study and measures if the objectives of the study have been realised.

1.9 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provides the reader with a background of the study and introduces the problem statement at hand and formulates research objectives. The chapter also provides a cognitive map of the layout of the study.

The next chapter deals with the literature review, and more specifically the topic of communication as applied in this mining business application setting.

CHAPTER 2

SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one covered the objectives of the study, the problem statement, methodology and the scope of the study. In this chapter, the researcher provides the reader with a literature review on small groups and communication, reviews of previous studies, and covers the history on small group communications.

Participation in groups is an inescapable fact of life that has attracted considerable scholarly interest in a variety of disciplines (Gouran *et al.*, 1999:3). The authors further that the interest of study in the field of communication developed almost immediately with the creation of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking in 1914. Early interest, however, focused on training of students in speech classes to become better contributors to the decision-making and problem solving groups in which they found themselves in the public arena.

In support of Gouran and his colleagues' introductory study to small group communication, researcher Fujishin (2007:9) states that once membership in a group is established, it is very important to realise that interaction with the small group occurs in two areas or dimensions, the task dimension and the social dimension. Fujishin furthers that each dimension covers a different aspect and the purpose of the group's interaction.

The task dimension is the work of the group (Fujishin, 2007:10). All efforts to this end are considered the task dimension of the problem-solving group. Fujishin (2007:11) says researching the problem, analysing the problem, brainstorming the solution, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the solution, reaching consensus on the best solution and implementing the solution are all elements of the group's task dimension.

The social dimension is the interpersonal relationships of the group members (Fujishin (2007:11). While the group is busy doing its work in the task dimension, the social dimension is occurring simultaneously.

Gouran *et al.* (1999:4) state that it was not until the second half of the 20th century that interest in communication in groups began to result in original scholarly inquiries (theoretical speculation and empirical research) aimed at enlarging understanding of the ways in which communication is related to other aspects of groups, such as the characteristics of members and the outcomes they achieve across different social contexts. Once scholarly inquiry took hold, the interest began to increase decade by decade in almost geometric progression.

Burtis and Turman (2006:102) state that most groups tend to develop norms and roles, which is why they call them The Way/Process tendencies. The tendencies are clusters of constructed meanings group members create for themselves. These are ideas about how the group should interact, about how members should behave, and about individual member responsibilities.

In addition, Burtis and Turman (2006:105) state that small groups develop patterns to their communication, which they call communication networks. They say that the group sometimes experiences pitfalls in their communication network, which makes it difficult to communicate. One of the pitfalls Burtis and Turman (2006:105) mentions is saturation of information flow, where one person tries to handle too much information flow, exceeding her or his channel capacity or leaving other members out of the loop.

Another related communication pitfall that Burtis and Turman (2006:106) discuss is centralization of information flow, indicating more authority in one member than in others. The researchers say that this may be more appropriate when an autocratic process is in order, which, by definition, should not be too often in groups where participation and democratic processes are needed.

Pinnell *et al.* (2001:246) state that on any given day and given time in the world, hundreds of thousands of small groups meet to get work done. Groups meet in schools, hospitals, churches, homes, and businesses. They usually meet over lunch, early in the morning, late into the evening and during weekends. Corporate managers consult with one another and with subordinates. Doctors, nurses, and therapists function in patient care teams.

Many people and organisations form small groups to perform certain jobs, but they do not have a clear understanding of what is a group, what constitute a group, and what it is that a group can and cannot do.

2.2 WHAT IS A SMALL GROUP?

Central to an understanding of small group communication is the knowledge of what constitutes a small group. One of the early inventors/researchers of small group communications, Bormann and Bormann (1980:5) described a small group as an interaction between two or more individuals who interact over time to achieve one or more common group goals or to achieve individual goals that are valued by each member who believes that this group can help him/her achieve them. Jones, George and Hill (2000:509) supported Bormann and Bormann's earlier study by defining small groups as "two or more persons who are interacting with one another in such a manner that each person influences and is influenced by the other person".

From a dialectical perspective, Frey (2002:31) describes a small group as constituted in dynamic interplay of dialectical tensions exigencies, and communicative responses among members of an assembly within its relevant context. Frey (2002:32) continues and state that the emphasis of this description is on the tensions, the dialectics themselves and on the communication that constitutes and manages these tensions.

Homans (quoted by Hirokawa *et al.* 2003:304), defines a small group as a collection of people, few enough in number to be able to interact and communicate with each other on a regular basis in order to reach a common goal. He further states that there are five basic elements of a group that are embedded in such a basic definition, namely:

- Number
- Purpose
- Interdependence
- Perceptual boundary
- Interaction

David and Chris (2009:9) in their recent study, defined a small group as a few people engaged in communication interaction over time, in a face-to-face and / or computer mediated environment that have common goals and norms and have developed a communication pattern for meeting their goals in an interdependent manner.

Fujishin (2007:3) states that the minimum number of individuals needed to constitute a small group is three people. Two people do not make a group because their interaction is that of a couple, or dyad. In a dyad, one person speaks, the other listens and responds, and then the original speaker considers what is being said. No third individual witnesses the event or influences the interaction. Fujishin (2007:5) advises that the ideal maximum number should be seven.

Looking at the above definitions of a small group, it is clear that members of groups usually have something in common, whether it is the same motivation, perception, goals or fate. In most cases, the outcome of what the group does affects all members of the group and not each member individually.

The definition of a small group is subjective to who is making the definition. A person from a large organisation may view a small group as a department in their organisation containing hundreds of people, while a mother may view her family of four as a small group.

It really does not matter what size the group is because all groups share the same characteristics and carry out their group process according to the same constraints. With rare exceptions, group members are expected to communicate openly and often with one another (Hartley, 1997:7).

Interaction among group members is the basis for sharing information, providing feedback, coordinating actions, persuading others, controlling group situations, establishing rules and procedures, and so forth.

There are two main types of groups that fit well into the research topic “**The Role of Small Group Communications in a Corporate Working Environment**” that will be briefly discussed in this study. These are **training** and **task-oriented** groups.

- **Training groups**

Fisher (1981:2) described training groups as groups that exist for the general purpose of interpersonal growth, while task-oriented groups are groups whose very existence depends on performing some task function. Fisher continues to say that the main purpose of a training group is the growth and interpersonal development of its members. Training groups also strive to modify normal behaviour of members through developing interpersonal sensitivity, human relation skills, mutual trust and freer expression of personal feelings.

Leigh (2006:5) states that training for just training sake is a recipe for disaster. Merely because a problem is concerned with **job performance**, it will not automatically mean that it can be rectified by training. Poor performance can be the product of a number of different factors in which training can play little or no part.

Deficiency can be brought about by poor design, defective material, and unsuitable working conditions or over-ambitious standard. Leigh (2006:6) states that in such circumstances, management would be misguided if they were to believe that training could be a panacea for all their company's performance problems.

Leigh (2006:6) also says that training is most successful when it improves, either directly or indirectly, the profitability or effectiveness of an organisation.

- **On-the-job training** takes place in a normal working situation, using the actual tools, equipment, documents or materials that trainees will use when fully trained. On-the-job training has a general reputation as most effective for vocational work.
- **Off-the-job training** takes place away from normal work situations — implying that the employee does not count as a directly productive worker while such training takes place. Off-the-job training has the advantage that it allows people to get away from work and concentrate more thoroughly on the training itself. This type of training has proven more effective in inculcating concepts and ideas.

Training differs from exercise in that people may dabble in exercise as an occasional activity for fun. Training has specific goals of improving one's capability, capacity, and performance. Some examples of training groups are encounter groups, confrontation groups, awareness groups, discovery groups and sensory awareness groups.

- **Task-orientated groups**

Task-oriented groups as previously stated exist to perform some task. Task-oriented groups are the most prevalent groups and comprise the majority of groups within organizations (Fisher, 1981:2).

Fisher (1981:3) also states that a ward of nurses and the Regional Health Authorities are examples of task-oriented groups. Understanding what type of group you are in will allow for the correct behaviour to be initiated within the group. Fisher (1981:3) further states that from the two main types of groups two subtypes of groups exist. Those two sub groups are "ongoing" and "temporary" groups. The ongoing group meets even through membership fluctuations and through group task changes.

The temporary groups break up after finishing their function or task. A project team to build an information system is a good example of a temporary group. A large team of specialists of systems, computers, programming and the organisation come together to build an information system, but upon finishing the system each specialist will go back to their respective companies.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF A SMALL GROUP

Cragan, Wright and Kasch (2009:9) state that there are nine characteristics of small groups. These are divided into two main characters, those that are *directly observable* and those that are *indirectly observable*.

Table 2.1: Characteristics of a small group

Directly observable	Indirectly observable
Communication groups – engage in purposeful, goal-directed, verbal and non-verbal talk	Interdependence Groups – trust that each member will do his/her part of an interlocking task
Space groups – are territorial about both their physical and virtual environment	Norms Groups – share values, beliefs, procedures, and a symbolic identity
Time groups – vary in how long it takes them to become a true group and how they manage their time	Structural patterns of talk groups – engage in four goal-directed patterns of talk, problem solving, role playing, relational, trust building and team building
Size Group – the minimum is 3, the ideal size is 5-7 and the maximum is 13	Goals groups – communication is goal directed toward solving a problem or winning a game and is measured in terms of productivity, quality of member satisfaction and consensus
	Perceived Shared Identity – the group perceives a common, symbolic identity among its members, as contrasted with non-members

Source: Gragan *et al.* (2009:10)

2.4 WHAT IS COMMUNICATIONS?

Randy, Robert, Larry and Linda (2003:304) described communications as about expressing and conveying thoughts, feelings, opinions and ideas to another person or persons. Randy *et al.* (2003:304) went further and said that good communications skills can help one to keep his or her head high and confidently take charge of unfamiliar situations.

Randy *et al.* (2003:305) says that people are more likely to listen, whatever one have to say, if he or she can express him or herself well, and this is particularly useful in influencing and negotiating important personal, social or business matters. It also comes in handy in resolving conflict and dealing with difficult people.

Randy *et al.* (2003:305) continue and say that some people are born with effective communications skills; others need to develop them. Developing effective communications skills requires repeated

practice, which one can do by putting oneself frequently in situations where one has to interact with a variety of people.

Randy *et al.* (2003:129) describe communications as a process whereby information is enclosed in a package and is channeled and imparted by a sender to a receiver via some medium. The receiver then decodes the message and gives the sender a feedback. They continue to say that all forms of communication require a sender, a message, and an intended recipient; however, the receiver need not be present or aware of the sender's intent to communicate at the time of communication in order for the act of communication to occur. Communication requires that all parties have an area of communicative commonality.

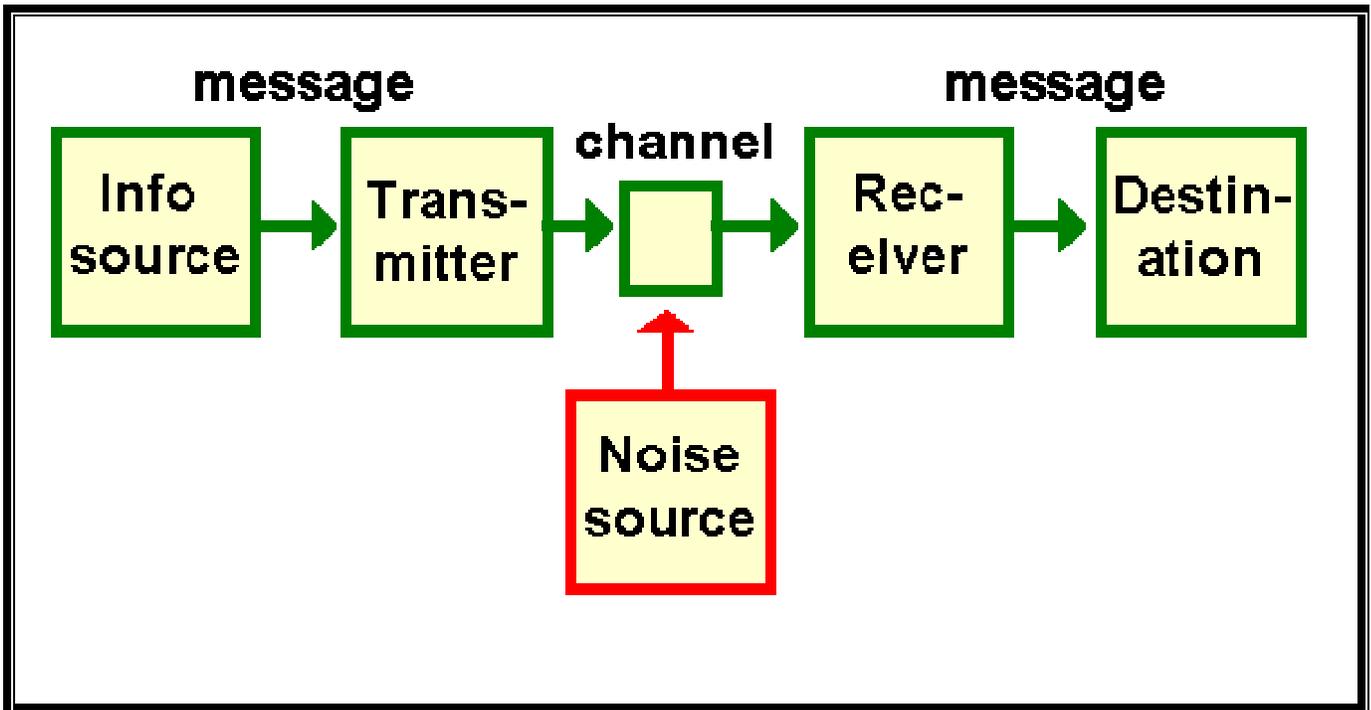
Robert Stearns, (2002:57) defines communications as “The ability of the sender of a message to ensure that the receiver understands the message, in the same way the sender meant the message to be understood”.

Stearns (2002:58) continues lists the followings as barriers that can get in the way of effective communication:

- lack of time
- tone of voice and/or
- facial expressions
- education and experience levels of the communicators
- relative positions within the organisation
- the relationship between the individuals who are communicating

To go a step further in explaining the communication, a well-known model of communication developed by Shannon and Weaver (1949), is used as the prototypical example of a transmissive model of communication: a model which reduces communication to a process of 'transmitting information'.

Figure 2.1: Transmissive model of communication



Source: Shannon (2004:68)

The above Shannon and Weaver original model consisted of five elements:

1. An *information source*, which produces a message.
2. A *transmitter*, which encodes the message into signals
3. A *channel*, to which signals are adapted for transmission
4. A *receiver*, which 'decodes' (reconstructs) the message from the signal.
5. A *destination*, where the message arrives.

A sixth element, *noise* is a dysfunctional factor: any interference with the message traveling along the channel (such as 'static' on the telephone or radio) which may lead to the signal received being different from that sent.

Looking at the above definitions of communications and the transmission model of communication, it is also clear that of all the animals that inhabit this planet, human beings are the only ones that are blessed with the ability to communicate through words. Naturally, words are an integral part of expressing thoughts and emotions.

However, effective communication is what sets a person apart from other individuals both in personal life as well as in a professional career. Effective communication is a must for everyone who hopes to climb the ladder of success. It is not something that you can leave to destiny.

2.5 TYPES OF COMMUNICATIONS BASED ON STYLE AND PURPOSE

Communications has been defined by many scholars (Shannon & Weaver, 1949, Stearns, 2002, Randy *et al.*, 2003), as exchanging information in the form of messages, symbols, thoughts, signs and opinions.

Communication of information, messages, opinions, speech and thoughts can be done via different forms of modern communication media like, e-mail, telephone and mobile. (Forsyth, 2006:30). Some of the basic ways of communication are by speaking, singing, sign language, body language, touch and eye contact. He also noted that these basic ways of communication are used to transfer information from one entity to other.

There are many different types of communication, depending on the medium used for communication or the way in which information is exchanged. Four basic types of communications will be discussed in this study, namely, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, written communication and visual communication.

2.5.1 Verbal communication

Verbal communication includes sounds, words, language and speaking. Language is said to have originated from sounds and gestures (Forsyth, 2006:36). There are many languages spoken in the world. The basis of language formation is: gender, class, profession, geographical area, age group and other social elements.

Speaking is an effective way of communicating and is again classified into two types, these being interpersonal communication and public speaking. Good verbal communication is an inseparable

part of business communication (Severin & Tankard 1991:47). In a business, you come across people from various ages, cultures and races. Fluent verbal communication is essential to deal with people in business meetings. Also, in business communication self-confidence plays a vital role which when clubbed with fluent communication skills can lead to success.

2.5.2 Non-verbal communication

Kruger (2005:1) states that non-verbal communication accompanies us mostly unconsciously every day. People do not think what kind of distance is appropriate in a certain situation. About 60 to 65 percent of all the meaning created in human encounters derives from non-verbal cues. Kruger (2005:3) further states that, in general, non-verbal communication can be defined as communicating without words through multiple communication channels. Multiple communication channels comprise the different media like gestures, space or time.

In support of Kruger's research, Guerrero and Floyd (2006:4) say that non-verbal communication is often equated with body language; it encompasses much more. Guerrero and Floyd (2006:5) also say that nonverbal communication includes features, facial and body movements and even communication through smell, touch or with the help of artefacts like masks and clothes.

2.5.3 Written communication

Written communication is writing the words which one want to communicate. Good written communication is essential for business purposes. Written communication is practiced in many different languages. E-mails, reports, articles and memos are some of the ways of using written communication in business. The written communication can be edited and amended many times before it is communicated to the second party to whom the communication is intended.

This is one of the main advantages of using writing as the major means of communication in business activity. Written communication is used not only in business, but also for informal communication purposes. Mobile SMS is an example of informal written communication.

2.5.4 Visual communication

The last type of communication out of the four types of communication is the visual communication. Visual communication is visual display of information, like, topography, photography, signs, symbols and designs. Television and video clips are the electronic form of visual communication.

These are the four types of communication. The different types of communication media are increasing day by day to ensure clarity and eliminate the ambiguity in communication.

2.6 WHY STUDY SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATIONS

For most of one's working lives one will be expected to participate in face to face discussions and be expected to work effectively and efficiently towards common group goals. (Cragan *et al.*, 2009:3) says that we have all experienced problems with communication and know that intimate romantic and friendly relationships between two people are difficult to build and maintain.

Cragan *et al.* (2009:4) also noted that working effectively with three or more people is even more complex and challenging. Enhancing one's level of small group competence requires a concerted effort to study and comprehend the dynamics of a small group. They have given three reasons why it is important to study group communications.

2.6.1 Living and working in groups

The study of small group communication brings with it a natural curiosity to understand small group processes. At the same time, there is a clear expectation that the study of the communication behaviour of small groups will lead to pragmatic advice on how to improve the small group experience (Cragan *et al.*, 2009:4).

2.6.2 Rationale for studying small group communications

Cragan *et al.* (2009:4) says that one studies small group communication because public debate and discussion is one of the cornerstones of a democratic society. The decision to go to war, the decision to change fundamental social contracts such as marriage, the decision to rebuild this country's infrastructure all flow from small group and public discussion. One also studies small group communication because the workhorse of modern organisation is the task group. Employees attend meetings, participate in project groups and exist professionally as part of long-standing working groups (Cragan *et al.*, 2009:5).

Further, the emergence of virtual teams and the vision of intercultural groups flourishing in multinational corporations foster a strong rationale for the building and teaching of small group theories and skills.

2.6.3 Cultural rationale

Cragan *et al.* (2009:6) state that the American democracy has made public discussion of affairs of state a moral obligation. Apathy is discouraged in some culture. Hence, they have a great many politically concerned citizens who are actively involved in small groups. The authors noted that there is a general belief that these groups should focus on rational group discussion-making and avoid emotional, undisciplined group activity. "Our towns and neighborhoods are beehives of small group discussions about such issues as immigration, then threats of xenophobia, terrorism, the rising costs of petrol and electricity, interest rates, how to provide affordable health care for all citizens, and other public issues that directly affect our lives," (Cragan *et al.*, 2009:7).

Cragan *et al.* state that South Africa consists of almost an infinite number of social groups. "We belong to fraternities and sororities, toastmaster and elks, gardening clubs and motor-bike clubs, bowling leagues and bridge groups. It might surprise you to discover how many social groups you have become involved in since you left school".

2.6.4 Corporate rationale

One of the recurring questions on the evaluation forms of private organisations and government agencies relates to the employee's ability to be a team player (Cragan *et al.*, 2009:7). The organisation in which one finds oneself after leaving college / university will probably want one to do at least two things:

- Communicate effectively
- Accomplish your task objectives within a work group

It is also noted that our abilities to organise, lead and participate in small group discussions will be major determinants of our future professional success. Since the 1950s, both private and public organisations have expanded a lot of time and energy on training of its employees in group communications skills.

2.7 PROBLEMS IN SMALL GROUP PROCESSES

There are many problems that may occur in small group communication and processes, but for the purpose of this study, only three topics taken from (Forman & Katsky, 2006:25) will be discussed. These problems may occur throughout the project or at a particular stage.

2.7.1 Poor conflict management

Forman and Katsky (2006:25) say that conflict problems can surface early and may recur throughout the project. Teams may not be able to resolve issues such as team membership, faculty advisor, sponsoring organisation, and strategic question.

These difficult decisions can pit team members against each other too early in the project for them to have learned how to handle conflict effectively. Forman and Katsky furthers that some teams attempt to avoid conflict because they perceive it as difficult to handle, or, worse still, as disruptive and uncontrollable. As a result, team members sometimes "agree" to major decisions that go against their deeper interests and preferences. For example, one team, when confronted with the choice

between an inferior international study and a good domestic one, chose the international study because one person insisted.

Later, as problems with the sponsoring organisation arose, the other group members voiced their ambivalence toward the project, but they raised their objections too late to affect the projects focus (Forman & Katsky, 2006:26). Differences in team members' commitment to the project made it difficult to conduct. If the students had worked through the conflict earlier, they might have avoided the later crisis that nearly resulted in splitting the team apart.

Forman and Katsky (2006:27) state that poor conflict management often arises concerning issues of control and ownership. Individual team members may assume too much responsibility, perhaps because of a prior connection to the sponsoring organisation, or members assume an inadequate level of responsibility and ownership because their expertise turns out to be peripheral to the study. They say that although most teams struggle with more than enough conflict, in some cases teams face little internal conflict because the students share similar values, knowledge, and skills. Unfortunately, this seemingly ideal situation can lead to poor problem definition due to the narrowness of team members' perspectives.

Forman and Katsky (2006:28) also say that a team whose members share similar values may be predisposed to push an organisation in a particular direction that reflects the team's values but does not take into account the organization's needs, or a team may insist upon defining a problem that lends itself to quantitative analysis only, having decided beforehand that a qualitative study would be worthless or uninteresting. At worst, the narrowness of team members' perspectives can result in "group think". Team members abandon their critical thinking and moral judgement in favour of shared group norms.

2.7.2 Personality differences and unresolved emotional issues

Forman and Katsky (2006:29) concur that team members bring various personal needs, styles, and agendas to their work. Students' motivation for conducting a project may vary. For some, the project is simply one more requirement, competing for limited time and energy in an overly busy life, so they want to define the project quickly and "get on with it".

For others, the project is an important personal statement; for example, they may see the sponsor as a potential employer (Forman & Katsky, 2006:30). In such cases, the students want the project to represent the best possible use of the team's capabilities in answering a pressing and well formulated question. In addition to differences in motivation, team members can have different work styles. Some may be meticulous and highly organised; others may value the creativity fostered by a less rigid approach.

Once the project is underway, some team members prefer to operate autonomously, conducting their part of the project on their own, while others prefer to be evaluated and to remain well informed on the work of teammates.

Finally, team members may have hidden agendas. One student may be flattered to be included in a team he or she perceives as high achievers; however, the student may hide difficulties in conducting his or her part of the project for fear of being exposed as less competent than the others (Forman & Katsky, 2006:31).

2.7.3 Poor client management

While the above problem areas concern the team members' relationship with one another, the last concern is difficulties in working with the sponsoring organisation. Every team must handle successfully what Forman and Katsky (2006:32) call "impression management": the public face it shows to the client. Yet, early in the project, when team members must strive to appear competent and cooperative to the sponsor, they may not feel like a unified group confident of its goals, expertise, and ability to work out emotional difficulties.

Forman and Katsky (2006:35) continue that often a team sees itself primarily as students passively responding to all requests from the sponsoring organisation rather than as outside consultants responsible for managing the client. Students' difficulty in defining their roles with the company is compounded by their need to maintain a student-professor relationship with their faculty advisors.

On the other side, client companies present different kinds of difficulties to teams. In some settings, the project is well defined, the contact person is highly placed in the organisation, and the key decision-makers within the organisation are interested in and agree about the study they would like

to see undertaken (Forman & Katsky, 2006:36). Once a team ascertains that this situation exists, the project often can proceed in a straightforward fashion.

Forman and Katsky (2006:37) state that client management becomes much more complex if some of the above conditions do not exist. For example, the company may have no idea or competing ideas of what the team should study, or the contact person for the study may be raising issues that are really above her or his level of responsibility (a fact which may not be immediately clear as the project begins). As the project progresses, other problems can arise. The client's needs can change, company contacts take other jobs, or the project itself becomes obsolete or infeasible.

Finally, client management can present difficulties at the end of the project (Forman & Katsky, 2006:25). People within the company may wish to control team findings to protect or strengthen their personal positions, or the company as a whole may feel too exposed by the study, and, therefore, may reject suggestions for change. At best, such a situation may result in the company's receiving the team's oral presentation in cold silence; at worst, the team can be subjected to verbal abuse.

2.8 KEYS TO SUCCESS FOR SMALL GROUP

Artstrongg (2004:34) is an assistant professor and director of the doctoral program in Adult, Higher, and Community Education at Ball State University and he states that one of the most commonly used instructional methods in adult education is the small group.

Joseph (in Taylor, Marienau and Fiddler, 2000:10) adds to this saying that small groups are used in higher education, adult literacy and basic education, and many forms of training. He also states that some write solely about it, but few offer specific practical tips of how to facilitate the effective use of small groups in adult education learning enterprises. Only four key successes will be discussed in this study.

2.8.1 Establish ground rules

Artnstrongg (2004:34) says that establishing ground rules is probably the most important, yet overlooked, action needed to create an effective group. Rules create space for the group members to participate and engage in not only for their own learning, but also in the learning of other members of the group. Ground rules "frame" the learning environment. It is very important that the participants have the opportunity to participate in the construction of ground rules. It is equally important that a select few ground rules be included by the facilitator, if they are not suggested by the group members.

Artnstrongg (2004:34) further states that every member must feel as though they will be heard and that their input will count. Establishing a ground rule that spells this out is a first step toward gaining commitment. Well-designed ground rules also give the group an effective means of coping with difficult situations that will inevitably occur in the life of any group. Artnstrongg (2004:35) also state that a ground rule that the group is committed to, for instance, hearing from all members, will result in value through everyone's input and gives the group a legitimate and mutually agreed upon method for limiting the discussion of those group members who would dominate and monopolise the discussion, while actively soliciting input from those members more reluctant to share their ideas.

2.8.2 Beware of the leader's halo effect

Anytime someone is appointed "**group leader**" or "**facilitator**", even in an informal group of friends, the leader is often perceived by the other group members as somehow special (Artnstrongg, 2004:35). This is often an unrecognized perception in group members, but it is real and often affects the group process more than members realise. Suddenly, as group leader, one person's opinion carries more weight than those of other members.

Artnstrongg (2004:36) also state that the perception carries with it the responsibility that the leader's opinion does not stifle the expression of others' opinions, so leaders must be careful to not express their opinions too quickly. However, if no other group member expresses an opinion similar to that which the leader had planned to express, then it is acceptable for the leader to share his or her thoughts. Being the leader does not preclude one from having an opinion or from having something

significance to contribute. The leader should not deprive the group of their experience and knowledge, but should remember how the added responsibility of being a group leader could affect the group.

2.8.3 Use the social-microcosm effect

Artnstrongg (2004:37) says that, given time, group members will carve out roles in the group for themselves similar to the roles they inhabit beyond the group. An adult educator can use this opportunity to help learners come to better understand themselves and their influence on others around them.

Artnstrongg (2004:37) says to do this, an educator should focus on the here and now (present), and assist the learners/group members to do the same. Address what is happening in the group, and avoid anything that may or may not, have happened outside the group.

2.8.4 Challenge ideas

Related to, and yet different from, conflicting ideas is the notion of challenging ideas (Artnstrongg, 2004:38). Doing so helps the group generate better ideas, but, more directly, helps individual group members develop their own critical thinking skills. As an old cliché correctly notes, one often does not know what one thinks until one tries to explain it to someone else.

Artnstrongg (2004:34) lists the following challenges:

- Tell me more about that.
- Have you considered an alternative?, and
- What is the rationale for the idea?

The above can force one to re-examine and reformulate one's ideas. This encourages critical reflection and learning in both individual learners and the group as a whole.

2.9 SUBCULTURE AND SUBGROUPS

Jandt (1995:14) stated in his earlier study that psychologists have long recognised that membership groups have an important influence on the values and attitudes a person holds. Like cultures and subcultures, subgroups provide members with relatively complete sets of values and patterns of behaviour and in many ways pose similar communication problems as cultures and subcultures. Jandt (1995:14) further states that, like subcultures, subgroups exist within a dominant culture, and are dependent on that culture.

In addition, Jandt (1995:15) states that one important subgroup category is occupation. Think of large organisations and of occupations in which most people dress alike, share a common vocabulary and similar values, and are in frequent communication as through magazines and newsletters. These subgroups include nurses and doctors, and police officers.

Jandt (1995:30) says that inter-cultural communication is critical to the business world. The diversity of people in cities and countries means an element of this type of communication will always be needed whether it is between staff, colleagues, customers or clients. Awareness of cultural differences can favourably impact the success of a business. Improved staff interaction, better customer relations and effective client management are all areas that will reap benefits through cross cultural understanding.

Although inter-cultural communication competency can only be truly achieved through cross-cultural awareness training, language acquisition, foreign travel and cultural immersion, there are some guidelines that can enhance a person's inter-cultural communication skills.

Subgroups usually do not involve the same large number of people as cultures and subcultures and are not necessarily thought of as accumulating values and patterns over generations in the same way as cultures do Jandt (1995:32). Members in some subgroups are temporary – that is, members may participate for a limited time and later become inactive or separate from it altogether.

2.10 COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

In any working environment different individuals are bound to come across different communication barriers that may affect their communication responsibilities and obligations to their colleagues. This normally happens because of their cultural background and norms. Jandt (1995:49) states three such barriers:

- **Anxiety** – refers to being so conscious of feeling out of place and focusing so much of your attention on that feeling that you appear awkward to others.
- **Assuming similarity** instead of differences means that in new situations, you assume that everything is done in the way you are familiar with instead of asking or otherwise finding out how things are done.
- The third barrier is **ethnocentrism**, or negatively judging aspects of another culture by the standards of one's own culture. Ethnocentrism can lead to neglecting other cultures and rejecting the knowledge of other cultures.

The other barriers of communication (Jandt 1995:49; Schwarts, Simon & Carmona, 2008:64):

- **Physical barriers:** One of the major barriers of communication in a workplace is the physical barrier. Physical barriers in an organisation include large working areas that are physically separated from others. Other distractions that could cause a physical barrier in an organisation are the environment and background noise.
- **Language:** Inability to converse in a language that is known by both the sender and receiver is the greatest barrier to effective communication. When a person uses inappropriate words while conversing or writing, it could lead to misunderstanding between the sender and a receiver.
- **Emotions:** Emotions could be a barrier to communication if a person is engrossed in their emotions for some reason. In such cases, you tend to have trouble listening to others or understanding the message conveyed to you. A few of the emotional interferences include hostility, anger, resentment and fear.
- **Lack of subject knowledge:** If a person who sends a message lacks subject knowledge then he may not be able to convey his message clearly. The receiver could misunderstand his message, and this could lead to a barrier to effective communication.

- **Stress:** One of the major communication barriers faced by employees in most of the organisations is stress. When a person is under immense stress, he may find it difficult to understand the message, leading to communication distortion. At the time of stress, our psychological frame of mind depends on our beliefs, experiences, goals and values. Thus, we fail to realise the essence of communication.

2.11 ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

Small group communication can never be studied in isolation; for it to be clearly understood and for the purpose of this study, the researcher has included ethical communication and business communication.

Questions of right and wrong arise whenever people communicate. Ethical communication is fundamental to responsible thinking, decision-making, and the development of relationships and communities within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and media.

Moreover, ethical communication enhances human worth and dignity by fostering truthfulness, fairness, responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for self and others. Unethical communication threatens the quality of all communication and consequently the well-being of individuals and the society in which we live.

Researchers and scholars like Sandra and Richard (1997:20) support the above notion. They agree that ethical communication is communication that is honest, fair, and considerate of others' rights. Communication is honest when communicators tell the truth; it is fair and considerate when they consider the listener's feelings.

Sandra and Richard (1997:21) further stated that there are times, however, when honesty and fairness are in conflict. For example, when a friend shows one his new car and says, "Isn't it beautiful?" even if one don't agree, one should not tell him so. In some culture this is known as a "white lie" – one that preserve another's feelings and since it not about an important issue, it is ethically acceptable.

Sandra and Richard (1997:34) further that, on the other hand, when one of the friends goes out and drinks herself into oblivion every night and asks whether a friend think she is an alcoholic, one's answer should be 'YES'. This is a situation where honesty is important because it concerns another person's well-being. Sandra and Richard (1997:36) also state that sometimes, truthfulness is set aside because of a particular style of communication in which, even if we lie, we are telling the truth because everyone knows perfectly well about the lie's existence.

Words that cause others pain are also ethically reprehensible. Anyone who is called "stupid," "fat," or "clumsy" is hurt by these words. Sometimes criticism is important in our relationships, but it should be carefully thought about before it is used.

Much communication that is harmful or disrespectful of others is said without thinking of the implications of the words. If individuals could think before they speak and ask themselves if they are being honest and considerate of others' feelings, they have a much better chance of communicating ethically.

2.12 ORGANISATIONAL OR BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Employees should understand the application of communication theory to organisational communication:

- Develop perspectives on the transition from traditional social science approaches concerning organisational communication to the emergence of naturalistic, interpretative scholarship in the field.
- Understand the standard theories of organisations and organisational effectiveness as well as traditional scholarship or communication structure and function, superior and subordinate relationships and group decision-making.
- They should be able to discuss organisational communication themes from the perspective of structural-functionalism, a contemporary model in the contemporary functionalist view of organisational culture; be able to evaluate communication theory in its application to the functioning of organisations.

2.13 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Communication is important in workplace as it plays a vital role on:

- **Good working relations**

The first and foremost benefit that one reaps from workplace communication is establishing and holding good working relations with sub-ordinates, seniors as well as juniors. Good working relations at the workplace in turn ensures a friendly and conflict free working environment.

- **Problem solving**

No workplace is ever free of conflicts, contradictions and problems within employees. However, communicating the problems or issues to fellow colleagues, seniors and in case of official conflicts the senior management, helps to solve the problem and thus prevents it from getting aggravated.

- **Healthy from business point of view**

Now, shift the focus from employee relations to hardcore business communication. Communicating with the employees about changes, amendments in the rules, regulations, policies, work procedures, and more, helps them in getting a better idea of things and therefore implementation in the actual work becomes easy. This results in increased productivity and accuracy.

- **Building trust**

Employees would always feel better and respectful when communication about every small thing happening at the workplace with them is present. This lays a strong foundation for building trust and confidence between the manager and the employees.

2.14. ROLES IN GROUPS

Borchers (2010) has identified several roles which relate to the completion of the group's task:

Table 2.2: Roles in groups

Task-Oriented Roles	Social Roles	Individualistic Roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiator-contributor: Generates new ideas. • Information-seeker: Asks for information about the task. • Opinion-seeker: Asks for the input from the group about its values. • Information-giver: Offers facts or generalization to the group. • Opinion-giver: States his or her beliefs about a group issue. • Elaborator: Explains ideas within the group, offers examples to clarify ideas. • Coordinator: Shows the relationships between ideas. • Orienter: Shifts the direction of the group's discussion. • Evaluator-critic: Measures group's actions against some objective standard. • Energizer: Stimulates the group to a higher level of activity. • Procedural-technician: Performs logistical functions for the group. • Recorder: Keeps a record of group actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourager: Praises the ideas of others. • Harmonizer: Mediates differences between group members. • Compromiser: Moves group to another position that is favored by all group members. • Gatekeeper/expediter: Keeps communication channels open. • Standard Setter: Suggests standards or criteria for the group to achieve. • Group observer: Keeps records of group activities and uses this information to offer feedback to the group. • Follower: Goes along with the group and accepts the group's ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressor: Attacks other group members, deflates the status of others, and other aggressive behavior. • Blocker: Resists movement by the group. • Recognition seeker: Calls attention to himself or herself. • Self-confessor: Seeks to disclose non group related feelings or opinions. • Dominator: Asserts control over the group by manipulating the other group members. • Help seeker: Tries to gain the sympathy of the group. • Special interest pleader: Uses stereotypes to assert his or her own prejudices.

Source: Borchers (2010)

2.15 SUMMARY

The character of a group – its solidarity, cohesiveness, productivity, energy and longevity can be understood and predicted through the analysis of both the internal and external systems. The internal system is formed and developed out of the external system.

The basic variables comprising the internal system are activities, interactions and sentiments. The external system represents the “givens” or circumstances that existed in the organisation prior to the formation of the group, and that are likely to continue after a disbanding of the group.

The group takes on an identity of its own. It can be viewed as a singular, separate entity rather than a conglomeration of the various personalities of its members. Just as a person can be extroverted and optimistic, so can a group become outgoing and optimistic in its view.

Like the authoritarian person who is highly conventional, dogmatic, and rigid, a group may be traditional, inflexible and authority-oriented. The point here is that small groups develop their own modes of behaviour and orientations just as individuals do.

The next chapter deals with the research methodology and results pertaining to this study.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL STUDY AND RESULTS INTERPRETATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two focused on the historical background of small group communication, how long it has been in existence; what it means; the advantages and disadvantages of it. The chapter also compared the views of the earlier researchers/scholars and those of the recent researchers/ scholars about small group communication.

Chapter three introduces how the research for this study was designed, about the questionnaire as measuring instrument, and the procedure that was used to collect data. The results of the research are presented and interpreted.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was conducted using a survey method. This method entails collecting, analysing, representing and interpreting the quantitative data. According to Floyd and Fowler (2002:1), the purpose of the survey is to produce statistics, that is, quantitative or numerical descriptions about some aspect of the study population. The main way of collecting information is by asking people questions, and that the answers to those questions constitute the data that need to be analysed.

Floyd and Fowler (2002:4) continue to say that, like all measures in all sciences, social survey measurement is not error free. The procedures used to conduct a survey have a major effect on the likelihood that the resulting data will describe accurately what it is intended to describe.

In his study on practical research planning and design, Leedy (1997:191) states that a questionnaire is one of the best tools to probe data beyond physical reach of the observer. In general, questions should flow logically from one to the next.

Leedy (1997:192) further stated that to achieve the best response rates, questions should flow from the least sensitive to the most sensitive, from the factual and behavioural to the attitudinal, and from the more general to the more specific.

3.3 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF USING SURVEYS

The advantages and disadvantages of using surveys to collect primary data are shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 follows on next page

Table 3.1: Advantages and Disadvantages of using surveys

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is an efficient way of collecting information from a large number of respondents. Very large samples are possible. Statistical techniques can be used to determine validity, reliability, and statistical significance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They depend on subjects' motivation, honesty, memory, and ability to respond. Subjects may not be aware of their reasons for any given action. They may have forgotten their reasons. They may not be motivated to give accurate answers; in fact, they may be motivated to give answers that present themselves in a favourable light.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Surveys are flexible in the sense that a wide range of information can be collected. They can be used to study attitudes, values, beliefs, and past behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Structured surveys, particularly those with closed ended questions, may have low validity when researching affective variables.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Because they are standardized, they are relatively free from several types of errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Survey question answer-choices could lead to vague data sets because at times they are relative only to a personal abstract notion concerning "strength of choice". For instance, the choice "moderately agree" may mean different things to different subjects, and to anyone interpreting the data for correlation. Even yes or no answers are problematic because subjects may for instance put "no" if the choice "only once" is not available
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is an economy in data collection due to the focus provided by standardized questions. Only questions of interest to the researcher are asked, recorded, codified, and analysed. Time and money is not spent on tangential questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Although the individuals chosen to participate in surveys are often randomly sampled, errors due to non-response may exist. That is, people who choose to respond on the survey may be different from those who do not respond, thus biasing the estimates.

3.4 SAMPLE DESIGN, SIZE AND RESPONSE RATE

As discussed in chapter one, the main objective of this study is to provide the reader with an understanding of the role that small group communications plays in a working environment, the influence it has within an organisation, and the structure it takes within the bigger structure of the organisation.

150 questionnaires were sent to two mines at De Beers asking employees via their supervisors and line managers to participate in the small group communications survey. The supervisors and line managers of both mines were informed via e-mail prior to sending the questionnaire explaining to them the aim and objectives of this survey. Informal interviews with a few leaders of the Mini Business Areas (MBAs) were also conducted about the impact of the small group communication within their areas of operation.

A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed at two mines, Venetia Mine in Limpopo Province and Voorspoed Mine in the Free State Province. Only 80 questionnaires were sent back, yielding a 53% response rate. 56% of the respondents were African, 20% White, while 11% came from Coloured, 10% Indian and the responses from other races makes 3%.

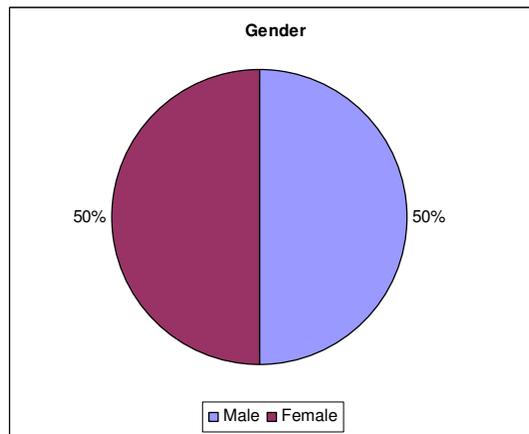
Statistical analysis and the interpretation of the data were conducted and results are presented in the section below and in Appendix B.

3.5 RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of the study are shown in the same order as the questionnaire per section (see Appendix A).

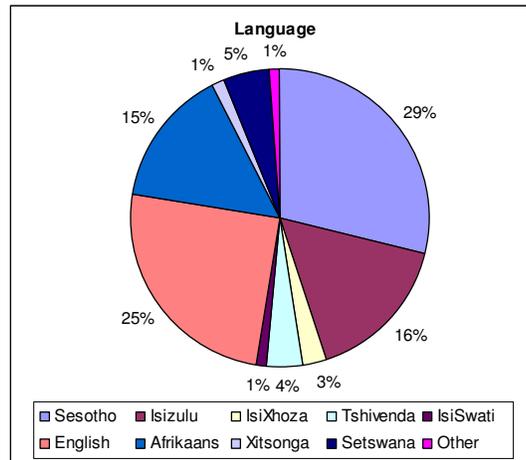
Section A: Demographic information

Figure 3.1: Gender of the respondents



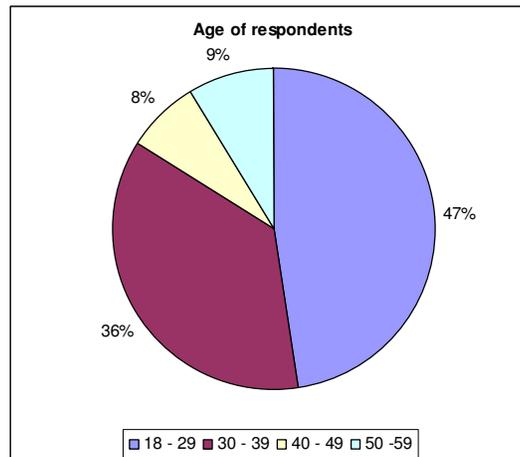
Of the total number of 80 respondents, 40 were male and the other 40 were female, making a 50% split between the male and female respondents. This was very interesting to see that the response rate was nicely shared between the male and female respondents, even though this was not the intention or the designed outcome of the survey. The industry was previously male dominated and this is slowly changing. This also brings a dynamic change in discussions because women have a different view of how things should be done whether in a small group or a large group. This will bring about creativeness within the group. The researcher believes that this will bring a balance in discussions at the various groups.

Figure 3.2: Language of the respondents



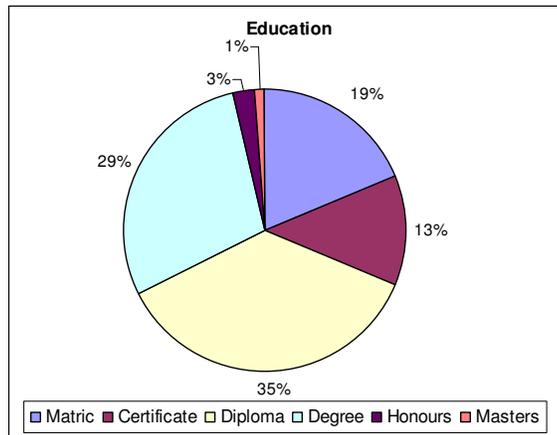
About 29% of the respondents are Sesotho speaking and 25% English speaking. Other languages vary from 16% to 1%. This meant that there is a diverse workforce at these two mines.

Figure 3.3: Age of the respondents



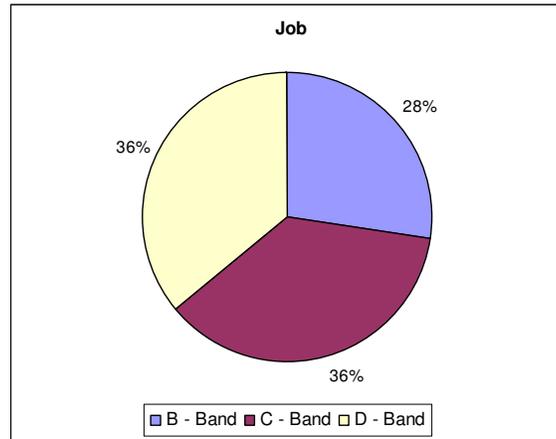
The largest percentage of respondents was between the ages of 18 and 29 years (47%) and 36% were between the ages of 30 and 39 years old. This meant that the majority of the workforce of the two mines was relatively young. Young people have different views on how things should be done in a working environment; they are not afraid to challenge the status quo. They will be able to debate issues within their small groups, push the boundaries and come up with some great ideas. This will benefit both their groups and the company.

Figure 3.4: Education level of the respondents



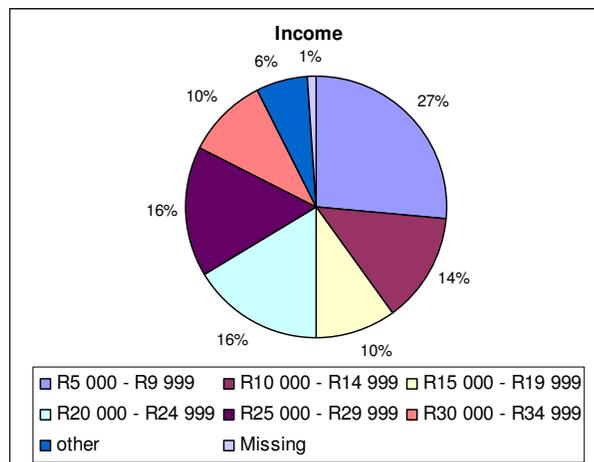
Of the respondents, 35% have diplomas, 29% have degrees and all the respondents have a matric certificate. Education plays an important part in any working environment; firstly, communication will be very easy for everyone, as this is one of the important aspects of small group communication. Technology is another important part of doing business today, because the majority of respondents can read and write, and it will be easy for group members to communicate via e-mails, teleconferencing, and social networks, and be able to make decisions without having to meet face-to-face all the time. This will save them time and speed up processes in some cases. It also means that the workforce can join groups from other mines and still be able to communicate and get the job done quickly.

Figure 3.5: Job grading of the respondents



The majority of the job grading of the respondents were between C-band (36%) and D-band (36%), while B-band had 28% of the respondents. These bands are classifications of the seniority of the workforce within the company, B-band being the lowest and D-band being the highest in this case. Employees from different job levels will bring different experiences and expertise to the small group. They will be able to share with each other their knowledge on how to do certain things and be able to learn from each other. This will be of great benefit to the company's success.

Figure 3.6: Income level of the respondents

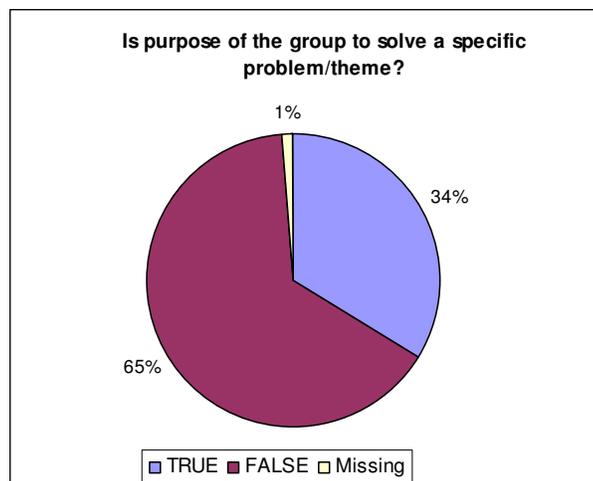


The bulk of the respondents (27%) earn between R5 000 and R9 999, while 16% of the respondents earn between R20 000 and R24 999. Another 16% earn between R25 000 and 29 999. A further 14% earn between R10 000 and R14 999. 10% of the respondents earn R30 000 and R34 999, and another 6% earn between R35 000 and R45 000. This concerns the level of job grading; the senior

workforce earns more than the lower graded employees. Having mixed job grading and salaries in a small group and having them share ideas and experience, will motivate the lower level employees to work even harder so that they also could get to that level. It will also motivate everyone in the group to improve on their qualifications and a healthy competition will keep every group member on their toes. The company will benefit from this and will have a highly motivated work-force.

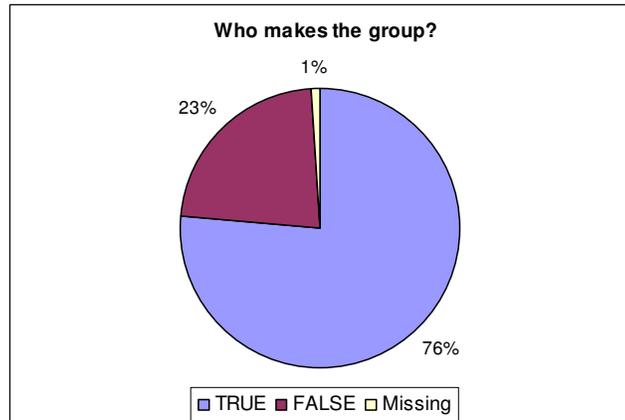
Section B: The role of the group

Figure 3.7: The purpose of the group



Of the respondents, 65% did not meet to solve a specific problem, but they got together to talk and solve a variety of issues, while 34% met to solve a specific problem/theme. This means that the majority of small groups is not meant for once-off issues, but is there to continuously work together in a sustainable long-term period. These small groups will gain a lot from getting involved and working in a variety of projects. Group members will be able to transfer their knowledge and experience to the other future employees of the company. The company will benefit for a long period from these experiences.

Figure 3.8: The composition of the group



The bulk of the respondents (76%) said that their group consisted of employees from their own departments and 23% of the respondents said that their group consisted of employees from other sections of the mines. The results indicate that group members are more comfortable to participate in small groups, but mostly with people that they know. They are more relaxed in their own comfort zones.

Figure 3.9: Appointment of the group leader



The majority of the respondents agreed that they participated when selecting the group leader, while 16% said that they did not participate in the selection of their group leader. This means that the old ways of forming groups and selecting a group leader (command and control) have changed. The process is more open and transparent. This will allow group members to believe and buy-in to the system, and be supportive of their group leader. This also indicates that there can never be groups

where all members agree with each other all the time. Group dynamics will bring a good balance within the small group.

Figure 3.10: Meeting schedule



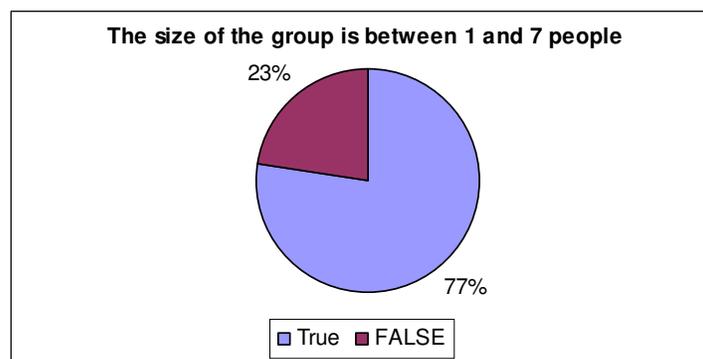
87% of the respondents agreed that their group meetings were scheduled by the group leader and 13% disagreed. This means that the group leader was in control of the group activities and procedure on how things should run within the group. More importantly, a leader should not deprive the group of their experience and knowledge, but should remember how the added responsibility of group leader could affect the group.

Figure 3.11: Participate in group discussions



An overwhelming 99% of the respondents agreed that every group member was encouraged to participate in the group discussions, and only 1% said that group discussion was discouraged for their members. This supports Levi's (2009:19) anecdote that an important value of the group is building the skills and capacity of the team and organization; and that this can only be achieved when every one within a group is encouraged to participate in group discussions. Levi (2009:20) furthers that performing in the team should encourage participants to want to continue working as a team in the future. Good communication depends on understanding and trust, and this result shows that there is trust among group members.

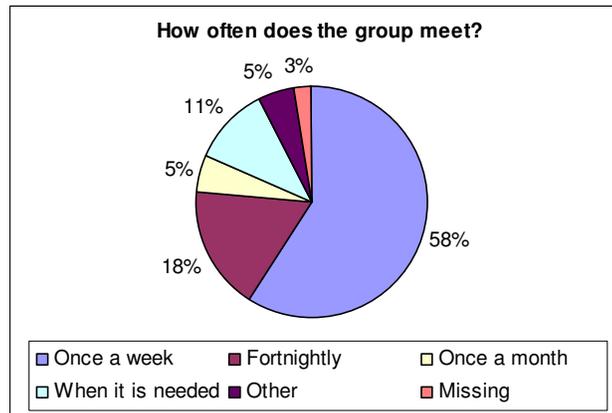
Figure 3.12: The size of the group



Of the respondents, 77% said that their group had between 1 and 7 members and 23% disagreed, but there was no indication of how large their group was. The results confirm what most of the researchers in the literature review are defining: the importance of small group communication. This result is an acceptable norm for small group communication.

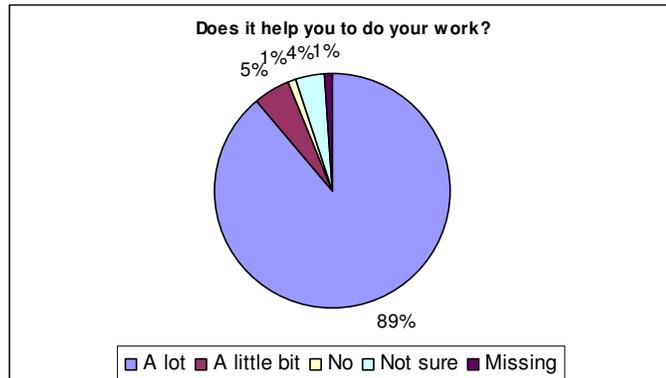
Section C: Appropriateness of the group meetings

Figure 3.13: The frequency of the meetings



58% of the respondents meet once a week to go through their work and consolidate whatever needs to be consolidated. A further 18% said that they got together as a group fortnightly, while 11% said that they met whenever it was necessary. The rest of the respondents said that they convened once a month as a group. The norm for the MBAs is that the teams meet face-to-face once a week to discuss and update each other on their tasks. The results confirm that the small groups are functioning properly.

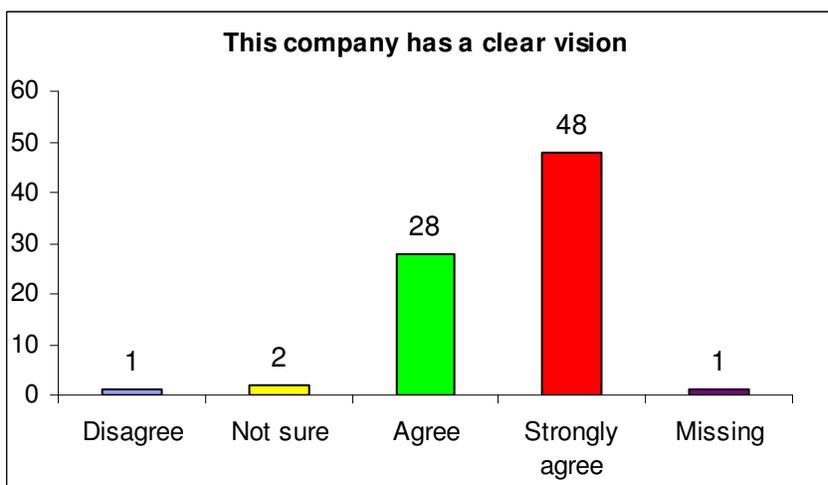
Figure 3.14: Does it help you to do your work?



89% of the respondents said that the group meetings help them a lot to do their work better; 5% said that these meeting helped them a little bit to do their work and 4% of the respondents were not sure if these meetings helped them at all. This is very encouraging; it shows that the meetings are serving their purpose, which is to meet, get advice and clarity and execute what is discussed in the meeting.

Section D: Perceptions of respondents

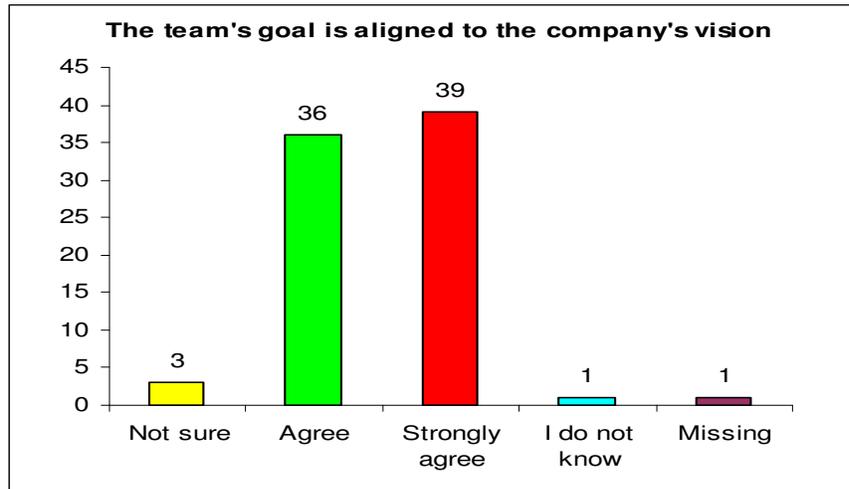
Figure 3.15: The company has a clear vision



A Total of 28 respondents (35%) agreed that the company had a clear vision and 48 (60%) also strongly agreed with this sentiment. Only 2 (2.5%) were not sure of the vision of the company and 1

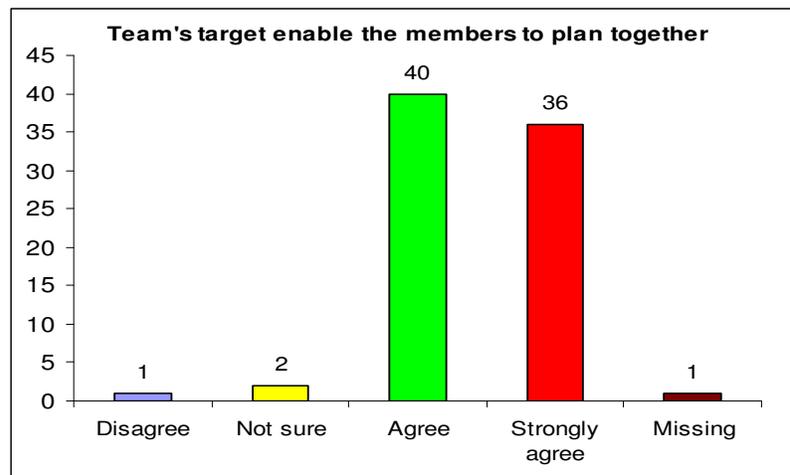
(1.25%) respondent disagreed with the statement. The majority of respondents (95%) agreed with this statement that the company had a clear vision. This means that the groups are aware on where the company is going and are aligning their goals and objectives with that of the company.

Figure 3.16: The team's goal is aligned to the company' vision



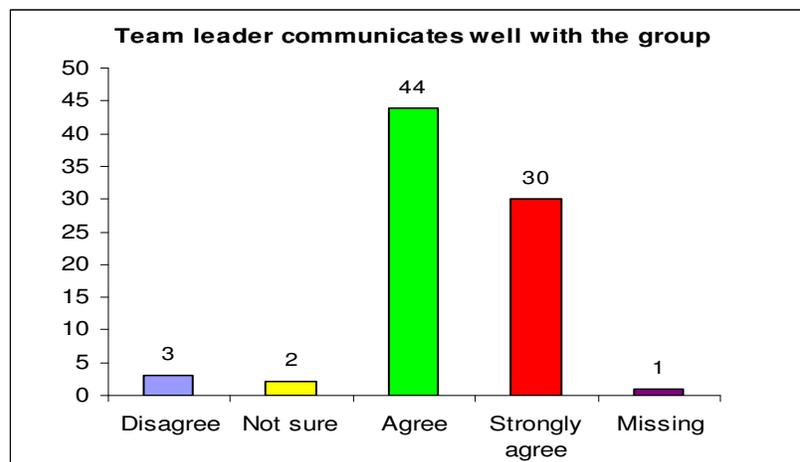
A majority of the respondents (93%) agreed that the team's goal was aligned to the company's vision. 3.7% were not sure and 1% did not know. Looking at the response, it is clear that these small groups contribute considerably to the success of the business. The fact that they are aligning their goals to that of the company shows that they want to be relevant to what the company does and contribute to the bottom line of the company.

Figure 3.17: Team's target enables the members to plan together



Again, the majority of the respondents (95%) agreed with the statement that the team's target enabled them to plan together and to coordinate their efforts. Only 2.5 % were not sure and 1% disagreed with the statement. Levi (2009:25) says that having the right people and the right type of task for a team does not guarantee success, but the team should have the right target aligned with that of an organisation for them to measure their success. The results of the survey support this notion fully.

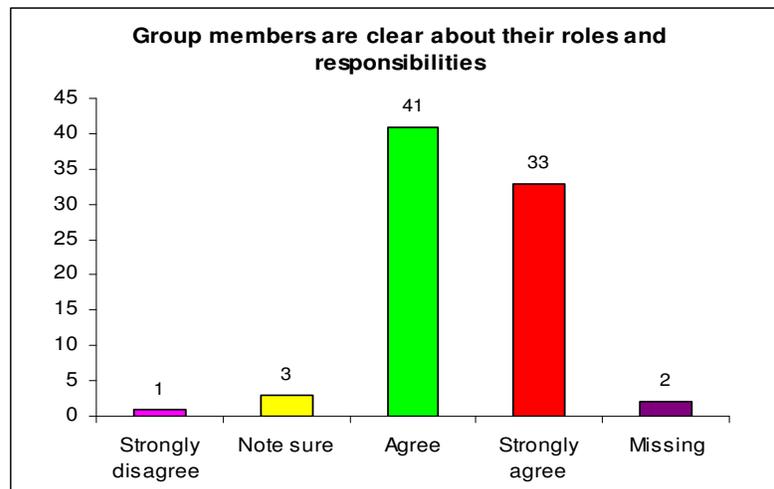
Figure 3.18: The team leader communicates well with the group



Of the 80 respondents, 74 (92%) people agreed that their team leader communicated well with them, 3 (3.7%) disagreed and 2 (2.5%) were not sure.

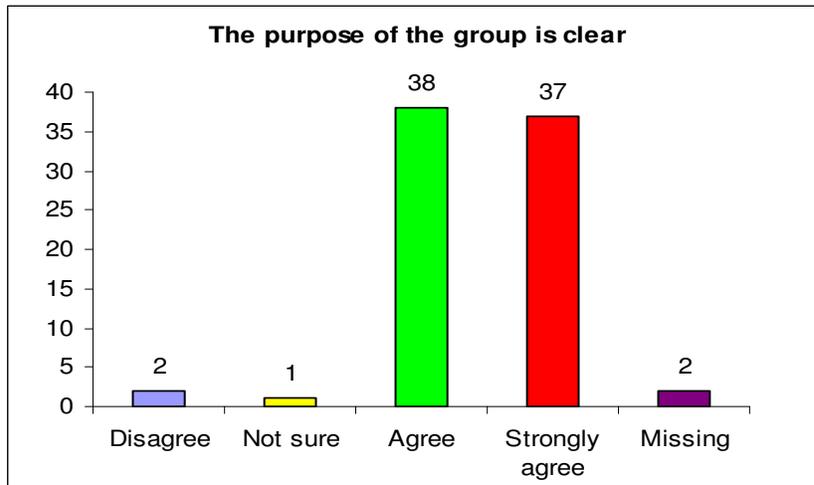
This supports the comments made by Randy *et al.* (2003:304) when they noted that people are more likely to listen to you, whatever you have to say, if you can express yourself well, and this was particularly useful in influencing and negotiating important personal, social or business matters. It also comes in handy in resolving conflict and dealing with difficult people.

Figure 3.19: Group members are clear about their roles and responsibilities



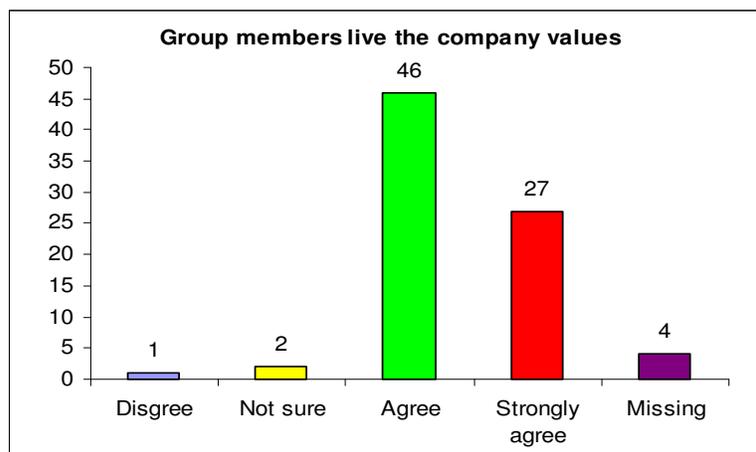
74 (92%) of the respondents were clear on their group's role and responsibilities and their contribution to the company's success. Three (3.7%) were not sure and only one (1.25%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The roles and responsibilities work as a contract between group members; each and every one knows what is expected of them and when to deliver on those expectations. This makes it easy for members to communicate within themselves and to achieve their goals.

Figure 3.20: The overall purpose of the group is clear



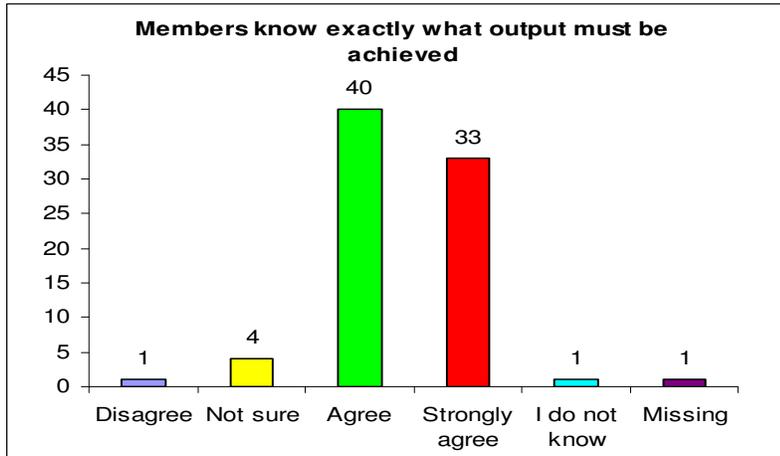
Of the respondents, 75 (93%) agreed that the overall purpose of the group was clear and aligned to that of the company, 1 (1.25%) was not sure and only 2 (2.5%) disagreed with the statement. This is the main pillar of small group communication: if the purpose of the group is not clear, then, there is no reason for a group to exist.

Figure 3.21: Group members live the company values



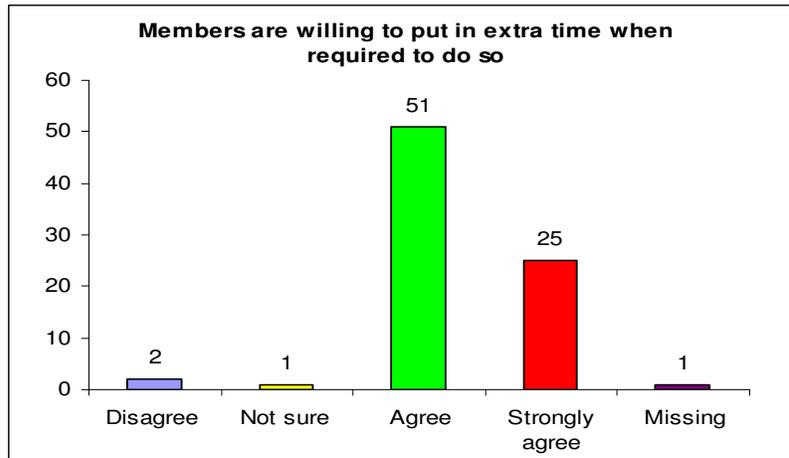
About 73 (90%) of the respondents said that their group members lived the company values, while 1 (1.25%) disagreed with the statement and 2 (2.5%) were not sure. 4 (5%) did not answer this question. The values of the company shapes the way the workforce should carry themselves when representing the company on and off duty. This means that the small group will take that into consideration whenever they are carrying their duties. When ever they are involved in group discussions, the values will guide them on how to behave and treat each other.

Figure 3.22: Members know exactly what output must be achieved



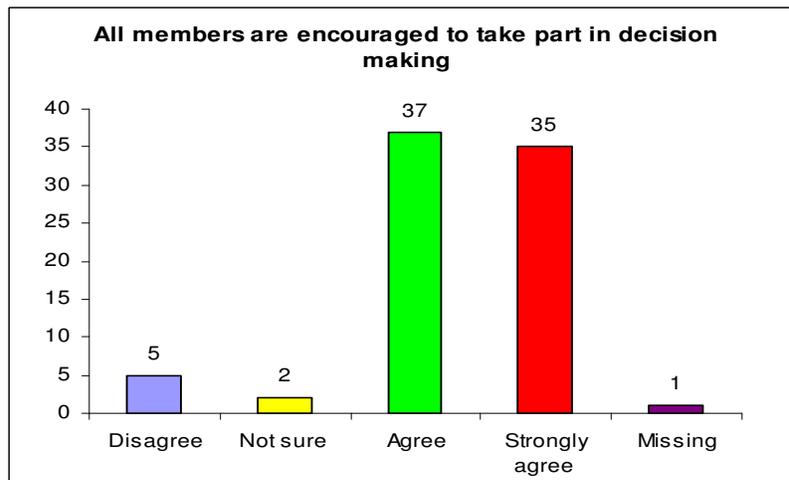
All team members know exactly what their output was and what was it that they needed to do to achieve those outputs. About 73 (91%) of the respondents agreed with this statement while 1 (1.25%) disagreed with the statement. Four (5%) were not sure and one (1.25%) said they did not know. In any working environment there must be an output from every employee. This means that whatever the group does, there must be a target and every group member should work towards achieving that target, because all business are about results and achieving bottom-line and making profit. The results confirm that the groups are constantly communicating with each other to achieve their targets.

Figure 3.23: Members are willing to put extra time when required to do so



Of the respondents, 76 (94%) said that their team members were always willing to put in more effort, beyond what was expected of them, to make the team more effective. Only two (2.5%) disagreed with the statement and one (1.25%) was not sure. This argues well for the team and the company because attitude is one of the main pillars for success in everything that one does.

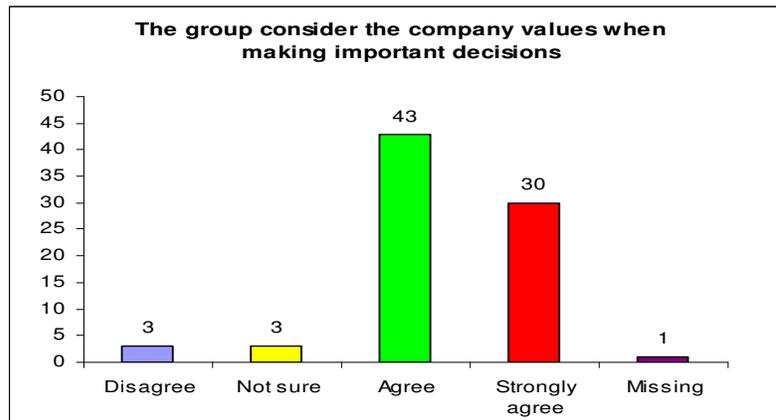
Figure 3.24: All members are encouraged to take part in decision-making



An inclusive decision is a very important aspect of a good working relationship in a team environment. 72 (89%) of the respondent agreed with the statement while only five (6.25%) disagreed, two (2.5%) were not sure. This means that the groups support participation from other members; all views are considered to be equal and as important as the next person's. The groups

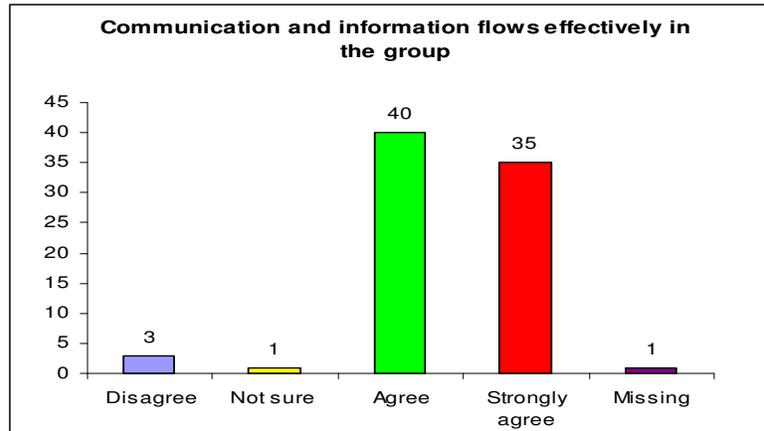
encourage openness and freedom for all members, the relationship amongst the members is very healthy and this argues well for the groups and the company.

Figure 3.25: The group does consider the company values when making important decisions



Group members always considered the company values when making important decisions. Of the 80 respondents, 73 (90%) agreed with this statement while three (3.7%) disagreed with the statement, three (3.7%) were not sure. Company values are the guiding principle of how individual employees should conduct themselves when representing the company.

Figure 3.26: Communication and information flows effectively within the team



Seventy-five (93%) of the respondents agreed that the flow of information within the team members was freely and effective. This is the cornerstone of success in any group task. Three (3.7%) disagreed with the statement, while only one (1.25%) was not sure and one (1.25%) missing. Group members are able to participate easily in all group discussions and other activities because every member has the information that they need at their disposal.

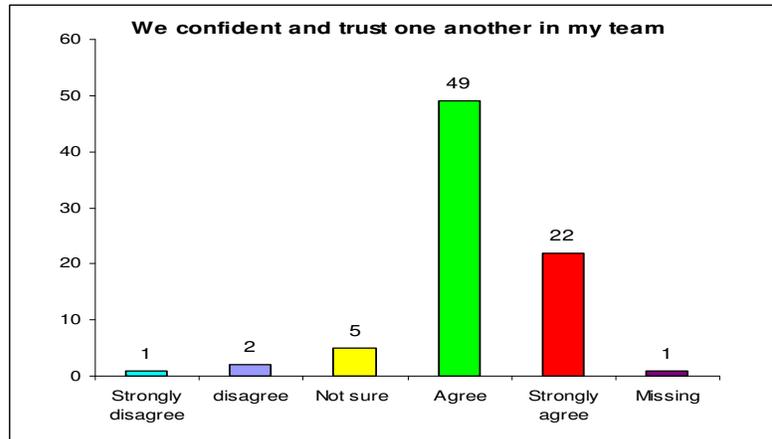
Figure 3.27: Each member is considered a valuable member of the team



Each team member felt that he/she was highly valued by other team members. Seventy-five (93%) agreed with this statement while three (3.7%) disagreed and one (1.25) was not sure. This encourages team members to work harder for each other and give their input freely to the team. This will benefit the group because when people see that they are being valued and their views are taken

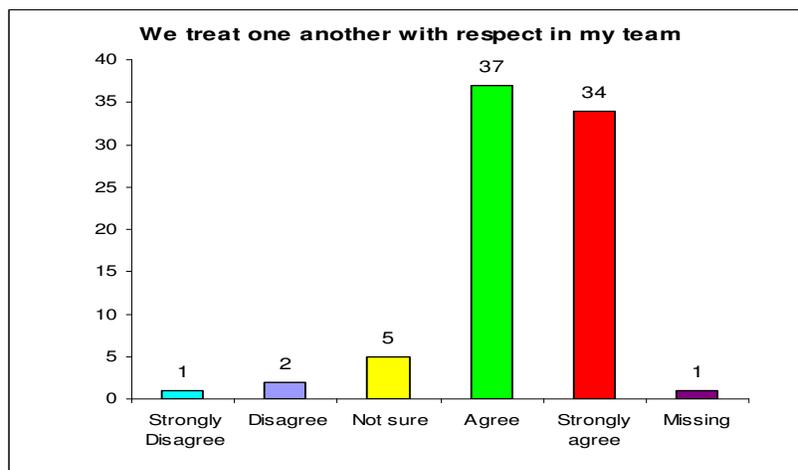
seriously, they will come up with many ideas and be willing to implement them without being afraid that they will be judged by their colleagues.

Figure 3.28: There is confidence and trust among the team members



Trust is an important concept in everything that one does. 71 (88%) of the respondents agreed with this statement, only three (3.7%) disagreed and five (6.2%) were not sure. In any working environment different individuals are bound to come across different communication barriers that may affect their communication responsibilities and obligations to their colleagues and to that of the company, hence it is very important for team members to trust each other. There is not much that can be achieved if this barrier is not bridged.

Figure 3.29: The team members trust and respect each other



Of the 80 (53%) respondents, 71 (88%) said that all their team members always treated one another with unconditional respect, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds. Three (3.7%) disagreed with the statement and five (6.2%) were not sure. The high positive response on this statement can only argue well for the team and the company's success.

3.6 SUMMARY

The respondents were relatively young with the majority of them having an educational level of matric certificate. Of the respondents, it was interesting to see that the majority of them agreed that they participated in choosing their leader and that most of the members took an active part in their group discussion. The group members agreed that the frequency of their meetings helped them a lot to do their daily jobs.

By analyzing the perceptions of the respondents on the survey, it was evident that small group communications contributed hugely to the success of the company. They clearly understood the goal and vision of the company. The team members aligned their targets with that of the company's vision and value.

The team members trusted and respected each other, irrespective of their diverse background. Most importantly, the information flow between members was effective, which meant that the communication channel was efficient.

The next chapter is the last chapter of the study. The researcher will conclude and summarise the findings of the study. The chapter will give indications of whether the objectives of the study have been met or not.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one of the study, a topic was proposed and the purpose of the study was clearly outlined. Chapter two focused on the historical background of small group communications, how long it has been in existence, what it means, and the advantages and disadvantages of it. The chapter also compared the views of the earlier researchers/scholars and those of the recent researchers/scholars around small group communication.

Chapter three introduced how the research for the study was designed and how the data were collected; it also covered the design of the questionnaire and the interpretation of the survey results received.

Chapter four presents the conclusions drawn from the study in line with the objectives set out at the beginning of the study. It also evaluates whether the objectives have been met or not.

4.2 CONCLUSION BASED ON THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of small group communication, to what extent the small groups communicate within their mini business areas. Part of the objective was the **role** it plays and the **influence** it has within an organisation, what structure small groups take within the bigger structure of the organisation.

4.2.1 The role

Looking at the definitions of both the *small group* and *communication* concept from the literature review, it is clear that participation in groups is an inescapable fact of life both individually and in the business environment.

The majority of the respondents agreed that every group member was encouraged to participate in the group discussions. They confirmed that they have participated in selecting their group leader. They became involved in decision-making processes within their groups and the information flow was effective and relevant to their daily tasks. Therefore, the researcher can safely say that most of the group members played a significant role in their teams' activities. The majority of group members was very effective within their group.

4.2.2 The influence

From the definitions by Jones *et al.* (2000:509), Homans (quoted by Hirokawa *et al.* 2003:304), it is clear that the objective of the small groups was to meet and be able to interact, discuss issues and be able to persuade each other towards a certain goal. Moreover, the results and the targets that the teams achieve in their tasks have a huge influence in the success of the organisation.

The majority of the respondents agreed that the team's goal was aligned to the company's vision. The team's target enables them to plan together and to coordinate their efforts. The team agreed that the overall purpose of the team was clear and aligned with that of the company.

4.2.3 The structure

For the team to operate smoothly, there must be open and efficient communication between the members of the team. More importantly, there must be a leader who will lead and give the team a more structured way of doing things. The majority of the respondents agreed that they have a leader and that they participated in selecting the group leader. One of the characteristics of a small group, according to Cragan *et al.* (2009:9), is that the minimum number of the members in a group is 3, the ideal size is 5-7 and the maximum is 13. They continue and state that the group perceives a

common, symbolic identity among its members, as contrasted with non-members. This was confirmed in the survey questions when the respondents were asked about the size of their groups.

The respondents to the survey agreed that the following points below were necessary for their team to function effectively thereby helping the company to achieve its set goals and vision and realise the company's bottom-line:

- Project-related information needs to be shared amongst the team members.
- Each member of the team needs to be acquainted with the team goal and his/her role in the team.
- Each team member has specific skills and knowledge that must be utilized and imparted to other members in the course of the work.
- Any questions or issues about the project must be broached and shared in order to resolve them.
- Any decisions taken must be imparted to all the members.
- Effective and open communication lines create feelings of trust and of belonging to the team. The more the member feels valued the more dedicated they are likely to be, and this in turn makes it easier for the team as a whole to achieve its goals.

4.2.4 Small group communications in organisations

Most organisations, today, work on different projects simultaneously with separate teams allocated to each project. Depending on the project size and scope these teams can be small or large.

Irrespective of the number of employees in a team, it is essential that every member of a team understands and shares relevant information related to the project. It is also important that they have a clear picture of their roles and responsibilities with respect to the project and deliver accordingly. Thus, in order to ensure a successful project execution, it is important that the team members share a healthy relationship based on trust, confidence and mutual understanding.

All this is possible only when a team develops and practices effective communication skills.

4.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Only one method to collect data was employed for this study namely the survey method. Questionnaires were used for the collection of the data from respondents. One of the shortcomings of this method is that the data obtained through this method of research is not suitable for generalisations to any population. It is therefore emphasised that it is not the objective of this study to generalise either. The sample and data were too small and the survey was company related.

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective team communication can foster in small groups by a mix of old-fashioned good manners, good attention and open-mindedness:

- Ask if everyone understands what the team goals are.
- Ask input and feedback from all members.
- Listen carefully to what the other person is saying.
- Do not interrupt until someone has finished talking.
- Give feedback on what they have said.
- Make your points in a clear, logical manner.
- Include facts and details, and make sure they are all accurate.
- Do not ramble on. Be concise. Stick to the matter at hand.
- Make sure every member of the group gets the chance to speak.
- Do not disparage anyone for their views and do not refute any point by taking personal shots at the speaker. Address the issue.
- If there are any misunderstandings, clear them up in a calm manner.
- When considering the pros and cons of any issue, consider the exact pros and cons, not the opinion of the majority.
- Be polite at all times.

4.5 CONCLUSION

Business in the 21st century is conducted via a number of effectively linked channels of communication. These include the wireless medium or the internet, print, radio and television and word of mouth publication. The success of the strategy adopted for effective business communication lies in the correct analysis of the medium best suited for the business and thorough research and understanding of the medium adopted. It is very important for businesses to up-skill their employees on these different communication mediums so that they can improve the way they do their work.

The other important point made is that in order to apply business communication strategies within an organisation, it is essential to first develop team-work. Team-work contributes towards high levels of excellence and quality in the business and enhances every member's level of co-operation. This, in turn, enables the staff to effectively persuade and negotiate and add to the profitability of the venture.

Cragan *et al.* (2009:28) summarise the key concepts of the study of small group communications very well in the table below:

Table 4.1 follows on next page

Table 4.1: Summary of key concepts

Key Concepts	Description
We study small group communication because:	<p>A. Small group decision-making is the bedrock of a democratic society.</p> <p>B. The small task group is the workhorse of modern organisation.</p> <p>C. Communication theories and processes help us predict the needed skill set to produce successful small groups</p>
A small group is:	<p>A. A few people (ideally 5-7) engaged in a purposeful communication over time.</p> <p>B. A group that has common goal norms and works in either a face-to-face or a mediated environment.</p> <p>C. An interdependent group that has developed a shared symbolic identity with structured patterns of talk.</p>
Three general types of small groups:	<p>A. Long-standing (permanent).</p> <p>B. Project (temporary).</p> <p>C. Virtual (both permanent and temporary).</p>
Recipe for a cohesive group	<p>A. Communication interaction focusing on the team. Trust and problem-solving skills.</p> <p>B. At least five major roles being played in the group.</p> <p>C. Generous portions of ideational conflict and norming behaviour.</p>
Tests or outcomes of a small group are:	<p>A. High productivity</p> <p>B. High quality of work</p> <p>C. Sufficient consensus</p>

Source: Gragan *et al.* (2009:28)

Then, finally, this chapter serves as a conclusion to the study. In order to address the research objectives set in this study, a literature review was conducted to form a solid basis for performing

primary empirical research. This was done in chapters 2 and 3. This chapter concludes the study by means of formulated recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from the research.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

De Beers Consolidated Mines
Cnr. Diamond Drive and Crownwood Road
Cornerstone Building
Johannesburg
2013

10 August 2010

Dear Colleague

INVESTIGATIVE STUDY ON THE ROLE OF THE SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION IN A WORKING ENVIRONMENT

My name is Abel Madonsela. I work for De Beers Consolidated Mines in the Public and Corporate Affairs Department, based at the Corporate Head Office, Johannesburg. I am currently doing my third year Masters in Business Administration Degree (MBA) at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

I am doing an investigative study on the role of the small group communication in the working environment. I know that most of us (De Beers' employees) are involved in this topic via our Mini-Business-Areas (MBAs) at our different sections. Your input in this study will be of great help to me.

Could I please ask you to help me by completing the attached questionnaire; it will take five minutes of your time. Your answers will be treated as completely confidential and no individual's answers will be made known to anyone.

Thank you

Abel Madonsela

SECTION A – DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please answer all questions.

All information will be confidential.

Mark the appropriate block with a cross (X).

Please be honest in your answers.

1. GENDER	
MALE	FEMALE
1	2

2. RACE	
AFRICAN	1
INDIAN	2
COLOURED	3
WHITE	4
OTHER (SPECIFY)	5

3. HOME LANGUAGE			
SESOTHO	1	ENGLISH	7
IsiZULU	2	AFRIKAANS	8
IsiXHOSA	3	XITSONGA	9
IsiNDEBELE	4	SEPEDI	10
TSHIVENDA	5	SETSWANA	11
IsiSWATI	6	OTHER?	12

4. If marked other, please specify:

5. AGE	
18 - 29	1
30 - 39	2
40 - 49	3
50 - 59	4
60 YEARS AND OLDER	5

6. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	
MATRIC	1
CERTIFICATE	2
DIPLOMA	3
DEGREE	4
HONOURS	5
MASTERS	6
PhD	7

7. JOB GRADING	
A - BAND	1
B - BAND	2
C - BAND	3
D - BAND	4
E - BAND	5
F - BAND	6

8. INCOME LEVEL - Per Month	
R1 000 – R4 999	1
R5 000 – R9 999	2
R10 000 – R14 999	3
R15 000 – R19 999	4
R20 000 – R24 999	5
R25 000 – R29 999	6
R30 000 – R34 999	7
OTHER (SPECIFY)	8

9. If marked other, please specify:

SECTION B – THE ROLE OF THE GROUP

Please mark the appropriate box with a cross (X).

1. The purpose of the group is to solve a specific problem/ theme?	
TRUE	FALSE
1	2

2. The group is made out of employees from my department only?	
TRUE	FALSE
1	2

3. The group leader was appointed by all group members?	
TRUE	FALSE
1	2

4. The group meetings are scheduled by the leader?	
TRUE	FALSE
1	2

5. All the group members are encouraged to participate in the group discussions?	
TRUE	FALSE
1	2

6. The size of the group is between 1 – 7 people?	
TRUE	FALSE
1	2

SECTION C: APPROPRIATENESS OF GROUP MEETINGS

CHOOSE ONE ANSWER BY MARKING A CROSS (X) ON THE ALPHABET LETTER.

1. How often does the group meet?

- a) once a week
- b) fortnightly
- c) once a month
- d) when it is needed
- e) other

2. If marked other, please specify:

3. Does it help you to do your work?

- a) a lot
- b) a little bit
- c) no
- d) not sure
- e) other

4. If marked other, please explain

SECTION D: PERCEPTIONS OF RESPONDENTS

The following are statements that may or may not describe your mini business area / small group. Indicate how much **you agree/disagree** with each of the statements, by encircling one of the numbers that appear on a scale to the right of the statement. Choose the number that best matches the description of the extent to which you agree/disagree with each of the statements.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know
1	This organisation has a clear vision	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	My team has specific goals aligned to our organisation's vision	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Our common team targets enable us to plan together and to coordinate our efforts	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Our team manager / front-line supervisor communicates well with the group	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	My group members are clear about their roles and responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	The overall purpose of my group / mini business area is clear	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	My group members live the company values	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	All members of my group know exactly what outputs must be achieved	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	All members of my group are always willing to put in extra effort (beyond what is normally expected) to make our team effective	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	In my group, all members are encouraged to take part in decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	We, as a group, consider the company values when making important decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	In my group communication and information flows effectively	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	I feel that I am really a valued member of my group	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	In my team members have confidence and trust in one another	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	We always treat one another with unconditional respect, irrespective of diversity amongst us	1	2	3	4	5	6

Any other comments?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS

Frequency table: gender (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	40	40	50.00000	50.0000
2	40	80	50.00000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: race (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	45	45	56.25000	56.2500
2	8	53	10.00000	66.2500
3	9	62	11.25000	77.5000
4	16	78	20.00000	97.5000
Missing	2	80	2.50000	100.0000

Frequency table: language (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	23	23	28.75000	28.7500
2	13	36	16.25000	45.0000
3	2	38	2.50000	47.5000
5	3	41	3.75000	51.2500
6	1	42	1.25000	52.5000
7	20	62	25.00000	77.5000
8	12	74	15.00000	92.5000
9	1	75	1.25000	93.7500
11	4	79	5.00000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: age (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	38	38	47.50000	47.5000
2	29	67	36.25000	83.7500
3	6	73	7.50000	91.2500
4	7	80	8.75000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: education (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	15	15	18.75000	18.7500
2	10	25	12.50000	31.2500
3	29	54	36.25000	67.5000
4	23	77	28.75000	96.2500
5	2	79	2.50000	98.7500
6	1	80	1.25000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: job (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	22	22	27.50000	27.5000
3	29	51	36.25000	63.7500
4	29	80	36.25000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: income (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	21	21	26.25000	26.2500
3	11	32	13.75000	40.0000
4	8	40	10.00000	50.0000
5	13	53	16.25000	66.2500
6	13	66	16.25000	82.5000
7	8	74	10.00000	92.5000
8	5	79	6.25000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: b1 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	27	27	33.75000	33.7500
2	52	79	65.00000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: b2 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	61	61	76.25000	76.2500
2	18	79	22.50000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: b3 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	67	67	83.75000	83.7500
2	13	80	16.25000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: b4 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	70	70	87.50000	87.5000
2	10	80	12.50000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: b5 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	79	79	98.75000	98.7500
2	1	80	1.25000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: b6 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	62	62	77.50000	77.5000
2	18	80	22.50000	100.0000
Missing	0	80	0.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: c1 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	47	47	58.75000	58.7500
2	14	61	17.50000	76.2500
3	4	65	5.00000	81.2500
4	9	74	11.25000	92.5000
5	4	78	5.00000	97.5000
Missing	2	80	2.50000	100.0000

Frequency table: c3 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	71	71	88.75000	88.7500
2	4	75	5.00000	93.7500
3	1	76	1.25000	95.0000
4	3	79	3.75000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d1 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	1	1	1.25000	1.2500
3	2	3	2.50000	3.7500
4	28	31	35.00000	38.7500
5	48	79	60.00000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d2 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
3	3	3	3.75000	3.7500
4	36	39	45.00000	48.7500
5	39	78	48.75000	97.5000
6	1	79	1.25000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d3 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	1	1	1.25000	1.2500
3	2	3	2.50000	3.7500
4	40	43	50.00000	53.7500
5	36	79	45.00000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d4 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	3	3	3.75000	3.7500
3	2	5	2.50000	6.2500
4	44	49	55.00000	61.2500
5	30	79	37.50000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d5 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	1	1.25000	1.2500
3	3	4	3.75000	5.0000
4	41	45	51.25000	56.2500
5	33	78	41.25000	97.5000
Missing	2	80	2.50000	100.0000

Frequency table: d6 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	2	2	2.50000	2.5000
3	1	3	1.25000	3.7500
4	38	41	47.50000	51.2500
5	37	78	46.25000	97.5000
Missing	2	80	2.50000	100.0000

Frequency table: d7 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	1	1	1.25000	1.2500
3	2	3	2.50000	3.7500
4	46	49	57.50000	61.2500
5	27	76	33.75000	95.0000
Missing	4	80	5.00000	100.0000

Frequency table: d8 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	1	1	1.25000	1.2500
3	4	5	5.00000	6.2500
4	40	45	50.00000	56.2500
5	33	78	41.25000	97.5000
6	1	79	1.25000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d9 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	2	2	2.50000	2.5000
3	1	3	1.25000	3.7500
4	51	54	63.75000	67.5000
5	25	79	31.25000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d10 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	5	5	6.25000	6.2500
3	2	7	2.50000	8.7500
4	37	44	46.25000	55.0000
5	35	79	43.75000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d11 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	3	3	3.75000	3.7500
3	3	6	3.75000	7.5000
4	43	49	53.75000	61.2500
5	30	79	37.50000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d12 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	3	3	3.75000	3.7500
3	1	4	1.25000	5.0000
4	40	44	50.00000	55.0000
5	35	79	43.75000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d13 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	3	3	3.75000	3.7500
3	1	4	1.25000	5.0000
4	40	44	50.00000	55.0000
5	35	79	43.75000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d14 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	1	1.25000	1.2500
2	2	3	2.50000	3.7500
3	5	8	6.25000	10.0000
4	49	57	61.25000	71.2500
5	22	79	27.50000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Frequency table: d15 (Abel 1.sta)				
Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1	1	1.25000	1.2500
2	2	3	2.50000	3.7500
3	5	8	6.25000	10.0000
4	37	45	46.25000	56.2500
5	34	79	42.50000	98.7500
Missing	1	80	1.25000	100.0000

Variable	Descriptive Statistics (Abel 1.sta)					
	Valid N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Std.Dev.
d1	79	4.556962	5.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.614918
d2	78	4.461538	4.500000	3.000000	5.000000	0.574169
d3	79	4.405063	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.610149
d4	79	4.278481	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.696819
d5	78	4.346154	4.000000	1.000000	5.000000	0.680468
d6	78	4.410256	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.653381
d7	76	4.302632	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.589231
d8	78	4.346154	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.641162
d9	79	4.253165	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.609084
d10	79	4.291139	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.803069
d11	79	4.265823	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.710884
d12	79	4.354430	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.698680
d13	79	4.354430	4.000000	2.000000	5.000000	0.698680
d14	79	4.126582	4.000000	1.000000	5.000000	0.740185
d15	79	4.278481	4.000000	1.000000	5.000000	0.799627