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Editorial
Angela J. Carter

Hello readers

Welcome to the 7th issue of EWOP In Practice with papers on the application of Work and Organizational Psychology (WOP). I am very happy to say that we are receiving some excellent material for the journal building on the success of our Congresses and another successful WorkLab held in Vilnius last year (described later in this edition). Our most significant achievement this year has been the recognition of In Practice by the Association of Business Schools (ABS). We have been recognised as *a one star journal* (appearing on p. 45 of the ABS list). I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been associated with In Practice who has enabled us to achieve this recognition. In acknowledgement of our achievement I thought current readers might like to know a little of the history of the journal which will be celebrating its *10th year anniversary* with the 2016 edition.

Some history of In Practice

Ute Schmidt-Brasse co-founded In Practice in 2005 when she gained the support of EAWOP at their General Assembly to publish a journal focusing on the application of WOP. Angela Carter joined as co-editor and together they developed the “zero” edition of In Practice published in 2006. Since that time there have been seven further editions of the journal.

Following the 2006 edition Ute and Angela continued encouraging content and editing the journal with Ute retiring in 2009. Salvatore Zappala joined Angela as co-editor later that year steering this and the next edition in 2011. Angela edited the next two editions of the journal alone and has prepared a majority of the 2015 content. Recognising the growing interest in the journal and moving forward we have expanded our editorial team and welcome two new co-editors: Diana Rus (the Netherlands) and Colin Roth (Germany).

In Practice aims to deliver:

“.....a more hands-on, strongly application oriented journal for WOP professionals. It was requested that there was quick and easy access to the journal, with possibilities to share knowledge and discuss approaches and experience. In addition, there should be opportunities to build networks in the field aiming to bridge the gap between scientists and practitioners and constituent and single members across Eastern and Western borders”.

p. 2 Schmidt-Brasse & Carter, 2006

and remains open access on the EAWOP web site.

In recognition of our new editorial team we have produced an opening feature article entitled *“What do your editors do?”* Following this article the current edition offers five further articles representing a range of WOP practice.

Anastasia Vylegzhanina & Mariya Bogdanova from Tyumen State University offer us and insight into entrepreneurial life in Russia. Their study explores questions of psychological health, stress and coping with a group of business people taking part in an educational programme. This positioning enables the authors to study their research questions and offer targeted interventions to their participants. There is a good deal of detail in this study that will be of interest to both researchers and practitioners.

Next, we have a rare evaluation study of a leadership development programme in the UK. *Chika Agabu* (recent master’s graduate from the Institute of Work Psychology, the University of Sheffield) conducted a qualitative study using the *TOTADO framework of evaluation* (Birdi, 2010) exploring the development of leaders in a local government organization. This paper offers a multiple perspective exploration of leadership development from participant, commissioner and delivery viewpoints offering insight and recommendations for further development.

Keeping with the topic of development our next paper by *Yasen Dimitrov* (doctoral candidate and organizational consultant from Sofia, Bulgaria) and *Ivo Vlaev* (Warwick Business School, the University of Warwick) offers an in-depth exploration of resistance to behavioural change. This paper will be of great interest to

practitioners providing training aiming to adapt, develop or change participants' workplace behaviours and it explores the role of *Emotional Intelligence* to facilitate lasting change.

The next feature is an illustrated description of *WorkLab 2014: A place where scientist and practitioners meet*. Participants of the WorkLab *Edita Dereškevičiūtė, Gintaras Chomentauskas and Solveiga Grudienė* describe the exploration of effective internal communication in organizations and the examination of many useful tools and techniques that were tried and evaluated in the WorkLab

To set the scene for the 4th WorkLab (<http://www.eawop.org/worklab-2015>) to be held on 12th to 14th November, 2015 in Nuremberg, Germany *Leanne Ingram* (WorkLab programme director and doctoral student from Sheffield University Management School) examines mindfulness interventions and research evaluating the effectiveness of these interventions in the workplace.

We intend that this collection of papers will interest you and enable you to examine your own and others' practice by extending your knowledge, attitudes and behaviours to develop and enhance our own and others' day-to-day working activities. We would like to thank the authors for their insightful contributions to In Practice and we look forward to further papers being presented for our next editions.

Hopefully these articles will inspire you to reflect and comment. Please contact the authors directly by email to continue the discussion; or use EAWOP's LinkedIn Group with the author's permission). I will ask the authors to summarise these discussions to be published in the next edition of In Practice.

In Practice is a journal that is for you, the EAWOP Practitioner and Scientist; and is also made by you. Think about writing for the journal yourself. The philosophy of the journal is to publish papers about the practice of WOP. We are interested in articles describing practices, procedures, tools, or even changes in organizational procedures stimulated by shifts in national economies and organizational processes. Some of these activities will be successful while others may not. We are as interested in what did not work well and reflections on why this may be; as well as

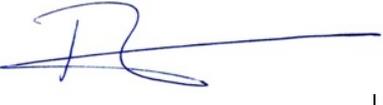
those projects that are successful. We will only learn as a community if we examine all aspects of our practice.

As for the length of article, a two to three page contribution is perfect; or more if you wish. The format for the papers is described in the style guide associated with this page. If you would like to discuss your ideas for a contribution or send us an outline we would be happy to comment on this and assist you in the preparation of your article.

Ioannis Nikolaou from Greece (inikol@aubg.gr) is EAWOP's Constituent Co-ordinator on the Executive Committee and he would be delighted to hear from you with any news from your local professional association. Helen Baron (helen@hbaron.co.uk) from the UK is the Practitioner Co-ordinator and she would be very happy to hear about any further practitioner activities you think EAWOP should undertake.

Very best wishes for the coming year and we look forward to seeing you in Oslo and discussing your work. Enjoy this issue of In Practice and don't forget we look forward to your contributions.



		
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What do your editors do?

With two new editors joining In Practice we thought it would be useful for you to know about the work we do and the research we are involved in.

Angela's work and research

Angela is a portfolio worker combining roles of: Lecturer in Work Psychology at the Sheffield University Management School; Researcher associated with the School of Health and Related Research, Sheffield; Principal of Just Development and voluntary worker with the British Psychological Society, the Division of Occupational Psychology and EAWOP. This work pattern enables Angela to combine research, consultancy, teaching and supervision of professional practice with masters and doctoral students.

Just Development is consultancy that combines evidence-based practice and development to enable individuals, teams and organizations to maximise their effectiveness. Much of our work is focused on leadership and management development often working with top management teams. Angela started this business in 1997 with her business partner Ian Greggor when she was completing her doctoral studies. The business is known as a consultant's consultancy often offering support, development and supervision to other psychological consultancies.

Angela began her career in the UK Health Service (the National Health Service, NHS) working as a radiographer, manager and internal consultant. While working she studied for her professional qualifications and also gained a degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Occupational Psychology, from Birkbeck College, London University. After being made redundant in 1993 she worked as an independent WOP and joined the research group at the Institute of Work Psychology, the University of Sheffield to undertake a large-scale investigation of stress in the NHS (Borrill et al., 2000; Wall et al., 1997). Her doctoral studies were nested within this project examining well-being in health care teams (Carter & West, 1999). She continues her research in health care organizations examining the: work of Emergency Departments (Mason et al., 2006, Goodacre, Campbell & Carter, 2015; Macintosh, Goodacre & Carter 2010; Weber, Mason, Carter & Hew, 2011),

implementation of angioplasty (Carter, Wood, Goodacre, & Stables, 2010); development of junior doctors (Mason, O’Keefe, Carter, O’Hara, & Stride, 2013), and currently, cross-boundary working to reduce avoidable admissions and attendances.

Four years ago (2011) Angela became alarmed and interested in the large number of young people (between the ages of 18 and 24) who were unemployed in the UK. While teaching on an undergraduate work psychology module and working with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP, the UK government welfare agency) we explored the voice of young unemployed people and the value of welfare provision available to them. Our research described a group of active, motivated and planful young unemployed people who were more future-work focused than many of the students they were compared with (Carter et al., 2013). Participants articulated the need for more diverse welfare services, such as those using social media that would be more suitable for young people. These findings challenged the current literature that tends to describe young people as demotivated, lacking in self-esteem (Vansteen et al., 2005) and being unready for the work environment (CIPD, 2012).

Being a work psychologist I questioned what was keeping young people out of work and discovered a staggering number of UK organizations did not employ young people under 24 (Carter, 2015). Further, this was not necessarily the result of the current economic climate as there has been a steady reduction of young people moving into employment over the last 15 years (SKOPE, 2012). A second look at the literature suggested young people were not trained or ready for the workplace and lacked critical skills needed at work. Questioning this assumption I set out to understand why there were so few jobs available for young people (demand issue), causing so many young people to be out of work (a supply issue); using a see-saw model to depict the two sides of the problem (Carter, 2013). I was keen to find out about what factors would tip the slide towards providing more jobs for young people.

My initial thoughts have led me to consider a number of factors associated with job entry:

- Recruitment material that does not mention young people or demonstrate job roles attractive to them;

- Bias in short listing candidates; work with colleagues (Palermo & Bourne, 2013) examining the use of personality profiling in selection sift suggests many young people are being rejected too early in the process when certain traits have not yet matured (e.g., Conscientiousness);
- Lack of consideration of differences in temporal perspectives (Sonnentag, 2012) of young people (who look back on their education) and hiring managers (who look back on their work) causes a mismatch of information shared at interview;
- Inappropriate selection processes focusing on already formed work competencies rather than developing competencies.

However, these are a narrow range of factors associated with recruitment and selection and there are likely to be other economic factors complicating the availability of work for young people. In the UK, like many of economies in Europe and across the world, we are struggling to emerge from recession. Reduced output and sales along with cuts in services has led to fewer jobs being available. Job losses mean a crowded job market of people seeking work including those working reduced hours, or receiving low pay, seeking additional work and competing alongside young people looking for entry-level job roles. In addition, there are many more women in the workplace now, compared to 20 years ago; seeking and maintaining job roles whilst having a family. All of these factors have resulted in a ready supply of experienced and competent staff from which companies can choose to fill job roles rather than employing inexperienced young people. Growing globalisation of work over the last 20 years has resulted in the loss of more entry level jobs as they are now being undertaken outside the country (off-shoring); further reducing the availability of jobs to young people. Looking at this pattern it is of little wonder that the literature describes long and difficult transitions between education and work for many young people (Symonds et al., 2011).

It strikes me that there is one area that has been overlooked; the fact that young people have many positive attributes that they can bring to the workplace (e.g., they are happier, more change aware). This leads me to my current research study exploring the advantages of employing young people. I am interviewing a number of company stakeholders to explore these benefits and hope to swing the balance with

a more positive dialogue regarding youth employment. If you or another company representative would like to take part in this study I will be delighted to broaden participation outside the UK in 2016 (a.carter@sheffield.ac.uk).

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Diana's work and research

Not unlike Angela, my work spans across a number of different areas, ranging from consulting to teaching, research, supervision of masters' students and voluntary

work. To this end, I spend the majority of my time working as the Managing Director of Creative Peas. In this position, a large part of my activities revolve around developing organizational and leadership capability for innovation (see below for more information). Next to that, I also provide lectures on innovation management and leading for innovation as part of a number of European executive education programmes. In terms of research, I am involved in a number of projects that investigate the relationship between leader behaviour, Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and innovation. For instance, in a current project we are trying to identify high performance HRM practices that are conducive to employee innovative work performance.

As of June 2015, I will resume a more formal university position as a part-time Senior Lecturer in Organizational Psychology at the University of Groningen. In addition, I volunteer with EAWOP and participate in a number of international initiatives geared at identifying drivers of social innovation and classifying and spreading best practice in the management of open innovation. Whereas this may, at first glance, look like a seemingly wide array of activities, there is a clear red line running through all of them: my belief that science needs to inform practice and practice, in turn, needs to inform science.

The belief that science and practice need to inform each other, led to the founding of Creative Peas. Creative Peas is an innovation consultancy that uses evidence-based practice principles to help organizations create work environments that drive innovative performance and engagement. We work with companies interested in building innovation capability and achieving competitive advantage through HRM. In practice, this means that we enable leaders and HR professionals to diagnose, challenge, and spur positive change in existing management and organizational practices. A large part of our activities revolve around developing leaders for innovation, training employees in applying design thinking methods in their work, and aligning processes and practices with the corporate innovation strategy.

My interest in leadership processes and their effects on employee performance, engagement and creativity emerged, years ago, during my PhD project at the

Rotterdam School of Management and further crystallised while working as an Assistant Professor in Organisational Psychology at the University of Groningen. For instance, in one line of research, we investigated determinants of leader unethical behaviour (Rus, van Knippenberg, & Wisse, 2010; 2010; 2012; Wisse & Rus, 2012). Contrary to the often-held notion that power is the root cause of leader corruption, we found that the effects of power on leader self-versus group-serving behaviour are contingent on both features of the individual (i.e., internal belief systems) as well as on features of the situation (i.e., procedural justice systems and accountability constraints). More recently we have been looking at the role of top management in embedding open innovation in organizations (Rus, Wisse, & Rietzschel, 2015) and the effects of leader behaviour on innovative job performance (Schmidt & Rus, 2015). In this respect, we found employees are more likely to engage in innovative work behaviours if their leaders create a learning environment within the team and treat them respectfully (Schmidt & Rus, 2015).

A few years ago, I became fascinated by a number of companies, such as Pixar, IDEO, Procter & Gamble, Apple and Google that have been successful in creating sustainable innovation cultures. I set out to understand what differentiated these companies, as well as the more innovative organizations I worked with, from others that were less successful in this respect. Interestingly, some of the things that appear to drive success are aligned with the findings of more than five decades of psychological research on innovative work performance, some of which, I will outline below:

- They have taken to heart research findings showing that employee' attitudes, motivation and perceptions influence their innovative performance and that these can either be mobilised or crippled by their work environment (Hammond, Neff, Farr, Schwall & Zhao, 2011). Their leaders and HR professionals are using at least three different levers to enable employees to engage in innovative work behaviours: a) they tap into employees' *intrinsic motivation* to be innovative by promoting feelings of self-efficacy, control and meaning; b) they are mindful about structuring the *work context* in such a way that people feel psychologically safe, autonomous, and supported by their organization, peers and leaders; and c) they invest in developing employees'

job-relevant *expertise* and promote collaboration across departments. In other words, they have understood that for innovation to happen, people need to *want* to do it, *feel safe* to do it and *be able* to do it.

- They have understood that the key to sustainable innovation lies in investing in human capital and that it is imperative to develop innovation capabilities at all levels of the organization. In other words, these companies took a broader view of innovation and realised that *innovation is the responsibility of everyone* in the organization; from top management, to HR professionals and all the way down to the shop floor.
- The HR function: a) acts like a real business partner by actively engaging with the different constituencies in the organization to understand their internal needs and challenges; b) are open to re-examining HRM practices that are not conducive to innovative behaviour; and c) does not fall prey to fads and fashion, but instead are mindful about ensuring that HRM 'best practices' fit the local context.

In summary, embedding innovation in an organization won't just happen overnight. If it is to become an everyday part of working life, innovation needs to be constantly nurtured and deliberately managed. Innovation is no longer the sole responsibility of the Research and Development department. Rather, it is the result of the collaborative efforts of motivated individuals, spread across the organization, working in an environment that stimulates, encourages and protects new ideas and their implementation. As WOPs, it is essential that we take an active role in shaping this environment by developing our leaders and creating a context that facilitates experimentation, learning and innovative work behaviour.

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Colin's work and research

The EAWOP conference in Münster was a great experience. I really enjoyed the venue, the beautiful palace, the park, and a lot of walking miles. Those of you, who were there, might still feel their feet burning! I was on my way to a keynote about green behaviours by Deniz Ones, when a banner with the headline "EAWOP WorkLab 2013 in Amsterdam" distracted me; and this is how things started.

Discussions with Angela and Diana about how WOP can contribute to a better workplace inspired me from the very beginning. When Angela asked me to support her as co-editor for EWOP in practice I was honoured and motivated at the same time. I am convinced we will make a good team by combining our experiences and insights from different perspectives and career paths.

To some extent, my occupational life resembles Diana's. I am founder and managing partner of Blackbox/Open, a consulting firm with emphasis on evidence-based management, or EBM (Briner & Rousseau, 2011). We offer consulting to various types of organizations in Organizational Development, Personnel Development, and Employer Branding. Our vision is to create and install HR practices that both fit company values and that are based on solid empirical evidence. We support our clients in finding the 'right' people, identifying and training the best performers and driving the motivation of individuals and teams through participation, goal setting, and feedback. Our software 'Ability' is a web based, cutting edge tool, that facilitates team development, performance management, employee surveys, and 360° feedback (Pritchard, Weaver, & Ashwood, 2012). One of the core principles of EBM is open access and collaboration, thus we have created the ProMES European

Competence Center (ProMES ECC), information and networking platform for ProMES experts across Europe. ProMES is a highly effective management system for measuring and improving the productivity, effectiveness, and overall performance of people in organizations (Pritchard, 1990; Pritchard et al., 2012). Following the principle “work smarter, not harder” (Pritchard et al., 2012, p. 129), establishing ProMES leads to significant gains in productivity and noticeable improvements concerning job satisfaction, team climate and stress (Pritchard, Harrell, DiazGranados, & Guzman, 2008).

To bridge the gap between research and practice I hold a part-time post-doctoral position at the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU). With my colleagues at the department of Work and Organizational Psychology, I conduct research on a variety of topics, such as Work Motivation (Pritchard & Ashwood, 2008), Job Crafting (Demerouti, 2014), and Psychological Capital (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). I also volunteer at the University of Central Florida (UCF) as an external dissertation committee member for doctoral candidates at the Department of Psychology and Management.

Angela asked me to describe my journey to become a WOP practitioner. I clearly remember a key moment, when I was attending a course on performance measurement by Klaus Moser, who later became my mentor and doctoral adviser. I must admit, I wasn't very motivated to join the class; I studied Social Sciences at the time and preferred to discuss Max Weber's theories on Capitalism rather than wasting time contending with questions concerning how to improve employee performance at work. However, I soon discovered the value and importance of such questions not only for organizational success but also for the well-being of individuals. Serendipitously, this course would also guide my future. I was late for class and consequently assigned the last available topic for my thesis, the Productivity Measurement and Enhancement System, or ProMES. Ironically, this seemingly Tayloristic expression became the core element of my research and career as a consultant.

After graduating in 2003 I started my professional career at GfK Media as an internal HR consultant. I had the chance to apply WOP tools in various business units in Germany but also with cross-cultural teams, especially in Eastern Europe. While conducting a project evaluation at a business division in Kiev, I experienced first-hand how dissimilar cultures can be within the same organization. When I asked some participants why their evaluations were so positive, they told me that they wouldn't report anything bad about the company even if they felt it. This was an extraordinary perspective and I wanted to understand it better. As such, I completed my doctoral studies at the Department of Psychology at the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg in 2007. During this time, I investigated the effectiveness of team interventions in knowledge intensive services, and looked for drivers of team success (Roth, 2007; Roth & Moser, 2005, 2009).

My interests in teams and motivation extend to professional athletics. I have always been fascinated about athletes, their engagement, and their dedication to what they do. WOP psychologists can gain valuable knowledge by investigating professional athletes and sports teams. Conversely, sports organizations can particularly benefit from achievements of WOP research (Fletcher & Wagstaff, 2009). I had the great honour to work with Robert Pritchard, (Naylor, Pritchard, & Ilgen, 1980; Pritchard, 1992; Pritchard & Ashwood, 2008) and inventor of ProMES. We implemented ProMES with the women's collegiate basketball team at the University of Central Florida (Roth, Schmerling, Koenig, Young, & Pritchard, 2010). Analogous to applications in the organizational context we found a significant change in the team's performance. Moreover, we celebrated the team's first Conference USA championship after the 2008/2009 season (the winners of the 35 conferences proceed to the so called "March Madness" to play for the National Championships). Following this excursion into the athletic arena, I continued my work as a management consultant and WOP researcher at the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg.

To me, research must inform practice. In return, practitioners should share their experiences with research institutions. As consultants, trainers, and coaches we have to embrace our role as ambassadors between the two worlds. Organizational

consulting is a huge market, and a lot of dubious practices are sold and applied in our organizations. Thus, I encourage practitioners to embrace scientific evidence when developing and revising their products and to employ tools based on rigorous scientific research. I am excited to read and review submitted articles for the professional exchange with our authors, and learning about new insights in cutting edge research and practice in WOP across Europe. And of course intensive discussions with Angela and Diana!

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Stress and stress-management in entrepreneurial activity in Russia

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Abstract

This study explores questions of psychological health, sources of stress and coping with a sample of entrepreneurs in Russia. The research was carried out as part of an educational project aiming to teach entrepreneurs how to manage fundamentals of management; including how to deal with issues of stress management. On the basis of our findings we make practical recommendations for individuals and suggest the effective use of stress management methods.

Introduction

In Russia entrepreneurship exists as a social-economic phenomenon for less than 20 years. However, entrepreneurs stand out as a special social group with, as many researchers have pointed, specific psychological characteristics (Chirikova, 1999; McClelland, 1987; Maslikova, 2001; Philinkova, 2007; Pozdnyakov, 2001). These characteristics are: a) the ability to define goals and reach them, using strategies of active search; b) the ability to make optimal choices (Pozdnyakov, 2001); c) adequate self-concept and a yearning for self-development, self-actualisation, and internal locus of control (Maslikova, 2001); d) self-confidence and assurance of their mission, ability to act effectively in conflict or risky situations, ability to make fast and optimal decisions and uphold their viewpoint (Chirikova, 1999); and e) a high level of

achievement motivation (McClelland, 1987). Even in the description of the classical term of entrepreneur as *an owner of capital who runs the risk of realising some commercial idea and making profit* (Adam Smith, 1776); we can see the inherent characteristics of readiness to take risks, innovating, and action orientation.

Entrepreneurial activity has been associated with both high psychological and emotional stresses (Bogdanova & Dotsenko, 2010) often due to the large number of actions that an entrepreneur needs to achieve each day. This is described as *Tasks for Action* (Bogdanova & Dotsenko, 2010); a need tension state often experienced as a difficulty that requires removal. Decisions need to be taken between the various motivational alternatives of action that are subjectively perceived as doubtful. Therefore, the need for entrepreneurial stress resistance and mature defence and survival systems are critical for entrepreneurs.

In the entrepreneurial environment in many cultures several failures of survival systems can be seen: alcoholism, compulsive gambling, psychosomatic problems, and downshifting. The high level of alcohol ingestion is one of the top priority problems in Russia today as it causes in excess of 700,000 of deaths annually. Examination of national statistics (Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, 2009) reveals that people who abuse alcohol are not always in a low income category of the population; but can be successful, wealthy entrepreneurs who choose alcohol as a popular and quite acceptable way of coping with stress.

Psychosomatic disorders, mainly cardio-vascular conditions are typical for the individual with the “Type A” personality; having such characteristic features as: impatience, ambitiousness, along with high capacity for work, strong need to assert themselves and striving for success (Friedman & Rosenman, 1959). “Type-A” behaviours are typical for many entrepreneurs.

The strategy of downshifting was first mentioned in the USA by Saltzman (1991); but is a new phenomenon for Russia. This strategy abandons the need for high profits and stressful activities for greater mental comfort, self-actualisation and family life. More recently downshifting has been reported as a stress coping strategy in Great Britain, Australia; in addition to the USA (Saltzman, 1991). Researchers understand downshifting as a defensive mechanism against occupational stress that endangers the health and self-identity of a person. We see downshifting as a coping strategy or defence enabling a person to adapt to their life circumstances. However, it is difficult to measure the level of effectiveness of downshifting as this will vary in each individual according to their circumstances.

Stress issues in the entrepreneurial environment are often mentioned in the Russian media describing high informational load, competitiveness, fast-paced market requirements, environmental changes, strategic discontinuities and disequilibrium. Stress-management training is in high demand aiming to control mental practices (e.g., techniques such as yoga enabling self-regulation of psychological and physiological state). However, Russian research has only so far investigated theoretical aspects of entrepreneurial stress; such as: a) a synthesis of medical-psychological and economic approaches in the research of entrepreneurial stress (Vlah, 2011); and b) different aspects of stress being associated with success, responsible attitude and personal maturity (Pozdnyakov, Pozdnyakova & Tihomirova, 2012).

Managerial stress has been examined with Russian samples (Leonova & Kachina, 2007; Leonova, Kuznetsova & Barabanshchikova, 2010; Kobozoev, 2011a, Kobozoev, 2011b); but to date this work has concentrated on risk factors and psychological defence and coping strategies of managers. However, there are relatively few empirical studies of entrepreneurial stress, stress factors and stress management with Russian samples. We wanted to investigate the sources of stress and to understand how entrepreneurs perceived these stressors. To help us appreciate the field of entrepreneurial stress we investigated the literature.

Literature review

Rauch (2007) examined the relationship between strain, performance and survival of small-scale business ventures finding strain a positive predictor of long-term survival of small businesses. This counter-intuitive finding may be explained by the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory suggesting persons attracted by, selected into, and persisting in entrepreneurship may be relatively high in capacity to tolerate and effectively manage stress (Robert, Franklin & Hmielesk, 2013). The authors indicate that entrepreneurs' relatively low levels of stress derive, at least in part, from high levels of self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience often seen in entrepreneurial samples.

Some studies suggest that self-employed individuals experience a greater variety of emotions at work than those who are in direct employment. For instance, a study by Patzelt & Shepherd (2011) suggests self-employed persons may be more susceptible than employees to negative emotions such as stress, fear of failure, loneliness, mental strain, and grief. The authors draw on the role requirements literature to develop a model of career pursuit based on individuals' willingness and abilities to regulate these emotions. Using a nation-wide survey of more than 2,700 US citizens the authors show that over and above the effects of positive emotions self-employed workers experience fewer negative emotions than those who are employed, contingent on their regulatory coping behaviours. However, a European survey showed that self-employed workers have higher levels of stress, overall fatigue, anxiety, irritability (*European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2006*). In our research we want to clarify if there are real contradictions in these data or if we can find some reasonable explanation(s) for the differences.

Buttner (1992) examined sources of stress and outcomes with a sample of entrepreneurs and managers in mid and upper level organizational roles. Entrepreneurs reported higher levels of role ambiguity and health problems and lower satisfaction with work compared to their managerial counterparts. But,

managers' reported more role conflict. This study examined the moderating role of personality type, tension discharge rate, and social support on the relationship between stress sources, entrepreneurial health and job satisfaction. Buttner suggests that the entrepreneur who relies on others' for support may experience less stress. On the other hand, entrepreneurs tend to be more independent; having a lower need for support than the general population, suggesting they rely less on others for advice and information. This study found the pressure of responsibility was (marginally) positively related to the frequency of health problems.

Buttner also investigated stress resistance associated with personality (Type A and B, identified by Friedman & Rosenman, 1974). Type A personality is characterised by aggressiveness, hostility, a sense of urgency, impatience, and achievement orientation, and its opposite, Type B is characterised by a more relaxed, slower paced and less hurried disposition. This study showed that while the ability to discharge tension may reduce entrepreneurs' health problems, it did not lessen the impact of the stressors measured in the study. Buttner, concluded that entrepreneurs' independence and low need for support may override any influence that external sources of support might have in reducing stress.

A Malaysian study (Ahmad & Xavier, 2010) offers empirical evidence of the sources of stress among entrepreneurs; and their associated coping mechanisms. An anonymous, self-administered survey was distributed to a sample of 118 entrepreneurs in various business industries. Results show that 'business skills required', 'work pressure', 'high expectation of others' and 'responsibilities' were among the main elements that generated stress in this population. The authors concluded that entrepreneurial work needs to be properly organised and individuals' emotions kept under control in order to reduce unnecessary factors that might create stress.

Grant & Ferris (2012) comment on a lack of systematic research on the sources of stress and scant attention to the identification and measurement of occupational stressors in both the entrepreneurship literature and the stress literature more

generally. Their study combined deductive methods (literature searches) and inductive methods (focus groups and interviews with 45 entrepreneurs) to identify common and salient sources of occupational stress in entrepreneurs' daily working lives. Content analysis of data produced nine main categories of stressors and 30 subcategories of these broader dimensions. These findings were then used to generate an initial item pool for a new measure of occupational stressors, specific to entrepreneurs described as the Sources of Entrepreneurial Stress Scale (SESS). The authors argued that the development of valid measures of entrepreneurial stressors would assist the understanding of occupational stress and entrepreneurship. We were not able to use the SESS in our research as there is, at present, no adopted Russian version.

While exploring the literature we also carried out a review of the relevant stress measures that are used in Russia; described below:

- Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale, a check list of 43 stressful life events that can contribute to illness (Holmes & Rahe 1967);
- Kurt Tepperwein's method of Personal Stress Profile (Tepperwein, 1997) was based on the PSM-25 Scale (Lemyre, Tessier & Fillion, 1988) measuring the phenomenological structure of the stress experience. This scale consists of 25 somatic, behavioural and emotional characteristics that was initially developed in France, and further adopted and validated in England, Spain and Japan. A Russian version of this measure was then developed (Vodoianova, 2009);
- Tubesing's method of detecting the optimal level of emotional arousal in a stress situation, offers a way of measuring stress-reduction techniques. This is a projective method revealing preferred strategies used to overcome individual stressors. It is possible to estimate the effectiveness of each strategy and revise appropriate coping strategies: by dropping ineffective strategies and learning new ones;
- Association of specific overt behaviour patterns with blood and cardiovascular findings (more popular as a method of detecting Type A and B personalities Friedman & Rosenman, 1959);

- The “Tiredness – Satiation – Stress” or DORS method is a popular measure of employee stress used in Russia (Leonova & Velichkovskaya, 2002);
- Evaluation the level of labour hardness in different types of professional activities (Plath & Richter, 1984) suggests differential diagnostics of capacity for work degradation states. The Job Stress Survey (JSS, Spielberger, 1989) has been adapted for use in Russia (Leonova, & Kachina, 2007). The JSS has two parts, with 30 statements in each, describing work stress-factors in terms of their force (first part) and frequency of influence (second part). We choose the JSS for our study as it measures professional stress in groups; rather than a general notion of stress. Certain JSS items required development enabling use with an entrepreneurial sample (e.g., lack of management support and struggle for career).

In general, we found that the main available, adopted and validated methods of stress diagnostics in Russia examine a rather general notion of stress (e.g., Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale) or lack specificity associated with the entrepreneurial experience.

Setting the research agenda

In spite of evidence of numerous failures of the personality survival system and the great social need for its minimisation; our understanding of entrepreneurial stress and coping is underdeveloped. Further, our review shows that systematic research on the sources of entrepreneurial stress is lacking. We are also aware that simple stress management interventions aimed at dealing with one particular stressor (such as time management) are not effective. Bogdanova and Dotzenko suggest that an interventional approach enabling people to develop adaptive defences towards psychosomatic reactions, while boosting coping resources, would be beneficial. This method is illustrated in the 5-step anti-stress programme described by Samoukina (2011) and formed a useful basis for our work with entrepreneurs.

Our examination of stress measures found a lack of instruments with the specificity to examine entrepreneurial stress. In our own consulting psychological practice, we

too face the absence of a sharp instrument for the measurement of entrepreneurial stress. This problem stimulated us to modify the stress factors, appropriate for employees in the JSS (Spielberger, 1989); making them appropriate and clear for entrepreneurs. The description of this process and its results follows.

Method

Sample

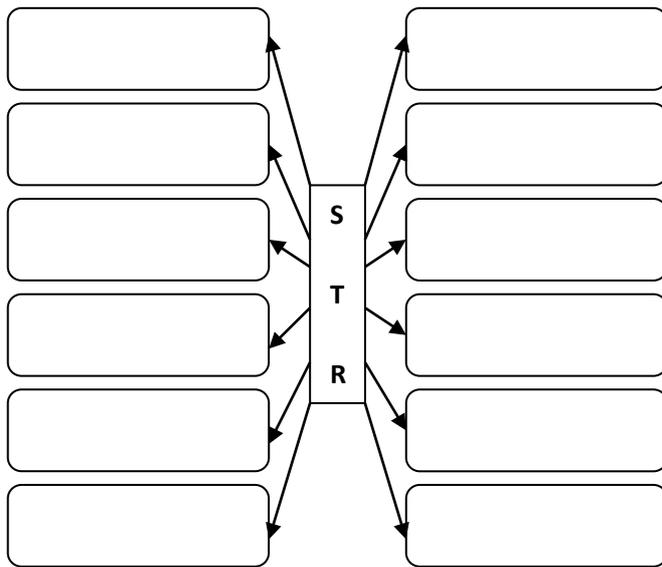
The sample consisted of 90 entrepreneurs owning small or micro-business companies working in groups of 20 to 25 persons. All of the entrepreneurs participated in a stress-management training programme where they were taught skills to manage their stress. As part of their educational and developmental process, they were trained on how to identify their sources of stress and received feedback from a trainer along with individual stress-management recommendations.

All participants consented to have their data used anonymously for the purposes of the current research. Surveys were completed during training sessions when the entrepreneurs were given all the necessary instructions to complete the survey and had the opportunity to clarify any questions with the instructor. Thus, we were able to achieve a 100% response rate to the survey. Once the surveys were completed training focused on responses to self-identified sources of stress. Feedback was given to all participants by email one-week later along with recommendations for stress reduction.

Measures

We used a projective method “Stress Card” (Bogdanova & Dotsenko, 2010) to investigate stressors (see Figure 1 below). We asked participants to describe up to 12 areas of their work that cause them stress and to label the “windows” of the Card with the most significant stress factors they face in the process of their entrepreneurial activity.

Figure 1: The Stress Card



After completing the Card, participants were asked to estimate how able they were to manage each stress factor (by marking each stress factor “+”, if they were able to manage, or, “-” if they felt they could not influence the stress factor).

For example, stress factors may be: a) “Lack of time, we can’t dispatch orders in time”; b) “My employees are not thorough enough, sometimes I have to do things by myself”; c) “Customers’ payments delays”; d) “I get tired from work so much, that I don’t have any energy for my family”; e) “I have so many things to do, that I can’t concentrate”. Factors 1 and 5 may be considered as manageable and given a “+” while factors 2, 3 and 4 were seen as non-manageable and given a “-”.

In addition, we modified the Russian version of the JSS by adopting the following statements (see Table 1 below) for items 1, 2, 5, 9, 13, 17-21, 28-30 to ensure they were more appropriate for an entrepreneurial sample.

Each item was assessed by: a) severity using a nine-point rating scale assessing the perceived severity of the stressor event (with 1 being “low level” and 9 being “high level”); and b) frequency rating asking respondents to indicate on a 0 – 9 times-a-day scale, how often each event occurred during the preceding six months. The survey had standard instructions explaining how to answer the questions. In total, 30 work-related stressor events were rated for severity and frequency.

Table 1: JSS modification for entrepreneurial work

Item	Original JSS version	Modified formulation of the item
1	Assignment of disagreeable duties	Unpleasant circumstance; contradicting obligations
2	Working overtime	Work is not limited by working day
5	Fellow workers not doing their jobs	Partners and/or employees neglect their duties
9	Performing tasks not in job description	Performing tasks don't correspondence to the main professional responsibilities
13	Difficulty getting along with supervisor	Difficulties in relationships with higher authorities
17	Personal insult from customer/consumer/colleague	Offence, personal insult from client/ customer /consumer /partner
18	Lack of participation in policy-making decisions	Lack of devotion to planning and making policy-making decisions
19	Inadequate salary	Inadequate reward for work
20	Competition for advancement	Strive for market promotion
21	Poor or inadequate supervision	Absence of good reliable assistants
28	Covering work for another employee	Necessity to make work for unskilled or negligent employees
29	Poorly motivated coworkers	Poorly motivated employees
30	Conflicts with other department	Conflicts with other department

Data considering gender, age, entrepreneurial experience, entrepreneurial effectiveness, sphere of business activity and business motivation were collected. For example, Entrepreneurial Effectiveness was investigated by asking “Do you consider yourself to be an effective entrepreneur? Estimate with the help of ten-point system” (0 indicating the respondent considered themselves to be completely unsuccessful and 10 indicating the person considered themselves maximally successful). Business Motivation was revealed by asking: a) “For what reasons did I create my business?” and b) “What is the mission of my company?”

Analyses

Data obtained from the Stress Card was content analysed by five Subject Matter Experts (SMEs, both academics and entrepreneurs) who distributed factors into categories of stressors. SMEs agreed logical rules of priority so that each stressor could not be counted in more than one category. Manageability of stress factors was calculated as a quantity (minimal manageable value of 0 points, and maximal value of 12 points). For example, if a respondent marked five items as manageable (by “+” sign) in the personal Stress Cards; they scored 5 points.

Respondents rated the JSS stress sources by their severity and frequency (as recommended by the Russian version of the JSS). The extent to which a stressor has influence (Influence Extent, see Table 4) is calculated by multiplying the rating of Stressor frequency (estimated by on a nine-point scale) and the rating of its severity (nine-point scale). This calculation allowed us to rank the stressors for this population of entrepreneurs.

Results

Seven responses were excluded from the research, as they were not fully completed; resulting in 83 completed surveys (response rate 92.2%).

The mean age of respondents was 34.2 years; females made up the majority of the sample (62%) and the average entrepreneurial experience was approximately four years. A majority of the entrepreneurs worked in Service, Trade and manufacturing businesses (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Spheres of entrepreneurial activity

Spheres of entrepreneurial activity	Percentage distribution
Trade	22.22 %
Catering	2.78 %
Services	34.72 %
Designing	2,.78 %
Insurance	1.39 %
Education	1.39 %
Manufacturing	16.67 %
Advertising	5.56 %
Tourism	2.78 %
Agriculture	4.17 %

Entrepreneurial aims

Participants describe five entrepreneurial aims: profit, process, self-actualisation, independency, and social value (see Table 3 below). We found no differences in frequency of stress sources or mean Influence Extent among different entrepreneurial groups with different aims. Therefore, irrespective of the type of business aims those entrepreneurs' pursue (for money or for people), their stressors are similar.

Table 3: Entrepreneurial aims

% of Respondents	Aim	Content
30.36	Money	Work for profit
3.57	Process	Work for process, itself
39.29	Self-actualisation	Business is self-actualisation
19.64	Independency	Entrepreneurship to gain financial, other independency
7.14	People	Activity directed at being useful for others

Demographic influences

A negative correlation was found between stress frequency and age ($r = -0.525$, $p \leq 0.01$); regardless of gender. Therefore, the older entrepreneurs perceived that they faced a lower number of stressful situations.

Sources of stress (Stress Card)

Seven basic sources of stress were identified and confirmed by SMEs (see Table 4 below): Time, Subordinates, Finance, Communication difficulties, Neglect of Duties, Client Issues and Failures.

Table 4: Categories of stress sources

Stress sources	Freq*	Stress Sources in descending order of frequency
Unit 1. Time	56	Tight time for large workload; urgency of certain tasks; lack of time for own self-regard; and acceptance of own inability to manage time. Inequality of workload and excess of free time Underutilisation of time.

Unit 2. Subordinates	44	Lazy, careless, failing, and delaying putting orders of the manager into practice; lacking knowledge and skills to perform duties. Communication and conflict with subordinate.
Unit 3. Finance	35	Lack of money, debts, delays in payments being made to them, the world economic crisis, falling profits and difficulties paying salaries of employees.
Unit 4. Communication difficulties	34	Non-conflictual communication (without any clear indication of how, whom and where these conflicts arise). Difficulties in relation to: Subordinates, Clients, Partners, and Family.
Unit 5. Neglect of duties (by company partners and employees)	29	Stressful situations develop, when partners are let down by suppliers; have to wait long periods for payments, and when others default on their contractual commitments.
Unit 6. Client Issues	23	Entrepreneurs often described their problem clients as being "inadequate"; resulting in conflict, aggression, and resulting in incompatible interactions
Unit 7. Failures (covers situations from total failure to trivial daily disorders of performance)	23	Failure situations are stressful, needing additional resources to resolve issues taking them away from planned work.

*Number of participants noting this category on their Stress Card.

Sources of stress (JSS)

The JSS reveals a further set of stress sources ranked by mean Influence Extent (IE). This was calculated by multiplying the rating of stressor frequency (estimated by a nine-point scale) and the rating of its severity (estimated by nine-point scale).

The JSS rankings' identify which stress factors have the highest Influence Extent (Responsibility, Deadlines, Interruptions, Neglect of Duties, and Crises). However, there are only small differences in mean group Influence Extent.

Table 5: JSS stress sources categories and mean Influence Extent

Rank	Mean IE	Stress sources
1	34	11 . Assignment of increased responsibility
2	32	26. Strict deadline of work execution
3=	29	23. Regular interruptions and distractions from work
3=	29	5. Partners and/or employees neglect their duties

3=	29	7. Dealing with crisis situations
6	28	20. Strive for market promotion
7	27	2. Work is not limited by working day
8=	26	6. Lack of support and/or obstacles from higher authorities
8=	26	21. Absence of good reliable assistants
10=	25	16. Making critical on-the-spot decisions
10=	23	28. Necessity to make work for unskilled or negligent employees
10=	23	4. Assignment of new or unfamiliar duties
13	23	19. Inadequate reward for work
14=	22	27. Absence/lack of time to satisfying personal needs and rest
14=	22	25. Overloading with documentation and additional information
14=	22	3. Lack of opportunity for advancement
17=	21	12. Periods of inactivity
17=	21	29. Poorly motivated employees
17=	20	8. Lack of recognition for good work
20	20	15. Insufficient personnel to handle an assignment
21	19	24. Transition from periods of involuntary idleness to intensive work
22	19	9. Performing tasks don't correspondence to the main professional responsibilities
23	18	17. Offence, personal insult from client/ customer/consumer/partner.
24=	17	13. Difficulties in relationships with higher authorities
24=	17	1. Unpleasant circumstances and contradicting obligations
26	16	30. Conflicts inside company (between departments, branches)
27=	15	18. Lack of devotion to planning and making policy-making decisions
27=	15	10. Inadequate or poor quality equipment
29	14	22. Presence of noise and extraneous interferences in working areas
30	11	14. Experiencing negative attitudes toward the organization

Combining information from Stress Card and JSS

Our analyses show some partial overlap between these two methods: *Time* and *Failure difficulties*, connected with *Subordinates* and *Partners*. However, some categories were unique to one of the methods. The Stress Card revealed the categories of *Finance*, *Communication* and *Clients* and they are not shown in the

JSS. The JSS identified additional stress categories of *Responsibility* and *Challenge* not seen on the Stress Card.

SMEs combined stress sources from JSS into the more general categories of the Stress Card categories (such as *Time*, *Subordinates*, *Finance*, *Communication difficulties*, *Neglect of duties*, *Clients*, *Failures*). This confirmed two new high ranking categories of *Responsibility* (highest source of stress: assigning increased responsibility to another) and *Challenge* (third highest source of stress: dealing with crisis situations) that had not appeared on the Stress Card.

Entrepreneurial Effectiveness and stress management

Respondents self-rated their entrepreneurial effectiveness (0 to 10) and their abilities to manage each stressor (0 to 12).

Entrepreneurial Effectiveness

We compared the ratings of entrepreneurs who considered themselves effective (a high rating on the scale) with those who give a low rating to their level of effectiveness. While these groups did not differ on average Influence Extent there were differences in the frequency of stress situations (U-test empirical = 205, 207; $p \leq 0.05$) indicating that those entrepreneurs who consider themselves as effective notice more events as tense and stressful than those who rate themselves as non-successful entrepreneurs.

Ability to manage stress and Entrepreneurial Effectiveness

Further correlational analyses to examine the relationship between manageability of stressors and the subjective assessment of Entrepreneurial Effectiveness revealed a moderate positive correlation between extent of manageable stressors and entrepreneurial successfulness ($r = 0.62$, $p \leq 0.01$). Hence it appears that successful

entrepreneurs feel that they are capable to manage difficulties, whereas those who perceive themselves to be unsuccessful feel less equipped to manage stressful situations.

Summary of findings

Our study shows that entrepreneurs are most stressed by *Responsibility* and *Challenge* along with *Finance*, *Communication* and *Clients*. *Time* stressor became the most important reason of entrepreneurial stress according to a projective analysis of stress sources (Stress Card). We will now describe the stress management training offered to the entrepreneurs.

Stress Management Training

Participants were given feedback regarding their sources of stress and offered additional training based on their most common sources of stress.

Entrepreneurs with a high number of *Time* stressors were encouraged to take additional individual and group training on time-management and delegation of authority.

Those with high numbers of *Subordinates* stressors were offered conflict management training, personnel diagnostics, selection, assessment and development training. In addition, team-building training was employed to increase the level of mutual loyalty and trust; contributing towards building positive and constructive interpersonal and work communications. In particular, employer and employees were encouraged to alter their perception to each other by moving their vision of a stress source from the *person* to the *process*. We recommended additional education about organizational psychology and management courses in order to optimise business processes.

Respondents reporting high levels of the stressor *Finance* were offered psychological training to reduce irrational attitudes (or perceptions) of money along with economic courses to increase financial competence.

Entrepreneurs reporting *Communication Difficulties* were offered training in effective communication and conflict management. Further if the stressor *Neglect of Duties* was reported entrepreneurs were offered training on effective communication and management.

In order to decrease the influence of the *Clients* stressor entrepreneurs were offered both stress management and client-centered management training; including an appreciation of emotional intelligence and social roles. Entrepreneurs frequently asked for training and development to enable them to work better with problem clients. Probably this issue needs to be included in future stress management training programmes.

Finally, those who reported *Failures* as a stress factor were offered general training about the perception of failure (such as positive thinking, increasing resilience, and creative thinking) along with individual consulting work over each problem case. The next section will examine the findings from this study.

Discussion

This study has shown that it is necessary to use both projective and standardised methods of identifying stressors in order to gain a full picture of the stresses experienced by entrepreneurs. Both of these methods gave information about individual sources of stress that then enabled us to formulate appropriate stress management training courses. The JSS survey allowed us to identify the stress factors with the strongest influence on entrepreneurs (*Assignment of increased responsibility to another*, *Strict deadline of work execution*, *Regular interruptions and distractions from work*; *Partners and/or employees neglect their duties*, *Dealing with crisis situations*). The projective method showed similar categories in a slightly different order (*Time*, *Subordinates*, and *Neglect of duties*), additional stressors (*Finance*, *Communication Difficulties* and *Clients*) and two new categories of stressors *Challenge* and *Responsibility*.

Differences in stressor identification can be connected with limitations of the JSS method. The format of the JSS questions direct the respondent to definite questions and answers; where the Stress Card encourages respondents to formulate their own sources of stress. However, if respondents only generated their own stress sources

(the Stress card was used alone) certain aspects of entrepreneurial life that may have not been considered. Therefore we suggest for a full picture of stress factors experienced by entrepreneurs both self-report and projective methods should be used.

It is interesting to note that *Responsibility* (i.e., “Assigning increased responsibility to another”) was ranked by the JSS survey as the strongest source of stress but was not noted on the Stress card. We see several possible reasons of not noting *Responsibility* on the Stress Card and they, of course, need further testing and research. One reason could be a defensive neglect strategy; making it difficult for entrepreneurs to admit weakness. Further, admission or expression of the burden of responsibility is not socially approved of in the business world. Another possible reason is the complexity of meaning of the word responsibility, which entrepreneurs may perceive as too abstract and complex a category; preferring to note on the Stress Card more concrete factors that cause them stress. But, when the respondent sees questions relating to the *Responsibility* factor in JSS they are able to recognise these issues as important complex stress factors. In addition, the *Challenge* stress factor (dealing with crisis situations) may be too general a formulation that the majority of entrepreneurs will agree with. But, when respondents are asked to formulate stress sources themselves they describe concrete notions that have more individual meaning.

Our research builds on the work of Buttner (1992) demonstrating the importance of other stress factors, in addition to the pressure of responsibility. This information can be taken into account in developing stress management training programmes and tuning them to work with more concrete stress sources that are common for entrepreneurs.

Our study revealed that irrespective of the type of business aims (be they for money; or for people); entrepreneurs' stressors are similar. Thus, we suppose that entrepreneurial stressors are mostly connected with entrepreneurial activities and are not governed by the motives of starting their own businesses.

Further, we demonstrated that the older the entrepreneur becomes the less they tend to notice stressful situations. This may relate to the entrepreneurs' abilities of

resilience, stress-resistance and hardiness that are likely to be acquired with many years of business experience. Probably they have already faced a number of stressful situations and are able to predict the consequences and actions' of others allowing them to choose appropriate behaviours and make quick decisions without added stress. New problems or situations may be perceived as interesting and developing strategies or actions to combat the problem may be seen as new challenges. Also we can suppose, that their entrepreneurial life experience allows them to have more "healthy" life priorities (involving interest in their family, personal health, and self-development); rather than solely focusing on business. This suggests that the experienced entrepreneurs can achieve more emotional dissociation while solving work problems or managing their emotions, when facing problematic work situations.

The study results lead us to conclude that successful entrepreneurs note a greater quantity of stressful situations; while at the same time they feel capable to manage these difficulties. Further, entrepreneurs who perceive themselves as successful are more likely to report that they are better able to adjust their attitudes and behaviours in stressful situations. Unsuccessful entrepreneurs are more likely to note less stressful situations, or may ignore some situation that could potentially cause them stress; as they suppose they are unable to manage these issues. Therefore, by accumulating unsolved problems over time this may lead to a perception of lack of effectiveness as an entrepreneur. So, we conclude that successful entrepreneurs are more likely to notice events as stressful and that such reflection may help them to manage these situations with a constructive form of coping. Non-successful entrepreneurs in this case demonstrate type of negative defence; they "try not to notice disturbing things". In this finding we saw some common points with the findings of Rauch's (2007) research which found a positive relationship between strain and long-term survival of small businesses. These findings correspond to the Attraction -Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory that suggests persons are attracted by, selected into, and persisting in entrepreneurship may be relatively high in capacity to tolerate and effectively manage stress (Robert, Franklin & Hmielesk, 2013).

Our research aimed to investigate the nature of sources of stress for entrepreneurs and we clarified that successful entrepreneurs are more likely to identify more events

as stressful; thus allowing them to solve problems with “open eyes”, and not ignore them. From that, it follows that training focusing on teaching entrepreneurs how to identify problems, predict consequences and prevent crises from developing can increase the attentiveness of less than successful entrepreneurs; building their logical and analytical abilities and therefore, their level of control over problems and business effectiveness.

Our research has enabled us to explore some contradictions between the stressor experienced by employees and those that are self-employed. As we noted in the literature review there is some unexplained contradictions between the results of several studies, devoted to the comparison of entrepreneurial stress and employees' stress. The study of Patzelt and Shepherd (2011) based on a nation-wide survey of more than 2,700 US citizens showed that self-employed workers experienced fewer negative emotions than those who are employed. However, a few years earlier a European survey (*European Working Conditions Survey, 2006*) showed that self-employed workers experienced higher levels of stress, overall fatigue, anxiety, and irritability when compared to those in direct employment. Our research offers some information about sources of entrepreneurial stress; which may differ from the stress experienced by employees. Further, we argue that methods and instruments used for the measurement of entrepreneurial stress should be improved and specified. Therefore, we conclude that findings differ according to the methods and instruments used in the measurement of stress; and that different instruments should be used for those who are self-employed, as compared to those in direct employment. Next we would like to examine some of the practical implications of this research.

Practical implications

The results of the research are useful at least in two directions of organizational psychology: diagnostics and prevention of stress. The projective method (the Stress Card) was found to be easy-to-use and relevant to the respondents. Therefore, we recommend this method as convenient to use both for qualitative and quantitative (statistic) analyses by organizational psychologists working with entrepreneurs, managers and employees.

In addition, we see a new opportunity in the field of stress prevention enabling respondents to develop stress management competences in relation to issues connected to their main sources of stress. For example, those entrepreneurs who report time-management as a source of stress can learn to effectively utilise their time resources thus decreasing their stress levels. However, it is important for entrepreneur to apply flexible time-management as rigid planning may not be sufficient for effective management of the time stressor. The main competences needed for increasing entrepreneurial stress-resistance are: readiness to react in unexpected situations, ability to make decisions in conditions of time and information deficit, and the ability of apply optimal locus of control.

Many entrepreneurs find their employees are a source of stress (*Subordinates*). Faced with difficulties communicating with employees entrepreneurs often choose a defensive position; where they isolate themselves from the employees and conflictual communication evolves between parties. Training programmes that decrease isolation from employees; develop communicational skills and enable the building of relationships between entrepreneur and employees will contribute to decreasing both entrepreneurial and employees' stress.

Our study suggests that experienced entrepreneurs may be more able to manage their emotions more successfully when faced with complex problems. Therefore, training programmes for experienced and younger entrepreneurs should be differentiated to account for these differences and mixed groups can use the potential of more experienced entrepreneurs to transfer their emotional, work and life experience and their vision of stress in business to the less experienced entrepreneurs.

Training and development programmes that facilitate constructive work with crises and personal leadership training (*Failures*) will enable stress reduction. Time invested in personal growth and positive thinking can lead to changing attitudes towards entrepreneurs' own failures. Entrepreneurs can learn to see opportunities in a difficulty and interpret a crisis situation in a more positive way. Further, it is possible to continue to increase stress resistance as the act of overcoming a crisis allows entrepreneurs to move to the next level of their development.

However, designing programmes for entrepreneurial stress prevention are complex; as there are many demands from different sources such as: organizations, individual entrepreneurs, business development institutes, government structures, and those responsible for business development. We recommend that research into the sources of entrepreneurial stress is made in each individual case as part of the educational and developmental process. Thus, entrepreneurs learn to investigate themselves to understand more deeply their own sources of stress (as entrepreneurs in this study used the JSS and Stress Card). Appropriate training programmes can then be developed in response to the stressor(s) identified thus enabling entrepreneurs to increase their manageability of these stress factors. Respondents analysed their sources of stress and compared their perceptions of Manageability of Stress factors before and after the training programme. In addition, each entrepreneur received personal feedback from a trainer along with individual stress-management recommendations. At the end of research and training programme, respondents noted that these methods were effective in enabling them to manage their own stress factors.

Future research

In this research we used the “Stress Card” and although this was useful for individual diagnostics it was not possible to compare actual individual findings with any normative values. Future development of this work to standardise the method and collect data from a large number of entrepreneurs would enable the development of such comparison data. In addition, we revealed the main factors associated with entrepreneurial stress (*Responsibility, Challenge, Finance, Communication, Clients and Time*) and developed appropriate stress management training programmes. The next logical step would be to test the effectiveness of these stress management training programmes and particularly look at the potential impact on health related outcomes such as alcohol consumption.

In this study the entrepreneurs who perceive themselves as successful are more likely to report that they are better able to adjust their attitudes and behaviours in stressful situations. Further longitudinal study is required to explore behavioural regulation and how this may influence perceptions of entrepreneurial success.

Further, we need to appreciate that the world of business is for ever changing; and therefore our research must continue to develop to enable a sustainable society. Today, many businesses use flexible structures and management styles to cope with the fast changing environment associated with competitiveness in the post-information age (Hitt, Haynes, Serpa, 2010). Thus, factors such as creative thinking, individuality of people and organizations, a strong sense of reality, emotional intelligence, cooperative management and communication practices will differentiate successful entrepreneurs and businesses. Therefore, it is important to strive for effective mechanisms and instruments of stress management to enable business owners to be resilient, develop their potential and support a new kind of worker who is competitive, healthy and happy to contribute to the future society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we note that research into entrepreneurial stress is important in the changing business environment and the labour market situation. New business developments such as net organizations, organic management, self-employment, project employment and other forms of work do not resemble past notions of direct employment anymore; but become closer to entrepreneurship by its psychological nature. Therefore methods and instruments of stress measurement of employees and self-employed workers need to be different, specified and supported by a wide range of normative data.

We need to identify the primary sources of entrepreneurial stress to further develop theories of entrepreneurial stress and enable the development of effective stress management training programmes for entrepreneurs and business leaders.

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Evaluation of a Leadership Development Programme in a London Local Authority

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Abstract

This is an evaluation of a Leadership Development Programme (LDP) consisting of a number of development approaches such as leadership coaching and action learning; carried out for leaders in a London Local Authority. Using semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion the Taxonomy of Training and Development Outcomes (TOTADO) framework is applied to evaluate the influence of the LDP on individual, team and organizational level outcomes. Characteristics of coaching and action learning were examined; along with factors that may influence learning and transfer of learning to the workplace. Findings suggest that the LDP led to increased confidence and awareness of leadership behaviours and improved teamwork amongst leaders. Coaching content, the coach's experience and experience sharing in action learning were found to promote leadership development. Manager and peer support, opportunity and work demands were found to influence transfer of learning to the workplace.

Introduction

The role of leadership in organizations is known to be of utmost importance, as leaders hold the responsibility of making decisions that influence their followers and drive general organizational performance. In light of rapid global changes in business, technology, environmental, political and social factors, understanding how to facilitate the development of effective leadership in organizations is important (Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014). Solansky (2010) notes the benefits of leadership development programmes may include enhanced leadership skills, increased

confidence, broadened perspectives, and increased communication skills for the individual. These desirable benefits confirm the importance of adequately planned and executed leadership development programmes in organizations. However, there is an indication that regardless of the increased focus on leadership development, systematic evaluation and reporting of outcomes of leadership development interventions are rare in the literature (Avolio, Avey, & Quisenberry, 2010).

This research aims to answer the following questions: a) using the TOTADO framework, to what extent does the LDP lead to individual, team and organizational level outcomes? b) What factors of coaching enhance or hinder leadership development? c) What factors of action learning enhance or hinder leadership development? d) What factors promote or hinder learning effectiveness and transfer from the LDP to the workplace?

Research context

Research was carried out in a London Local Authority (LLA). London has a two-tier system of local and regional government. The first tier includes 32 Boroughs (including the LLA) and the City of London, responsible for delivering day-to-day services to local residents. The second tier, the Greater London Authority, sets out an overall vision on a range of issues including air quality, policing, development, transport and waste.

The LLA is currently undergoing various organizational changes resulting from financial and economic factors (e.g., budget cuts of £80 million over the next four years); while continuing to work towards providing quality services to the residents. The LLA decided to give an identity to its leaders by bringing together senior managers and directors from across the organization to form what is now referred to as the Leadership Family. The LDP stemmed from the organization's desire to have competent leaders working towards achieving goals including: development of new solutions to reduce inequality, creating conditions for economic growth and driving value for money services. The organization holds the belief that if their Leadership Family is well equipped with six leadership behaviours namely the: Ability to Influence, Inspire, Drive Quality and Value, Collaborate, Develop People and Are Politically Astute; the organization can achieve these goals.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the LDP carried out in the LLA between November and December 2013 using the TOTADO framework (Birdi, 2010). The LDP consisted of Multi-Source Feedback (MSF) and an on-line Development Centre (an approach consisting of Situational Judgement Tests, personality assessment and motivation assessment), created by a leading Psychology Consultancy to assess leaders' behavioural strengths and areas for development. One hundred and twenty Leadership Family members participated in the LDP; and were provided with feedback reports from the MSF and on-line exercises. A two-hour, one-to one-coaching session, facilitated by a consultant from the Psychology Consultancy allowed participants' to discuss their leadership behaviour strengths and areas of development from the feedback reports and to set future development goals. The leaders were then put into action learning sets of seven to nine participants; with the aim of supporting each other towards achieving their development goals.

Evaluation of Training and Development

Evaluation is defined as "The systematic collection of descriptive and judgemental information necessary to make effective decisions related to the selection, adoption, value and modification of various instructional activities" (Goldstein, 1993, p.181). Effectiveness of training and development should be assessed through evaluation to ascertain whether aims have been achieved (Boaden, 2006). However, some organizations fail to carry out thorough evaluation, focusing instead on "post-delivery feedback or happy sheets" which only provide initial reactions to the programme (McGregor, Carter, Straw & Birdi, 2009, p. 30). Some known evaluation techniques include: Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Framework (Kirkpatrick, 1959), Context-Input-Reaction-Output- Process (CIROP) Evaluation model (Warr, Bird & Rackham, 1970), and TOTADO (Birdi, 2010).

Kirkpatrick's evaluation framework (Kirkpatrick, 1959) proposes evaluation should be carried out at four levels: participant reaction to the programme, learning acquired, behaviour transferred to the workplace, and organizational business results. The Kirkpatrick framework has been criticised for being vague, simple and lacking evidence to support relationships between the four levels (Alliger & Janak, 1989). The CIROP model of evaluation sought to address these shortcomings of by considering the context and process of the evaluation. According to Warr and

colleagues (1970), evaluation should be carried out in five stages: context, input, reaction, output and process. While this model covers a wider range of variables with specific evaluation outcomes, it does not consider the possibility of training and development having multidimensional level effects; such as effects on teams, the wider organization and the external environment.

Consideration of these wider outcomes led to the development of the TOTADO framework (Birdi, 2010) emphasising the importance of going beyond individual level outcomes to evaluate training and development. Meta-analysis by Taylor, Russ-Eft and Taylor (2009) on the impact of evaluation data sources on the effect sizes of outcomes of management training indicated that the data source used for evaluation affects the outcome, and as such data from a single source, may be subjective. In some cases, evaluation data obtained from participants' of training or development programmes may be biased as a result of impression management (Taylor et al., 2009). The TOTADO framework provides a good deal of multi-source (and therefore useful) data to scientists and practitioners exploring the impact of training and development, which the other evaluation techniques do not provide.

The TOTADO framework consists of individual, group, organizational and societal levels of evaluation; each level consisting of outcome dimensions on which learning is expected to have some effect (see Figure 1 below).

While the TOTADO model gives an in-depth approach to evaluation, some levels and dimensions will apply to certain activities more than others (e.g., physical outcomes). As a result of time constraints and organizational restrictions the researcher focused on the following. Individual level: affective, cognitive and behavioural; Team level: affective, cognitive and behavioural; and Organizational level: output and processes.

Figure 1: The TOTADO Framework; Levels and Outcomes

Level	Sub-Level	Outcome
Individual	Affective	Feelings resulting from participating in a training and development activities (confidence, self-efficacy)
	Cognitive	Learning gained from the training and development activities
	Behavioural	Changes in work behaviour/performance as a result of training and development activities
	Physical	Changes in physical health and fitness as a result of training and development activities
	Instrumental	Events that have occurred as a result of taking part in training and development activities e.g. Pay rise
Team	Affective	How the team feels about and individual taking part in training and development activities
	Cognitive	Group learning resulting from training and development activities
	Behavioural	Changes in team work behaviour/performance as a result of training and development activities
	Instrumental	Events within the team that have occurred as a result of taking part in training and development activities
Organizational	Processes	Changes in the organization's way of working as a result of training and development activities
	Outputs	Changes in the organization's output as a result of training and development activities
	Financial	Changes in the organization's financial performance as a result of training and development activities
	Resources	Changes in the organization's human and material resources as a result of training and development activities
Societal	Economic	Influence of training and development activity on the local economy
	Health	Influence of training and development activity on health
	Educational	Influence of training and development activity education in the society
	Law and Order	Influence of training and development activity on law and order
	Environmental	Influence of training and development activities on the environment

Learning effectiveness and transfer

The effectiveness of learning gained from training and development activities is determined by learners' ability to successfully transfer and generalise such learning to the actual work environment; in such a way that can be sustainably maintained (Blume, Ford, Baldwin & Huang, 2010). Research evidence suggests factors that facilitate or hinder learners' ability to transfer learning to the workplace can be

broadly classified into three categories: characteristics of the learner, transfer environment, and learning programme (Lim & Johnson, 2002). Learner characteristics reported to have the most influence on transfer of learning include, but are not limited to, perception of the usefulness of learning (Burke & Hutchins, 2007), self-efficacy (Velada, Caetano, Michel, Lyons & Kavanagh, 2007) and personality (Blume et al., 2010; Colquitt, LePine & Noe, 2000). Furthermore, organizational characteristics that influence transfer of learning include: peer and supervisor support (Ford, Quinones, Segó & Sora, 1992) and organizational transfer climate (Rouillier & Goldstein, 1993). Furthermore, Belling, James and Ladkin (2004) reported that pressurised work environments requiring employees to meet work demands under strict deadlines, can hinder transfer. Characteristics of the learning programme include the training system (Arthur, Bennett, Edens, & Bell, 2003) and the relevance of the programme content (Axtell, Maitlis & Yearta, 1997). Meta-analysis of 89 empirical studies exploring the influence of trainee characteristics, work environment and training interventions on the transfer of training to different contexts, carried out by Blume and colleagues (Blume et al, 2010), confirmed significant relationships existing between transfer and predictor variables such as work support and personal motivation, especially when the training was related to leadership development. Considering the existing literature on learning transfer, it is expected that some factors will influence learning effectiveness and transfer to the workplace in the organizational context of the LLA.

Method

A qualitative approach was taken in this research, with interpretivism and constructivism as the underlying orientation as individuals are expected to have different perceptions of the influence of the LDP (Willig, 2008). This evaluation combines the use of interviews and a focus group discussion (FGD) to obtain a depth of information from a range of participants over a short period of time (Morgan, 1996).

Semi-structured telephone interviews were used with ten members of the Leadership Family. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes depending on the interviewees' responses. The interview questions were based on the TOTADO framework (Birdi, 2010) and the research questions (see above). For example, "How

has taking part the LDP influenced your behaviour as a leader?” Probing questions were asked to further understand the participants’ responses. Responses were fed back to participants to enhance clarity and accuracy. These responses were then noted down by the researcher. Some dimensions of the TOTADO Framework such as financial changes were not explored at the request of the organization.

The FGD was carried out with four members of the Leadership Project Team and Human Resource Business Partners of the LLA involved in the planning and implementation of the LDP. The FGD aimed to uncover the benefits, or absence thereof, of the LDP from the viewpoint of the Leadership Project Team. The FGD took place in a private office at the LLA and lasted one hour and ten minutes.

Questions asked in the FGD explored the outcomes of the LDP from the perspective of the Leadership Project Team. For example, *“To what extent have you achieved the expectations for the LDP?”*

No recordings were taken for confidentiality and anonymity purposes. At the end of all interviews and the FGD, notes were written up into transcripts, with references made to reflexive notes taken by the researcher. Reflexive notes were taken to account for the researcher’s preconceptions about the research and how the researcher may influence every step of the research process. The participants’ responses were analysed using template analysis (King, 2004).

Template Analysis

Template Analysis was used to collect and categorise data from the interviews and FGD, allowing the researcher’s *‘a priori’* thoughts to be explored. These thoughts are used to categorise expected outcomes into templates before gathering responses from participants. King (2004) defines Template Analysis as “a varied but related group of techniques for thematically organizing and analysing textual data” (p.256). Unlike Grounded Theory technique (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) that specifies procedures for data gathering and analysis; Template Analysis provides a flexible approach allowing the researcher to tailor the template to research requirements (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Following suggestions presented by King (2004) *‘a priori’* themes for this research are defined as: a) Influence of LDP on leaders; b) Influence of LDP on teams; c) Influence of LDP on the organization; d) Coaching factors influencing leadership development; e) Action learning factors influencing leadership

development; and f) Factors affecting learning effectiveness and transfer. These themes, defined by the leadership development literature and the research questions, served as a guide that will be broken down into sub-themes, allowing for the flexibility of adding and deleting themes based on relevance and importance to the research (King, 2004).

Findings

Ten participants were interviewed (seven males and three females) with varying lengths of service (ranging from two to 35 years), responsibilities and number of staff managed (ranging from two to 200). Findings are summarised in Figure 2 below, with key findings discussed further.

Figure 2- Summary table of interview themes and sub-themes

S/n	'a priori' themes	Sub themes and lower level themes
1	Influence of LDP on the leaders	1) Feelings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Feeling about self <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Awareness of behaviour strengths and development 5/10* ii) Increased confidence 2/10 iii) Long-term career development 1/10 b) Feeling about organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Organization's interest in leadership development 4/10 ii) Increased integration of leaders 4/10 iii) Clarity of organizational goals 3/10 iv) Empowering environment 1/10 2) Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) New knowledge 6/10 3) Behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Focus on future career 2/10 b) Increase awareness of personal leadership style 5/10 c) Conscious display of leadership behaviour 3/10
2	Influence of LDP on Team level outcomes	1) Teamwork among followers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increased consultation with team 1/10 b) Communicating vision 1/10 2) Teamwork among leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Awareness of work going on in other directorates 2/10 b) Increased leader interaction 3/10 c) Knowledge of common goal 1/10
3	Influence of LDP on Organizational level outcomes	1) Achievement of LLA Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Awareness of working together towards achieving goals 7/10 2) Process improvement 4/10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reduced use of Checks in LLA b) Cross-directorate team working
4	Factors of Coaching influencing Leadership development	1) Enhancing factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Content of coaching session 4/10 b) Coach's experience 1/10 2) Hindering factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Short duration of coaching 1/10 b) Poor rapport with coach 1/10
5	Factors of Action learning influencing Leadership development	1) Enhancing factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Experience sharing 4/10 2) Hindering factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Time constraints 1/10 b) Poor attendance 2/10 c) Learning style 1/10
6	Factors affecting the effectiveness of learning	1) LDP Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Enhancing factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Multi-Source Feedback 5/10 ii) Coaching 2/10 b) Hindering factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Conflicting feedback reports 1/10 ii) Non context-specific content of online tools 1/10 2) Organizational Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Enhancing factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Manager's support 3/10 ii) Peer support 2/10

		iii) Opportunity to apply learning 2/10 iv) Personal factors 2/10 b) Hindering factors i) Time and Work demands 5/10
7	Suggested improvement	a) Increase one to one coaching sessions b) Facilitation of action learning sets c) Simple log-in process for online tools d) Provide Context- specific content for online tools e) Clarity of rating scales for multi-source feedback / Reduce ambiguity f) Consider time and work demands of leaders g) Include a means to measure leaders' progress after the programme

* The number of participants who reported the themes.

Influence of LDP on leaders

Influence was considered on: leaders' feelings, learning and behaviour. Sub themes are further explained in the following sections.

Influence on leaders' feelings (towards' self)

Eight of the ten participants reported a change in their feelings about carrying out their leadership duties since the LDP, citing increased awareness of leadership behaviour strengths and areas for development, increased confidence and long-term leadership development. For example:

"I've become more aware of my style and I'm reflecting on how I do things. It's made me work on the weaknesses that came out of the programme..." Participant 7.

"It's made me more effective, better equipped and more confident to talk with others on projects." Participant 10.

"It's helped me to focus more on long-term career development rather than the day to day work activities." Participant 4.

However, two of the ten participants stated feelings towards their leadership abilities had not changed since the programme.

"I don't feel any different. To be honest, I still don't know what LLA means when they say leadership. It's easy to write words down but difficult to translate these to reality" Participant 1

"I feel pretty much the same in how I do what I do" Participant 6

Leaders' feeling towards organization

Four participants reported an increase in the organization's interest in developing leaders. Others reported increased integration of leaders, clarity of organizational goals and empowering environment. For example:

“It does demonstrate the interest of the organization in developing leaders to focus on their strengths and weaknesses. It’s a concerted effort to develop leaders.” Participant 6.

“It’s helped to address the kind of ‘silo-ed’ nature of leadership, giving an opportunity to come together with others in a systematic way and to talk openly about the leadership and change issues in the organization” Participant 10.

Comments show that since the LDP, a majority of the interviewed participants feel positive about the organization’s interest in developing its leaders, increased integration of various leaders, clarity of organizational goals and note the experience of an empowering leadership environment. However, these views were not shared by all participants.

Influence of LDP on Leaders’ learning

Six of the ten participants reported gaining new knowledge of their leadership behaviour from the LDP while the remaining four reported no new learning.

“I learnt more about my strengths and weaknesses through the self- assessment evaluation. It was a great opportunity to take a step back, to know where my strengths and weaknesses lie. The 360 feedback was also useful, powerful and eye-opening. Some of the negative comments got me defensive at first but they also got me thinking about how I really behave.” Participant 10.

Participants who reported no new knowledge attributed this to discrepancies in the feedback reports they were given. For example:

“To be honest, I didn’t relate well with the results. There were contradictory reports from the personality tests, 360 feedback and SJT. The results were much different from how I saw myself. The reports felt negative while the 360 was more positive. I came out without a clear understanding of where my strengths and weaknesses lie....” Participant 9.

It was interesting to note that leaders who reported no new learning, also reported getting a negative feedback report

Influence of LDP on Leaders’ behaviour

Six of ten participants reported change in behaviours as a result of the LDP through focus on future career development and increased awareness of personal leadership behaviours. However, four participants reported no change.

“It’s made me think more about my career and my future as a leader. I was aware but I guess it brings it to the front of one’s mind. I don’t think my personal leadership behaviour has changed.” Participant 4.

“It has made me more aware of the kind of behaviour I want to display. You know, things I find uncomfortable and how to address them. I understand better now and am more aware of my leadership style” Participant 2.

Some reporting no changes in their leadership behaviours since the LDP besides being more aware of them. However, three participants reported changes in leadership behaviour:

“Working on the project with XXX directorate has definitely helped in my collaboration.” Participant 2.

“Well, I’ve made conscious effort to increase my Political Awareness by being in front of politicians as much as possible” Participant 4.

Summary

Participants expressed an overall understanding of the influence of the LDP on individual outcomes based on the TOTADO framework. Knowledge gained from the LDP informed some changes in behaviour identified by some participants; making them more focused on their future development and increasing awareness of personal leadership behaviour.

Influence of LDP on Team level outcomes

While eight of ten participants reported no changes in teamwork amongst followers, two participants indicated some changes in teamwork within their work group:

“It’s definitely made me consult more with them... There have been situations regarding how best to carry out the job. In the past, I wouldn’t consult with the whole team but now I do and it’s led to more efficient ways of delivering on the project.” Participant 8.

Seven of ten participants reported changes in teamwork with other leaders, citing increased awareness of work in other departments, increased leaders’ interaction and knowledge of the common goal.

“...the action learning was very useful meeting people from different directorates and to help understand what other people do in the business.” Participant 7.

“It’s helped increase my understanding of the importance of collaboration. It has helped working with the other directorates on projects to provide better services to customers” Participant 10.

Findings suggest while there was little change in teamwork amongst followers; a majority of participants’ report a change in teamwork among peers; citing increased awareness of work going on in other departments and increased integration amongst leaders.

Influence of LDP on Organizational level outcomes

Two sub themes emerged: achievement of organizational goals (the LLA Plan) and process improvement. Seven participants described increased awareness of working together to achieve the LLA plan. For example:

“It has given a degree of clarity in terms of what is expected. There is an awareness of what is expected for me as a manager and others as well. Other heads of services know what they have to do and that they have to work together to achieve the goals” Participant 2.

Six out of ten participants indicated they had made no decisions leading to process improvements since taking part in the LDP. However, four participants who reported process improvement stated that they were not necessarily as a result of taking part in the LDP.

“I have encouraged my staff to work with other teams to improve the process and ways we do things to avoid duplication and bring more clarity to the roles and responsibilities.” Participant 2.

“Well, one is our approach to try to get rid of checks from the business.” Participant 5.

Summary

Findings indicate an awareness of working together to achieve organizational goals but not necessarily achieving these goals.

Coaching factors influencing Leadership development

Enhancing factors

Content of the coaching session was reported by four participants as important for leadership development.

“The ability to talk it through and to know that while the feedback report wasn’t what I expected, there were other areas where I could focus on to improve myself.”

Participant 5.

One participant however, stated the importance of the coach’s experience for leadership development.

“It gave me a window to the outside world, talking about how things are in the private sector in comparison to the public sector. It provided some useful insight. Also, being challenged by the coach who has obviously worked with several senior managers was good. I also got the opportunity to draw up a plan moving forward, with regards to my development.” Participant 10.

Hindering factors

Short duration of coaching and poor rapport with the coach was identified by two participants as hindering factors.

“...there was just one session and so no avenue for follow- up. Two or three more coaching sessions could have been useful” Participant 4.

“Because I didn’t connect with my coach and the report wasn’t meaningful and I had no clear understanding of my strengths and weaknesses” Participant 9.

Summary

Findings suggest some characteristics of coaching are important for leadership development such as relevance of coaching content and coach’s experience. On the other hand, the coaching duration and absence of rapport were hindering factors.

Action learning Factors influencing Leadership development

Four of ten participants reported finding Action Learning useful for leadership development through experience sharing.

“I thought it was a really good, open forum for people to have discussions about leadership challenges... ”Participant 3.

However, six out of ten participants reported not finding the Action Learning useful citing: time constraints, poor attendance and learning style.

“We haven’t met in my group. I found this least useful because of the lack of time to meet up. I guess the group dynamic has not been effective.” Participant 9.

“It doesn’t suit my personal working or learning style. I prefer to learn on my own”

Participant 1.

Summary

Experience sharing amongst leaders in an open environment was reported to be useful in leadership development. However, Action Learning was hindered by: lack of time to meet with other leaders; poor attendance of Action Learning sets; and perceived unsuitability of Action Learning to some leaders’ learning styles.

Factors affecting learning effectiveness and transfer to the workplace

Reports from six participants showed that MSF and coaching were the most useful features of the LDP; while on-line tools and contradictory feedback reports were least useful. For example:

“It was a 2 hour one to one session spent going through my strengths and weaknesses as a leader in detail. It was very useful having the results interpreted to me in an understandable way. I guess it kind of set the ball rolling on what next steps to take were, with regards to my leadership skills and focussing on how to improve.”

Participant 2.

Organizational Characteristics

This sub theme includes enhancing and inhibiting factors. Eight participants identified a range of factors helping them to apply learning including: manager’s support, peer support, opportunity to apply learning and personal factors.

“My manager has taken keen interest in my development and has encouraged me to take on board my personal development. ... She also encouraged me to take on the XXX project on a full time basis and it made me feel more comfortable doing this with her support.” Participant 2.

“Getting feedback from colleagues was useful in applying what I’ve learnt.” Participant 3.

Five of the ten participants reported time and work demands as hindering factors of learning transfer from the LDP.

“Time to apply the learning... Time to reflect on some of the things learnt as well. The thing is leadership can be pushed down the list of priorities when other things come up, especially at this busy time in the organization.” Participant 2.

Summary

Generally, interview findings gave insight into participants' perception of the LDP on individual, team and organizational level outcomes of the TOTADO framework. Key factors affecting learning effectiveness and transfer were identified as manager's support and work demands.

FGD findings

Responses from each question were grouped together to form the themes presented below (See Figure 3 below).

Figure 3- Summary table of FGD themes and sub-themes

FGD Summary Template		
S/N	Themes	Lower level themes
1	Strategic aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To reduce number of leaders b) Create identity for leaders c) Identify potential strategic leaders d) Identify Strengths and areas for development of those leaders e) Develop leaders with skills to achieve organizational goals.
2	Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Leaders strengths and areas for development b) Have collective information on leadership family strengths and weaknesses c) Give leaders the opportunity to take charge of their own development
3	Balanced view of programme achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a)Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Development Centre and Coaching run as expected b)Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Action learning not run as expected
4	Balanced view of programme Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a)Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Individual Leaders strengths and areas for development identified ii) Leaders taking charge of their own development b)Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) No collective outlook on general leadership family performance
5	Inadequate information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Information too spread out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Provided paradoxes
6	Development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) One to one coaching b) Action learning sets c) Leadership family events d) Cross-directorate projects
7	Future consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cost implication b) Better understanding of outcomes
8	Suggested improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Create a simpler log-in process

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Pre-training on how to access the online tools to maximise user experience c) Tailor contents of programme to better suit organizational context d) Reduce ambiguity of some content e) Factor in time for planning and execution of entire project f) Gain better understanding of how data and outcomes can be used and applied
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FGD findings suggest that the LDP had achieved most of the aims that were set out. Participants reported the development centre and coaching yielded the expected outcomes of producing a feedback report and a one-to-one coaching session with each leader. While some Action Learning sets were up and running, others were not due to time constraints for leaders and poor attendance in some groups (validating interview responses stating the same). Findings also indicate that individual Leaders' strengths and areas for development have been identified in individual feedback reports with some Leaders taking charge of their own development. However, there was no summary report of collective performance of the Leadership Family.

Summary

Although the LDP had identified leaders' strengths and areas for development, it had not provided a collective output on performance as expected by the Leadership Project Team.

Overall, these research findings suggest that for the majority of participants, the LDP resulted in changes in feelings and learning with some change in leadership behaviour. However there were mixed findings for team level outcomes and no evidence of changes in the organizational level outcomes. Coaching and Action Learning were found to be beneficial by most participants and links were found between the interview and FGD data, serving as validation of these findings.

Discussion

The TOTADO Framework was useful in assessing the different levels of influence of the LDP. Research findings suggest the LDP resulted in some positive outcomes for individuals and mixed findings for team and organizational level outcomes. Coaching content and coach's experience were found to be important for leadership development, while experience sharing was relevant for Action Learning. Social

support; time and work demands were key factors affecting transfer of learning to the workplace.

Individual level outcomes of leadership development

Findings indicate mostly positive individual level outcomes as a majority of leaders felt increased confidence and awareness of their strengths and areas for development. This is supported by the literature stating that leadership development should begin with self-awareness; to help leaders work on their own development (Atwater & Waldman, 1998). These findings are validated by the FGD findings as members of the Project Team affirmed that leaders had become more aware of their strengths and areas for development, indicating the achievement of one of the programme strategic aims.

A majority of leaders reported change in feeling towards the organization; stating increased clarity of organizational goals and noting the organization's interest in their leadership development. This seems to suggest a change in organizational climate for some; such as "shared perceptions of work environment characteristics" (Burke et al., 2008, p.139). Participants considered the LLA was paying more attention to leadership suggesting a more supportive climate helping leaders in their development, especially in the transfer of learning from a development activity to the workplace (Rouillier & Goldstein, 1993).

This evaluation demonstrated that the LDP led to the acquisition of new knowledge, as majority of the leaders reported learning about their leadership behaviour strengths and development. However, some leaders reported acquiring no new knowledge suggesting the tone of feedback (positive vs. negative) critically influences learning; as those leaders reporting gaining new knowledge had received positive feedback. This confirms meta-analytic findings on the effects of feedback intervention on performance (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996); describing discouraging feedback decreasing intervention effectiveness. Negative feedback may not always result in positive behavioural changes and this poses a challenge for the LLA and practitioners as they have to consider the best ways to provide feedback that would achieve its intended aim. Alternatively, absence of learning may result from low managerial self-efficacy i.e., "perceived capacity to be effective and influential in the organization" (Fast, Burriss & Bartel, 2014, p. 1017). Fast and colleagues (2014) in

their study of managerial self-efficacy, ego defensiveness and employee voice, demonstrated that managerial self-efficacy affected the extent to which managers responded to improvement-oriented voice. Since feedback reports projected how leaders were seen by direct reports, peers and line managers and it could be argued that leaders with low self-efficacy would find it more difficult to accept reports that didn't describe their own view point.

According to the findings, some leaders reported no changes in learning but some changes in behaviour. This dissonance between learning and behaviour suggests that behaviour is not always a result of learning. Perhaps changes in organizational climate requiring leaders to exhibit certain desired behaviours motivates the exhibition of such behaviour even without learning taking place, for example the need for the LLA to save money leading to collaboration among leaders.

A majority of leaders reported little change in their leadership behaviours; expressed as Inspire, Influence, Develop People, Collaborate, Are politically Astute and Drive Quality and Value. This finding may suggest that these behaviours have not been fully internalised at an individual level in relation to job roles; therefore leaders were not able to demonstrate these behaviours. Further work expressing these behaviours may be required making them more applicable to each leader's role. This may then lead to more opportunities for leaders to apply these behaviours effectively in the workplace. Furthermore, the extent to which leadership behaviours had improved after the LDP cannot truly be ascertained. This is because there were no standard measurements for leadership behaviours besides self-reports; and no pre-LDP measures to compare behavioural changes against.

Team level outcomes of leadership development

Some participants reported changes in their work groups such as increased consultation with direct reports and improved communication of the LLA vision to the work group. The LDP also encouraged changes in teamwork among leaders, through increased awareness of work taking place in other departments and increased interaction among leaders and knowledge of common goals. The increased interaction appears to be a significant shift from how things were previously done, confirming some team level changes as a result of the LDP. This is

a positive outcome which could be attributed to the changing climate within the LLA promoting integration.

Organizational level outcomes of leadership development

Leaders indicated becoming more aware of the roles they had to play individually and collectively towards achieving the LLA plans; with some reporting decisions leading to process improvement, although they could not attribute the origins of these decisions to the LDP. The absence of perceived organizational change could be as a result of the short time span (seven months) between the LDP and its evaluation or the fact that the researcher was unable to explore other organizational outcomes where changes could have occurred, such as savings and profits resulting from the LDP.

Coaching and leadership development

Content of the coaching session and coach's experience were found to promote leadership development while the short duration and poor coach-coachee rapport were found to hinder development. Leaders reported the relevance of coaching content helped them to understand strengths and areas for development enhancing leadership development. This outcome could be a result of basing the coaching on feedback reports and focusing on leaders' current needs in order to set adequate development goals (Feldman & Lankau, 2005). This is similar to leadership development action research by Thach (2002), where MSF was carried out initially to inform coaching, which took place over a few months, and ending with a follow-up MSF that showed some increased effectiveness as a result of this procedure. The coach's experience was reported to enhance leadership development. While there is no major research promoting the importance of coach's experience, some research has indicated that coaches must have a general understanding of leadership, business, management and organizational politics (Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001). This implies that a coach who is more experienced is more likely to gain the confidence of the leader, which could be relevant in building rapport to aid leadership development.

The short duration of coaching and poor coach-coachee rapport was found to hinder coaching for leadership development. The LDP coaching was a two-hour session which may be argued to be inadequate, especially as leadership development is

considered an on-going process. In support of this notion, past research on leadership development has reported coaching sessions lasting from a few weeks to over a year (Thach, 2002). As Carey, Philippon and Cummings (2011) suggest coaching stages should include: relationship building, problem definition, reflection, goal-setting; ending finally with evaluation and follow-up to monitor the leaders' developmental progress. In line with research, coach-coachee relationship is listed as important for successful coaching outcomes in leadership development (Boyce, Jackson & Neal, 2010).

Action Learning and leadership development

Experience sharing was found to promote leadership development while time constraints and poor attendance hindered leadership development. The opportunity to share work experiences with colleagues proved useful for leaders' development. This finding confirms the proposition of Marquardt (2000) that Action Learning should create an avenue for experience sharing on work-related issues, where managers help and are helped by others in similar positions, leading to development of problem-solving and personal development skills.

Time constraints and lack of attendance were highlighted as factors hindering Action Learning, but, there may be practical issues resulting from inadequate scheduling within the LLA, especially considering the demanding work climate. It would therefore be useful for the LLA to consider more practical ways of bringing leaders together for Action Learning activities.

However, an interesting theme identified by a participant was their different preference in learning style. According to one participant, Action Learning was not beneficial to leadership development because it did not suit their learning style. This finding differed from the action learning literature which suggests that group action would lead to learning (Cho & Egan, 2009). This highlights the role of individual differences in learning as proposed by Honey and Mumford (1982), which identified four learning preferences including Activists who learn by doing, involving themselves in group discussions and role play; and Reflectors who learn by observing and thinking of what has happened. This implies the need for the LLA to consider such differences when planning developmental activities, by making various

options for development available to leaders, as opposed to making certain activities mandatory.

Factors influencing learning effectiveness and transfer

MSF and coaching were both found to influence learning effectiveness. Participants reported MSF increased awareness of their leadership behaviour, while coaching allowed a deeper understanding of leadership to be developed. This finding emphasises the importance of including MSF and coaching in leadership development (Feldman & Lankau, 2005).

The lack of context-specific content in some of the online exercises was found to hinder learning. Although this point was highlighted by only one interviewee, it was validated by the FGD findings. Research examining factors affecting learning transfer by Axtell and colleagues (Axtell et al., 1997), showed a high correlation between the content validity of training content and transfer. This suggests that for effective learning, the participants of training and development activities must see the relevance of the training or development programme content to their job. Therefore it is important that practitioners designing leadership development interventions tailor content to suit the organizational context.

Leaders reported support from managers and peers helped to ensure transfer of learning acquired from the LDP. This confirms past literature that social support within the organization enhances the transfer of learning. In Lim and Johnson's (2002) study of factors influencing training transfer, the forms of support most recognised as positively influencing transfer of learning were discussions with supervisors on applying new learning, supervisor's involvement in training process and positive feedback from supervisors.

Leaders reported lack of time to reflect on learning and prioritised work demands hindered learning transfer, confirming Belling and colleagues (2004) finding that a pressurised work environment hinders the application of learning to the workplace. Training and development activities are regarded as effective if the acquired learning is generalised to the workplace and sustained overtime (Blume et al., 2010). Therefore, it is important organizations, like the LLA, should ensure that factors promoting learning transfer are available to leaders, while the factors hindering transfer are managed effectively.

Reflexive consideration

The researcher tried to maintain a neutral role in carrying out this evaluation and so tried to remain independent of both the LLA and the Psychology Consultancy. The researcher approached each interview and the FGD quite openly, regardless of the knowledge of leadership development approaches and expected outcomes from past literature. This allowed for better understanding of the varying perspectives of participants; which was also useful during the analysis. While reporting and discussing the findings, the researcher not only considered the most recurring themes from the interviews and FGD, but also singular themes that appeared to be important to individuals. Most interviewees seemed to respond quite openly to the study, while some found it difficult to give specific examples of changes that occurred as a result of the LDP. The researcher attributes this to perhaps a lack of preparation. The FGD participants also seemed to have unified answers, which the researcher attributed to their working on the LDP project together for a long time. The responses from the interviewees and FGD were positive most of the time, leading to the reporting of findings in a somewhat positivist nature whilst acknowledging participants who reported their experiences from a different perspective.

Implications of research

One prominent finding is that duration of coaching and coach-coachee rapport is essential to promote leadership development. It is therefore important for the LLA (and other organizations) to consider longer-term coaching, with adequate follow-ups for leadership development. In order to manage costs, it would be worth considering the training of in-house staff to undertake the coaching.

This research highlighted the possible influence of negative feedback on learning; it is therefore important for the LLA to consider the best ways of providing feedback in a developmental manner to staff (such relating feedback to their work roles and also providing suggestions and opportunities for improvement) in order to ensure learning takes place. Time constraints and poor attendance hinder Action Learning for leadership development and so it would be useful for the LLA to consider more

suitable ways of running the Action Learning sets (with proper scheduling to accommodate leaders' own schedules) and encouraging leaders to create time for their own development and providing Action Learning set facilitators to help leaders fully utilise the time set aside for Action Learning.

Individual differences in learning style also need to be taken into consideration in the design of development processes in order to provide leadership initiatives that will be beneficial to all leaders, such as providing one-to-one coaching for leaders who do not learn effectively in Action Learning sets. This research noted the positive influence of social support and an enabling environment on learning transfer indicating the importance of encouraging a supportive work environment in the LLA (e.g., managers' having closer involvement in leaders' development, to allow leaders to display leadership efficiently, further improving their leadership development).

There is also need for the Psychology Consultancy to further tailor the contents of the LDP to better suit the organizational context, to improve the learning experience and promote learning transfer. This could be achieved by researching into the leadership needs of the organization and choosing training and development interventions that are best suited for the organization, thereby ensuring participants' ability to relate the intervention to the organizational context and their individual roles.

Recommendations for future research

Findings show that there is need for even more evaluation research to assess the influence of LDPs. While the TOTADO framework allowed for evaluation of different training and development outcomes resulting from the LDP, future research could apply the framework in its entirety by including the societal level and extending multiple data collection sources to include direct reports, supervisors and customers. This will allow for more in-depth evaluation of training and development outcomes. Future research should examine leadership development in a longitudinal way to account for the on-going nature because of leadership development. The use of comparison groups who have not participated in development would be beneficial to explore true behavioural changes that may occur as a result of the LDP. Longitudinal studies on larger samples, that incorporate a mixed method approach will allow for better understanding of development and evaluation of learning transfer. Finally,

research on the role of individual preferences and learning, in the context of leadership development, could also be explored to provide better understanding for adequate leadership development.

Conclusion

Leadership development remains an evergreen area of research as organizations continue to seek effective leadership for the achievement of organizational goals in today's competitive, global business environment. These research findings show the importance of adequate planning and implementation of leadership development initiatives, in line with organizational requirements to ensure achievement of desired outcomes. In this study, carefully planned and facilitated coaching and Action Learning were beneficial for leadership development. Future evaluations should use the TOTADO framework to considerate several outcome levels of evaluation to determine the effectiveness and impact of leadership development programmes.

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**Corporate Training in Emotional Intelligence:
Effective Practice or Modern ‘Fugazy’?**

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Abstract

The article presents a viewpoint for conducting corporate training programmes aimed at soft skills, using comprehension of the Emotional Intelligence concept. The purpose of the article is, by disclosing some of the flaws and failures of such programmes, to offer new solutions directed towards overcoming automatic defence mechanisms; a coping technique that reduces anxiety which hinders personal development by making individuals unwilling to learn and act outside their usual comfort zone of behaviours.

Are Corporate Training Programmes Effective?

For many years now, designing and providing corporate training programmes have been the main concern for many Human Resource (HR) consulting companies (Waters, 2014). In the majority of such cases the training modules, provided on

different employee levels, are aimed to develop behaviours that would assist attainment of business goals, boost motivation and job involvement. However, training does not always show benefits in subsequent bottom line measures (e.g., objective indicators such as revenues, productivity, and absenteeism) (Salas, 2012).

Training activities may also have remedial purposes; when an employee is sent to a training programme because they do not practice the desired behaviours (which may be simply because this person lacks the motivation to do so). Naturally, when the employee returns to the work environment, they do not apply any of the taught practices (Bovey & Hede, 2001).

The annual report of American Society for Training and Development (ASTD, 2009) underlines that while American Companies have spent 47.3 billion dollars on external training providers, 62% of clients feel that those programmes have failed to reach their expectations in terms of financial impact; with employees not acquiring the targeted competencies and behaviours (ASTD, 2009). Taking a closer look at the European Union we can detect similar problems. The Education and Training Monitor (2013) reports research stating that only one of five adults implement the knowledge they have learned or somehow memorised. While this research focuses mainly on institutional education, the report stresses that a substantial part of the data comes from business and entrepreneurship sources (OECD 2013).

As a logical sequel to these unsatisfactory training effects organizational leaders and programme sponsors are dissatisfied with the outcomes of these costly, time consuming activities. Therefore HR consultants are facing a tremendous challenge to reverse these outcomes by changing consulting practices to enhance the faith of their customers and increase the effectiveness of the soft skills training programmes. The purpose of this article is to discuss an effective approach that will encourage the abandonment of ineffective training patterns and will encourage the behavioural changes expected when employing HR consultants.

The Missing Ingredient is Emotional Intelligence

The most common mistake in designing a training programme is the conception that the core part lies in its content. This puts the emphasis on learning of new skills and models of behaviour, with the demand on participants to adopt them (even when we speak of 'soft skills' which is the case in many HR programmes). It is already known that neither the abundance, nor the scarcity of information and knowledge is sufficient to provoke individuals to question old behavioural habits (Ajzen, 1991; Bovey & Hede, 2001; Webb & Sheeran, 2006). Strong determinants for change are individual emotional needs (Bowen, 2014; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). The key point of our thesis is that by using the *Emotional Intelligence* (EI) concept, training practices could be easily rectified and employees encouraged to undertake new lines of behaviour.

The EI concept, though gaining most of its popularity as a result of the work of Daniel Goleman (1998), was originally created by Mayer and Salovey (1997). While other authors have also discussed the meaning of emotions, the definition of the main aspects of EI is undoubtedly Salovey and Mayer's contribution. According to their theory, EI is multidimensional construct composed of three main dimensions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997): a) Appraisal and Expression of Emotions; b) Utilisation of Emotions; and c) Regulation of Emotions which we will discuss in the next section. It is not a coincidence that the same behaviours described by these two authors have a defining role for the success of 'soft skills' training programmes (Nelis, Quoidbach, Mikolajczak & Hansenne, 2009). That is why the focus here is on these three factors, and their constructive role in personnel training practices. We review these factors in order to convince readers of their significance for understanding human behaviour in organizations.

Emotional Intelligence at Work

Appraisal and Expression of Emotions

This dimension of EI includes self-knowledge, awareness of one's emotions and also the emotions of others expressed in both verbal and non-verbal ways. So, it becomes clear how we can deliver behaviour change as a result of well held training programme. As we know, the main 'culprits' for stability of the mind-set and behavioural models are *defence mechanisms*; those are acts, coping techniques or

mechanisms that reduce anxiety that may be generated by threats from unacceptable or negative impulses (Schacter, 2011). Their purpose is to defend the personality from attacks of the surrounding environment, and the realisation of facts detected as threatening for the individual's self-image. Defence mechanisms are usually unconscious, unlike conscious coping strategies (Kramer, 2009). It is important to know that the modern view of defence mechanisms goes far beyond a psychoanalytical or psychiatric approach. Today this phenomenon is understood in terms of social and organizational resistance to change (Bovey & Hede, 2001) and is described as being 'in the border context of stress and coping' (Villant, 1988, p. 200). These are the states of mind that often accompany behavioural change and career progress (Fabio & Kenny, 2014). Defence mechanisms are triggered during increased levels of emotional discomfort; mainly by feelings of anxiety.

Therefore, we can conclude that if we expect the skills and behaviours presented during training to be tried out in real work situations, we have to educate the participants how to identify their defences and how to respond when defences are activated. Specifically, during training participants have to be trained how to withhold the urge for backtracking to old, secure behavioural models; and how to prolong their abidance in the area/zone of discomfort (also known as Quadrant II), simply because this area is the only possible place in which the beginning of behavioural changes can be marked. *'To learn new skills or techniques means that you must enter Quadrant II. Yet this is the place where there can be most anxiety/panic/unpleasant feelings. These are stress-related emotions. For many people they respond by retreating and avoiding the learning experience; they quit.'* (Morgan, 2005, p. 41).

For example, recently a participant in a training on negotiation skills declared: *"I've been to many similar trainings, and on theory everything looks easy and applicable. But when I try any of these in a real situation I got so tangled, felt so uncomfortable like it is not me out there. Last time I recon the client felt that I'm trying to apply some gimmicks on him and the negotiation turned against me. At the end of the day I had to play the lowest price possible just to close the deal. Instead of gaining more profit through wider margin, my company got the minimum from that deal. So my opinion is just be yourself, because being somebody else is not working."* In this example, the

“gimmicks” that the client might have felt are nothing else but the inability of the seller to hold on to their own anxiety and activation of defence mechanisms that simply triggered the ‘fly response’ when the trainee is in the discomfort zone. Obviously, the trainee was not trained or prepared to cope with such states. We recommend entering business interactions, such as sales negotiations, only with tested and proven behaviours, and to try new behaviours in more secure situations during role plays, business simulations, and workshops.

Utilisation of Emotions

Going back to EI and the dimensions of the construct, the second dimension is *utilization of emotions*. It is interesting to mention that one of the main reasons for psychologists to start searching for something different than IQ (classic cognitive intelligence), was the need to explain why some people are experiencing career and life setbacks and are unable to connect with others despite the intellectual abilities they possess. Further, to question why others, not so gifted with intellect, are performing better and are showing better career achievements. Utilisation of ones emotions turned out to be one of the factors determining that difference (Goleman, 1998). Led by the same interest many researchers today focus on emotions in the workplace, because they have the understanding that emotions hold a central place for increasing our understanding of individual work motivation (George & Brief, 1996; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). It is not a secret that the process of keeping high personal motivation towards work achievement and professional realisation is closely tied with this ability to utilise emotions. This is a core ability to develop in participants if we expect them to apply the taught skills and behaviours in a work environment. It is well known that mastering a new behaviour to the level of becoming a habit is hard, could be strenuous or even fatiguing, and requires a high level of personal motivation (Lally, van Jaarsveld, Potts, & Wardle, 2010).

Take for example a simple skill that many training programmes are trying to develop in order to improve the customer service abilities - the *positive refusal skill* (i.e., a skill to refuse a demand from a customer without provoking negative emotions). This is a simple technique to understand and not hard to apply in role plays. But, to execute well in a work situation requires complete mastery and automation. In most

of cases, just few days after the training is over, participants will try the technique with some of their customers. This technique involves statements or strategies such as *“What I can do for you is..... because unfortunately our policy does not allow reduction of the price bigger than the one written in the general conditions”*.

However, after only a few weeks, the employee’s answer usually goes back to an old ineffective strategy such as *“I cannot give you bigger reduction than the one written in the general terms.”* The difference between those two strategies is obvious: in the first case the client receives a message willing help from the salesperson; while in the second case the message is a direct refusal. The gradual fading away of the desire to apply the positive-refusal technique is due to reduced zeal toward the new role, often triggered by the dynamics of the training (such as the charisma of the trainer and other factors Rynes & Rosen, 2006). In other words, if the extrinsic or intrinsic motivation is lacking, behaviour follows the path of least resistance back to the old habits; and the employee starts doing what they always have done. But isn’t that what we wanted to change in first place?

The development of self-motivation ability is maybe the most valuable part of the EI concept. By developing awareness of their own emotional responses to specific situations, employees will be able to use their strengths, and avoid, or at least control, their weaknesses. Such a structured knowledge of one’s emotions enables learning from mistakes and failures, and integrating them as useful experience, instead of falling into denial, rejection, or depression (Druskat, Sala & Mount, 2006). Equipped with EI, employees can master the ability to ‘recharge’ again and again (i.e., avoid burnout), and to keep following their goals and objectives, even when it is hard, tiresome and the reward is not within arm’s reach (Chang, Sy, & Choi, 2012; Druskat et al., 2006).

Regulation of Emotions

Finally comes the third dimension of EI; the regulation of emotions. Indeed, it is very important to have control over one’s emotional reactions in every aspect of life; both professional and personal (Bowen, 2014). EI has been shown to enable individuals to regulate negative emotions (Sevdalis, Petrides, & Harvey, 2007). By learning how to put a cognitive frame over seemingly uncontrollable emotions (in other words, by

reframing or changing the meaning of the emotion), a person could restrain impulsivity and behaviours often described as ‘the jerk instinct’ (acting before thinking). Undoubtedly such ability is also important in situations of team work and/or customer service (Schlaerth, Ensari, & Christian, 2013). The realisation of how our emotions could interfere with our goals, but also be just a moment away from being the propulsive force for achieving them, is the basic tool in behavioural change (Vlaev & Dolan, 2015). So, by using the EI concept we can build that bridge between knowledge and its behavioural application. This is the bridge that we can honestly say is missing from most of corporate soft skills training programmes (ASTD, 2009).

Behaviour change models

There are quite a few concepts and models proclaiming that they can provoke and successfully manage personal change and adoption of new behavioural models. One of them is the 6-Sigma management model (Mikel & Schroeder, 2000) which is a quality-management approach concentrating on identifying, quantifying, and driving out errors in business processes, customer service and employee performance. The behavioral change and organizational transformations are achieved through leadership, customer-centric goals, teamwork, customer-focused metrics, and control of costs. Many organizations (e.g., Motorola, Dell, and General Electric) have used this model to achieve undisputable results in cost savings, market share, and optimisation of work process. But, researchers and the many of the critics of the model often argue that it provokes conflicts in the process of competition for resources, executive attention, and organizational power; thus inducing uncertainty and anxiety (Nelish, Satish, Swati, 2012).

The other popular model that impacts on organizational as well as personal change is the ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006). ADKAR stands for: a) Awareness of the need for change; b) Desire to make the change happen; c) Knowledge about how to change; d) Ability to implement new skills and behaviors; e) Reinforcement to retain the change once it has been made. Basically, this is a goal-oriented change model that allows change management teams to focus their activities on specific business results, reached by adoption of new roles and behaviours within the organization. The model emphasises the impotency to diagnose employee resistance to change

before starting change actions; and we certainly agree with that part of the ADKAR concept. Even though within the frame of that approach the emotional component is taken into account and made more tangible, ADKAR does little about employees' ability to retain integrity and composure when they are under the influence of stress and anxiety (which is an invariable part of any significant change).

There are many other models, some of them widely recognised like Organizational Learning (Fiol & Lyles, 1986), but the purpose of that article is not to argue the feasibility of any of these models. We believe that each model could be good enough for the consultant if they attend to the three main issues: a) to overcome the defences against change; b) to provide the element of self-awareness; and c) to ignite the process of self-regulation of motivation. Emotional processes can give the momentum for behaviour change, and thus turn into a mover of the whole organisational culture; or emotions could become the 'stick in the spokes' and hinder the much needed adoption of new sets of behaviours.

Conclusion

Nevertheless, why EI? Is EI a legitimate concept when applied to the practical aspects of corporate training, or, is it just another way to sell more, to promise more, to palm off another gleaming product to our clients; a modern 'fugazy'? This article argues it is not! For many of us (management scholars and HR professionals) EI provides the shortcut to those three factors (overcoming defences against change, providing self-awareness; and igniting the process of self-regulation of motivation) that facilitate change. We believe that when the potential of EI is recognised as a legitimate part of behavioural change we could open a new chapter for different roles and career opportunities as well as improving organizational functioning. This is achieved by addressing the needs for training and personal development connected with emotions and their regulation, and with the ability to cope and overcome the tendencies of resistance. This will help us address those tendencies that are so typical for all of us especially when we need to do things differently in our life, in our organizations, and in our training.

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WorkLab 2014: A place where scientist and practitioners meet

Report from the 3rd EAWOP WorkLab, 13-15 November, 2014, Vilnius, Lithuania

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Edita and Gintaras both hosted and participated in the 3rd WorkLab in Vilnius in November, 2014 and Solveiga was one of the WorkLab delegates. This report is their reflections and comments about the event (further details are available at <http://www.eawop.org/worklab-2014>)

Effective communication – the WorkLab topic

Effective communication is one of the key success factors within any organization. Every company member spends most of their time communicating; regardless of their position within company hierarchy. The need to improve communication has increased over recent years because communication plays such a critical role in so many ways; such as: product or service technology developments; customer relationships; innovation and change management; marketing and sales; and personnel management. In fact, communication is active in virtually every facet of business operations. Moreover, the constant development of communication technologies increases information flow and intensiveness as well as opening new communication possibilities. In this context, on the road towards increased efficiency and effectiveness, organizations continuously handle internal communications with the joint aim of improvement and excellence. It is for these reasons that the 3rd EAWOP WorkLab focused on ways to overcome communication challenges at work.

WorkLab format

The WorkLab was entitled “*Improved performance through enhanced communication: Getting bosses and staff to talk*”. Over a period of three days the workshop provided the opportunity for practitioners and scientists of Work and Organizational Psychology to: a) look at communication issues from different perspectives; b) to investigate participants’ case studies; and c) experiment with modern tools designed to enhance communication in a workplace. Further we had the opportunity to sample some aspects of Lithuanian culture and the night life of Vilnius accompanied by our local hosts.



WorkLab content

The first workshop session looked at communication issues from different perspectives. Kathryn Waddington (UK) and Angela Carter (UK) navigated the group through the jungles of formal and informal communication ingeniously. At the beginning of their presentation entitled “*Formal and informal communication in the workplace: what works best?*” they discussed definitions of formal and informal communication. This was an opportunity for everyone to think about these two types of communication in their cultures and describe them to everyone else. Participants sought and discovered examples and forms of formal and informal communication. Then Dr Waddington followed up with some examples and definitions of formal and

informal communication and highlighted the symbiotic nature of both forms of communication and how they can be viewed as useful for the organization. Dr Waddington then introduced her own research on gossip (Waddington, 2014); seeing it as a lens through which formal and informal communication could be viewed. Participants were given a series of examples to examine and explore. Participants could look at gossip from unusual angles and, although they recognised gossip as largely an informal communication method; they found that managers could benefit from listening to gossip as ways of finding out important information. Moreover, communication was explored in terms of how managers and employees use formal and informal communication. Various obstacles of upward and downward communication between employees and managers were discussed. Dr Waddington linked the theory that she presented with practical experience in the form of case studies and communication tools.

The second WorkLab presentation encouraged participants to practise effective manager-employee relationship facilitation with practical tools and techniques from Deirdre O'Shea (Ireland) and Sarah Brooks (UK). Session tools included:

- **Tool 1: Reflection**

- a) Personal Reflection: A tool designed to allow practitioners to reflect on their individual learning about communication in the workplace throughout the workshop. A diary-style template was provided to participants and they learned and used the concept of “*A two-minute purposeful reflection*” during the workshop. This gave participants the possibility to reflect on what they were thinking, doing, or feeling at a specific time within the workshop.
- b) Public Reflection: A tool designed to allow groups to reflect on what they learned. This was done virtually using a Linked- In group and physically using a Suggestion Box.

The reflection sessions aimed to highlight the difference between personal reflections and public reflections, how to learn from these reflections, explore why it is useful to reflect and examine some of the reasons why people find it difficult to engage with reflection.

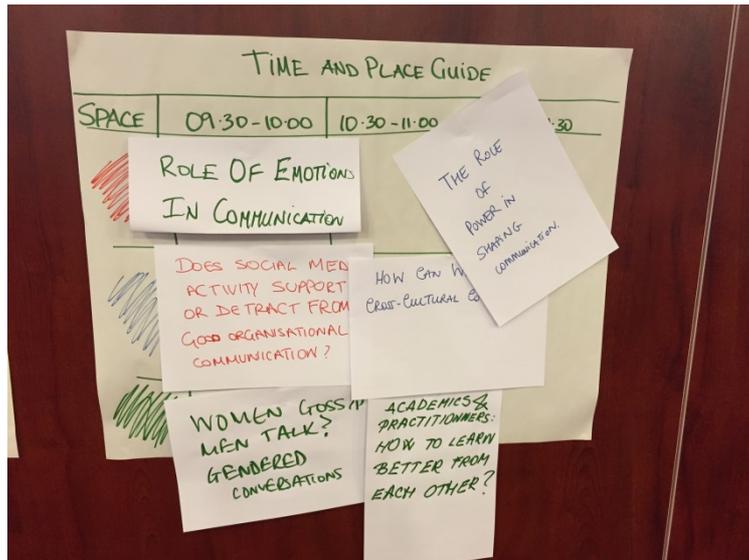
- **Tool 2: Communicative Space**

This is a tool designed to help people appreciate that different groups of people have different perspectives on communication; and until these differences are made explicit it is difficult to move towards shared communication solutions. A case study looking at elderly care (in the UK; Burns et al., 2014) illustrated how communicative space works, and what the tool's benefits and challenges are. A facilitated discussion helped participants to draw reflections and learn how communicative space could be used in organizations to enhance communication, especially when agreement between different stakeholders is needed.

- **Tool 3: Open Space**

Open Space is a workshop/discussion design tool to use when diverse groups of people must deal with complex and potentially conflicting material in innovative and productive ways. Open Space helps people to be creative, synergistic, and self-motivated. It is a facilitation method people can use to identify specific issues on a given topic, self-select into discussion groups, and work through the issue with people similarly concerned. At the WorkLab participants chose to discuss several topics such as: the role of emotions in communication; an evaluation of the use of social media in organizations; do men talk and woman gossip; the diversity of gendered communication; and how to enrich cooperation between academics', practitioners' and others. This range of topics yielded plenty of ideas and findings for the participants.

The third form of WorkLab presentation, much appreciated by participants, was small group interactive, facilitated sessions examining real case studies. Participants practised applying the tools and techniques that they had learned within the context of their own workplace communication challenges. In their groups each participant verbalised a detailed description of their chosen case, and were then encouraged to analyse it from the perspectives of formal and informal communication, and then from the stakeholders' viewpoints. Participants then discussed possible solutions and applications of the tools that would benefit their own cases and shared these with the other small groups.



Since the WorkLab participants were consultant practitioners and academic representatives from different countries, everyone had the chance to exchange views, experiences, and share discoveries regarding communication during the event. The WorkLab enabled exploration of particular aspects of communication in various organizations, situations, and cultures.

Participants listed the greatest benefits of the WorkLab at the end of the workshop sessions. Some of these were:

“A chance to expand your views and see different situations from other peoples’ perspectives”

“A chance to hear more solutions to your case study from the parallel sessions”

“Colleagues’ practical tips trying to solve personal challenges related to communication”

“Working in mini groups where we had a chance to explore specific consulting cases and look for ways to solve communication problems”

“This was a space to explore the value of informal communication”

Conclusion

In summary, this three-day workshop provided the opportunity for practitioners of Work and Organizational Psychology to work through their own workplace communication case studies. Throughout the WorkLab tools were presented that can be used to enhance communication in the workplace (e.g., communicative space, open space, and reflexive diary). The differences between formal and informal communication were discussed; highlighting the different ways employees speak to their managers and communicate information. Unlike other practitioner events, leading academics in the field of Work and Organizational Psychology and communication worked closely with participants to help shape solutions and develop personal action plans.

The tools and methods offered by the organisers enabled participants to thoroughly explore their own case studies and to consistently reflect and apply the WorkLab content and conclusions of our colleagues to our working practice and our lives.



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Workplace mindfulness inventions: What are the benefits, when are they appropriate, and how can organizations optimise the transfer of training?

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Abstract

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is now frequently offered as a stress management intervention in the workplace. The academic evaluation of workplace mindfulness interventions is a small but growing area of research, highlighting the potential benefits to both the individuals and organizations who take part. This article will use the existing literature to focus on key outcomes of mindfulness training from the perspective of the individual and the organization. Suggestions will be made of contexts where mindfulness training may not be appropriate, and of ways that an organization providing this training for their staff might facilitate the process and therefore maximise the benefits.

Introduction

Mindfulness can be defined as “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). This is very much a distinct quality of attention, which promotes letting go of past regrets and future worries, and living as fully as possible in the here and now. When thoughts from the past and worries about the future are not influencing one’s perception of the present, a more rational and objective assessment of experiences can take place. This objectivity allows one to carefully consider how to react instead of in a way which is habitual or automatic. As such, mindfulness allows us to suspend the auto-pilot and bring full awareness to our feeling, thoughts, and behaviours.

Mindfulness has its roots in Buddhism, with mindfulness meditation being practiced for over 2,500 years in the Buddhist tradition. In comparison, non-religious, or secular mindfulness has been growing in popularity for a mere 35 years, but the research and practice of mindfulness without religious underpinnings is increasing exponentially (Dane & Brummel, 2014). By designing a stress reduction programme based upon Buddhist mindfulness, but in a secular format, Jon Kabat-Zinn's MBSR (1982) sparked an interest in the use of contemplative techniques within a western model of health care. This technique has developed a body of supporting evidence in the successful treatment of both mental and physical illness (Chiesa & Serretti, 2009). In more recent years, the mainstream nature of the concept of mindful living and the popularity of mindfulness meditation as a way to improve well-being has meant that mindfulness resources are increasing faster than scientific evaluation, particularly in the workplace.

As academics race to keep up with the explosion of interest in workplace mindfulness, there is a growing amount of high-quality evaluative research into the use of mindfulness interventions in the workplace (de Vibe, Bjørndal, Tipton, Hammerstrøm, & Kowalski, 2012), and the benefits or drawbacks these may have. Such research can inform organizations, consultancies and individuals about whether mindfulness is the right intervention for them or their workplace in order to improve well-being and work-related outcomes, such as turnover intentions, burnout and customer satisfaction, for the benefit of the individual and/or the organization.

What do mindfulness interventions look like?

The original MBSR course is an eight-week, group-based intervention, which focuses on the improvement of mindfulness through practices of meditation, yoga, and the act of being mindful during everyday tasks. New Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBIs) have since been developed to focus on the application of mindfulness to either specific problems, for example, in Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT; Williams, Teasdale, Segal & Soulsby, 2000) as a treatment for anxiety and depression; or as one technique in a multi-layered approach, for example in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes, Strosahl & Wilson, 1999), which incorporates mindfulness to facilitate behaviour change. Group-based MBIs usually rely upon small numbers of people to promote open discussion and

sharing of experiences, and a large homework commitment of 45 minutes per day, six days per week, which can mean they are not always considered ideal for organizations with a large number of interested employees, or an already heavy workload without first being modified.

Internet-based interventions are a cost-effective alternative allowing large numbers of individuals to participate in mindfulness training that can either be completely self-directed through the use of audio and visual resources, or can be facilitated by on-line discussions and webinars, which provide a platform for the exchange of experiences in the absence of face-to-face group meetings. Finally, completely self-directed methods are available in the form of email-based courses, which send new topics and activities to the learner on scheduled days, or through self-help manuals or workbooks, with no support from a trained expert.

Benefits of mindfulness training for participants

When looking specifically at their use in the workplace, the benefits described can be discussed at the individual-level and the organizational-level. Furthermore, at an individual level, mindfulness has been linked to both reductions in negative outcomes or illness, and an increase in positive outcomes and human flourishing.

Mindfulness and the individual; reducing the negative

Substantial improvements in negative symptoms have been found among school teachers. In an intensive evaluation of a 42-hour training course for school teachers in the United States (US) which was based upon MBSR with additional attention to emotion-regulation, Kemeny and colleagues (2012) found that self-reported negative outcomes including depression, rumination and trait negative affect were improved following the training, when compared to a control group. Importantly, this improvement was maintained at a five-month follow-up. The authors also used a marital interaction task with a partner or spouse as a behavioural measure and found that observed hostility towards one's partner in this task was reduced after the intervention. These results indicate the potential to reduce negative symptoms and behaviours, which can free the mind to concentrate on the present moment when at work and be less burdened with stress and unhappiness. The results also indicate

the potential for a reduction in hostility in difficult situations, making people more open to new solutions and the perspectives of others, which could be extremely beneficial for team-based working.

Nursing is another highly stressful profession which parallels teaching as a role where the individual's well-being and performance can have a significant impact upon those in their care. Burnout is a particular problem for nurses, and is defined as "a psychological syndrome that involves a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job" (Leiter & Maslach, 2009, p. 332). This syndrome manifest in three ways: as cynicism towards and detachment from one's role; a lack of feelings of personal accomplishment; and extreme emotional exhaustion, which are usually measured on three corresponding sub-scales. Several MBI evaluations have been conducted with nurses in the US (Moody et al., 2013; Pipe et al., 2009; Mackenzie, Poulin & Seidman-Carlson, 2006), within which burnout is often one of the key outcomes that researchers hypothesise will improve.

Improvements in levels of burnout have been found in nurse populations to support this hypothesis. In a detailed mixed-methods study with nurses published in three parts, Cohen-Katz and colleagues (Cohen-Katz, Wiley, Capuano, Baker, & Shapiro, 2004; Cohen-Katz, Wiley, Capuano, Baker, & Shapiro, 2005a; Cohen-Katz, Wiley, Capuano, Baker, Deitrick, & Shapiro, 2005b) found that trainees reduced their emotional exhaustion, and increased their sense of personal accomplishment in their roles compared to a control group after an MBSR course. There was also a reduction in the number of clinical cases of psychological distress for the intervention group following the training. Leiter and Bakker (2010, p.1) define work engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational state of work-related well-being that can be seen as the antipode of job burnout." This negative correlation with work engagement means that reductions in burnout following mindfulness training allow employees to be more invested, energised and committed at work, which has been found to predict nurses' quality of care ratings in a study conducted in Belgium (Van Bogaert, Clarke, Willems & Mondelaers, 2013). As such, it can be seen that the reduction in the negative symptoms of burnout and psychological distress among nurses has far-reaching consequences for staff and patients.

In addition to the single studies described above, there have also been a number of meta-analyses highlighting the reductions in negative emotions and behaviours resulting from mindfulness training. In a comprehensive and high-quality systematic review of MBSR interventions for the Campbell Collaboration, De Vibe and colleagues (2012) use a combined measure of several mental health outcomes including anxiety, depression, stress or distress, anger, worry, and rumination, and found a moderate effect size of 0.62 using Hedge's g (Hedges, Tipton & Johnson, 2010) from 10 randomised controlled trials of healthy populations, leading them to describe MBSR as a promising intervention for improving mental health. Similarly, in a meta-analysis specifically investigating the use of MBIs to reduce psychological distress at work, Virgili (2013) found a strong effect size of 0.68 using Hedges' g . This indicates that there is much potential for the use of mindfulness to decrease adverse psychological outcomes for the individual employee.

In summary, one way in which MBIs affect individuals is through the reduction of negative outcomes, which may be feelings and thoughts, as measured in self-reported levels of psychological distress, or negative behaviours, such as hostility to others. Research has also shown that mindfulness training can go beyond the reduction of the negative and enhance participant positivity, as will be discussed below.

Mindfulness and the individual; enhancing the positive

As one would expect from an intervention grounded in the health care sector, evaluations of workplace mindfulness training often focus on the reduction of symptoms and bringing health levels back to baseline. Positive psychology uses “scientific understanding and effective interventions to build thriving in individuals, families and communities” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 9), focussing on individual strengths and qualities that can enhance life experiences. At the present time, workplace evaluations which consider the impact of mindfulness upon positive psychological constructs such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience, and the concept of exploring heightened wellness as opposed to reduced illness are rare, although some mindfulness practitioners and media outlets state that mindfulness

training will enhance these. There is however, some preliminary research in this area which suggests that mindfulness can provide opportunities for human flourishing. In the study described above, by Kemeny and colleagues (2012), self-reported positive affect was also shown to increase following mindfulness training. Furthermore, neuroimaging research has shown that after MBSR training activation in the left-side anterior region of the brain, which is related to positive affect, increased relative to a control group, and continued to increase at a four-month follow-up (Davidson et al., 2003). This is not a clear-cut issue however, as self-reported positive affect was not found to increase significantly in the same study, despite the participants showing increased brain activation in areas related to positive affect. Similarly, self-reported positive affect was not found to increase after a five-week mindfulness intervention for teachers (Benn, Akiva, Arel, & Roeser, 2012). Self-report positive affect in all of these cases was measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark & Tellegan, 1988) which asks participants to record the frequency with which they have felt emotions such as inspiration and enthusiasm over a fixed time period. It may be the case that mindfulness has initial effects in the reduction of negative affect, and once the impact of this and related mechanisms such as rumination have been minimised, individuals may then focus more on the positive attributes of their experience and an appreciation of these. Kemeny's research evaluates a very intensive 42-hour training programme which may have allowed more time for this process to occur and explain the increase in self-reported positive affect.

In further areas of positive flourishing, Mackenzie and colleagues (2006) in the US, and Mellor and colleagues (Mellor, Ingram, Van-Huizen, Arnold & Harding, *under review*) in the UK, both found that satisfaction with life increased significantly following a workplace mindfulness intervention, with this increase continuing at a one-month follow-up in the latter study. Life satisfaction is a facet of subjective well-being, which is based upon judgements of one's satisfaction with life from a cognitive perspective relative to other people (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985), as opposed to a quantifiable change in life circumstances or events. As such, by positively changing one's outlook on life as it currently is, employees may be able to reappraise situations in and out of work and reach more favourable valuations.

Mellor and colleagues found a significant increase in levels of hope – defined as one’s belief, expectation or desire for positive outcomes, and of working towards these in a planned manner – after workplace mindfulness training. Hope has also been positively linked to work engagement, suggesting that more hopeful employees also experience more vigour, dedication and absorption at work (Ouweneel, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, & van Wijhe, 2012). These findings demonstrate the importance of increased mindfulness skills in relation to positive psychological outcomes, and their connection with work-specific outcomes such as work engagement.

As can be seen, positive psychological outcomes allow individuals to achieve more constructive insights and attitudes to life both within work and beyond, however it is possible that some positive effects take more time to develop; more longitudinal research is needed to investigate this. Qualities such as hope and satisfaction with life could lead to increased engagement at work, which as we have seen may increase performance at work.

Benefits of mindfulness training for organizations

High levels of mindfulness have been linked to a number of beneficial organizational outcomes which indicate the value of this type of training to businesses as well as individuals. Dane and Brummel (2014) found that higher levels of dispositional mindfulness were linked with higher performance ratings from supervisors and lower levels of turnover intention. This finding suggests that those who were more aware of the present moment in their job were both more successful and more content to stay in that role. Similarly, in Singapore, Reb, Narayanan and Ho’s mindfulness study (2013) found that dispositional awareness levels were positively correlated with task performance and organizational citizenship behaviours at work, whereas absent-mindedness was linked with deviance and poorer task performance. This research shows mindful employees will be more positively committed to their workplace and to high standards of operation which can lead to a healthier and more productive work environment. As these studies focus upon natural levels of mindfulness and correlations between outcomes, it is not possible to ascertain if mindfulness is predicting the workplace outcomes, or if the workplace factors are affecting

mindfulness levels. However, by utilising longitudinal and controlled research designs, researchers are able to make claims regarding the causality of these findings.

By implementing controlled intervention studies, researchers have been able to propose the direction of the relationship between mindfulness and important work-specific results. For example, in an intervention study, Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt, and Lang (2013) found that after a self-directed mindfulness intervention, employees in customer-facing roles felt more job satisfaction and less emotional exhaustion as they spent less time 'faking' positive emotions with difficult customers. This enhancement of emotion-regulation at work could also assist staff in difficult encounters with colleagues and stakeholders, thus improving working relationships. Moreover, in an intervention designed for call centre employees in Canada, Grégoire and Lachance (2014) found that general levels of customer satisfaction increased significantly after some staff members received mindfulness training. This suggests that even a partial increase in mindfulness amongst a working population can positively influence organizational success.

In conclusion, mindfulness interventions are linked with a range of factors which are considered beneficial to the organization. Furthermore, controlled intervention studies indicate that mindfulness training is the cause of improvements in important workplace outcomes such as customer satisfaction. These studies show that the potential benefits of mindfulness training can reach far beyond the individual taking part to the performance of the organization as a whole.

When is mindfulness not suitable at work?

Despite the popularity and general academic support for MBIs, situations and contexts remain for which mindfulness training may not be a feasible remedy. An example of this can be seen in populations showing high levels of burnout and stress. As stated above, there is support for the use of mindfulness training to reduce levels of burnout in some cases, however, there are also indications that success is constrained by the level of burnout presented at baseline; where extreme levels of burnout may hinder the training process. In one study, Moody and colleagues (2013)

found that mindfulness training did not significantly improve levels of burnout, depression or stress for paediatric oncology nurses. This population was under considerable pressure, with stress scores more than one standard deviation above the national average in the United States, and extremely high levels of depression. Participants may feel 'too stressed to meditate' and so do not have the cognitive resources to commit to the training. As such, it may be the case that where chronic levels of psychological distress exist, an experiential training programme which requires a certain level of dedication and homework practice may lead to further distress as participants are being given more work-related tasks to achieve when they are already over-stretched.

Working populations with chronic levels of psychological distress are likely to need more substantial treatment and care. Mindfulness training offered on a voluntary basis within the workplace is not a suitable alternative to professional medical help, and steps should be taken by organizations to ensure that employees are getting support or treatment which is appropriate to their own wellness levels before incorporating mindfulness training into their well-being initiatives.

There is a small body of research which compares mindfulness with other stress management interventions and at this stage these differing methods seem roughly equivalent in their benefits to employee well-being (Wolever et al., 2012; Virgili, 2013). Furthermore, Wolever and colleagues (2012) found no significant differences between outcomes for those receiving online or in-person mindfulness training. As such, it may be the case that alternative techniques, such as yoga and relaxation programmes have the same benefits at a lower cost than a full eight-week mindfulness course, which can be expensive for organizations. More research is needed which directly compares stress management interventions, and it may be the case that modified or on-line mindfulness courses are cost-effective alternatives for organizations when compared to in-person stress management interventions and the costs associated with hiring a qualified trainer.

It is important to consider actions organizations may be able to take to enhance mindfulness in their employees without the need for formal mindfulness training. Reb and colleagues (2013) explored the relationship of awareness at work with several

organizational factors and found that organizational constraints such as poor equipment and conflicting job demands were related to lower levels of awareness, where awareness was measured using select questions from the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer & Toney, 2006). Conversely, organizational support in the form of role autonomy and supervisor support were both correlated with higher levels of awareness at work. Furthermore, organizational constraints and supervisor support were found to be predictors of workplace awareness levels. Consequently, in order to encourage a more mindful workforce, there is much that an organization can do to create positive working conditions outside of formal mindfulness training. By providing a supportive and unconstrained environment and culture, employers may be able to raise dispositional levels of mindful attention, and compound the effects of any formal mindfulness training. The reverse of this scenario is also true; mindfulness is not a panacea for organization-level problems, and providing mindfulness training for employees who remain immersed in a toxic environment may limit the potential benefits of the intervention.

In summary, the evidence of failure of mindfulness training in certain contexts provides valuable indications of situations in which MBIs may not be appropriate, whilst comparison to other stress management interventions, although limited at this stage, means that organizations should carefully consider which intervention is right for them. Simple changes to working conditions may also increase natural levels of awareness at work for all employees. Once employees and work environments are in a condition which is conducive to mindfulness training there are a number of ways organizations can further facilitate the training process and the transfer of training to the workplace in order to assist in the development and maintenance of mindfulness skills, which will be discussed below.

How can organizations facilitate mindfulness training?

Some research evaluations have included qualitative elements in which mindfulness trainees are asked how their experience of mindfulness at work can be further improved, or what extra steps they have taken voluntarily to maintain high levels of mindfulness at work. Cohen-Katz and colleagues (2005b) analysed completed

evaluation forms and data from interviews and focus groups with mindfulness course trainees to establish how they would maintain their practice. The authors found that establishing informal networks with other trainees after the course had helped participants continue to practice mindfulness. Some of these participants had arranged regular mindfulness meditation times during their work lunch break using mindfulness audio CDs. Other participants had looked into further resources such as books and CDs to expand their knowledge of mindfulness further. An organization could facilitate these activities by making a room available for meditation practice at pre-arranged times, and maintaining a small library of mindfulness resources which employees can borrow from. Refresher training was also provided for course graduates to revive or reinforce their practice of the methods. When asked what else could be done to maintain their practice, graduates suggested inspirational emails throughout the year and bibliographies of available information which they could look into if desired. This detailed qualitative evaluation demonstrates how an organization can support mindfulness training participants and ensure that maximum benefits are received. Many of these suggestions are inexpensive, such as allowing the use of a spare meeting room for lunchtime meditation sessions, which help with the transfer of training by bringing mindfulness practice into the working day.

Conclusion

Mindfulness-based interventions can have a wide range of benefits in the workplace which extend to the individual undergoing training, the workplace they are a part of, and potentially the customers they serve. Academic research has highlighted both the benefits of mindfulness training at work and the conditions in which it may not be appropriate. By considering all of these factors, organizations can make informed decisions about if and when mindfulness training is right for their employees, and consequently ensure that the skills learned are maintained and applied in the workplace by creating good conditions for the transfer of training. Research into mindfulness at work continues to grow, and will continue to provide organizations and practitioners with resources to assist in their choices around mindfulness interventions.

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