Submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Change Agent Skills and Strategies

An Inquiry into the conditions that stimulate greater self-direction in learning in organisations

by

Sue Young

School of Management
University of Surrey

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Abstract

This Inquiry examines conditions that stimulate self directed learning (SDL) in Organisations.

Two different definitions of conditions are developed. A literature review is used to compile an integrative Framework of conditions developed from formal research and theory. A second approach to defining a framework of conditions is developed as a result of interviews with a sample of experienced managers.

The literature provided a wide range of different perspectives on SDL and the conditions that appear to support or inhibit it in organisations.

A series of in depth interviews with managers in a government department enquired into the conditions relevant to their personal learning during their career.

The interviews adopted a constructivist approach where conditions are seen through the perceptions and choices that individuals make in relation to their learning. The conditions reported during the Interviews were used to compile a Framework of Conditions derived from the concepts, language and terminology used by the participants

While there was considerable overlap between the literature and interview findings, there were differences in both the language and emphasis. While considerable consensus exists in the literature around the socially constructed nature of learning my interviews reveal more explicitly how this manifests itself, and how individuals' readiness for SDL is influenced by a complex range of factors including much that is tacit and informal. Participants consistent highest rated conditions, were around personal motivation, self efficacy, and awareness of 'self' in relation to others within the context of organisational cultural 'norms' .

Self Directed Learning (SDL) is growing in importance as an approach to learning and development. Yet despite widespread recognition of the need for greater self direction in learning, there is evidence that it is not perceived to be happening sufficiently. . The Framework of Conditions has potential to be developed and used to identify how organisations can create conditions more conducive to SDL.

I declare that my work entitled **"An Inquiry into the conditions that stimulate greater self-direction in learning in organisations"** for the degree of Master of Science in Change Agent Skills and Strategies embodies the results of an original research programme and consists of an ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge in a well-defined field

I have included explicit references to the citation of the work of others or to my own work which is not part of the submission for this degree."

Susan Young

25 August 2007

Author's signature, full name and date.

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

3. Applied Research Methodology

4. Analysis and Interpretation

5. Conclusions

– Formal Letter of Request
C. Targeted e mail to Potential Volunteers
D. Interview Structure Plan
E. Contracting with Volunteeers: Pre-interview letter and Consent Form
F. Example Transcript Excerpt
G.
H. Detailed Themes Analysis by Respondent

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PREFACE

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind

The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The Third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The Fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee.
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
" 'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

Moral:

So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!

So, I found my journey of exploring the realms of Self Directed Learning. There are many perspectives, all of which have hold of a part of the elephant. They are all right and all wrong!

There are many theoretical and practitioner interpretations of what Self Directed Learning is about, all of which have something of value to bring. I found in my literature search little that represented the perspective of individual managers in their own terms. In some way this dissertation seeks to redress the balance.

In this dissertation I attempt to bring the different parts together to form a more holistic picture. The issues are not easy, but I believe the frontier of management learning and development is about

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why this Inquiry Subject?

The subject of my inquiry stems directly from my experience of working as a management and organisation development consultant and coach.

In my work as a practitioner I have worked with individuals and groups in organisations for over 14 years using a broad range of approaches to learning and development. In that time I have experienced the value of creating an environment where people feel they have the freedom and scope to make their own choices about the what and how of their learning. This value is felt by the individuals concerned in improved job satisfaction, and also in improved results for their organisation.

In working with organisations, it appears that the benefits of greater choice and involvement from an organisation's people are widely recognised. In my learning and development work with clients there is a trend to using a wider range of approaches, such as coaching, project based learning and action learning in addition to more traditional 'training' approaches, which place more emphasis on attention to individual needs. Even on courses there is increasingly a requirement for the individual to take responsibility for setting development objectives, planning how they are to be met, and reviewing what they have achieved. Individuals are expected to take responsibility for managing their continuing development and manage their careers. Approaches that appear to be encouraging greater self direction in learners are now widespread in large organisations.

There is evidence of a growing awareness of the benefits of self direction in the professional client HR community. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) is the professional body for those involved in the

management and development of people. Their 2006 Review of Trends in Learning and Development said that *"a high majority (of survey respondents) state that individual employees are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning"* yet goes on to state in their findings that, although the aspiration might be there, in the majority of organisations *"these results question the reality of individual responsibility for learning and development, and a changing role for learning and development professionals in supporting learners to take charge of their own development".*

Increasingly I am working closely with clients in Human Resources who are trying to develop more holistic learning approaches linked to workplace and organisational outcomes. Despite this aspiration my perception is that there could usefully be greater understanding of the nature of the learning issues involved. This inquiry I hope will help me engage in this dialogue and learning process with my clients and colleagues.

I want my inquiry to result in practical outcomes to the benefit of my practice and ultimately to my clients. Self direction in learning by definition can only be initiated by the individual. I hope in this inquiry to deepen my personal understanding of the conditions that stimulate self direction in the workplace. I want to use this to develop my ideas about what practically might be done by practitioners and organisations to stimulate greater self direction in managers' learning.

1.2 The Value of an Inquiry Approach

I am interested in using an inquiry based approach as inquiry methods will enable greater investigation of more realistic circumstances, compared with reducing the subject for study to something conforming more to the rigours of traditional academic research. I believe Inquiry can have a considerable rigour to its method. But an inquiry based approach would also be about holding an open mind to a multiplicity of perspectives and to expect the unexpected. I saw the process of my inquiry as a journey where I could stop off and reflect on what

I was learning at points along the way, and to keep my objectives under review, being prepared to change them, as I make more explicit and thereby challenge my own assumptions and beliefs. I also wanted to take an applied research approach that would inform my practice.

1.3   Scoping practical objectives for my Inquiry

The starting position for my inquiry involved a number of objectives within the broad theme of my inquiry question.

Focus on Self Directed Learning for managers: The group I mainly work with and want to use as a focus for my inquiry are managers and professionals, where there is more discretion about the 'what' and 'how' of their learning.

Within this focus my Inquiry provided me with some important opportunities:

1. To explore how theoretical perspectives, and research, about self directed learning can help identify relevant conditions. What does 'self directed learning' as a discrete area of research and theory have to offer my inquiry? What is the current range of perspectives on self directed learning, in particular of relevance to workplace and organisational contexts? Which meanings might be most relevant to my practice?

2. To research how individuals in organisations experience and are stimulated towards self directed learning. Self directed learning is by nature intangible. How do you know when it is happening and what conditions are contributing to it? I want to use my Inquiry to explore the dynamics and tensions between greater self direction in learning in an organisational and a task related context where individuals are expected to meet certain organisational objectives. Who owns the learning and in what kind of way?

3. To develop my own practitioner awareness and articulation about the conditions, and possible issues, involved in facilitating greater self direction in learning in organisations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

My initial Inquiry objectives helped me identify initial themes to guide my literature search.

What is Self Directed Learning? How does the literature define self directed learning (SDL) in relation to other forms of learning? Was there any consensus that existed in the literature around defining self directed learning? How does that compare to my experience as a practitioner? Does the literature comment on the influence of environmental and social factors on SDL?

To focus on conditions that stimulate SDL: To understand more about what the research said about the conditions that stimulate greater learner self direction, in particular those that seemed to be largely located in the individual, and those conditions that appeared to be more influenced by the organisational context.

To explore the relationship between the individual and organisation conditions. What does the literature say about this relationship, particularly in relation to self directed learning; and from what perspective - the individual, and the organisational perspective? What do the fields of management theory and organisational development theory have to say about SDL?

I recognised that my thinking about some of these questions was still very formative and the reality was that I was likely to evolve the focus of my inquiry as my research raised issues I had not considered, relevant to my overall inquiry question.

2.2   Defining 'Self Directed Learning'

I started by reviewing various definitions of 'self directed learning'. This provided me with some initial understanding of a very extensive range of different perspectives used by people who have researched and written within the field. These perspectives were typically expressed as lists of conditions considered key to SDL.

Malcolm Knowles, an early 'thought leader' in adult learning, defined self directed learning as the process by which *"…individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes."* (Knowles 1975)

Tough studied informal adult learning projects and likewise came up with a description of people making *"highly intentional"* changes in their lives or a *"self defined, successful series of activities to achieve a goal"* (Tough 1982).

Later researchers developed further the concept of self direction which Candy (1991) described as:
- A personal attribute (personal autonomy)
- The willingness and capacity to conduct one's own education (self management)
- A mode of organizing instruction in formal settings (learner control)
- The individual, non-institutional pursuit of learning opportunities in the 'natural social setting' (autodidaxy)

Brookfield(1994) further defined self direction in learning as:

- the continuous exercise by learner of authentic control over all decisions having to do with learning
- the ability to gain access to, and choose from a full range of available and appropriate resources

17.

Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) synthesised much of the research that had been done on self directed learning and recognised differences in self directed learning as:

a) instructional method
and …
b) a set of personal characteristics.

Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) view self directed learning as an **instructional process** aimed at facilitating greater self direction in learners centred on activities such as:
* assessing needs,
* securing resources,
* implementing learning activities and
* evaluating learning.

In particularly they emphasised the aspect of **personal responsibility** where individuals take responsibility for their own thoughts and actions.

This suggests one perspective on self directed learning as **a conscious planned process** that individuals can use and that can be used by teachers or facilitators of learning.

On the other hand, rather than necessarily being pre-planned, "self directed learners, rather than pre-planning their learning projects, tend to select a course from limited alternatives which happen in their environment and which tend to structure their learning projects". (Spear and Mocker quoted in Merriam and Caffarella 1991).

Thus self direction need not be a linear planned process. Much self directed learning becomes possible when certain things cluster together to form the stimulus and the opportunity for reflection and exploration.

Another major strand of research in SDL appears to have been on understanding how individuals go about the process of learning on their own and what **attributes** can be associated with learners who are self-directed. Candy's definition focuses on learner autonomy as a key characteristic.

Other researchers in the field have carried out extensive research focused on learner attributes. Guglielmino conducted a three round Delphi study designed to allow 13 researchers (including Houle, Tough and Knowles amongst others) and writers on self directed learning literature, to arrive at a consensus on the characteristics necessary for self directed learning.

Table 1: Guglielmino's SDLRS Constructs
- Independence
- Confidence
- Persistence
- Initiative
- Desire to learn
- Ability to plan
- Accept responsibility for own learning
- View problems as challenges rather than obstacles
- Curiosity and self discipline
- Organise time
- Set appropriate pace for learning
- Goal orientated
- Derive pleasure from learning

In 1977 she published a description of the highly self directed learner based on the Delphi results, as well as an instrument to assess **readiness for self directed learning,** the Self Directed learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS), which has gone on to be the most widely used quantitative measure of readiness for self directed learning.

Houle (1961) argued that there are 3 main groupings of adults in terms of their **orientation and motivation** towards learning:

- **Goal orientated –** those who use education as a means of accomplishing fairly clear cut objectives.
- **Activity orientated** – those who take part in such activities because of an attraction in the circumstances of learning rather than in the content or announced purpose.
- **Learning orientated** – those who seek knowledge for its own sake.

And more recently added:

- **the self-reliant, autonomous, and independent learner**

More recent research (Confessore 2002) demonstrated **learner autonomy** as a syndrome consisting of four constructs`;

1. The desire to learn
2. learner resourcefulness
3. learner initiative
4. learner persistence

In conclusion, the major strands of research and writing on SDL seem to emphasise one or a combination of :

- SDL as a process, either planned or more emergent,
- Linked to the above, SDL as an instructional process,
- SDL as personal attributes,
- SDL as a natural human motivation.

I discovered a rich vein of writings about wide ranging conditions that stimulate SDL. I wanted to understand more about what lay behind some of these differences in perspective.

2.3   Relevant Theoretical Perspectives

2.3.1 Humanistic and Constructionist Assumptions

SDL as a field of formal research and inquiry has its roots in the humanistic learner centred constructionist school of thinking. This humanistic school has been a major influence on adult education since the 1970s. Humanistic philosophy assumes a natural human motivation being to self actualise; where the learner as the important agent in the learning process. The field of Adult Learning and Education, in particular, has extensive literature referring to SDL.

The theories of Dewey, Piaget and Brunner have had a major influence on recent understanding of learning, and therefore approaches to education and development. For Dewey knowledge only emerges from situations where learners have to draw out meaningful experiences can only learn by "directed living," whereby concrete activities are combined with theory.

Adult Learning is based on constructionist assumptions about the nature of learning. **Constructionist learning** is inspired by constructivist theories of learning that propose that learning is an active process wherein learners are actively constructing mental models and theories of the world around them. Constructionism holds that learning can happen felicitously when people are actively making things in the real world. (Burr 1995)

2.3.2 Adult Learning and Education

Knowles popularised usage of the term 'andragogy' or adult learning in 1973, and which was based on the following assumptions about the adult learner:

1. Self-concept: As a person matures his self concept moves from one of being a dependent personality towards one of being a self-directed human being.

2. Experience: As a person matures he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.

3. Readiness to learn: As a person matures his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles.

4. Orientation to learning: As a person matures his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his attitude to learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness.

5. Motivation to learn: As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal (added 1984)

Knowles' assumptions about the nature of the adult learner suggest a natural maturation process in people towards greater self direction.

Other strands of adult learning, whilst acknowledging the role of the individual as important introduce contextual influences on individual learning (Merriam and Caffarella) that take into account the interactive nature of learning and the learner's situation and context.

The interactive and dynamic nature of adult learning has been developed through a strand of research and theory in adult learning around **experiential learning**. This has subsequently become a particular approach and focus for learning and development activities undertaken by a growing number of practitioners.

This theory was first developed by Kolb. He developed a theory on learning based on the idea of a cycle of experience. Kolb stated that from our own experience, we observe and reflect so that we can formulate new concepts,

principles and strategies for action. Finally, we experiment and practice them in new situations. This is Kolb's experiential learning cycle. This has subsesquently been adapted into a typology of learning styles, where individuals will tend to develop preferences in their use of the four stages of the learning cycle. Experiential learning theory postulates that by being more consciously aware of how they learn, individuals can be more purposeful and selective in their use of learning strategies.

The assumptions on which adult learning theory is based lead to an approach to learning that emphasises the need for the learner to lead on diagnosing learning needs, identifying resources, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. These assumptions also underpin the school of Self Directed Learning.

2.3.3 Behavioural and Cognitive Perspectives

In organisations many current assumptions about the nature of Learning are based on either the **Behavioural** school of theory or the **Cognitive school**.

The **Behavioural approach** focuses on stimulus-response reinforcement of behaviour patterns. To develop behavioural objectives a learning task must be broken down through analysis into specific measurable tasks. Stimulus is therefore externally driven rather than internally or self-directed and is aimed at reinforcing and encouraging desired responses and behaviour. Self direction is limited to the individual choosing a course of action that will result in a perceived positive response from a third party, or avoid a negative response.

The **Cognitive approach** assumes that the thought process needs to be influenced as well as behaviour to promote effective learning. Piaget's work led to the key learning concepts of **assimilation and accommodation.** Assimilation refers to the integration of perception into existing mental models, whereas accommodation refers to how individuals come to terms with experience that do not fit with their current mental models. Greater self direction

in learning can therefore be potentially facilitated through learning mechanisms designed to aid understanding and therefore capability for self direction.

The behavioural and cognitive schools of learning are still very relevant to many approaches to learning in organisations currently. For example, the current emphasis on clear targets, and focus on the behavioural indicators and competencies as being common across the organisation, adapted to particular levels or parts of the business. These do not apparently make allowance for individual difference.

However the emphasis on the individual within the adult learning school would appear to be relevant, particularly with managers of some experience. The more open nature of life in organisations is best suited by an approach that acknowledges that individuals will typically determine their own agenda, and attitude towards their organisational context.

In reflecting on this initial phase of my literature review I saw that the main themes emerging from the range of adult learning theory as they relate to self direction in learning seem to provide the most relevant framework to use to progress my Inquiry.

The Constructionist approach is also more open and flexible, enabling the inclusion of factors from other schools of thinking, where appropriate. This led me to examine in more detail research on the factors, or conditions, that came more from within the individual, and their environment. In particular what evidence was there on what these conditions were and whether and how they stimulate, or inhibit, SDL.

2.4   Role of Personal factors in SDL

My initial survey of the fields of Adult Learning and theory around SDL had already located core conditions for SDL that reside in the individual. However, I felt there were some 'gaps' around the individual, particularly in the area of emotional and motivating influences. Although some of the literature made reference to these factors as important I had not come across any more detailed research or writings on this aspect in relation to readiness for SDL.

2.4.1 Feelings and Emotions

This led me to be concerned with understanding the role of feelings and emotions, or the affective, in SDL.

Writers on SDL acknowledge the importance of feelings in SDL but do not typically illuminate why or how**.** Focus on the process of SDL takes a more rational cognitive view of the processes involved.

Heron brings in the role of feelings and emotion to learning. His upward hierarchy of 'whole-person learning' is grounded in the affective mode moving progressively into imaginal, conceptual and the practical. The affective mode he sees providing emotional confidence, fulfilment and positive arousal. He proposes "the importance of emotionality in learning is fundamental" (Heron 1992)

 A broad perspective on the affective dimension of learning is provided by Heron (1992) in his use of the term Emotional Competence. Heron goes on to say that ' Emotional Competence means many things, for example "being able to identify, own and accept emotions of all kinds, and to switch and redirect emotional states.... being able to spot institutionalised and professionalised forms of displacement.... being able to supportively confront other people who are unawarely acting out their denied distress in negative and disruptive forms of behaviour".

Heron suggests that to be truly self directed in the sense of being consciously intentional about their learning, the individual needs to become aware of their own drivers that derive from long past repressed emotional defences.

Heron's broad view of emotional competence provides insights into the dynamics of how a range of factors may be at work in individuals during any process of learning. Other work provides particular insights into important areas of people's feelings relevant to SDL. These can either result negatively in resistance, manifested in a range of defensive mechanisms, or contributing positively to motivation and a desire that results in learning

2.4.2 Self Esteem and Self Efficacy

The role of self esteem and self efficacy been extensively researched in relation to SDL (Hoban and Hoban 2004).

Self efficacy (Bandura 1977), is defined as one's confidence that he or she has the ability to complete a specific task successfully and this confidence relates to performance and persistence in a variety of endeavours. Perceived self-efficacy refers to people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives.

It is a construct that combines a number of attributes. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes. They include:

* cognitive,

* motivational,

* affective, and

* selection processes

A strong sense of efficacy enhances accomplishment and personal well-being in many ways. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided.

Such an outlook fosters intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities. They set themselves challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them. They heighten and sustain their efforts in the face of failure. They quickly

recover their sense of efficacy after failures or setbacks. They attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skills which are acquirable. They approach threatening situations with assurance that they can exercise control over them.

In contrast, people who doubt their capabilities shy away from difficult tasks which they view as personal threats. They have low aspirations and weak commitment to the goals they choose to pursue.

When faced with difficult tasks, they dwell on their personal deficiencies, on the obstacles they will encounter, and all kinds of adverse outcomes rather than concentrate on how to perform successfully. They slacken their efforts and give up quickly in the face of difficulties. They are slow to recover their sense of efficacy following failure or setbacks. Because they view insufficient performance as deficient aptitude it does not require much failure for them to lose faith in their capabilities. They fall easy victim to stress and depression.

From reviewing some of the identified attributes of highly self-directed individuals the role of self esteem and self efficacy would seem to be highly influential (Guglielmino 1977).

A central feature for any Self directed learning needs to explore our understanding of ' self ' itself and whether this has any bearing on conditions that result in SDL or not.

Sartre (in Rowan 2001) makes the point that in an important sense ' Our projects are the most important part of our self structure. What I want to do, what I want to be, what I want to happen – that is what defines my direction. It arises out of my values, my needs, my wants'

Individuals may vary widely in their sense of self, and this may result in varying reactions to identical circumstances. It is likely to be a major factor in their motivation and readiness for SDL.

2.5 Critical Reflection as a key aspect of SDL

Another major strand I discovered in my search on individually derived conditions that I felt to be relevant to SDL was transformational learning theory.

Transformational learning is about changes in the fundamental ways individuals see themselves and the world in which they live.

"Perspective transformation is the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrating perspective; and, finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings." (Mezirow 1991).

The theory says that for learners to change their *meaning structures* - that is, beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions - they must engage in critical reflection on their experiences, which in turn leads to a transformation of perspective.

It appeared to me that the process of critical reflection could therefore an important condition at an individual level for higher levels of self direction in learning.

2.6 Critical Perspectives on SDL

There has been a critical perspective growing of the Self Directed Learning School, much of it from within, seeking to take more account of what can be perceived as the naivity of the purist perspective of SDL. A leading proponent of this more critical line of thinking has been Stephen Brookfield who warned of the dangers in adult education provision and "the misguided tendency of humanistic adult educators to depoliticise and decontextualise all practice into a concern for personal growth". (Brookfield 1993)

Criticisms of SDL centre around a number of themes. The first of these is the over-emphasis on individualism, which can have its darker side. This is to only be concerned with narrow self-interest driven by our instincts and desires, a

narcissistic self absorption "where each self is seen as pursuing its own trajectory, accompanied by its own little planetary system of values, seeking to negotiate the best possible deal from the various 'relationships' that come along". (Ehrenreich 1990).

If self direction in learning focuses on the need for people to be responsible for framing their own choices and taking their own decisions rather than ceding these responsibilities to others, then issues of control in relation to learning have to be considered. A second area of criticism of the SDL school is that its discourse has become disconnected from questions of power and control over learning. "Who has the final say in framing the range and type of decisions that are to be taken, and in establishing the pace, and mechanisms for decision making, indicates where control really resides" (Brookfield 1993). He raises the question of how control can be exercised authentically in a culture which is itself, highly controlling.

He proposes an inauthentic form of control where adults feel that they are framing and making decisions about their learning, while steering clear of things that we sense are deviant or controversial. "Then we are controlled rather than in control". He goes on to say "how easily external control can be unwittingly internalised in the form of an automatic self-censorship". In this people can perpetuate external control as they may appear to be working on learning projects that are of their own choice, but will already have absorbed and be taking account of implicit assumptions and values in the culture.

Antonacoppoulou (2002) undertook a study of the way individual managers learn in a research study across 3 major retail banking organisations. Her study suggested the close interdependence between individual and organisational learning. "The organisation culture, even when it promotes learning, essentially discourages learning because the boundaries it sets limit human agency in the process of learning". She puts it "if managers were genuinely encouraged to learn than chances are their learning could throw into question the institutionalised norms, regimes of practices and policies within their employing organisation and in relation to trends in the sector. Instead, the impact of their

learning on the organisation is limited because they seek to learn in ways that maintains, rather than challenges the status quo".

Garrick further contends that principles of 'learner autonomy' and 'self direction' are fundamentally flawed in the context of workplace learning, where "subtle and discursive corporate influences and political coercion often apply" (Garrick 1998).

The other area that can have an impact upon the degree of authentic self direction in learning is control over resources. Resources in organisations include financial, time and access to information. For example for learners to exercise control in any meaningful sense over their learning, they must not be so buried under the demands of their daily work that they have no time or energy that are required to engage in shaping and making decisions about their own development.

It appears that organisations, although they want more self reliance, initiative and leadership from their managers, the way the system and processes in organisations operate, often achieve the opposite.

2.7   Management and Organisation Theory Perspectives

Criticisms of SDL seem to centre around lack of sufficient account taken of environmental factors including those of power and control. I next looked to see what the areas of research on management and organisational development had to say about self directed learning, particularly in relation to the organisational environment.

2.7.1 Management Theory

There is a considerable body of writing and research in management literature that is concerned with learning and self directed learning or "self development" for managers.

Pedler describes self developing managers as those who "are self motivated, enthusiastic and energetic, active in seeking and creating learning opportunities etc".

Antonacopoulou (1995) describes what she calls "philomathic" managers as "the individuals that are appreciative of the need to learn and engage in a conscious and active learning process to improve themselves, beyond the boundaries of the context in which they operate." They may demonstrate this attitude by seeking exposure within the job, aiming to make the most out of the learning resources they have available and taking personal initiative.

Thus there has been a great deal of research into the kinds of personal attributes that tend to be associated with higher levels of self direction in individuals. Currently strengths in the area of self direction figure largely in assessment processes to establish managers' potential for growth to be future leaders of the organisation.

2.7.2 Environmental influences on SDL

The constructivist philosophy, and indeed the body of literature on SDL acknowledges the importance of environmental factors on SDL. For example, Knowles asserts the paramount role of climate setting in organisations where he sees it as " probably the most crucial element in the whole process of HRD" (Knowles 1990).

Similarly, the socially constructivist philosophy suggests that "knowledge is constructed from experience, and that learning is an active process in which meaning is negotiated through the sharing of multiple perspectives where we change our internal representations through collaborative learning". (Caffarella and Merriam 1999). Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) further claim that self directed learning cannot be divorced from the social context in which it occurs.

Brookfield (1994) defined learning as culturally formed and bound and that the self is not free from cultural influences "It has not sprung fully formed out of a

political vacuum. It is rather, an embedded self, a self whose instincts, values, needs and beliefs have been shaped by the surrounding culture".

2.7.3 Conditions in the organisational environment

In organisational contexts the work of Argyris and Schon on double loop learning and action science has been highly influential. Their theory on the dynamics of organisational learning (Argyris and Schon) is a rigorous process and approach that relies on critical reflection or an inquiry process that questions underlying assumptions, values and beliefs.

It takes place at an individual level but is powerful in a social context where it leads to 'organisational learning'. Double loop learning takes critical reflection forwards into action and certainly requires and stimulates greater self direction. In this they postulate that the organisational climate has a major impact.

Argyris and Schon describe two organisational learning climates they label as **Model I and Model II. Model I** climates are characterised by values such as unilateral control, secrecy, and win/ lose thinking. These operating values are usually implicit and assumed, and not held up for examination in the day to day. **Model II** climates, by contrast, help people make their assumptions and beliefs public so their thinking can be examined. Such an open inquiry process cannot take place in an atmosphere of defensiveness and control. Creation of a supportive climate is essential to enable double loop learning.

Psychoanalytic perspectives on organisations suggest some of the underlying dynamics of the prevalent Model I organisational climate. This perspective suggests that Model I behaviours derive from a social defence system that evolves to meet an individual and collective need to reduce anxiety." (de Board 1978).

If organisational climates are predominantly Model I this suggests the existence of constraints on the individual that may well work against creating conditions for SDL. Certainly this corresponds with my own observations of how hierarchiarcal organisations tend to operate, and the gap that exists between

'espoused theory' of Model II thinking and the Model I reality or 'theory in practice'.

Much of the literature on learning in organisations implicitly. if not always explicitly, proposes Model II thinking as an underlying condition for a climate that supports learning. Mumford provides a list of factors which, in his view, should be present in any organisation that encourages learning:

- Encouraging managers to identify their own learning needs
- Reviewing regularly performance and learning
- Encouraging managers to set learning goals for themselves
- Providing feedback both on performance and learning
- Reviewing managers' performance in developing others
- Assisting mangers to see learning opportunities on the job
- Providing new experiences from which managers can learn
- Providing or facilitating the use of training on the job
- Tolerating some mistakes
- Encouraging the review and planning of learning activities
- Challenging the traditional way of doing things

2.6.4 Managers holding the tension between organisational and individual pressures

The body of literature on how individual managers learn and the factors that facilitate or inhibit learning take a predominantly individual-based psychological perspective. However managers will feel particular pressures and tensions, as they try and balance their own and personal needs with the demands on them to represent an organisational set of task related needs.

A distillation of main factors from research in the field has been undertaken by Antonacopoulou (1995). Adding this to Mumford's list of enabling factors creates an interesting 'framework' of vulnerabilities to self directed learning.

Table 2: Organisational Vulnerabilities to managers' learning

Personal Factors	Organisational Factors

Perceptions of the need to learn	Internal organisation of work
Perception of the ability to learn	Organisational systems, e.g. training
Cultural values and beliefs	Culture and climate
Emotions-feelings / reactions	Decision making processes
Attitude towards up-dating	Communication and feedback
Intellectual-mental capability	Politics and aversion to risk
Age	Instability and change
Memory	Economic position, competition
Ability to communicate	Power and control

More applied research has been undertake by Antonacopoulou in her study of the nature of management learning in three major retail banks. The complex range of influences on learning in an organisational context are illustrated in the diagram below. Antonacopoulou's research findings show that "individual identities of what it means to learn are the product of learning practices that transcend across a number of levels (national, industry, sector, organisation, group, individual)." (Antonacopoulou 2002) From the findings of her research she proposes that "individual learning in some respects is as good as the organisation context in which it takes place".

Figure 3: Multiple Levels of Learning and their Interactions
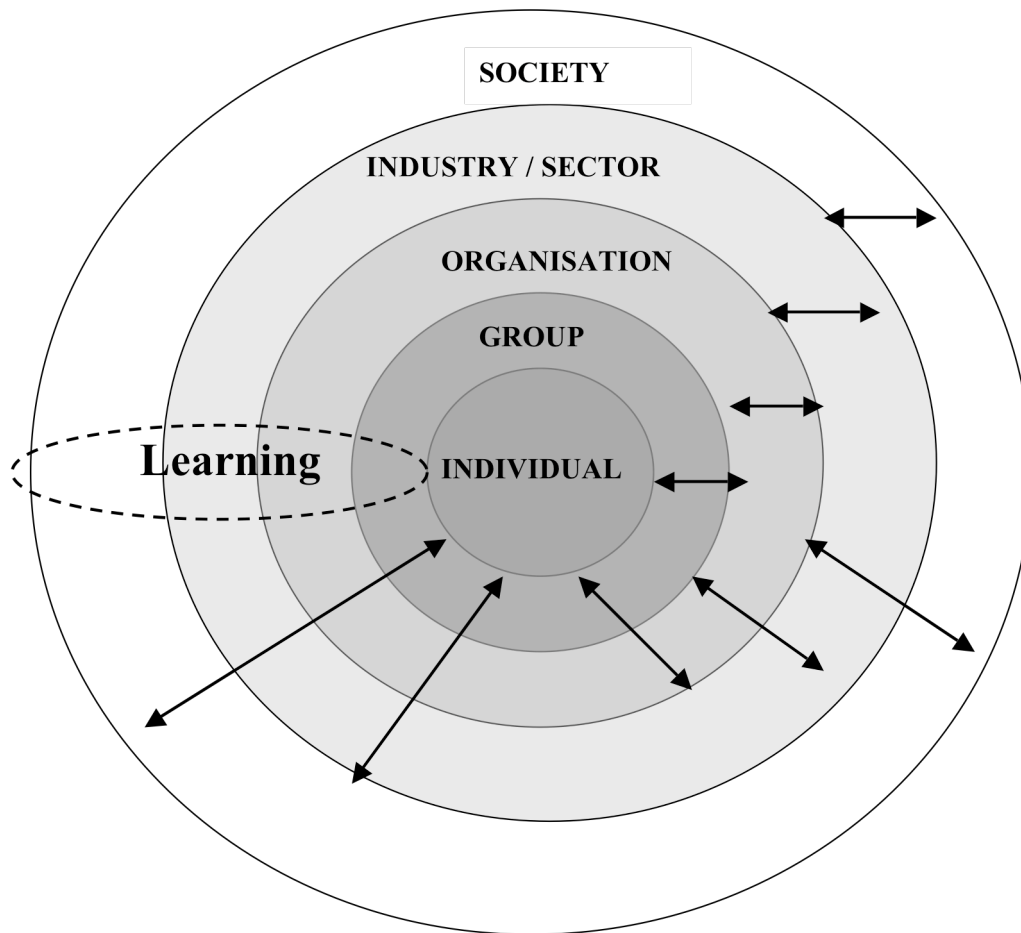
2.7   Workplace Learning - additional perspectives

A body of research I came across in my literature search that I considered potentially relevant, particularly to the organisational context for self directed learning, was that of 'learning in the workplace'.

2.7.1 Tensions with formal and informal learning: Marsick and Watkins (1990) describe the area of informal learning as learning that is 'experience based, non-routine, and often tacit' They extend Kolb's concept of experiential learning and explore more explicitly how people can be helped to learn more effectively from their experience in workplace settings.

According to Mocker and Spear (1982) the organising definition of degree of formality is the extent to which the learner has control over both the objective and means of learning which they equate to self directed learning.

In self-directed learning the learner controls both the objectives and means of learning. While in informal learning the organisation controls the objective, but the learner controls the means. In their research and work on informal learning Marsick and Watkins are less concerned with who controls the learning and more with understanding how people learn using informal approaches, and for "the necessity of a learning perspective in training"

They go on to emphasise that In self directed learning a high degree of learner intentionality is a crucial factor. Informal learning on the other hand can be planned but includes learning that is not designed or intentional.

In workplace learning, learning is prompted, at least in part, by the needs of the organisation and sometimes "by the direct request or command by others."

According to Marsick and Watkins their research shows that the organisational context influences the learning process. They believe in this context there are two types of self directed learning that are somewhat interdependent; "learning directed at one's own self development, and learning in pursuit of collective needs within a group or organisation".

Marsick developed a theory of workplace learning drawn from the work of Habermas and Mezirow. Learning in the workplace, according to Marsick, integrates three domains of learning:

- **instrumental,**
- **dialogic, and**
- **self reflective**.

Instrumental learning is focused on task related skills and is usually behavioural or cognitive in its approach. Dialogic learning is social and contextual and refers to creation of consensual norms, which in organisations

are translated into the organisational culture, or the set of implicit assumptions around 'how things happen and get done round here'. Self-reflective learning is described as the way in which people learn to understand themselves.

It is possible to learn separately in each of the 3 domains. However, In the workplace setting learners often set out to solve a task-related, instrumental problem and end up encountering both organisational norms and self perceptions, for example norms carried over from family, upbringing and ethnic background that may be unconscious, taken for granted and unquestioned. However these will influence how people perceive, question, evaluate, interpret and judge their experiences. There is a parallel here with Bateson's three levels of learning.

Marsick and Watkins believe that collective learning is the distinguishing feature of workplace learning "because people learn through interaction in bounded social groups that are connected by organisational goals" (Marsick and Watkins 1990)

The kind of task requirements today's management roles are increasingly non-routine where the context is complex and where the nature of inquiry remains "messy, multivariate, back-forth-many-stages-all-at-once" (McClellan 1983).

It is this persistently non-routine characteristic of informal learning that requires the need for skill in critical reflection.

Characteristics that Marsick and Watkins describe as enhancing workplace learning, whether formal or informal, are proactivity, critical reflection and creativity. These are also attributes that are found in highly self directed learners. Informal learning theory and practice is imbued with humanistic values emphasising "learner-centred generation of ideas, peer interaction, a positive self concept and creative imagination."

Self directed learning in the workplace is seen by some as essential to employee participation. "An environment needs to be created that encourages

informal learning. The environment would make resources available to learners such as access to consultant help; legitimise discussion of how best to solve problems, would tolerate the extensive time required for consensus; it would encourage widespread networking; it would make important a learning relationship with supervisors." (Munnelly C. 1987)

They suggest that self direction can be encouraged by helping learners to become more self directed in planning their careers and development and helping them to learn more effectively.

Marsick and Watkins come from an educational and training and development perspective. They do not take account of political factors. In their definition of informal learning the organisation is definitely a stakeholder in the individual's learning and learning objectives are in a major part at least "owned" by the organisation.

The nature of Power as a dynamic that operates in organisations is undoubtedly a major influence on the extent to which individuals perceive they have control over the what and how of their own learning. The organisation has a legitimate stake in the 'what' people need to learn to perform effectively in their roles. The negotiation of how that works in practice often comes down to the relationship between the line manager who is acting as the agent of the organisation, and the individual.

However, according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) which has recently carried out research (2007) on the role of line managers in training, learning and development, this research shows that 23% of respondents feel that line managers don't take their learning and development responsibilities seriously.

2.7.2 Research into Career Learning: A more recent research project into early career learning at work provides an additional perspective into what it describes as the main factors influencing workplace learning.

This review of learning in the workplace helped me to triangulate, or cross check, the thinking I was developing from my reviews of other areas. The emphasis on the need to consider conditions that were complex and often intangible, dynamic and personal was consistent with the picture emerging from other fields of my inquiry.

 The TLRP funded LiNEA project, Early Career Learning at Work is a longitudinal study of the learning of groups of newly qualified nurses, graduate trainee engineers and trainee accountants. Research was carried out over a three year period using a combination of observation visits in the workplace and in depth interviews with research participants. Research objectives were to answer 3 questions:

What is being learned?
How is it being learned?
What are the main factors affecting this learning in the workplace?

The research identified two significant groups of factors:

- **Learning Factors**, and
- **Context Factors**

Learning factors were defined as those that effected participants' commitment to their work, to their colleagues, and to their employers. Context factors were those that were found to most directly affect the Learning factors.

Figure 1: Learning Factors Identified in LiNEA Research Project
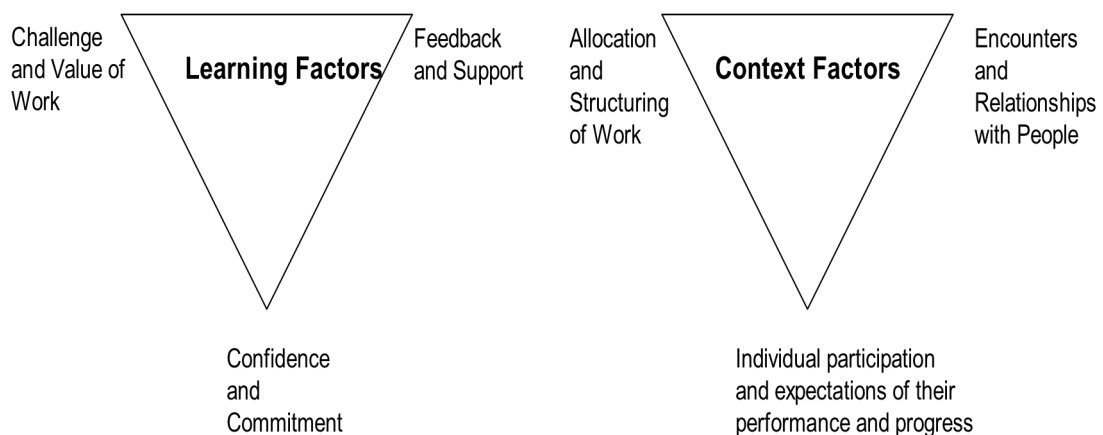
Learning factors include what the researchers describe as the overwhelming importance of **confidence.** Much learning at work occurs through doing things and being proactive in seeking learning opportunities, and this requires confidence.

The research also noted that confidence came from successfully meeting challenges in one's work, while the confidence to take on such challenges depended on the extent to which learners felt supported in that endeavour.

Shown above is the triangular relationship between challenge, support and confidence (Erault et al. 2000). This ties in with practitioner frameworks, particularly in the area of talent management that show the importance of a mix of challenge and support in developing high potential staff.

The research further specified what they meant by "confidence", which came closest to Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, that is a context-specific concept related to peoples' self belief in relation to carrying out a particular task or successfully perform a role.

It is not a general attribute like "self esteem". For some participants confidence related more to relationships, than to the work itself. Examples would be feeling confident about the support of their working colleagues in more senior, junior or parallel jobs. This depended on whether they perceived their more significant working relationships as mutually supportive, generally critical, or downright hostile.

At early career stages, feedback was seen to be highly important, together with perceived value of the work itself, as additional motivational factors. Commitment to learning, which, together with confidence, affects the extent to which the early career professionals are proactive in taking advantage of the learning opportunities available to them. Moreover concerns about career progress that arose from inadequate feedback tended to weaken novice's motivation and to reduce their commitment to their organisation.

The researchers extended their model to include a second triangle focused on context factors that influenced the learning factors of the first triangle.

The allocation and structuring of work was found to be important in its impact on learning because it affected:
1) the difficulty or challenge of the work,
2) the extent to which it was individual or collaborative, and
3) the opportunities for meeting, observing and working alongside people who had more or different expertise, and for forming relationships that might provide feedback and support.

They found it useful to make a distinction between quick feedback on performance that supports learning on how to do particular tasks, and a more

considered, deliberative kind of **feedback on general progress**. One of the findings from the research was that the second form of feedback, usually associated with appraisal was wanted by individuals but rarely met to their satisfaction.

2.8   Overall Conclusions - Review of the Literature

My review of the literature provided valuable understanding and insights into the conditions that stimulate SDL in organisations..

2.8.1 An Emerging Consensus:

I believe it is possible to see signs of an emerging consensus about the conditions that stimulate SDL in organisations, both those residing in the individual and their response to environmental influences

Although there are different emphases depending on the particular interests of the writer, around:

- self direction as a fundamental motivation for adults
- self direction as a set of learner personal attributes
- self direction as an intentional learning process,
- self direction as an instructional process used by facilitators and teachers to aid others to be self directed in their learning

There are also some practical semantic constraints in that use of language itself may refer to similar conditions but use different words. This review began to form the possibility of some form of overview, or integrative, framework which I developed later in the Inquiry.

2.8.2 Practical relevance to the Practitioner

I found the fields **Adult Learning and Education** and **Workplace Learning** most directly relevant to the context of working with managers of all the theoretical perspectives I considered on the nature of SDL in an organisational context.

The **constructivist** frame seems to have most relevance where learning is an active process involving multiple perspectives and where meaning and interpretation has to be shared as part of everyday working.

Behavioural and cognitive frames have relevance to the more structured task focused aspects of the management role where there is a need to set goals, structure the task, and obtain feedback to measure progress.

In the context of the complex requirements of the typical task and relationship environment managers operate in, although organisations will have an important stake in the 'what' of learning, there is a high degree of individual discretionary choice of action.

2.8.3 Individual perception and experience as the driver

With Self directed learning, only the individual, by definition, can direct their own learning. The ability to self direct is therefore determined by the degree to which the 'self ' has developed its own sense of direction and autonomy, as opposed to 'other' direction. I found little in the literature that was based on research into the perspective of the learners themselves.

I found only the field of adult learning with its emphasis on the learner as the starting point has really put forwards a coherent, practical, theory about the factors that stimulate greater self direction. These are in creating a climate for learning involving people in the planning and decision making around learning objectives, and the planning and implementation of their learning.

Theory around Self Directed Learning is based on this premise. Where outside teaching or facilitation is involved the teacher/ facilitator takes a "helping" role, facilitating learner discovery for themselves. Assumptions of this school are that learner motivation is governed by self actualising principles and the role of any additional party is to help the person to come to their own conclusions.

I have concluded that the organisation can have no direct impact on self directed learning by definition. However the organisational environment can have a major influence on people's perceptions and choices with regard to their learning.

There are connections here from adult learning teaching theory and practice to learning in the organisational context. Managers have a great deal of discretion about what and how they learn within parameters the organisation lays down and standards of performance required.

2.8.4 The interaction between individual and organisational conditions:

My research of the literature showed the role of organisational climate and particularly how prevalent organisation cultures may interact with self directed learning.

The nature of managers' learning today is also likely to be largely informal in the day to day. Similarly, current research into workplace learning shows a complex range of individual and task / performance related influences. The realities of power and control over learning and how these operate in practice also are likely to have an impact on SDL.

The individual processes of critical reflection and inquiry can support change in these cultures through challenging habitual assumptions.

In the context of managers in the workplace self direction cannot be unrelated to the task environment. Effective self direction has to mean taking more initiative in managing one's own learning needs in relation to the task environment. The task environment will include relationships with others and managing relationships effectively is increasingly important in today's working environment.

3. Research Methodology

The opportunity to carry out some applied research was an important further aspect of my Inquiry. It would be valuable to test whether frameworks derived from the Literature Review worked in practice.

Similarly, it would be valuable to see whether an approach through a more applied approach could add further insights than the theoretical frameworks alone gave, for example into how the more implicit and informal nature of SDL operates from an individual perspective.

3.1   Influences and Assumptions

My literature review had also helped me to clarify how to approach my research.

An Inquiry into the conditions that stimulate greater self-direction in learning in organisations needed to consider a mix of individually created, as well as organisationally created conditions. Far from it being an absolute divide that may be more one way or the other, the boundaries between the two are highly permeable. What is individual, and what is organisational, can be difficult to deduce.

Taking a constructivist viewpoint the perspective that I believe is more realistic and relevant for my inquiry is the question **'what is the individual's perception of organisational conditions?'**

The methodology would also need to encourage a **high degree of reflection** from the participants to uncover the conditions relevant to their learning.

Much learning is implicit or taken for granted (Erault 2000). I felt I needed to allow for the fact that individuals may not necessarily be articulately aware of the what or how of their learning.

The complexity and range of the data likely to be involved did not lend itself to a highly structured research process. Also, given that I was researching self directed learning the nature of the data I collected was by definition highly subjective and likely to be unique to each person.

I needed to find a way of researching something that people would not necessarily be able to easily or immediately relate to. People may have difficulty responding to simple standard questions about their learning.

3.2   Consideration of Research Options:

With all of this in mind I considered a number of research options.

A structured questionnaire I judged would not provide the depth and richness of material I was seeking. It would also pre-judge types of influence on peoples' learning experiences and I wanted to avoid this. I wanted to understand the personal constructs people used themselves in reflecting on and describing their learning experiences and the influences on these.

I judged that a group research setting, such as a focus group, would not be appropriate as the material I needed required people to be very disclosing about some experiences they may be reluctant to share.

I also wanted to use an approach that would emphasised critical reflection or as Mezirow explains "becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a

more inclusive, discriminating, and integrating perspective; and, finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings". (Mezirow 1990)

An interview method suggested greater potential to work in a way conducive to creating an environment appropriate to this reflection process.

I also saw this akin to facilitating individual learning where there would be the need to be able to relate and connect to participants' experiences in order to encourage them to disclose the quality of information I required.

3.3   My chosen approach

Qualitative research approaches appeared most relevant to the nature of my inquiry. I was aware that it is in the very nature of Qualitative approaches that there is an important element of discovery involved that is a key part of the approach. I did not expect to completely plan every aspect. However, I was able to plan an initial approach.

Having explored a number of approaches to qualitative methodology I found Patton (1990) provided a particularly useful framework on qualitative design issues, which I use here to describe the process by which I designed my research approach. The steps of this process I use as sub-headings in this section, but for ease of reference I show them as a single list in **Appendix A**.

3.3.1   What is the primary purpose of the study?

The primary purpose of my study is to inquire into ' **What are the conditions that stimulate self direction in learning in organisations? '**

This is stated as a broad purpose. It required further definition to ensure practical implementation through applied research.

3.3.2 What is the focus of the study?

Patton is clear that the issue of focus is about balance and trade offs in the research design; " In many ways a major trade off between quantitative methods and qualitative methods is a trade off between breadth and depth. …… Qualitative methods permit the researcher to study selected issues in depth, and detail; the fact that data collection is not constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth and detail of qualitative data." (Patton 1990).

It was clear that my primary concern was to produce information that was more applied than theoretical. My interest is about working with SDL in practice, rather than a laboratory. The complexity of factors indicated moreover that I would need to be open in my approach rather than fully predetermined.

I needed to focus my data on the matter of learning, but keep open to whatever emerged as reports about each individual's experiences of learning. My challenge was to come up with a research design that could capture individuals' unique experiences and have sufficient breadth to allow the possibility of some aggregation of data that may have wider implications.

I was interested to explore whether an interview could be used to access information to understand and map the wide range of conditions that stimulate self directed learning in organisations.

My Inquiry could be undertaken using a number of approaches. It would also be possible to combine a short quantitative measure to provide some cross checking.

I was also becoming interested in the possibility of building a more integrated framework of theoretical conditions affecting SDL from the participant's perspective as part of my work for this inquiry. My literature search had not found a single theoretical framework, rather a complexity of perspectives, and it had become apparent that the conditions affecting SDL might appear from any of these sources.

3.3.3   What are the units of analysis?

Patton (1990) emphasises " each unit of analysis implies a different kind of data collection, a different focus for the analysis of data, ... for example, what is happening to individuals in a setting and how individuals are affected by the setting. Individual variation would be the primary qualitative research issue".

The Individual, and the comments they offer concerning their experiences, and conditions relevant to their learning will need to be treated as unique. They may be reported in language that is not identical to, or that doesn't correspond simply with the terminology of any framework, but where meaning can be the same, even though the words were different.

Their perception, words and language are the priority. "The task is for them to express it. It is for the researcher to understand what they are saying." (Patton 1990) It was important to approach any data gathering in a manner without being constrained by predetermined terminology, or categories, of analysis.

In line with my inquiry objectives I judged that my prime units of analysis would be information that indicates a condition having an effect on self direction in learning.

3.3.4   What will be the sampling strategy or strategies?

 " .... a sampling strategy must be made to fit the purpose of the study, the resources available, the questions being asked, and the constraints being faced. " (Patton 1990)

 With regard to sample size, Patton again emphasise that: " The validity, meaningfulness and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/ analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size.

My aim therefore was to access potentially information rich cases where relatively high levels of learning and SDL might have occurred because of other criteria available.

I intended to select a representative organisation as a source of potential cases that would offer some comparison across all organisations.

It would also increase the possibilities of sourcing people with experience of typical organisation contexts.

It would be important to be able to have access to a sample of people who would be likely, by other measures, to have some experience and capability in self directed learning, but who are not exceptional enough to be different from what may also be widely typical – Patton refers to this approach as **intensity sampling**.

Similarly, some selection of any sample should be used to ensure a measure of **maximum variation sampling**, where the data analysis would offer two kinds of findings:
1. High quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniqueness, and
2, Important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity.

I had the opportunity to approach a range of possible organisations. One of these I was working for on a range of development projects, the Department of Education and Skills (DfES, now the Department for Children, Schools and Families, or DCFS). I was working on a development programme aimed at middle managers, and I requested and was granted permission to approach past participants.

See **Appendix B**, which was my formal written request, having had conversations and agreement in principle with members of HR.

Another element in the sampling approach would be to add an element of random selection. Once the organisation had given me permission to approach past participants of the development programme I then sent out an e mail

asking for volunteers and my selection was on the basis of a first come first served basis. See **Appendix C.**

My aim was to obtain a sufficient number (5-7) individual case studies about what individuals reported had been conditions that have affected self direction in their learning in their organisation.

3.3.5　What type of data will be collected?

The primary data collected would be reports from individual's about conditions which stimulate self directed learning in organisations – according to their own personal experiences about their own learning.

This would then enable a comparison to the framework of factors arising from the literature review.

It would also enable comparison of similarities and differences between individuals in their experiences of conditions.

My applied research would also rely on two types of data, individual interviews and a quantitative questionnaire.

1. Use of an in depth interview

This method would be used to obtain, and record, comments made by individuals about key experiences they have had in their careers, and what conditions they believe have most influenced their development. I did not want to pre-judge the nature of their learning.

In particular, I proposed the use of an interview guide approach. This involves outlining a set of issues that are shared in advance of the interview. This serves as a guide and kind of checklist and is very much an outline. This would enable the flexibility required to adapt to the interviewee, the context of the individual interview, and yet provide some standardisation to obtain the similar information from different people.

2. Use of a quantitative measure on use of self directed learning.

As well as data from the interview I had in my research discovered the Guglielmino Self Directed Learning Readiness Scale questionnaire. This questionnaire was developed in the 1970's and was validated with an initial group of researchers and teachers who had an active interest in the newly emerging field of self directed learning which included the likes of Knowles and Tough. I decided to use this in conjunction with data from the interviews to see whether there was any correlation.

This would provide a simple measure of the extent to which a person uses self direction in their learning and not the specific conditions that affected their use of SDL, but it would provide some data on whether in overall terms the individual was high, average, or low in their use of SDL; and thus whether the comments they reported about conditions were more or less than might be expected.

3.3.6 What controls will be exercised

Although my approach overall was that of a naturalistic inquiry, I incorporated into my methodology a number of controls that would enable me to have some confidence in the information reported.

A. Individual Sample Selection: Overall, individuals would be selected for the interview on the basis of a balance between some selected criteria, and also some random criteria.

- Selecting a typical organisation to agree to make people available. Because of my work as a practitioner, I had the opportunity to approach a range of possible organisations.. I approached a major public sector organisation I judged to be representative of a large number of organisations

- Selecting managers with a track record of effectiveness and responsibility who therefore had some proven level of capability

- Selecting people with some demonstrated interest in learning. I agreed with the DFES to source my sample from people who had recently taken part in an internal Management Development Programme within the last two years.

- Use of random selection criteria from volunteers was more likely to lead to motivation and interest from participants. I agreed a standard letter of invitation with the DFES that would be sent to sets of individuals on a programme timing basis, working from the earliest attendees approximately 18 months ago progressively to more recently. I accepted the first people to respond to the invitation.

B. A quantitative measure would check the level of self direction indicated.
- Guglielmino's SDLRS completed questionnaire would provide a measure of readiness for self directed learning that could be compared to interview responses

C. Ensuring appropriate control was exercised during the Interview.
It was similarly important to strike an appropriate balance in the interview method used.

- An interview guide provided some general focus and structure to the interview. At the start of the interview it was important to set the context and general purpose of the interview

  This was set formally in the written invitation and brief, and reiterated at the start . The primary method was to ask about the interviewee's career experiences – asking them to go through critical incidences that they believe have influenced the progress of their career, and what factors might have lay behind / helped to make key things happen.

- It was also important to demonstrate some interest respect and empathy for their story as it developed.

- Interviews were conducted in a spare office /room onsite at their offices.

- I exercised careful control of questions asked and information suggested or introduced. Further questioning was limited to probing and asking for further clarification about what they said happened, and why they believe it was important, and how it worked exactly.

- I also considered that I would be able to practice, and build up appropriate my interview technique on one or two 'dry run' interviews.

3.3.7 What analytical approach/approaches will be used?

My expectations from this design would be that at the very minimum I would access basic information about conditions that stimulated SDL in organisational contexts.

- A qualitative case record would be completed for each interview transcript highlighting comments relevant to identifying conditions stimulating SDL.

  If the data was sufficient, I further expected to carry out further analysis. I was aware that relying on an Interview transcript may lose some of the data experienced during the interview process itself, eg inflexions; non verbal reactions etc…

- This case record could be used to complete an analysis, grouping items that could be ascribed as conditions into an integrative framework of conditions based on the interview data.

- *   I would also consider the conditions coming out of my Literature Review. This could then be used as a check on the information coming out of the Interviews about conditions.

- I would use cross case analysis to compile my understanding of the conditions being reported, using comparative analysis.

- I also aimed to create a more verbatim framework of the reported conditions between cases. This would be useful as a summary of key conditions, in language that was more user friendly, and designed for understanding by people in organisations. I fully expected that language used to describe conditions that affect SDL was not the same language used in theoretical frameworks.

- If necessary, I also expected to be able to illustrate any interpretation of interviewee commentary about conditions through using samples of verbatim comments / interview behaviour from the transcripts.

- The SDLRS data would provide a comparable Quantitative measure of individual readiness for self direction. This would be applicable at an individual level and across the sample.

3.3.8 How will validity of and confidence in the findings be addressed?

The careful attention paid to the design of access to a sample of cases, and use of multiple methods of analysis will add to the validity of the findings.

- The sampling strategy has a strong element of random selection. This will provide compelling evidence should any patterns emerge.

- Individual Case Reports will demonstrate the range and extent of conditions reported in terms of the integrated framework that emerges from the interviews. Samples of interviewee commentary relevant to the findings will be illustrated.

- Compilation of the reported conditions from the interviews overall will allow for comparative analysis between individuals and will help add emphasis to the qualitative findings

Triangulation through the use of a psychometric will provide a cross check on whether the outcome of the qualitative approach varies, or coincides with the outcome of this quantitative approach.

3.3.9   Time issues: when will the study occur? How will the study be sequenced or phased?

There were few time related factors relevant to the design. The most important time factor was negotiating and agreeing with the organisation for access to an appropriate sample. This involved contact with a range of different people in HR and participants through a number of stages.

3.3.10   How will logistics and practicalities be handled?

The Interview itself was essentially a one off meeting, freely given, and easily arranged.

The target population for my research was all past participants from a leadership development programme. These were all staff at the same level.

Once HR had consented to let me have access, they provided me with names of past programme participants to approach directly.

3.3.11   How will ethical issues and matters of confidentiality be handled?

Appendix E provides details of the essential contracting process used, which gave assurances about confidentiality and use of data. As part of this participants had to sign a consent form

3.3.12   What resources will be available? What will the study cost?

The main resources were my own time, and travel costs. Some personal expenditure was incurred on purchasing the SDLRS questionnaires and quantitative analysis together with transcription services.

3.4   The Interview Process

As the interview would be my main source of data I reflected on how the interview needed to work as a means of collecting the kind of data I was looking for.

I was as much looking to develop the interview process itself rather than just assess the data resulting from the interviews. As such it would be important to understand how the approach and interpersonal dynamics needed for such an interview to work.

The structure of the interview would also make an important contribution itself to analysis and Interpretation.

The timeline narrative of each interviewee's career experiences would provide a natural basic structure to the meeting. I had designed an outline question framework for the meeting itself. (See **Appendix D.**)

During the interview itself I focused on creating a climate and atmosphere of trust where the participant would feel sufficiently comfortable to relate their experiences.

I also used a digital voice recorder so I could fully concentrate on attending to the participant during the interview picking up on their cues, both verbal and non-verbal.

I began the meeting by outlining the purpose of my research, and emphasised again the confidentiality of the information. I said I would be providing the organisation with a summary of the main themes emerging from my research.

I started by saying that with most people the influences on their careers went right back to family and school where choices and influences started. I gave

some examples – e.g. parental influences, either positive or negative – influential teachers, role models, early subject or hobby interests.

I deliberately encouraged them to start their story prior to their formal career, and asked about early influences they could remember. This was to encourage a tone that was more overtly personal (rather than business, which they would have easily slipped into as their more usual mode in the interview context),

These may have shown early indicators of personal preferences, styles, influences which may have followed them into their careers. This would enable me to build a more inclusive atmosphere which would help them open up, both in terms of their self awareness, and about how they felt about their experiences. It would also be more likely to facilitate the critical reflection which I wanted to be part of the process.

Although I had a broad structure in mind, the interviews should be more like conversations with the participant doing most of the talking.

I can probe for more detail when issues arose that seemed to be of particular significance to them as influences. My intention was to help them explore the meaning of their experiences.

In effect, listening to the interview recordings, and reading the transcripts, afterwards, I was struck by the readiness to disclose a breadth and depth of information. At certain selective points I pick up and amplify points I sense that are important to the participant. In this way I validate their experiences and encourage them to open up and explore that experience in greater depth.

I planned during the interviews to seek to understand in particular the influences behind peoples' actions and choices. In particular I wanted to explore the interaction between their own personal influences and their perception of and response to their environment within the organisation, including their working relationships. In this way I wanted to lay a foundation for subsequent data analysis where I saw the relationship between internally generated influences

and those perceived as 'external' as being a central one to my inquiry question, and therefore to my analysis.

The context was an interview that broadly sequentially followed the progression of someone's career and the factors that they identified as helping or hindering their development. For each key event or stage, if not volunteered, I probed for the influences that lay behind these.

For example a typical career event is a change in job or role. I would probe around the reasons for that change, and how it came about. I was looking to establish the extent it came about because of what the individual made happen, and in what kind of way. What degree and nature of personal effort and energy was required? How did this fit in to their overall goals and way of thinking about their career and development?

3.5   Conclusions on methodology

I identify here some of the potential risks and limitations of my chosen approach, and how I sought to mitigate these.

My sample is small, and potentially biased towards the higher end of capability for SDL; so any findings would have to recognise this influence. Also the eventual sample was self selected on a "first come, first served" basis amongst a pool of people who had demonstrated an interest in their own development. I judged this was helpful in that it would be more likely to ensure the maximum amount of conditions possible within the limited context of the small sample.

The open ended nature of the interview meant that potentially there could be a variety in range of participant interview experience. I recognised the trade-off to be had between the more controlled and consistent test conditions of a more structured approach and the more open free-flowing interview I intended to use, aimed at capturing maximum possible material.

There was a risk of lack of clarity about exactly what I was researching and therefore dangers of participants not understanding it.

I had judged it best not to contaminate any findings by specific reference in the interviews to "self directed learning" or "conditions". Rather, I would see what emerged from the interviews. Likewise I had not established outcomes or measurement criteria to assess. Similarly, I had not pre selected any particular themes that had emerged from the literature search to compare my findings against.

The possibility of very different experiences, and perceptions, of my sample meant there could be a risk of no consistency of findings and therefore no analysis outside of individual cases possible.

I also recognised a potential limitation on the research being my own personal values and beliefs around SDL and that there was some risk of being selective and biased in how I perceived the data.

Use of a quantitative measure in Guglielmino's SDLRS was some cross check of validity and reliability on the level of self direction demonstrated by participants. This could be cross checked against the interview data.

In terms of the risk of participants' reactions to the research I was careful to position my research as an open ended inquiry with no "right" or "wrong" evaluative outcomes.

4.   Analysis and Interpretation

4.1   My approach to analysis and Interpretation:

Analysis and Interpretation became an important consideration at all stages of my applied research; not just at the conclusion of gathering the data.

Practical Interview Data lead to further Literature search: As the interviews started, I became increasingly aware that, although I could sense some of the theoretical perspectives implicit in what I was hearing, there were what felt like some big gaps. For example, I was hearing consistent themes in my early interviews around self confidence, feelings, and working relationships, that I had not initially come across in the literature. This had resulted in further literature search.

The Analysis and interpretation of Interview data also went through a number of progressive cycles. I quickly found that I was able to use the Interview to access what appeared to be a very rich source of data. However, even if a first, or even second interview provided a lot of material, I could not rely initially on this being consistent.

This began to open up more and more possibilities about what I could make of the data – exactly how to best analyse and interpret it. I found I was interpreting meaning as I progressed with my interviews as a way of making sense of the large amount of relevant data I was receiving

Significantly, the interview data also began to provide important perspective on the theoretical frameworks found in the Literature search. People did not use the terminology typically used in the Literature search in reporting and describing conditions. I was led to needing to make more sense of these differences. I began to see the literature search as another form of data that also that it needed to be an important part of my analysis and Interpretation.

4.2   Identifying Conditions from Transcript Analysis

I describe, below, the principal stages I went through in analysing, and interpreting the Interview data.

1. Early identification of key themes about conditions from informal Interview notes

As the interviews progressed I kept informal notes as I went of any key themes around conditions influencing peoples' development that appeared.

2. Starting a draft Framework of conditions arising from Interview data.

From my informal notes after three of my interviews I started to compile a draft framework of conditions. I listed two columns, one headed 'Individual' and one 'Organisational'. I then started to list the broad categories of condition as they had been emerging from the Interviews.

3. Confirming the data in the Interview Transcripts. When I received the first transcripts, I read them through and it confirmed my impressions of a wide range of conditions and a corresponding depth of description. See example of an excerpt from a raw transcript in **Appendix F**.

I now needed to find a way to make sense of both the quantity and wealth of data in terms of my analysis.

4. Identifying evidence of conditions in each Interview Transcript.

When I had all the transcripts I read though each of them and identified evidence relevant to conditions in each of them. See **Appendix G:** Example of initial analysis of relevant Transcript evidence.

I used a sequential numbering system, which also allowed me to differentiate between individual and organisational conditions.

5. Creating a participant Interpretation table. I then created a participant Interpretation table of the conditions reported for each interview transcript.

This was made up of the numbered conditions from the earlier annotated transcripts, divided into 2 columns – organisational and individual.

I used short hand descriptors in the participants' own words to create summaries of the conditions for each interview.

I also drafted what seemed to be emerging categories of conditions. This resulted in my first complete draft of the framework of conditions arising from the interview data. I describe this as the Overall Framework of Conditions.

See **Appendix H** for the full summaries for each of the 5 participants. I show an illustrative excerpt here in **Table 3** below:

Table 3: Initial categorisation of the conditions relevant to the type of evidence

PARTICIPANT A	
1. Individual Influences	**2. Organisational Influences**
1. Confidence building – learning new skills; comparatively no worse than peers! 2. Taking initiative – telling manager I want a move and what I want 3. Clarity about what I want and why 4. Approaching Heads of Profession directly to see if interested in skills / experience I have 5. Evolving what I do and don't like from experience. Changing preferences as I develop 6. Personal qualities early on in career – determined; happy to work on own 7. Feelings of competence 8. Ambition 9. Frustration from lack of progression – compared to others – they get promoted when I don't 10. Proactively influencing the organisation through getting together with peers to lobby on a collective issue 11. Making broader connections in the organisation – developing a reputation 12. Identifying next experience I want	1. Induction by Line Manager (LM) – very thorough but became limiting 2. Being spotted as having potential by manager 2 levels up. When current LM moved on given more senior level of work. 3. Working directly to more senior manager (2 levels up) 4. Work that played to my strengths and gave me opportunity to perform well 5. LM good at helping me think things through rather than come up with solutions 6. Incorporated what I liked from what my LM did into my own approach 7. Seeing broader impact of my work and value to our bigger business 8. LM interested / engaged in what I'm doing v. not! 9. Absence of feedback – don't know how I'm doing positive or negatively. Can't improve when I've no idea if what I'm doing is right 10. Input or expertise at times from others, when needed. 11. As LM of others – having to manage different people and situations – learning from key relationships 12. Exposure to stakeholders and our external environment

This made an easy to refer to summary that would quickly enable me to capture the essence of what was the meaning and context for the item subsequently in further analysis.

The numbers used on the table were the same as the numbered items on the transcript itself. This would mean I could easily check back on the exact wording used by the participant to describe the experience and draw on direct quotations.

I continued to refine my interview conditions framework as I immersed myself in the transcripts for my next stage of analysis.

I did not refer back to the framework derived from my literature search other than as a cross-check to see whether I was missing anything the data was telling me. I did not add anything that was not there. Indeed once I had done all the transcripts and saw that some of the conditions I had noted had only been mentioned by one individual I looked to integrate this as part of another category, rather than lose it altogether.

6. Checking how the Overall Framework of Conditions served as a basis for the analysis of each Transcript

I then went back through the transcripts with this **Overall Framework of Conditions** to check whether it served as a basis for identifying evidence of conditions.

For each numbered condition I made a note of the category it seemed to fit into in this **Overall Framework of Conditions**. If it didn't fit, and seemed to introduce another provisional condition, I added that to my framework. I did not at this stage want to exclude anything.

Some conditions I defined could be interpreted as one of a number of things. It could be an 'event' that stimulated a particular response from the participant. For example it could be a change in departmental structure, a change in manager, a change in existing job responsibilities, or new working relationships. Alternatively it could be a feeling or personal realisation, like feeling the need for a change or feeling 'stuck in a rut'. It could be a particular perception about the way things were in the organisation at a point in time for example the nature of opportunities or barriers that were perceived.

Individually based conditions would comprise behaviours, attitudes, awareness, skills, motivation or beliefs. Organisation derived conditions would come from factors outside the individual, such as perceived opportunities, others in the organisation, cultural assumptions and expectations and norms, responsibilities of the work itself, feedback from others etc.

I recognised that this was a simplification because the boundaries between individual and organisation are interactive, and at times not clear. Relationships with others would be an obvious example of this, where the relationship is co-created. However most of the organisational conditions that emerged could be broadly categorised, especially given the proviso of 'perceived' organisational conditions.

7. I compiled an analysis for each Individual using the completed Overall Framework

For each transcript I counted the number of times a particular condition was mentioned.

One event or influence description could cover more than one condition category. In this way I wasn't biasing my findings by artificially excluding any conditions in my analysis of items.

The eventual overall framework of conditions I ended up with, after several iterations, is shown in **Table 4: Overall Framework of Conditions Derived from Interview Data** below.

Table 4: Overall Framework of Conditions derived from Interview Data

Individual Conditions	Organisational Conditions
1. Motivation / Drive	1. Perceived opportunities for progression
2. Self Efficacy	2. Feedback
3. Personal Preferences	3. Cultural norms
4. Skills Development	4. Line Manager
5. Relationship building	5. Relationships with others
6. Role Modelling	6. Opportunities for growth
7. Taking Initiative	7. Exposure to senior management
8. Attitude to risk	8. Opportunities in role
9. Self awareness	9. Responsibilities of work itself
10. Identification of Opportunities	10. Expectations and career paths
11. Enjoyment / satisfaction	11. Behaviour of senior management
12. Values and Beliefs	12. Broadening organisational experiences
13. Clear goals	13. Seeing broader impact of work
14. Interest in work	14. Attitude towards WLB needs
15. Lifestyle	
16. Learning and stretch	
17. Organisational awareness	
18. Promoting achievements / expertise	

Although I had completed this basic Overall Framework of Conditions, and was satisfied that it served to analyse and interpret evidence of conditions for each Interview, I continued to use it in a number of other ways to check that it seemed to work with making further sense of the data. This would be important if it was going to be of practical value.

For example:

8. I cross-checked my analysis by counting the numbers of mentions that each of the condition categories received. This could identify important shared patterns that cut across individual cases that appear to have more general significance. Those that received most spontaneous mentions are highlighted in **Table 5** below.

Table 5 Using the Main Item Framework to assess the most common patterns across the sample.

Individual	Total Mentions	Organisational	Total Mentions
1. Motivation / Drive	21	1. Perceived opportunities for progression	13
2. Self Efficacy	24	2. Feedback	11
3. Personal Preferences / Work style	16	3. Cultural norms	24
4. Skills Development	19	4. Line Manager	33
5. Relationship building	19	5. Relationships with significant others	13
6. Role Modelling	9	6. Opportunities for growth	15
7. Taking Initiative	11	7. Exposure senior management	7
8. Attitude to risk	9	8. Opportunities in role	12
9. Self awareness	9	9. Responsibilities of work itself	17
10. Identification of Opportunities	10	10. Expectations and career paths	13
11. Enjoyment	9	11. Behaviour of senior management	6
12. Values and Beliefs	11	12. Broadening organisational experiences	15
13. Clear goals	11	13. Broader impact of work	6
14. Interest in work	13	14. Attitude towards WLB needs	3
15. Lifestyle	10		
16. Learning and stretch	20		
17. Organisational awareness	13		
18. Promoting achievements / expertise	3		

On this basis, the eight most frequently mentioned conditions were:

1. The Line Manager
2. Motivation / Drive
3. Self Efficacy
4. Cultural norms
5. Learning and stretch
6. Relationship Building
7. Skills Development
8. Responsibilities of Work

A more detailed commentary on these items is provided in Appendix J

Appendix i: Learning Themes by Individual provides a commentary drafted to help in any detailed interpretation of the data in the Interviews.

This commentary comprises an individual famework of conditons and illustrative comments based on their most frequently counted mentions of categories of condition.

It illustrates how these themes require careful interpretation in the light of the individual and organisational context in which they operate.

At this point I judged the analysis had addressed my inquiry question in terms of identifying a set of conditions that stimulate self directed learning in organisations. These are evidenced in some detail, by individual, in the appendices.

I also wanted to test whether and how my analysis of the individual data could be of potential practical application.

9. Using the Main Item Framework to identify positive/neutral/ negative influences.

I used the framework as a basis for going through each interview response table, as shown in **Appendix k**, and did a numerical counting of all the items in terms of their impact on the individual's learning – positive, negative or neutral. This would help with my understanding of conditions that support and inhibit self directed learning.

Appendix k shows an analysis of the impact of the conditions as they were experienced by each individual, positive, negative or neutral. I also give some brief commentary together with illustrative quotes.

11. Cross checking with the Quantitative measure.

Finally I cross checked my interview findings against the quantitative measure of level of SDL readiness. In particular, this would enable me to do a crosscheck, or triangulation, of the quality, and/or availability, of data to expect from any individual.

The Guglilmino SDLRS profile results for each individual were significant as each of the individuals scored in the upper quartile of the norm sample, i.e. they were higher on their reported level of self directed learning readiness compared to 75% of the general population.

This encouraged me to conclude that the data was at least partly typical of people with high scores (by this measure) of high self direction.

4.3   Integrative Framework of Conditions from Literature

My experience of the data emerging from the interviews began to raise questions about the theoretical frameworks I had found in my Literature Search. There was clearly a difference in language and terminology being used in the interviews, with the typical language and terminology typically used in theoretical frameworks.

From my literature search I compiled a list of conditions, individual and environmental that were deemed to either lead to greater self direction, or inhibit it. I have listed these in **Table 3** below and colour coded the item as shown for its source.

Table 3: Integrated Framework of Conditions from Literature

Individual Conditions	Organisational Conditions
Guglielmino's SDLRS constructs – derived from the humanistic learning school including Knowles, Long, Tough et al	**Organisation climate** for learning - as defined by Argyris and Schon
Confessore's additional constructs from the LAP (2004)	**Adult Learning Theory** – additional constructs in creating a climate for learning (Knowles1990)
Transformational learning theory (Mezirow)	**Management Learning**
* Conditions relate to Bandura's concept of self efficacy	**Workplace learning -** Marsick and Watkins and LiNea Project: Early **Career Learning at Work** - TLRP Conference Paper November 2004 (Erault et al)
Independence	Organisational climate – operating values (M&W also)
* Confidence	Participation in goal setting
* Persistence	Values and makes use of experience learners have to bring
Initiative	
Desire to learn	Encouragement to identify own learning needs

Individual Conditions	Organisational Conditions
Ability to plan	Regular review performance and learning
Accept responsibility	Provide feedback on performance and learning
* View problems as challenges	Review performance in developing others
Curiosity and self discipline	Assisting to see learning opportunities in job
Organise time	Provide new experiences
Set appropriate pace	Training on the job
* Goal orientated	Tolerating some mistakes
Pleasure from learning	Review and planning learning activities
Perception of Circumstances	Challenge traditional way of doing things
Expression – ability to make known one's feelings	Build in time for Consensus building
Group Identity	Encourage networking
Growth and Balance - choose own direction	Place high priority on line managers role in staff development
Communication Skills	Support for employees planning their development and careers
Change Skills	Perceived value of work itself
Critical reflection, open to challenge own assumptions	Challenging work tasks
	Team working
	Allocation and structuring of work
	Performance and progress expectations

Some of the items are identified from more that one source so there is some overlap within the source differentiation. Nonetheless I think it is a useful indicator of the different perspectives on the conditions that have emerged from my literature review reflecting the different schools of thinking and their interests, focus and assumptions.

I was interested to note that the individually derived stimulus come from the considerable body of research into self directed learning that is primarily informed by the humanistic school of adult learning. There are some behaviourist influences in the task related side of the learning process – goal setting, planning, and organising time.

Confessore's later work on a self direction measure, the Learner Autonomy Profile (LAP) , integrates social and political factors such as interaction with others in its introduction of constructs such as expression, group identity and communication skills.

Finally, at an individual level, awareness and ability to critically reflect on the habitual assumptions that structure the way we interpret our experiences, is a pre-requisite to being highly self directed in learning.

Adult learning theory views the organisation as playing a crucial role in setting the climate for learning, involving individuals through participation, and valuing and making use of the experience that learners bring. In the area of management learning the focus tends to be 'other' based as in describes things that are done to, for example "assisting to see learning opportunities in the job. Agency lies with the organisation or those who represent its interests.

More recent research into workplace learning tends to reflect more the task context of work typically in an organisation. Influences here include the kinds of support that are in place for employees in planning their development and careers, support from line management and how work is allocated and

structured. The level of participation of individuals in these processes will determine how self directed the development is.

4.7   Comparison of Literature Review and Interview Derived Conditions

Having reviewed the conditions that stimulate SDL from the perspective of the framework that emerged from the interviews, I now wanted to compare that to the framework of conditions that had emerged from my literature search.

My purpose was to examine how closely the theory related to what I had discovered from my conversations with individuals.

I found it of interest in reviewing the literature based conditions that the different schools of thinking I found could be broadly based on either an organisational or an individual perspective. That is perhaps not surprising as the focus of the theoretical perspectives I found to come from one of these two centres.

I found when comparing the interview derived master table of conditions to that from the Literature, I immediately detected a difference in language, as well as perspective. How the individual perceives these conditions directly is best viewed in **Appendix G**, which comprises notes made from participants' own words.

Comparing the two tables there was a great deal of overlap at a general level, However, I found a number of significant differences:

Certain individually derived conditions that emerged from the interviews did not get notable mention in the literature that I reviewed:
1. Personal preferences
2. Self awareness
3. Skills development, other than in learning
4. Organisational awareness

5. Promoting achievements / expertise

The first two of these items emerged particularly in relation to working with others.

Most participants gave examples of powerful learning and development from working with people very different to themselves, "learning from adapting my natural style to work more effectively with someone who had a very different style". This was closely linked to self-awareness.

A major way to understand self is in interaction with others to gauge the differences. Learning to recognise typical work style differences, being aware of your own work style preferences, and working constructively with those differences in others. Interestingly this is a popular topic of management development programmes in organisations.

Similarly awareness of the need to acquire skills to do the job and develop for the future. This is directly linked to immediate performance in the role.

Finally, for the individual, the two conditions I have labelled 'organisational awareness' and 'promoting achievements / expertise' are two individually derived conditions that represent the social and political aspects of organisational life.

'Organisational awareness' takes into account the broader context of work in relation to overall organisational objectives. It is not possible to achieve any real measure of control or choice without seeing this bigger context for one's work. It also takes account of relationships with key stakeholders, which in government is often working with partner organisations, such as agencies or voluntary organisations to implement policy programmes.

'Promoting achievements / expertise', although mentioned by only three of the participants was perceived to be a crucial capability in managing a career in an organisation. It concerns the need to have some kind of profile, in terms of

being known for achievement or a particular area of expertise, or being influential in relationships.

As such it is a social attribute, but also has links to power and influence. It is about being influential through the relationships struck with others of power, which may be through influence as well as hierarchy. It is one that is a reality in organisational life but can create considerable discomfort for individuals. It is part of the implicit 'unspoken rules' of organisational life.

I found that the theoretical perspective on organisational conditions, broadly represented a management perspective on the conditions that need to exist.

As such they tend to focus on management activities rather than something the individual would necessarily see as being of value. For example, unless individuals had particularly relevant and good experience, they are unlikely to report 'review performance in developing others' as a condition. Similarly 'place high priority on line manager's role in staff development'.

I found it interest that theoretical perspectives on conditions for SDL did not as a whole incorporate the personal, interpersonal or the social and political influences.

The interviews showed up more tangibly than any of the theoretical perspectives the dilemmas and realities of achieving greater self direction in the complexity of organisational life.

Brookfield in his critical appraisal of the Self Directed Learning school, and other writers on SDL increasingly agree that SDL has to take place in a relational context "... there is no such thing as an autonomous learner. Our particular stance on this issue is that the self-directed learner cannot help but relate to others while in the act of learning, if only in terms of his or her own history of learning. Such is the relational nature of learning."

When the social context for learning is combined with the political and work task related aspects of learning, SDL in the organisational context is a complex matter, requiring further research.

4.8   Conclusions from my Analysis and Interpretation

Analysis and Interpretation - Findings

Here I review the significance of my findings in relation to my inquiry question.

The issue of significance according to Patton (1991) can best be examined by looking at analysis and interpretation in relation to a number of aspects:

1. Coherence and consistency of evidence in support of the findings.

2. The extent that they increase and deepen understanding of the phenomenon studied.

3. The extent that the findings are consistent with other knowledge.

4. The extent that they are useful for some purpose – in this case, informing practice in encouraging greater self direction in approaches to learning.

I go on to review my analysis and interpretation here under these aspects:

Coherence and Consistency

My process of analysis and interpretation was continuously progressive. I believe it became increasingly consistent and coherent.

It started in my literature search, and subsequently during the interviews, as I was beginning to sense groupings or potential categories of conditions.

Eventually, it has been possible to use the interview derived framework to analyse and interpret the data from each interview.

From my literature search I had found multiple perspectives on conditions for greater self direction in learning. These were further refined and enhanced by the framework that emerged from the interviews.

Thus my integrated framework has been informed by a cross section of theoretical, practitioner and research participant perspectives.

There were a couple of areas which I discovered figured largely in my interviews as conditions that generated a need for further literature search.

I found that the emotional side of self directed learning, although suggested in the literature on SDL, came out as a stronger, more explicit theme in the interviews emerging from individuals' stories of their experiences. This led me to further research on this theme and subsequent refinement of the theme to the ideas of 'emotional competence' and 'self efficacy'.

Use of the Guglielmino SDLRS questionnaire confirmed my sample, although a good cross section of age and different career experiences within this organisation, was all in the upper quartile of readiness for SDL. The range of factors identified therefore can be seen as representative of people who have relatively high levels of readiness for SDL. This would need to be further verified with a larger sample, in order to see what the differences might be.

Increasing my Understanding of SDL
At the same time from the interviews I gained deeper appreciation and understanding of these conditions in relation to the stories of individual experiences of their development.

In particular I gained a deeper appreciation of the relatedness between the different factors and therefore a closer understanding of the likely nature of complexities involved.

For example, a climate for learning is described in the literature as an important organisational condition for learning to take place. My research identified in

more realistic terms how these conditions are created in practice in organisations.

For example, it identified the importance of relationships in creating the climate and with those in positions of authority and influence in particular. These could have a big impact on individual confidence, an important individual condition for encouraging higher levels of self direction.

Discovery in the interviews of the close interrelationship between self concept, attitudes to development, and how this was experienced in relationships with others, led me to theory and research on development in workplace settings and the body of writings on 'workplace learning'.

My interviews in particular deepened my understanding of some of the barriers to self direction and in particular some of the ways people experience the organisational culture, for example some organisational top-down directives and policies as negative, therefore reducing motivation and readiness for SDL. In this I deepened my appreciation of the interrelationship between individual and organisational influences and how they could potentially impact on readiness for SDL.

Consistency with Knowledge
At a general level the integrated framework of conditions derived from the interviews was consistent with, and predicted by, the theory.

Having said that, I found that the conditions in the literature were derived from a number of different theoretical perspectives. I did not come across any such integrated approach to the application of SDL in organisational settings.

The field of Adult Learning and humanistic school was the only one that had a comprehensive framework for reviewing the influences on readiness for SDL, in particular those relative to the nature of motivation of the learner. However, these are still poor in relation to learning in organisations

What my research mainly did was to take the theory and relate it to how that translated into the practical context of organisations. So, for example the language used by people in organisations is very different to that in academic research and even in the field of Adult Learning, which tends to be more practitioner oriented.

I found little that linked organisational theory to SDL, although Argyris and Schon's organisational learning theory provides potentially a sound theoretical basis for this link. There does not yet appear to be much evidence of this perspective taking root in approaches to learning and development as experienced by managers in organisations, although the concepts of action learning and action inquiry are beginning to be developed in some organisations.

How the Findings Might Contribute

There are a number of different stakeholder interests in the findings of my research. At an individual level, I see that the Integrated Framework from my interviews could be developed for potential practical use by individuals and / or organisational representatives.

With individuals, the framework would need to be further validated with the research participants as the next stage of its development. This would be a check to get additional or corrective feedback from the individual concerned on the description of the framework dimensions. Similarly they would check the descriptions of the conditions.

I would see the main use of such a framework as a tool to be used to help the participant to consider what they might want to do more / less to take more autonomous charge of their personal learning and development. As part of that it could help them to challenge their assumptions around how they and the organisation contributes to their development

At an organisational level the framework can point to aspects not considered in creating a climate that will support greater self direction.

The research could be of interest and relevance to other practitioners seeking to extend their understanding of the conditions that encourage and discourage SDL.

To be taken forward the integrated framework of conditions conducive to SDL would need further refinement, validation and development beyond the scope of this small sample. However, for all its limitations I believe this research forms a sound basis on which further research can build.

5. Conclusions

5.1 My experience of this inquiry

Encouragement by the support of the Client Organisation, and volunteers: Both the client representatives in HR, and the individuals who took part in the interviews, were very ready and enthusiastic to help in this work. Of course this is a small sample but encourages me to believe this interest could be a widespread reaction.

The value of this inquiry based approach is much clearer to me. I believe part of the reason for the encouragement was due to the open minded approach to investigate rather than to try and tell or even use other kind of simple didactic framework with implicit simple assumptions about what it is all about.

I believe It is still far from clear for many people exactly how learning takes place in organisations; and there is still considerable interest to progress the issue.

Enhanced perspective on the study for MSc: I have also been pleasantly surprised at the extent to which this inquiry has been a conduit for me to bring together the full range and depth of work carried out previously throughout this MSc.

I have found I have drawn on work at all levels of individual, group and organisational learning. In many ways it feels I have come full circle, back to the subject of Module 1 and the subject of Learning.

5.2   Principal Challenges in carrying out this Inquiry:

One of the main challenges and areas of learning for me has been in managing my aims and objectives for this inquiry. How to explore such a broad topic from a number of angles, yet keep a tight focus on SDL.

Although it can seem initially counter-productive to explore a subject from so many different angles I believe it has been valuable to see how these can be brought together to provide a basis for tackling a crucial issue in the field of learning and change management.

I was very aware of the need to focus on what practically can be done with limited time and resources available. SDL is part of a far bigger field of learning. The prospects of getting involved in these far bigger questions is obviously relevant, and which I have largely left out for the purposes of this inquiry. There is an important almost philosophical question of whether all learning should be regarded as self directed, for example.

5.3   Review against my original Inquiry objectives

Objective 1: To explore how theoretical perspectives, and research, about self directed learning can help identify relevant conditions.

There was a large amount of material available, however it was noticeable that the greater amount of attention to the subject of SDL appears to be from a less academic perspective, in particular the field of adult education, which tends to be more practitioner focused.

Major schools of learning say little about intrinsic motivation to learn. It appears that where attention has been driven by practical issues different approaches have had to be developed as academic approaches have not contributed sufficient of value to practitioners.

The development of constructivist and constructionist themes have led to greater consensus on how to approach the issue of adult learning, recognising that there has to be a way of managing individual differences as part of learning rather than reducing the learning approach to something which will be common across all.

I was parallel processing my literature review to an extent with my interviews. That pointed me at work on self-esteem and introduced me to Bandura's theory of social learning and the concept of self efficacy in particular. Exploring the roles of feelings in learning re-introduced me to Heron and his work on the affective.

One measure of personal change I have undergone during this MSc is whereas I found Heron obscure and irritating, I have re-discovered and come to appreciate the greater rigour (and meaning!) in his writings on feelings in relation to whole-person learning. His upward hierarchy of learning and his writings on feelings in "Feelings and Personhood" is the only real holistic and rigorous representation of the learning process I have come across to date. Perhaps appreciating Heron is partly a matter of readiness!

Linked to the affective is the darker side of organisational culture, or some of the organisational dynamics that inhibit self directed learning. I could not go into that in any great depth within the constraints of my inquiry. My literature search touched on certain aspects and in particular the work done by Argyris and Schon on double loop learning and organisational defences.

Critical reflection emerged from the literature as an important condition for higher levels of self direction. Critical reflection by individuals can surface the assumptions they are working within and achieve greater levels of awareness. This is the only way for the individual to retain independence of thought, for example in being able to see cultural norms and make conscious choice about how to respond.

While the research into work based learning is still developing, and I found some of the concepts more directly relevant to the practitioner context, I did not find much attention given directly to the conditions that facilitate greater self direction. There is almost an implicit assumption that learning is self directed, and attention is given more to the what of that learning, not the how or why.

My literature search findings enabled me to develop an integrated framework pulling together the major strands of theory on conditions for SDL. This helped significantly to achieve some overall level of understanding of the Literature.

Objective 2: To research how individuals in organisations experience and are stimulated towards self directed learning.

The interviews provided useful data on conditions: Even after these five interviews I was accessing a range of information similar (at the level of broad conditions) to that suggested through the integrated framework based on my literature search.

This certainly helped me in my understanding of the range of factors involved. Further work may have to be done as to whether such an interview based framework of conditions could have wider value.

The range of conditions conducive to adult learning was largely confirmed, particularly in respondents' descriptions of the organisational conditions that they perceived were conducive to or inhibited their continued development.

Bandura's concept of self-efficacy indeed emerged from the interview data as a core condition for greater self direction. In more everyday language this would equate to self-confidence, willingness and ability to take on new challenges, and being goal orientated.

It also became important to distinguish between conditions residing mainly with the individual, and those conditions that derived mainly from their perception of

organisational conditions. This appeared to work well as a broad framework to explore and analyse conditions having an impact on SDL.

Accessibility to such intrinsic data

It is easy to understand why literature has had difficulty with intrinsic factors such as the whole area of motivation. However the real value of a constructionist approach is that it enables working from the basis of what matters to the individual rather than externally testing for it.

The major drawback here is the extent to which the individual is aware and able to articulate the more intrinsic factors. My work in this inquiry encourages me to conclude that this can be influenced by the interpersonal relationship conditions that are created.

Even though it was accessible I was still left with the impression that could have been worthwhile to go on with a second, or even third session to get into some of the detail of the conditions, such was the richness of data on tap and in the circumstances.

Differences in language used to describe conditions

I was conscious that the language used to report these conditions was significantly different in language to that used in the literature. It seems to me a vital part of the conditions to access this information is to work with language that the individual is comfortable with.

I did find it important as part of my analysis to deliberately separate the language of theory and organisations about the same phenomena. The language is particular to each individual and less easy to generalise. There is always the risk of introducing outside concepts that do not fit with the constructs and meanings developed by individuals. Use of such a framework in practice would have to be carefully pitched as an aid to discussion, which is its potential greatest value, rather than a substitute for discussion.

I would be confident there is organisational language that is more usable in a more direct approach. For example the term ' Line Manager ' is an example of a typical organisational term that carries a considerable weight of meaning, and accesses a large range of experiences for most people in organisations.

The importance of Critical Reflection: One condition I have concluded is central to higher and more sustainable levels of self direction in learning is that of critical reflection.

This is an example of something that is difficult to ascertain from a two hour interview. The concept of critical reflection is not a familiar one to most managers, although instinctively they will tend to a lesser or greater amount as part of their usual thinking process. It is the kind of thinking process that most enables people to separate out and see clearly and test out more independently the cultural assumptions they are working within.

Objective 3: To develop my own practitioner awareness and articulation
I feel the level of my inquiry question was right for me at the time.

Further questions are now around how useful that kind of information is to individuals in helping them make more meaning of their own experience, and to the extent such a framework could be used by them to make more proactive progress on their own development.

I now want to follow up with individuals to validate and check the themes coming out and probe for greater clarity around particular meanings for them.

I will continue to develop it as my own personal practitioner framework.

The data generated could identify opportunities to add to self directed learning approaches for the individual. For example the data could be used to help individuals explore their perceptions of organisational conditions and develop ideas / thinking about what they might do to make more of opportunities and minimise barriers.

There were a number of strong organisational themes came out of my interviews where indications were that more could be done by representatives of the organisation to create more conducive conditions for greater self direction in learning.

For example, in conventional approaches in organisations to Learning & Development there is often little awareness or attention given to issues around motivation and engagement of learners. While there is a growing awareness in the value of using a range of more experiential forms of learning, there is less attention to the 'why' of learning from the individual perspective

Engagement and motivation to learn is the last big frontier for organisations in their approach to learning and development. People representing the organisational agenda tend to get so preoccupied with that agenda, they tend to miss the major opportunity represented by paying greater attention to individual needs and interests.

Similarly more can be done to support and encourage individuals to be more self directed and to be more effective in managing the organisation.

In Conclusion...
The formal process of reporting and inquiry may not always reflect the process of discovery involved in the very nature of inquiry. For example, the process of literature search approach to formal research analysis and interpretation is more than one simple formal cycle. It is not as linear as the report format suggests. However the rigour involved in the formal process has greatly supported my learning throughout the whole inquiry.

My original inquiry question, the title of this inquiry, has held up well as an appropriate focus. It has served its purpose of being an appropriate starting point. It has helped to form a good foundation for continuing my work in this area. I consider my inquiry has enabled me to make some start in

understanding and testing in practice how understanding of such a complex subject can be improved.

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APPENDIX A: Table 7 - List of Qualitative Research Design Issues

1. What is the primary purpose of the study?

2. What is the focus of the study?

3. What are the units of analysis?

4. What will be the sampling strategy or strategies?

5. What type of data will be collected?

6. What controls will be exercised:

7. What analytical approach/approaches will be used?

8. How will validity of and confidence in the findings be addressed?

9. Time issues: when will the study occur? How will the study be sequenced or phased?

10. How will logistics and practicalities be handled?

11. How will ethical issues and matters of confidentiality be handled?

12. What resources will be available? What will the study cost?

Source: Patton M. Q. (2002) Qualitative Research Evaluation Methods (edition 3) Exhibit 5.8, p. 254

APPENDIX B: Contracting with Sponsor Organisation – Formal Letter of Request

Dissertation Research Project

I'm undertaking a part time MSc in the School of Management at Surrey University – Change Agent Skills and Strategies (CASS) as a mature student, and am about to embark on the research stage of my dissertation. As part of this I will need to carry out a small piece of original research in an organisation.

It will be inquiry based and qualitative in nature so large samples are not required for quantitative validity. The academic aim is to demonstrate ability to design and implement a small piece of research in an area relevant to organisational and individual change.

The research itself will be participative where individual volunteers should find the process to be a developmental one as individuals focus on their most important developmental experiences and identify the factors that have most helped and hindered them.

Core Question of Inquiry: What are the main influences on employees' readiness for self directed learning approaches and what can be done by organisations to facilitate greater self direction in development?

Self Directed Learning is a broad term that also covers a wide range of definitions, as well as approaches and methods. My particular area of interest lies in achieving a greater practical understanding of the factors that contribute to readiness for learning approaches relying on greater self direction; then helping organisations better design and implement learning and development approaches in line with staff readiness.

I have long had an interest in self and career development within organisations. I see this as being of great relevance given the trend towards greater emphasis on self direction in learning and development activities. My medium term aim is to develop a practical diagnostic that will help organisations:

- assess staff readiness for development approaches that rely on greater self direction
- identify optimum development strategies and approaches given the current state of readiness of staff

Potential Benefits to the DfES
- Individuals should find the process of developmental value to them in extending their thinking and ideas about their own careers and development
- I will provide a summary of my main findings, which should be of high relevance to the areas of learning and development that the DfES is actively working on.
-
-

APPENDIX B: / cont.

- The findings may add to thinking on work you are already undertaking on a range of career development initiatives, some of which BCL is already working with you on.
- The opportunity to review any differences in findings between key groups, for example Fast Stream and others; London based and regional staff

Approach:
- undertaking a literature search on published research and writings on the field;
- face to face interviews with a small sample to extend the inquiry into practical application in an organisational setting

Need:
A sample of 6-8 people who would need to:
- complete a self directed learning questionnaire and prepare answers to a number of core questions as preparation - approximately 45 minutes
- have an in depth meeting with me - approximately 1.5 hours

The interviews themselves will be mainly biographical and narrative in focus, reviewing what have been the major influences on the person's learning through their careers to date, exploring the extent to which they were self directed in nature, and what they have found has helped and hindered them with their development.

Sub-Questions of Inquiry
- what individual and organisational factors most influence individual and organisational readiness for self directed learning, and in what way?
- how can approaches that rely on a greater extent of self direction be best incorporated as part of an integrated Learning & Development strategy?
- how can the effectiveness of self directed learning approaches best be assessed by organisations?
- what measures can organisations take to facilitate greater self direction in people's development?

Sue Young, Berkshire Consultancy Ltd.
December 2006
Contact: sue.young@berkshire.co.uk   Mob: 07802 817727

APPENDIX C: Targeted e mail to Potential Volunteers

Research into Career Development

The DFES has given me permission to contact you as a past participant on the DfES Management and Leadership Programme (MLP) who may be interested in taking part in an independent research project into career development.

My name is Sue Young, and I am currently a mature student completing an MSc with the School of Management at Surrey University. As part of this MSc, I am completing a research project into career development.

I am looking to conduct interviews with a sample of volunteers to help me in this research project.

Your involvement would require a minimum of about three hours of your time, for 3 separate exercises over a 2 month period.

My dissertation project will look into new ways to help people in their learning and career development. In particular, how organisations can best contribute to greater self direction in peoples' learning and development.

I need volunteers prepared to review their experience of their own learning and career development and the factors that have helped and hindered them along the way. If you volunteered, the process should also provide you with a confidential opportunity to contribute to your thinking and planning about your career development.

What you would be committing to do is as follows:
* Some preparation by completing a questionnaire and making some individual notes on a few core questions (approx. 30 mins)
* A confidential face to face interview (approx 1.5 hours)
* Follow up telephone conversation within 4-6 weeks (approx. 30 mins)

What you will get from it:
* an opportunity to review your approach to your development to date
* potentially gain more insight to the factors that have helped and hindered your development
* consider the implications for your career and on-going development
* a summary report of the overall research findings

Any information from your interview will be completely confidential. Any information in my research report will be generic, and on an anonymous basis.

If you are interested to take part or find out more, then contact me:
sue.young@berkshire.co.uk ; mobile number 07802 817727

Best wishes

Sue Young

**APPENDIX D: Contracting with Volunteeers: Pre-interview Letter and
               Consent Form**

Apps House
Spear Hill
Ashington
West Sussex
RH20 3BA

XXXXX
DfES
Mowden Hall
Staindrop Road
Darlington DL3 9BG

8 February 2007

Dear XXXXX,
Further to my research into influences on career development please find
enclosed a questionnaire - Learning Preference Assessment. There are
no right or wrong answers. The best way to answer is to go with your first
reactions.

Do get in touch if you have any queries. The best number to contact me
on is my mobile number 07802 817727.

Please post your completed questionnaire to me in the enclosed SAE,
which will come directly to me.   If you could either send me a CV or one
page profile before we meet that would be helpful. You can send it to me
on my personal e mail sueyoung@dircon.co.uk.

As requested in my e mail in addition it would be helpful to our discussion
if you could give some thought before we meet to the following questions:
* What have been the most formative events in the course of your career
to date?
* What factors have helped you and hindered you most along the way?
* To what extent have these factors been down to you, or other outside
influences?
* What kind of support could the organisation provide more of ?

I would like your consent to record our interview. I undertake that any
tapes and transcripts or other data used will be anonymous and any
information kept will be confidential and kept in accordance with the Data
Protection Act. I will bring a formal consent form for you to sign to our
meeting. I look forward to meeting you on 16 February 11.30 at
Sanctuary Buildings.

With kind regards
Sue Young

APPENDIX D: / cont.

CONSENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE: An Inquiry into the factors influencing peoples' learning and development in a public sector organisation

RESEARCHER: Sue Young

INSTITUTION: University of Surrey, School of Management

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Paul Tosey

Please tick box

1. I confirm that I have discussed the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time. I understand that I can ask for any sensitive remarks to be removed from the record and that I am free to withold information which I regard to be of a sensitive nature ☐

3. I understand that interview tapes and transcripts will be anonymised and stored securely for a period of 5 years under the care of a designated custodian in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 1998 ☐

4. I confirm that I have / have not * agreed for the interview to be tape-recorded as part of the above study ☐

* Please delete as appropriate

_____   _____   _____

Name of interviewee   *Date*   *Signature*

_____   _____   _____

Name of researcher   *Date*   *Signature*

APPENDIX E: Interview Structure Plan

- Introduction – I am looking at influences on peoples' development in their careers. My objective is to understand more about what individuals do that helps them develop, and how organisations can best support individuals in this.

Narrative Career History – explore:
- What made you decide on your earliest career decision – explore influences – narrative – go with – explore whether externally / internally motivated ?

- Key events – moves, experiences in roles; use CV as prompt

- Key learning points / what taken from each role / how informed / used subsequently

- How organisation has helped / hindered?

- Role of line manager? Others?

Now and Future

- Influences on your development right now

- What you see you can do to influence your development

- How do you think the organisation can help you with your development

- What do you think organisation could do more of / less of?

Appendix F: Example of an Excerpt from a raw Transcript

I think at that point I was very aware of being very young and especially in facilitating stuff where you've got kind of you know ageing school governors talking about their thirty nine years experience being a school governor and so on so you kind of feel like trying to you know, facilitate a conversation here but clearly don't have the understanding of the issues that you do. So I was quite aware of being very young at that point which I was.

Yes, and how did you feel about that? Can you remember how you felt about that at the time like did you have erm…? Because that can be quite an uncomfortable place to be

I think so, yeah because I just think I was very aware of my lack of experience and understanding on stuff and kind of knowing that I didn't know lots of staff as well. It's kind of ok to be ignorant sometimes because you feel more comfortable but erm…when you kind of know what you don't know it was a bit more uncomfortable but that's probably what's pushed me to do kind of do more and try and get more experience which is what I was doing on the projects I was working on really.

So looking back and looking at that sort of erm…just over a sort of…just under a year, nine months.

Yeah wasn't long was it?

Looking back what do you think was the most powerful learning points you took from that experience?

I think I'd struggle to pick out one particular. I think it was more the experience of working with those two good project managers and just seeing how you do things in this environment. It's kind of…I'm just gaining the framework of understanding of how you conduct a project, how you go and make contact with other people in the department or how you identify who you need to talk to erm…how you kind of go about approaching someone and the sensitivities involved in kind of not wading in and saying we think this that and the other and how you go about making policy recommendations and I think it was just the whole kind of process or the kind of…it opened my eyes to what it was like being in the Civil Service and what the job was like.

And how it works really.

Yeah and understanding the whole political environment as well was [?]

How to make things happen and…

Yeah, and I think the next role was really the same. It was all the same unit so...

So it's kind of been a natural kind of…Because it reads like a natural progression in many ways.

Yeah I mean it was and I think I was…in each role I had I was always stretching to take more from the role above which was probably why…and then I'd kind of threaten to leave and then they'd kind of say there's a role coming up here and I think I made myself quite indispensable actually because I was…as I became kind of…had more line management responsibility I started doing a lot more kind of work with kind of the wid…well we had research and delivery team which was all the support staff that supported the project managers and I became a lot more involved in the kind of setting agendas for team meetings and having team discussions so I think I had quite a big role in developing a team identity and I think I mean I learnt most of this from my line manager at the time because he was very much a people person and was really good at kind of talking to pe…well he spent his whole day talking to people actually but I don't think he ever did anything but he was very good at the people management side. So I think I was emulating a lot of what he was doing and then he left so I got his job in the end because I think I'd positioned myself…

Did he leave the organisation or did he move on to something else [?]

I think he went to DTI he moved around a bit. I think I might have jumped ahead there but it's kind of all a bit of a progression really because I was kind of supporting him quite a bit and then because I'd positioned myself as kind of when he left it kind of seemed quite natural for me to do that role.

So it sounds like there's a pattern of you're constantly sort of looking to stretch and looking to the role above and then it naturally tends to move onto it.

Yeah I think…I mean when I got my EO job I remember being terrified. I mean the interview went ok but I was just terrified of hearing the results and thinking oh God I don't know if I can do an EO job. When I look back now I think my God that was so easy so I think…and then I remember when I got the EO job I thought oh God I'm never going to be an HEO that's so far away. Never going to be able to do that and then like you know however long not long afterwards nine months later I got the HEO job and it didn't seem that bad and then I thought I'm never going to be an SEO so I kind of always had that feeling but as soon as I feel comfortable in that role and I kind of stretch myself it doesn't seem that far away erm…

So there's always that drive once you're comfortable that drive kicks into well what's next? And how do you…what are things that help you through that initial kind of erm…how long does that ooh Gosh I can't do this or…?

Appendix G: Example of initial analysis of relevant Transcript evidence

I made initial notes thoughout all the transcripts. This is an excerpt (as given in Appendix F, above) where I then added my notes of analysis and interpretation about the data provided as to how it provided evidence of conditions.

Passages I considered significant are first underlined. I then added my comments, in italics, for later reference in compiling the results.

I think at that point I was very aware of being very young and especially in facilitating stuff where you've got kind of you know ageing school governors talking about their thirty nine years experience being a school governor and so on so you kind of feel like trying to you know, facilitate a conversation here but clearly don't have the understanding of the issues that you do. So I was quite aware of being very young at that point which I was.

Yes, and how did you feel about that? Can you remember how you felt about that at the time like did you have erm…?   Because that can be quite an uncomfortable place to be

I think so, yeah because I just think <u>I was very aware of my lack of experience and understanding on stuff and kind of knowing that I didn't know lots of staff as well. It's kind of ok to be ignorant sometimes because you feel more comfortable</u> but erm…when you kind of know what you don't know it was a bit more uncomfortable but that's probably what's pushed me to do kind of do more and try and get more experience which is what I was doing on the projects I was working on really.

(1.20 …. aware of what I don't know – seeking experience …. discomfort about lack of experience pushed her to acquire more – insecurity drive)

So looking back and looking at that sort of erm…just over a sort of…just under a year, nine months.

Yeah wasn't long was it?

Looking back what do you think was the most powerful learning points you took from that experience?

I think I'd struggle to pick out one particular. I think it was more the experience of <u>working with those two good project managers and just seeing how you do things in this environment.</u>

(2.9 Others who demonstrated and acted as role models of how to get things done in this environment)

It's kind of…I'm just gaining the framework of understanding of how you conduct a project, how you go and make contact with other people in the department or how you identify who you need to talk to erm…how you kind of go about approaching someone and the sensitivities involved in kind of not wading in and saying we think this that and the other and how you go about making policy recommendations and I think it was just the whole kind of process or the kind of…it opened my eyes to what it was like being in the Civil Service and what the job was like.

(2.10 Observing others – picking up on the norms of how to influence others in relation to the nature of the task and the culture

And how it works really.

Yeah and understanding the whole political environment as well was [?]

How to make things happen and…

Yeah, and I think the next role was really the same. It was all the same unit so...

So it's kind of been a natural kind of…Because it reads like a natural progression in many ways.

Yeah I mean it was and I think I was…in each role I had I was always stretching to take more from the role above *(1.21 stretching to take on next level of work in current role)* which was probably why…and then I'd kind of threaten to leave and then they'd kind of say there's a role coming up here *(2.11 Organisation offering opportunities)* and I think I made myself quite indispensable actually because I was…as I became kind of…had more line management responsibility I started doing a lot more kind of work with kind of the wid…well we had research and delivery team which was all the support staff that supported the project managers and I became a lot more involved in the kind of setting agendas for team meetings and having team discussions so I think I had quite a big role in developing a team identity *(2.12 learn from the team environment and way of working)* and I think I mean I learnt most of this from my line manager at the time because he was very much a people person and was really good at kind of talking to people; well he spent his whole day talking to people actually but I don't think he ever did anything but he was very good at the people management side. *(2.13 Learning from observing Line Manager who identified as being very good at people management)* So I think I was emulating a lot of what he was doing and then he left so I got his job in the end because I think I'd positioned myself…

Did he leave the organisation or did he move on to something else [?]

I think he went to DTI he moved around a bit. I think I might have jumped ahead there but it's kind of all a bit of a progression really because I was kind of supporting him quite a bit and then because I'd positioned myself as kind of when he left it kind of seemed quite natural for me to do that role.

So it sounds like there's a pattern of you're constantly sort of looking to stretch and looking to the role above and then it naturally tends to move onto it.

Appendix H: Conditions for SDL - Individual Transcript Analysis and Commentary

The following tables list notes on the conditions that emerged in the sequential order they emerged during each participants interview. The notes are in the words used by the participant

TABLE 8: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant A	
1. Individual Influences	**2. Organisational Influences**
1. Discovering what I don't like or value 2. Pushing / making case for kind of job I want – led to a positive response 3. Early preferences in education have changed in work setting. 4. Worked on own a lot and enjoyed – now I don't! 5. Evolution of personal preferences – have become more rounded with broader experience 6. Conversations about what I want to do with my manager 7. Developing my confidence about working in a group 8. Finding subject / area I can enjoy and make something of 9. Finding work interesting 10. Family influences – mum a teacher; Dad enjoyed doing more technical things 11. Supportive family. Wanted us all to do well – first generation that all kids in family went to university 12. Lifestyle choice – London and friends, outside work interests v. City and late hours 13. Opportunity for professional development – training and opportunities for progression – sounded better in CS 14. Balance of right level of challenge and mastery/ achievement in work Incorporating what I like in manager's approach to mgmt into my own approach 15. Knocks to my confidence – peer comparison and feeling less, struggling 16. Confidence building – learning new skills; comparatively no worse than peers!	1. Organisational policy to move people around when in Fast Stream 2. Organisational process that allows people to influence – discussion with LM about preferences / aims /kinds of opportunities interested in 3. Opportunities available – limited at school – had to compromise on subjects allowed to mix. 4. Where put me when I started 5. Induction by LM – very thorough but became limiting 6. Being spotted as having potential by manager 2 levels up. When current LM moved on given more senior level of work. 7. Working directly to more senior manager (2 levels up) 8. Work that played to my strengths and gave me opportunity to perform well 9. LM – not interfering but approachable – if things go wrong OK to talk 10. LM good at helping me think things through rather than come up with solutions 11. Incorporated what I liked from what my LM did into my own approach 12. Style – felt compatible with my LM 13. Seeing broader impact of my work and value to our bigger business 14. LM interested / engaged in what I'm doing v. not! 15. Absence of feedback – don't know how I'm doing positive or negatively. Can't improve when I've no idea if what I'm doing is right Input or expertise at times from others, when needed.

TABLE 8: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant A	
1. Individual Influences	**2. Organisational Influences**
17. Taking initiative – telling manager I want a move and what I want	16. Seeing others get on where I feel stuck. Compare and see no reason, given my experience and performance. Perceive as lack of fairness.
18. Clarity about what I want and why Approaching Heads of Profession directly to see if interested in skills / experience I have	17. LM encouragement to have a go at promotion panel. Making me feel I can do it.
19. Evolving what I do and don't like from experience. Changing preferences as I develop	18. Being a Fast Streamer. Mgrs tasked with providing dep't opps
20. Personal qualities early on in career – determined; happy to work on own	19. Providing me with a role that is developmental – as LM
21. Feelings of competence	20. Culture – avoids difficult feedback. Influenced my approach as mgr when lacked confidence
22. Ambition	21. As LM of others – having to manage different people and situations – learning from key relationships
23. Frustration from lack of progression – compared to others – they get promoted when I don't	22. Exposure to senior people in working situations
24. Proactively influencing the organisation through getting together with peers to lobby on a collective issue	23. Access to coach who gives me feedback on my personal style
25. Making broader connections in the organisation – developing a reputation	24. Providing experience in a leadership role
26. Identifying next experience I want	25. Exposure to stakeholders and our external environment
27. Seeking help and input from others	26. Organisational initiatives and drives e.g. PSG, structure of work areas need to get experience of e.g. Policy, Delivery, Corporate Services
28. Setting out to 'have a go' to get useful experience and stretch – take a positive attitude to likelihood of not getting job – panel interview; seeking to get learning and feedback from situation	27. Organisational messages e.g. Capability Review – poor people mgmt. Made me angry.
29. Building relationships with others while seeking help	28. Senior mgmt not role modelling behaviours org says are expected
30. Identify the learning from mistakes	29. Senior mgmt not interested in engaging people – being seen to be interested
31. Learn from managing different personalities and styles of working	30. Working with right people
32. Giving others feedback	31. LM giving me opportunities for autonomy, or to prove myself and extend my experience
33. Discussion with others to get different perspectives on an issue	32.Being given interesting work
34. Using external relationships e.g. sister who in CS in another dept	
35. Feel positive when I feel trusted	
36. Awareness of own patterns of motivation, interest and energy related to when it's time to move on.	
37. I believe if people want to develop they have to find the opportunities – pops here are very good	

Appendix G / cont.

Conditions for SDL - Individual Transcript Analysis and Commentary

TABLE 9: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant B	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
1. Early influences. Describes self as working class background –felt slightly intimidated at grammar school. Father a brick layer 2. early interests – history and english. Languages not forte. I think I've always enjoyed finding out what happened. Had interest in forensic science. Never followed through. Quals wouldn't allow 3. Left school at 16 because father made redundant. Could have easily stayed on.. Felt made no choice 4. early career Aspirations – not to be a brick layer. In vague way wanted to work in London rather than locally. No interest in business. Joined CS – filled in form. Was offered and told to report 5. Expectations. Didn't expect to get through – failed on intangible – no real feedback. Went away with impression that cultural norms stacked against 6. Values – held LM in contempt 7. Initiative – got myself away and into more challenging job * How? What did? 8. Role had an impact on me in terms of finding out more about sort of work I wanted to do. 9. Met someone outside of work – personal relationship – emigrated to Canada. Relshp blew apart 10. Took dramatic events to take stock. Flirted with things more related to interests – drama. Insecurity of job so applied to do college course 11. Discovered that a natural public speaker. Had been pointed out by teacher at school. Never thought could as naturally very reserved. Now thought seriously about option. Really enjoyed doing english and drama at college. 12. Attitude to personal risk -Courage	1. Assigned initially. 2. Promotion slow partic if not graduate in those days 3. Impressions of opportunities linked to training. Did a lot of training but not linked to advancement. Not personalised. 4. Experience of selection process Eventually applied for Fast Stream (6 years?) Chairman of board made it clear that not having a degree not good plus psych said I hated my mother – patently not true. 5. Fast stream process and follow up – no de-briefing or follow-up – no explicit or specific feedback 6. Expectations of cultural norms – CS – public school ethos – dying but still elitist 7. LM not interested. I regarded with contempt 8. Next role – personal interest – more rigorous environment intellectually. Tapped more into my enjoyment of legal aspects of job. Helped me finding out more about sort of work I wanted to do. 9. LM – encouraged me – talking about job related issues. Always thought that people work for more impt than formal trg. Someone who wants to take time. 10. Welfare culture. Looks after people. When org found out I was back in country, wrote and offered job back. 11. Org sent me to Uni Grants Committee (not part of dept) 12. Less hierarchical control meant opportunity to take more responsibilty 13. Restructuring – job moved out so role ended 14. Roles available to come back to 15.Opportunity to see how dept operated at top level,interesting. 16. Regarded PIs and business plans as

TABLE 9: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant B	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
failed me to follow through in career terms – security – led to taking job back in dept.	a waste of time.
13. Found work in Uni Grants Committee "very convivial". Working with academics – raised intellectual sights and finance element . It suited me.	17. I was found a job on return from leave.
14. N Ireland. Risk made a bit more exciting	18. Interaction with Colleagues - peer. Learning from way they did things. Very rigorous and could analyse something
15. Sense of personal responsibility – previous jobs more heavilly hierarchical. Staff freer to do own thing within the framework. Take resp for own areas of work and engage with senior level at uni.	19. See self as working in an organisation which is strongly conditioned by a framework of judgement and rules and questions. The CS does train you to think about things
16. Didn't want to move to where job moving as would be in much smaller org	
17. Turned down job options because of person I would be working for.	
18.Motivation – saw myself just continuing – maybe getting promotion or not. Other external influences more impt – own house,living w someone. Aspects of work itself found interesting.	
19. Took initiative to remove self from job – went on leave for a mont ahd saiud I wanted anew role on my return. (!)	
20. Discovering use of talents in role – public speaking	
21. Enjoyment of work itself – legal aspects.	
22.Met someone personally – a woman! Had 3 kids and lived in Irteland. I lived in Brighton.	
23. Self concept in relation to work – see myself as administrator rather than leader. Don't like managing people or see myself as any good at it. I've probably been naturally suited to CS	
24. See self as lazy – I've always refused to work longer hours than necessary – a bar to my progress.	
25.Attitude to learning – i do enjoy learning quite a bit but mainly outside of work. In the work context I learn as much as i need to to do my work.	

Appendix I / cont.

Conditions for SDL - Individual Transcript Analysis and Commentary

TABLE 10: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant C	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
1. Up-bringing – small Welsh valley – wanted to come to London; found attractive, challenge, buzz. 2.Interest in Politics – mother and father opposite ends of spectrum – made it interesting 5. creating relationship where other person inclined to involve me and offer opportunity of new role 6. Early influences – I was shy, overweight, didn't enjoy school, youngest, elder two not role models I could identify with, poor teachers, father low earner, mother made redundant, I was main earner; subjects I enjoyed more analytical. 7. Drivers – wanting to do it right. Crave clarity and hopeless if I don't have it. 8. Sensitivity to responsibility in impact of work – element of customer service, respect for the person, doing right thing for them, genuinely listen, not tell them 'you should...' 9. Personal satisfaction – get great pleasure in helping people 10. Ambitious – looking for next challenge to a point 11. Caution – 'challenges need to be safe' e.g. doing what I do on a bigger scale – e.g. working in a bigger office" 12. Desire for change – not stretched. Had done all could. 13. Move to London – q different 14. Driver for next move – a confidence about having acquired a particular skill set – interpersonal skills, communication – plus sense of what next stage of dev't about – taking that skill set to bigger context – coming to HQ 15. Growth in confidence in early stages from using to confirm understanding what required and doing right. Snowballs.Like	1. Unpleasant factors in local environment – nasty, threatening, stress . 2. Was interviewed for first job. .. Led me towards equality. 3. Where my part of org'n put in Dept – moved to social security – departmental restructuring – went with but v exciting – political moves of leaders. 4. Key relationship – individual who picked me up on setting up a new unit – an innovative blue sky thinking tank secondment – policy ideas to test feasibility 5. Opportunity of high profile role with lots of exposure 6. In early stages of new role where bigger role – where what req less obvious, less reactive to immediate - imptance of feedback frm LM and colleagues to make sense of what req and how doing – one source not enough 7. Being thrown into new unit where everyone else new too. All in the same boat 8. Getting affirmation about my approach on piece work by getting positive feedback from sr mgr when my immed LM had suggested differently. Gave me confidence in my judgement. 9. Being in a wider role (Womens' Unit) that required working through others across Whitehall departments 10. Culture of checking – works against taking real responsibility 11. Change in focus of role – coord across wider org'n - to narrower policy area where req was to drill deeper; become more of a subject matter expert. 12. Supportive LM – spent time w me; answered my Qs. Relaxed, patient, informal; gave me whatever time I needed. Brought humour and

TABLE 10: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant C	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
combination safe where right combination clicks and door unlocks. Satisfying.	perspective to work. A human being yet respected a lot.
16. My style to use self depracation with being open about where I don't know and weave humour in. Still use even though more senior	13.LM created environment where felt could take a risk and suggest things. Helped free up to be more creative
17. Being reliant on others and get things done through others over whom had no direct auth – confirmed my interpersonal skills in influencing – different sense of power	14. Would give me alternative perspective by saying well have you thought of...? Like a colleague.
18. Realisation Senior i.e. LM doesn't nec know best all the time. Recognise need to get range of perspectives and sources of fdback. Can question and challenge thinking	15. LM A role model for me.
19. knowing CS culture and how operates – helps know how to get others to do things	16. Role provided contact with widerange of contacts in different sectors – financial. Industry, community, voluntary...
20. Next opportunity came through relationship built in Women's Unit	17. Responsibility for managing large project – conference – learning from large scale organising and relshp mgmt involved, keeping a level head when things go wrong!
21. Satisfaction from becoming a subject matter expert – met individual motivation that came from feeling a source of expert knowledge and having clarity of focus	18. Having to stand in for Dir of Unit who went off sick – nobody else to do as I'd been involved from start
22. Boredom when felt had mastered after about 8 mths	19. Hit bit of a low – no feedback from LM
23.Growing confidence from dealing successfully with range on interpersonal difficult situations	20. Org hasn't trad recognised value of people mgmt – takes time. Dept hasn't allowed for time involved. I still question whether it really will in practice
24. Confidence knocked by sense of failure (4 mth off w stress) from Private Office + p'sal circs – mum died	21.Not being on Fast Stream – expectations – more if you are.
25. More balanced sense perspective from stressful experience	22. Perceptions of what it takes to be seen as successful in this org'n – bright, continuously improving. Some resentment – what if doing a good job but don't want promotion? Not convinced reward sufficient. What if want a life as well? Perceived long hours culture
26. Realisation that can take aspects of LM value and adapt them to dev own way	23. Last LM not giving me what I need – clarity of expectations and feedback. More an academic and thinker. Complete clash of styles. I'm an ESTJ; he's the opposite
27. Loving additional responsibility forced by Dir illness 'because I knew what I needed to do'	24. Most powerful development come from being given more responsibility, complete freedom, say to do what I judged changed over from individual:
28. Personal goal as motivator – set myself target of G7 not long after started. Dersire to prove self as didn;t have a degree	25.Impact of behaviour of minister – insensitive treatment on return after bereavement (mother's death)...
29. Happy with level and balance got now. Monetary, way of working. Can work 2 days a week from home	26. Workload plus behaviour of minister - led to stress and time off work

TABLE 10: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant C	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
30. Personal motivation - I want to develop my skills, prove I can do a good job – that will be my satisfaction. 31. Currently not clear about what is expected of me – personal need / desire for clarity again! (ESTJ)	

Conditions for SDL - Individual Transcript Analysis and Commentary

TABLE 11: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant D	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
1. Dyslexia slight – school not a great experience. Relies a lot on written	1. Perceived success criteria - Saw to get on not only had to prove could do job doing well, but that had to prove could do any job at next grade. E.g. not enough to be able to manage this section but cd you mg any section.
2. Early development (9) of strong interest – magic, conjuring. Saw on TV. Interested. Went library. Forced me to read early on and persevere Found address of shop London. I publish, give lectures. Presentation and oral suits my style.	2. Process for promotion centrally based – although in local office had to go to national panel and prove fit for all grades, all jobs at next rank.
3. Education. Went to O levels. Then left school.	3. None of my LMs helpful - all characters in themselves
4. Conversation with friend. Convinced I needed to get a 'proper job' – what doing not good enough. Lifestyle too insecure. Attraction of regular income	4. Traditional time-served culture: 10 years in grade then prob good enough to go to next level.
5. £10 Bet that I couldn't find a job by Monday (Challenge). Drive to find a job – unemployment office 6 mths casual. "I don't like people telling me I can't do something. Prob can't do but try and prove them wrong	5. Environment Previous job emp centre Not getting stabbed or beaten up by claimants wd be a good week
6. income not regular enough but when left school had a nice life –– doing magic –	6. Management responsibility – had team of 14. In de-motivating difficult environment
7. Once in Unemp Office attracted regular income. Kind of drifted into CS. Still able to do magic in evenings	7. Talents Recognised Picked up by G7 and selected as one of three for new team around new initiative – go out and sell to potential employers / users of services. Recognised commitment and drive to make something happen
8. Perceptions of Role of career in life Life o/s work – relshps – early stage of career, work was work. "Work was what you did to bgo out on a Friday or a Sat night"	8. Move into new job and broader scope of responsibilities an – staff allocations, monitoring, bids across the employment service.
9. Expectations – never a thought in my mind there wd be a career. Not getting stabbed or beaten up by claimants wd be a good week	9. Held back – applied and didn't get things. Got frustrated .
10. I was mouthy – said what I thought no matter who; could blag; could make a persuasive case not intimidated by hierarchy. AR said 'I want you.' Recognised qualities he needed for role. Similarity in commitment	10. Post going to go; needed to find ano job. Applied no jobs. Heard back on one that suited strengths – bringing in new student loan system.
11. Connections, relationships – girlfriend in head office – applied for vacancy she knew of	11. Feedback / recognition from LM - I wasn't sure but you've grown into the G7 role very rapidly
11. Post going to go. Could wait for them to find me something or make effort to get my own. Decided better to find my	12. Perceived attitude of org to recognising talent. Lose some of better ones. What they tend to keep can be more those who suffer frm apathy or who aren't able to move
	13. Compatible style of LM
	14. Lessons from First LM about mgmt – I want you to mg, not do. The need to

TABLE 11: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant D	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
own job. Applied for a number 12. Job played to my Skills – going out, problem solving, talk to local authorities. Think on my feet 13. Problem solving approach; eat an elephant in parts strategy enabled to take on larger role 14. Seized opportunity of position in relation to new initiative, 15. prepared to move to different physical location to develop approach - Glasgow 16. Carved out .niche of expertise in new area 17. Money as motivator 18. Motivation - Achievement orientation – wanting to do the best I can. 19. Motivation - Introducing new things 20. Motivation – promotion as recognition 21. Motivation – stepping up to challenge of next level 22. quick learner 23. Confident in my ability to do most things 24. Learning about motivating a team – donut – get people connecting on ano level outside immediate task – get all issues on table 25. Intuitively understand psychology of people – learnt a lot from magic. How to put people at ease; not embarass; group dynamics; facilitating and bringing quieter ones in in way where don't feel put on spot	step back 15. Supportive environment - Working in a new team as peers on tough objectives in short timescale – bonded quickly. All scared. Made it less daunting. All in same boat. 16. Clear goals, clear targets that had to build team to achieve. 17. Frustrated by bureaucracy of dealing with poor performance 18. Gaining an understanding of next level up. How to get the picture. Very =difficult to get access to what that's like,operating at next level. How you fit into the bigger picture. Had that with Student Loans 19. Career progression structure unclear in practice. Says to get to SCS have to have experience in at leastv2 of 3 career families – operational, dlivery, corporate 20. Perceived lack of clarity around where we are next thinking of moving – enables you to think ahead. Hard as cards played close to chest. Out of that inner sanctum

Appendix I / cont.

Conditions for SDL - Individual Transcript Analysis and Commentary

TABLE 12: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant E	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
1.Parents – always ambitious for me. Thought I'd go to university. My dad wanted something better for his kids.	1. Entry process to org'n External recruit exercise. Called me + 2 others looking for someone for month or so to help a couple project mgrs.
2. School – didn't really engage although enjoyed some of subjects. Didn't get on well with people – I was bullied	2. First people worked for. Very supportive and good at feedback
3. College – more like minded people wanting to do well	3. Management style – 1st LM gave early directive style then as got up to speed took less of direct role
4. Early Interest in acting and dancing – became more confident and outgoing	4. Role modelling - Picking up a lot from style of managers – negative as well as positive- watching the good ones and mopping up the mess from the bad
5. Conscientious – at college nobody made you turn up. I was able to self-direct own study	5. Seeing what could go for – being aware of visible opportunities in terms of where could go
6. Interest in subjects of psychology and biology. Equal measure maths and english. Look back now and still think really interesting. At time with essays etc. a bit of a chore	6. Nature of opportunity saw CS as – can move around, interesting work that makes a difference, can have diff levels responsibility in diff roles + security of being CS
7. Mix of subjects been helpful in drafting and project work skills – both come in handy in my career – transferable skills	7. Perceptions of Fast Track – jealous as get so much trg; expect'ns c. their performance.
8. Strategically when chose subjects at A level went for balance to give me options	8. Providing range and depth of experience to develop higher level skills
9. Had a really good teacher. Inspired me to do degree	9. Corporate environment provides potential to link what you're doing to stuff that appears in the newspapers
10. Lacked awareness of org'l career context Knew very little about career options. Never really had those conversations at home. They didn'tt understand career context.	10. Hearing stakeholders talk about their work – opened my eyes.
11. Awareness of own preferences – people person; liked going out and talking to people	11. Learning from 2 LMs – showing me how to get things done in this environment – how to make contact with others in dept, how you conduct a project, how identify who you need to talk to... how you go about the whole policy recommendations process, the whole process... Task and environment
12. Feeling could do that – putting self forwards	12. Organisation identified opportunities – there's a role coming up here
13. Using 'taster' experiences and extrapolating that to bigger tasks – e.g.	13. Learnt most from my LM – he was a good people manager – emulated him –

TABLE 12: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant E	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
summer students to mainstream mgmt	then got his job when he moved on!
14.Actively seeking to collect new experiences and skills	14.Lack of clarity about more senior roles in organisation – they're less visible. I know less about what they're doing, what they're feeling and `i don't really know what it would be like to be one.
15. Motivation to become part of civil service (be part of group?)– saw self as outsider at that point	15. Perceptions of sr roles and what expect – lot of stress, lot of meetings
16. Not being Fast Track made me more determined to do the same in terms of taking on the responsibility as if I was.	16.Others supported and given me confidence.
17. Taking from experience higher level skills and awareness e.g. understanding where other people coming from as well as trying to influence from your agenda	17. LM quickly letting me have more and more responsibility
18. Seeing connection between work doing and bigger picture	18. LM having a lot of confidence in me
19. Volunteering for broader corporate activity outside of immediate role – to learn new skills of facilitation and gaining confidence about working in groups;	19. LM gave me good feedback. Very direct and supportive
20. Gaining exposure at conferences and involvement in wider work. Gets you noitced and hear stakeholders talking. Provides perspective	21. Used opportunity early in my career of taking on summer placement people to develop line management skills – delegating, giving feedback etc.
21. Awareness of what I don't know – pushed me to try and get more experience	22.Developing others – suspected someone had dyslexia and encouraged to take test. Did!. Organisation supported – mentor etc and been rapidly promoted.
22. I was always stretching to take more from the role above.	23.Managing someone more experienced.
23. Sought to get involved and make myself indispensible – setting agendas, having team discussions;	24. Support from peers – discussing management situations and how to handle
24 Having a big role in developing team identity	25. Opportunity to scope a new area of work from start.
25. Stretching myself out of comfort zone – terrified even. Push myself to do stuff I'm not very comfy wiith. Look back now and say that was so easy...	26. Working with lots of different partners and people
26. Having a really clear goal – Grade 7 a milestone. With hindsight that was what I was striving for. Meant I could secure important aspects of lifestyle – buy own flat, and feel I'd got there.	27. Balance autonomy and team - Like chance to write my own stuff and doing my own thing , and working in team
27. Lack of clarity about goals – need to explore my options – inside and out.	28.Immediate team environment – very different from last job; not same sense of community.
28. Learning from adapting my natural	29. Relationship immediate LM not

TABLE 12: Individual Transcript Analysis - Participant E	
Individual Influences	**Organisational Influences**
style to another style more suited to what needed (I'm too nice; others styles more straight forward)	supportive– very directive, doesn't listen; everything about her and what she wants; strong character
29. Feeling isolated and not so enthusiastic. But do feel I can make a difference	30. New role requires a very proactive approach. Getting bombarded with lots of requests so fighting against being reactive

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual

I wanted to consider whether this work on identifying conditions that stimulate SDL in general, could be extended and used in a practitioner context to provide a basis for exploring influences on development in dialogue with the individuals concerned,

I therefore continued with my analysis and interpretation of individuals reports to formulate a basis for reporting back to the individuals concerned.

For each individual I formulated a report on Learning Themes. These are presented in this appendix as additional material to further evidence and illustrate my overall findings, another possible theme for stimulating SDL.

This Appendix contains the full numerically weighted analysis derived from each interview, together with a more detailed commentary against their highest rated conditions.

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

Learning Themes from Participant A

A has mentioned most frequently conditions brought about by her line manager. **A** appears to have taken a great deal of learning **from mangers she has worked for** – good and bad; *"I don't think I would have progressed as fast as I did. I was very lucky that my immediate manager moved on and the Divisional Manager thought that I had potential so I got given the workload of my boss. I had loads of autonomy to just get on with it and do it."*

"He was so good at not interfering but making me feel as though it anything went wrong it was okay and I could go and talk to him"

"He was really good at helping me think things through. So rather than offering solutions he would sit down and help me think it through..... I have to say in my managing I've really tried to offer the same... I know not the same thing works for everyone but for me that worked".

A's line manager played an important role in building her self confidence after a sustained period of her confidence being at a low point after leaving university.

Taking the initiative in influencing the organisation is a typical highly self directed learning approach in an organisational environment. Firstly in the course of carrying out a role identifying an organisational problem or issue that needs addressing and trying to influence others who have some formal control or influence over the issue. This involves making sense of the decision making chain, stakeholders who have an interest in the issue and setting out to actively influence resolving the issue. *"It was the deputy head who came and talked to us and at least gave us the opportunity to discuss our concerns.... I'm really glad that I was proactive about finding another way to do it."*

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

Table 13: Analysis of Responses by Category – Participant A

Individual Led Influences	No Mentions	Organisational / Outside Influences	No Mentions
1. Motivation / Drive	2	1. Perceived opportunities for progression	1
2. Self Efficacy	3	2. Feedback	3
3. Personal Preferences / Work Style	4	3. Cultural norms and hierarchy	4
4. Skills Development	1	4. Line Manager	9
5. Relationship building	4	5. Relationships and interaction with others - connectedness	3
6. Role Modelling	3	6. Opportunities for growth	2
7. Taking Initiative	5	7. Exposure to senior management	2
8. Attitude to risk	1	8. Opportunities in role	1
9. Self awareness	4	9. Responsibilities of work itself	2
10. Identification of Opportunities	4	10. Expectations and career paths	2
11. Enjoyment	1	11. Behaviour of senior management	1
12. Values and Beliefs	0	12. Broadening organisational experiences	2
13. Clear goals	1	19. Broader impact of work	1
14. Interest in work	1	14. Attitude towards work / life balance needs	0
15. Lifestyle	1	15. Reputation building	1
16. Learning and stretch	4	16. Organisational awareness	2
17. Organisational awareness	2		
18. Promoting achievements / expertise			

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

Taking the initiative in **building and making best use of relationships** is a career management skill along with **identifying opportunities. A** was encouraged to apply for a job vacancy, even though she probably didn't have quite enough experience. She decided to apply anyway because of the valuable experience in the process she would gain. *"I didn't get it but it was very worthwhile because it meant that when it came to applying for the next time I'd already done a lot of the work. Three colleagues including my old line manager gave me some really helpful feedback"*

Identifying opportunities to make broader connections in the organisation outside of the formal organisation and immediate job requirements to gain useful whole-organisation perspective and exposure to a broader range of people.

Self awareness in the workplace is usually linked to interaction and **relationships with others**. It is through the interaction that people become aware of others with very different work preferences to their own. It gives them a comparison which helps develop a greater objectivity about their own style preferences. **A** had learned a great deal as a line manager having to manage and influence others with very different style to her own. *"Louise is quite a relaxed, laid back person. Her management skills are fantastic and I've learned loads from working with her, and she's excellent at her job and is quite confident with that so I don't think she sees me as interfering".*

On the other hand another team member has a very different style. *"Jill is very good, very experienced, she's worked in all sorts of different areas but she's not really very ambitious.... Her first reaction if you ask her to do something is to ask 'why?', and the way she sometimes puts it across makes me think she's not really asking 'why?'; she's thinking I don't think we should do this, or why are you telling me? I may or may not be right but I find her quite difficult because I don't always know what to say"*

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

This then led to further exploring of what lay behind her own discomfort. In my experience it is handling these kinds of relationship issue that is typical of the messy kind of real learning that takes place in everyday interactions in the workplace.

"I picked up something that was quite difficult and I got to grips with that. In hindsight they were rubbish actually but in reality they were no worse that anybody else's".

Learning Themes from Participant B

In my analysis of the factors that have had most impact on **B**'s development, **cultural norms** and **career path expectations** have figured largely, particularly in the first 10 years of his career. **B** came in on a particular career track where promotion was traditionally slow in a hierarchical culture. He had an unfortunate experience of a poor assessment process in applying for FastStream, did not get feedback, and did not have support at the time from his line manager. Since then the negative aspects of this have been balanced by the fact he has made use of the strong welfare aspects of the culture to his benefit.

In terms of his **motivation and drive**, **B** has throughout his career had a strong sense of what he didn't like or want to do and over time, what aspects of his work he gained most **enjoyment and satisfaction** from. He described the years he spent between 1978 and 1982 as *"quite formative, in that it was a more rigorous environment intellectually, it was highly legalistic. That brought out some of my tendencies.... had my life taken a different path I suppose I might have become a solicitor"*. Intellectual challenge is a theme that recurs in **B**'s descriptions of what he most enjoys.

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

Table 14: Analysis of Responses by Category – Participant B

Individual Led Influences	No. Mentions	Organisational / Outside Influences	No. Mentions
1. Motivation / Drive	5	1. Perceived opportunities for progression	4
2. Self Efficacy	8	2. Feedback	1
3. Personal Preferences / Work Style	1	3. Cultural norms and hierarchy	8
4. Skills Development	4	4. Line Manager	2
5. Relationship building	2	5. Relationships and interaction with others - connectedness	3
6. Role Modelling	1	6. Opportunities for growth	3
7. Taking Initiative	2	7. Exposure to senior management	1
8. Attitude to risk	5	8. Opportunities in role	2
9. Self awareness	1	9. Responsibilities of work itself	2
10. Identification of Opportunities	0	10. Expectations and career paths	7
11. Enjoyment	5	11. Behaviour of senior management	2
12. Values and Beliefs	5	12. Broadening organisational experiences	1
13. Clear goals	1	13. Broader impact of work	1
14. Interest in work	5	14. Attitude to work / life balance needs	1
15. Lifestyle	3		
16. Learning and stretch	2		
20.Organisational awareness	1		
18. Promoting achievements / expertise	1		

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

B was strongly motivated by the discovery and realisation of a **talent he had for public speaking**. This had first shown itself at school *"a teacher said to me after we had all to do a presentation (I can't remember what) that I think you're a natural public speaker"* In the early 1990's he got the opportunity to use that natural skill in running seminars. *"It was at that stage that I discovered that standing up in front of loads of people and talking was not as horrifying as some people do find.... and the more hostile they were the better as far as I was concerned... simply getting a laugh which I would never have thought of myself."*

At the same time he came to the awareness that he derived a great deal of personal satisfaction from **working with others** where he could learn from them intellectually, *"he was someone who was intellectually very rigorous and could analyse something - in the latter half of the period we worked together, we worked for someone again who was different from either of us"*.

Attitude to risk has been a major factor, both positive and negative aspects. **B** has been reluctant to take risks but at key points in his career has taken calculated risks. His driver for a secure income has meant he has passed up the opportunity to move out.

Learning Themes from Participant C

One of the most often mentioned factors that came up for this participant as a regular pattern was the role of their **confidence in their own abilities or sense of self efficacy.** He mentioned periods or turning points of feeling an increase in confidence and also periods when his confidence was very low. *"I was suddenly instead of being a bigger fish in a small bowl .... I didn't know what was expected of me. You felt like going to the big school you know from the little school in a way, and yet you knew you had to deliver"*. **C**'s experience seemed to be that he needed feedback that he was doing okay; *"I wanted to make sure I was doing it right now and I didn't want people to tell me I was doing it wrong".* He described the experience he has had in different roles as a bit like opening a combination safe *"You think yes, I'm there. I'm getting there. When things sometimes seem up there and they do for a very long time, and then suddenly goes click, click, click, click, and....It's this realisation – all these lights suddenly come on, or the fog is clearing."*

There was a sense from **C** he did not feel it was not okay in the organisation to ask questions or be seen not to know the answers. *"There is an assumption of knowledge from your peer group when you start a new job, that you already know this, or if you don't know you should know...there are fundamental questions that you must know and you use all other methods that are less embarrassing, or you think they are, to find out."*

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

Table 15: Analysis of Responses by Category – Participant C

Individual Led Influences		Organisational / Outside Influences	
1. Motivation / Drive	5	1. Perceived opportunities for progression	1
2. Self Efficacy	8	2. Feedback	3
3. Personal Preferences / Work Style	5	3. Cultural norms and hierarchy	5
4. Skills Development	5	4. Line Manager	6
5. Relationship building	4	5. Relationships and interaction with others - connectedness	2
6. Role Modelling	1	6. Opportunities for growth	4
7. Taking Initiative	1	7. Exposure to senior management	1
8. Attitude to risk	2	8. Opportunities in role	5
9. Self awareness	2	9. Responsibilities of work itself	6
10. Identification of Opportunities	4	10. Expectations and career paths e.g. Fast Stream	3
11. Enjoyment	3	11. Behaviour of senior management	2
12. Values and Beliefs	2	12. Input / expertise when needed.	0
13. Expectations and assumptions	0	13. Team environment	1
14. Managing balance of 'stretch' and comfort zone	2	14. Exposure to experiences that provide broader organisational perspective	7
15. Clear goals	5	15. Comparison with peer group	0
16. Interest in work	2	16. Broader impact of work	1
17. Lifestyle	3		0
18. Learning	2	18. Attitude to work / life balance needs	3
19. Reputation-building	1		
20.Organisational awareness	3		

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

C developed an approach of asking staff junior to him to get information he somehow felt he should know. *"I use it as a technique to talk to people – to sub-graders, people more junior that myself, people I manage, as well as my peers to get answers, or the information I need".*

Linked to the above the role of the **Line Manager** was perceived as an important factor in development, whether positive or negative. This was in particular in the climate they could create that was either conducive to learning or not, for example where he felt *"you could take a risk and suggest things", or "he would say something like 'well, have you thought of......?' ...it was his style and manner, the way he did it without you realising. I'm realising now, as I reflect back.... I should see whether I can develop those traits, those skills, those approaches to things".*

Broader organisational relationships and exposure figured largely as influences in this individual's perceptions of their development. Several of the roles they had involved working with non governmental public bodies (NGPB) and working in units *"that required working through others and across Whitehall departments".*

C had **personal work style preferences** for having **clarity in his goals** and struggled if he felt this wasn't there. Linked to this he was strongly motivated to acquire skills he saw relevant to achieving these. At all stages of his career in particular I got the impression he was personally motivated by wanting to be seen by others as capable. *"I want to prove to others I can do this job well and do it right and then I'll be more content".* Once he felt he had mastered a role he "felt

Learning Themes from Participant D

Table 16: Analysis of Responses by Category – Participant D

Individual Led Influences	No. Mentions	Organisational / Outside Influences	No. Mentions
1. Motivation / Drive	3	1. Perceived opportunities for progression	5
2. Self Efficacy (Bandura)	3	2. Feedback	2
3. Personal Preferences / Work Style	3	3. Cultural norms and hierarchy	4
4. Skills Development	5	4. Line Manager	7
5. Relationship building	4	5. Relationships and interaction with others - connectedness	2
6. Role Modelling	2	6. Opportunities for growth	3
7. Taking Initiative	4	7. Exposure to senior management	1
8. Attitude to risk	1	8. Opportunities in role	1
9. Self awareness		9. Responsibilities of work itself	3
10. Identification of Opportunities	2	10. Expectations and career paths e.g. Fast Stream	
11. Enjoyment		11. Behaviour of senior management	
12. Values and Beliefs	1	12. Input / expertise when needed.	
13. Expectations and assumptions		13. Team environment	
14. Managing balance of 'stretch' and comfort zone		14. Exposure to experiences that provide broader organisational perspective	2
15. Clear goals	1	15. Comparison with peer group	
16. Interest in work	2	16. Broader impact of work	
17. Lifestyle	5	17. Restructuring	1
18. Learning	2	18. clarity of overall organisational direction	1
19. Reputation-building		18. Attitude to work / life balance needs	

feedback, learning about management from his example, and having a compatible style that he could identify with. His first opportunity to set something up from scratch was obtained directly from a manager higher up in his department, *"My luckiest break was being picked up by the then grade 7 XX"*

Broader **lifestyle considerations** have had a major impact on the conditions underpinning **D**'s approach to his learning during his career. In the early days of his career he was definitely 'working to live' rather than having any overt career ambitions. Very early on he had chosen to pursue magic as a career before he realised that earning a decent living would be difficult. The drive to earn a comfortable living has been a strong driver.

If he could see **opportunities for progression** this was an important motivator to **D** was alert to the fact *"that you had to do your job well but you also had to prove that you could do any job at the next grade".* **D** was strongly motivated by wanting to progress up the hierarchy. The process for promotion was seen as restrictive *"the barrier to getting promoted that you were fit for all gradesyou have to go to a national panel and prove that you were fit for all grades, all jobs at the next rank."* The **cultural norms and hierarchy** figured large in this, *"I'd known people who'd who were EOs, section managers, and they'd been there 20 years and retired there."* One of the cultural norms is a reluctance to deal with poor performance which *"as an individual manager you can get frustrated by the bureaucracy in dealing with poor performance".*

He has always been strongly motivated by task achievement*, "Bringing in student loans was very good. The design of the single system was a major achievement. In the short time I had to bring in the variable fees and bursary system that came in on-line in 2006 and worked was again, another tremendous achievement".*

His audience management experience as a magician still stands him in good stead in certain contexts. In managing a large team he feels very comfortable standing up and presenting. In describing what he does he draws a lot on his experience of working groups of people in nightclubs in his large team meetings. He reads the behaviour of people and how to best work with those dynamics in a group. *"Who do I have to bring into the meeting because they're quieter and then how do I bring them into the meeting in a way where they feel they can make a contribution without putting them on the spot... it's very subtle."*

He has developed strong intuition about people that he has followed through into an interest in psychology and NLP. *"I have been told I'm very empathetic. I pick up on things and I just think I intuitively understand how to work with people".*

Learning Themes from Participant E

E's line managers have been an important influence on her development, both positive and, more recently, negatively. In the early stages of her career she was fortunate enough to be working to two project managers from whom E gained in several different ways. *"They were excellent project managers, and the stuff I learnt from them has taken me a long way"*. In addition *"they were very supportive and very good at feedback, and very engaging. If ever I was going on a visit they would rely on me to do the notes and stuff which at the time seemed quite a big thing because it was complex and important policy matters they were talking about".*

E in reflecting on what had helped her was clearly seeing it *afresh "when I was reflecting on it the people I have worked for very much started off with a bit more hand holding where I've needed it, then I've probably pushed to do more myself and they've let me, or helped me on that. There were some really bad managers, as well as good."*

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

Table 17: Analysis of Responses by Category – Participant E

Individual Led Influences		Organisational / Outside Influences	
1. Motivation / Drive	6	1. Perceived opportunities for progression	2
2. Self Efficacy (Bandura)	2	2. Feedback	2
3. Personal Preferences / Work Style	2	3. Cultural norms and hierarchy	1
4. Skills Development	4	4. Line Manager	9
5. Relationship building	5	5. Relationships and interaction with others - connectedness	3
6. Role Modelling	2	6. Opportunities for growth	3
7. Taking Initiative		7. Exposure to senior management	2
8. Attitude to risk		8. Opportunities in role	1
9. Self awareness	2	9. Responsibilities of work itself	4
10. Identification of Opportunities	2	10. Expectations and career paths	3 (2 neg)
11. Enjoyment		11. Behaviour of senior management	
12. Values and Beliefs	1	12. Broadening organisational experiences	3
13. Clear goals	3	13. Broader impact of work	2
14. Interest in work	3	14. Attitude to work / life balance needs	
15. Lifestyle			
16. Learning and stretch	8		
20.Organisational awareness	7		
18. Promoting achievements / expertise	1		

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

A later manager she found helped her development in a different way. *"He had a lot of confidence in me and I knew that he did. He was very good at giving good feedback, but he would also say 'XX, why haven't you done that thing? You know it's a priority...' so he was very direct but very supportive. He didn't make me feel rubbish, but it was like, 'look you need to go and do that'. He helped me get the Grade 7 in that job".*

More recently her line manager has a style that she feels as more constraining *"She's just very directive and doesn't listen, so everything is about her and what she wants, and what she's heard, and there's just not the kind of more open discussions that I think are really important. I think the unit is quite... not depressed, but restricted by that in a way".*

E has had a great deal **of motivation and drive** to progress. Part of this drive has been to prove herself. She did not come in on the Fast Stream entrant scheme and has a strong need to be recognised as having that potential. *"There's so much expectation around their performance and everything, so I was very aware that I wasn't on that actually but that made me even more determined to do it..."*

A major theme in **E**'s development has been her **desire to stretch and learn** and push herself to the edge of her comfort zone. She's carefully controlled that rather than simply jumping in. *"I've been in a position in the role where I can stretch myself further as well. The Grade 7 I was working to quickly let me have more and more responsibility.... it's been gradual which has allowed me to think 'oh, well I can do that now, I can do a bit more, a bit more', a gradual building of confidence I think".* That was a pattern she has repeated and that has worked well for her throughout her career to date.

E has demonstrated **organisational awareness** in her learning, for example in identifying skills that may be useful looking ahead and spotting opportunities to develop and demonstrate them. *"I worked with a guy in the department who*

was organising lots of facilitated workshops and wanted to have a pool of DfES people so I kind of volunteered to be a part of the pool" On probing further as to her reasons for pursuing that line; *"I just thought that's a really useful skill to have, and it kind of gets you noticed a bit more as well, and I was becoming involved in the wider work of the department... I remember facilitating something at a school governers' conference and even just having that opportunity, and hearing stakeholders talking about their work... well it opened my eyes."*

Linked closely to organisational awareness has been the way **E** has used **relationships with others** to develop her understanding of the way the organisation works, and how to get things done. *"... it's from others I gained the framework of understanding of how you do things in this environment - how you conduct a project, how you go and make contact with other people in the department, or how you identify who you need to talk to... how you approach someone, and the potential sensitivities involved; not just wading in and saying 'we think this, that and the other..' ; simply they opened my eyes to what the job was about."*

Relationships where E is involved in the management and development of others are also providing important learning. For example a current challenge is managing someone a lot more experienced. *"In the end it all worked out quite well but I remember really feeling that I had to prove myself to this lady"*. On being asked how she approached that *"Well, I was just quite professional about it and followed all the guidance, and just made sure I prepared for every conversation"*.

Appendix J: Report on Learning Themes by Individual / cont..

In this she is being challenged by her own personal development frontiers. "As a manager I'm just trying to be too nice and I kind of notice that others' styles are much more straight forward. I liked the fact that with my line manager he was so direct in how he put things and I like that style, but at the moment it really isn't my style". She's found it useful to talk through this issue with a peer. "We've been discussing that on a regular basis, so that's been helpful"

Appendix K: Common Themes on Conditions Influencing Development

In this Appendix I show analysis of overall themes that emerged from the interviews as the most frequently mentioned.

1. Line Manager

The immediate manager came out by far as the biggest influence on the learning environment in this small sample, either positive or negative.

Some of the positive ways line mangers were perceived to contribute to development, particularly early in career / job stages included:

- recognition of skills,
- acting as role models of how to do things,
- providing feedback and
- providing an appropriate balance of direction and letting go as the individual became more experienced.

"He was good at not interfering but if anything went wrong it was okay and I could go and talk to him."
" I have come to the realisation that I can take aspects of my manager's approach that I value and adapt and develop them to my own way."

Managers can be a direct source of influence over several of the organisational conditions in the framework, such as

- allocation of work responsibilities,
- creating the immediate work climate,
- providing development opportunities in the role, and
- exposure to broadening work experiences.

Examples of perceived strong negative behaviours from line managers included:

- lack of interest,
- a clash of styles,
- lack of feedback and
- lack of clarity of expectations.

Appendix K: Common Themes on Conditions Influencing Development / cont..

- One participant even went on to describe their response to a manager who they perceived showed a lack of respect as *"I regarded my manager with contempt".*

In theory it is possible for an individual to be strongly self directed in their learning despite having a poor relationship with their line manager however there was some evidence that it could have negative impact on self direction.

" We got on fine socially but he didn't offer a lot of support and didn't understand why I couldn't do it. I didn't even have a desk of my own for 2 years. I felt really isolated. It really knocked my confidence and it took me a good couple of years after to feel I was really back on track".

2. Motivation / Drive

Motivation and drive is a prerequisite to strong self direction. This derived from a number of different sources

- Being told I couldn't do something; proving to myself and others I could do it,
- A desire to prove myself as I didn't have a degree,
- Stretching to achieve a next goal
- Setting myself a goal of getting to G7
- Aspects of role that played to my skills / strengths
- Wanting to do the best I can
- Wanting to do it right. I crave clarity and am hopeless if I don't have it.
- Feeling trusted

De-motivators included:
- work that was lacking in challenge,
- where there was lack of clarity about goals.
- Where the individual lacked confidence

Appendix K: Common Themes on Conditions Influencing Development / cont..

3. Self Efficacy

This is closely related to motivation but is about self confidence in relation to task accomplishment. It is a belief in one's own capabilities that translates into characteristics such as resilience and persistence in the face of obstacles or set-backs. This equates to the triangular relationship between challenge, support and confidence that the researchers in the LINEA workplace learning project found (Erault et al. 2000).

- Growth in confidence as acquire competence in skills
- Growth in confidence in the early stages. It snowballs until like a combination safe it clicks and the door unlocks. It's satisfying.
- Looking for challenge – at right level
- Getting the right balance between feeling mastery and challenge

To a certain extent there is a natural cycle to any new task that individuals respond to very differently. For one individual the process of "not knowing" felt a positive one, even exciting:

"It's a cyclical thing - your first cycle is really feeling around in the dark, and IO really enjoyed that bit, and then your second cycle is where you're restarting to add value to it because you understand more, and can spot where improvements can be made, and by the third cycle it just starts to get a bit boring... so then it was time to move on and do something different".

Whereas for another, the experience could be very different:

"I was wanting to do it right. I crave clarity and I'm hopeless if I don't have it".

This individual felt slightly anxious and driven to seek more certainty.

One factor which seems to make a big difference to people's ability to respond to challenges and stress is the support they receive from significant others. If they are faced with the challenge of heavy demands yet have strong support from key individuals they can get though it. Sometimes working for a manager

Appendix K: Common Themes on Conditions Influencing Development / cont..

with a particular style can create stress and even a strong sense of failure at inability to cope:

"My confidence was really at an all time low. I felt I'd failed.'

4. Culture

The impact of the organisational climate and organisational processes and ways of doing things, when it was raised was more often in relation to a negative impact. Positive aspects mentioned were the strong welfare tradition, which is gradually being eroded, and having a strong supportive climate in the immediate work team.

Particularly negative aspects mentioned included things that are changing but are still felt to be present.

- Legacy – strong Welfare culture.
- Team culture
- Hierarchical, civil service public school ethos – dying but the culture is still elitist
- Less hierarchical control means the opportunity to take greater responsibility
- Traditional time-served culture
- I get frustrated by the bureaucracy of dealing with poor performance
- Avoids difficult feedback

Generally cultural aspects explicitly raised could be deemed to work against self direction.

Balanced against that I would counter that for those with the interest and motivation there are opportunities and resources to be used that many in the private sector would gasp at .

Appendix K: Common Themes on Conditions Influencing Development / cont..

5. Learning / Stretch

6. Relationship Building

While a Line Manager can have a big impact on the conditions for self directed learning, others and outside the organisation can provide conditions for learning. This links to the assumption that learning is a social process *"because people learn through interaction in bounded social groups that are connected by organisational goals"* (Marsick and Watkins 1990).

Conditions mentioned by participants relevant to this category include:
- Having a big role in identifying team identity
- Being reliant on others and getting things done through others over whom I had no direct authority
- Knowing the civil service culture and how that operates – it helps to know how to get others to do things
- Building good relationships with stakeholders is a core part of my role
- Seeking help and input from others
- Discussion with others to get different perspectives

7. Skills development

Taking from experience a higher level of skills and awareness

Actively seeking to collect new experiences and skills

Having to influence others confirmed my interpersonal skills in influencing

Appendix K: Common Themes on Conditions Influencing Development / cont..

8. Responsibilities of work itself

Work responsibilities in practice are the most immediate vehicle for learning in organisations. A core assumption of adult learning theory is that adults are only motivated to learn "to the extent that they perceive it will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that the confront in their life situations." (Knowles 1990).

Erault et al (2000) identified "challenging work tasks" and "allocation and structuring of work" as being two factors that contributed significantly to work place learning.

Some illustrative examples mentioned of how work responsibilities contribute to peoples' motivation to learn included:

- *"My most powerful development has come from being given more responsibility and the complete freedom to say and do what I judged was needed"*
- *"Learning from managing different personalities and styles"*
- *"Experience in a leadership role"*
- *"Developing others"*
- *"As a line manager – having to mange different people and situations"*
- *"Opportunity to scope a new area of work from the start"*
- *"Working with lots of different partners"*
- *"Managing someone with more experience"*
- *"Getting involved in setting agendas, having team discussions"*

The extent to which they critically reflect on what they have learned will affect the degree of self direction but work responsibilities appear to be a strong environmental stimulus to individual motivation for self directed learning.

Appendix K: Common Themes on Conditions Influencing Development / cont..

9. Personal Preference / Work style

This was a condition that did not emerge at all in the categories identified by the integrated framework offered by the literature search into self directed learning. The literature did not also identify 'self awareness' as a factor.

Arguably the two could be put together in as far as how they influence self directed learning. Greater awareness of ones own personal work style preferences enables more conscious learning and career choices to be made about career direction and more conscious awareness of some of the differences in ways of working in oneself compared to others. Self knowledge can help one identify what is likely to be satisfying and suggest strategies for changing approach to work, managing relationships, or to suggest changes in environment that would be a better fit with an individuals preferences.

- I get great pleasure in helping people
- I discovered I had a natural talent – I discovered that I was a natural public speaker
- I found out more about the sort of work I wanted to do
- Learning from adapting my natural style to another style
- I could make a persuasive case – that was recognised and I was put in a role to go out and sell our services to prospective users and employers
- I enjoy introducing new things

Of itself self awareness need not necessarily lead to greater self direction. Without it I would question the sustainability of self directed learning beyond having focus on short term goals. Self awareness and recognising one's own assumptions and habitiual ways of doing things is essential to double-loop learning and critical reflection. It is however interesting to note that self awareness, although implicit in self directed learning theory, is not made explicit.

Appendix L: Conditions – Analysis of Impact by Individual

In this appendix I give selective commentary on the main contributions and barriers to the individual's development, as perceived by that individual. I include direct quotes from the participants for illustration purposes.

The tables in this section show each participant's reported conditions, either individually led or as perceived to be organisational. It shows for each the split between positive, negative and neutrally perceived conditions, expressed in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the total for individual or organisational led conditions.

PARTICIPANT A

Table 18: Conditions – Analysis of Impact

PARTICIPANT A	Total No	Total as%	Positive No	as %	Neutral No	as %	Negative No	as %
Individual led	38	100	27	71	8	19	3	10
Organisational	33	100	22	66	13	27	7	21

A was relatively up-beat and positive about her learning experiences and the learning she took from them.

Negative indicators included an overly restrictive line manager *"he was very thorough but it became limiting to my development"* and absence of feedback, *"nobody told me whether what I was doing was good or bad. How can I improve when I've no idea whether what I'm doing is right?"* The latter was seen as particularly important in the early stages of a job before having sufficient experience to be confident about ones own judgement.

Appendix L: Conditions – Analysis of Impact by Individual / cont..

A negative organisational influence with **A** was perceived to be senior management not role modelling the behaviours that the organisation publicly states are expected. This research was not sufficient to indicate whether this had a negative impact on capability or motivation to learn although my sense is this probably has longer term impact.

PARTICIPANT B

Table 19: Conditions – Analysis of Impact

Participant B	Total	Total as%	Positive No	as %	Neutral No	as %	Negative No	as %
Individual led	25	100	16	68	2	8	7	28
Organisational	19	100	7	37	5	26	7	37

B's perceptions of positive and negative development influences and events are interestingly polarised compared to the others. His 'story' was more overtly influenced by broader life factors. This was no doubt partly a function of the fact of being older and therefore having more life experiences to draw on. However it was also partly to the fact that he is undoubtedly strongly self directed but not in the classic "career" mode. He has a particularly style and set of strengths that fall out of the traditional organisational career "success model".

The other characteristic of his profile is the relatively higher weight given to negative organisational and personal factors. *"I cannot remember at this stage particularly why I applied for the Civil Service; it was there... my mother had always made it clear that I was not to become a bricklayer (like my father), although of course ironically you can now earn a lot of money from that".*

Appendix L: Conditions – Analysis of Impact by Individual / cont..

B joined the organisation at a clerical level and around 6 years in applied to join the Fast Stream career track. He didn't pass that and the process of feedback was seen as poor by **B**. *"There was no sort of debriefing afterwards and, having failed, there was no sort of follow up, saying 'well ok you haven't done this, but let's consider what might be your future options.' "*

B didn't have high expectations of getting through the process *"although I thought I was as capable as others who were already in Fast Stream".* On inquiring what his reasons were for that assumption , *"Oh I understood from the cultural mindset of the department at the time. It was never explained to me.... that public school ethos has only recently died away in the last ten years or so".*

B was personally dismissive of the current emphasis on Performance Indicators and Business Plans, describing them as *"a waste of time".* He is sceptical of corporate initiatives, such *as   "... of course we're meant to be undergoing a process of continuous improvement - that's the new watchword.."*

B has chosen to make use of the civil service tradition of always being able to find a role for people even if their job disappears. He has made a conscious trade-off in deciding in the overall balance of work / life that works for him. He stated *"The extent to which I haven't progressed further in the Civil Service is probably in that I've been lazy. I've always refused to work longer hours necessary. That's not an absolute bar to progress but it tends not to help".* On being challenged about using the word "lazy" his response was *"I think of myself as lazy in the sense that I do so much less than I could.. Sometimes I get through more work in two hours than some people get through in a day".*

On the other hand he identifies with what he sees as core aspects of the civil service culture that he personally values. One of the major influences on his career he describes as *"working in an organisation which is strongly conditioned by a framework of judgement and rules and questions... The Civil Service doesn't really train you very much at all in many respects but one thing it does train you to do is to think about things".*

Overall his view on his own learning *"I do enjoy learning quite a bit, but it's almost wholly related to outside work.. I mean I see myself continuously learning and so on, but not in the work context. In the work context I learn as much as I need to do for my work. Some other things I learn because we are we are required to learn them but I sort of make the minimum effort necessary to do it".*

Table 20: Conditions – Analysis of Impact

Participant C	Base	Base %	Positive No	%	Neutral No	%	Negative No	%
Individual led	31	100	15	48	13	42	3	10
Organisational	26	100	15	58	8	31	4	15

C perceives that in terms of what is regarded as 'successful' within the organisation you have to be seen to have promotion potential. Having gone through intense and stressful work periods, particularly in ministerial office, he is not convinced he wants promotion to the next level. *"What if I want a life as well? There is a long hours culture here."* He also perceived that perceptions and expectations are that *"everybody should want promotion... and be doing better, not coasting".*

Appendix L: Conditions – Analysis of Impact by Individual / cont..

In terms of work style, **C** appears to be highly energetic and practically focused. Themes have been having a strong drive to do the right thing in service of others. This natural focus has meant he has tended to do best in situations where he can use his interpersonal skills to be of help to others. It is a natural inclination that he drew out from our conversation as a theme throughout his life and career. Another theme that came through is his need for tangibility and a drive to prove himself. Currently he feels a *"personal need and desire for clarity in terms of what is expected of me"*

Table 21: Conditions – Analysis of Impact

Participant D	Base	Base %	Positive No	%	Neutral No	%	Negative No	%
Individual led	25	100	18	72	4	16	3	12
Organisational	20	100	9	45	0	0	11	55

Overall the most significant difference with **D** was the negative weighting of organisational conditions at 50% of the items. This may reflect the fact that **D**'s career progression had been from the bottom and he felt frustrated by the lack of perceived promotion opportunity at different stages. At an individual level he perceives that he has initiated a high level of positive moves in relation to his learning.

D appears to have "plateaued" and appears somewhat disillusioned although he still has a lot of positive energy. *"I think life has been a lot of 'downs' so... it's plateaued at the bottom for a long while so I'm not expecting it to rise much"*.

Appendix L: Conditions – Analysis of Impact by Individual / cont..

On being asked as to whether he was going through a taking stock process he replied *"No, I just don't see any point in taking stock... my life took a dip about five years ago and it's not got any better so that's fine – you have to learn that maybe life is never going to be what you expect it to be.... My philosophy in life is life is what it is. It's either good or bad, it's happy or sad*; whatever it is, but *life is life"*.

It appeared to me that **D** was unsure what direction he was going in and unsure how to approach it. He seemed defensive about the potential value of taking learning forwards for the future *"Sometimes you can over analyse a new situation... and you lose the fact that sometimes you just have to take a risk... life is intuitive and you need to go with what you think is best and not over think it"*.

D has possibly developed some strong skills partly as a result of his dyslexia. At an early age (10) he started a lifelong interest in magic, which he worked in up to the age of 17 when he made a decision that he needed to get a "real job". He put huge amounts of energy and commitment into developing his magic show, *"... it's a presentation and oral style that suits my style".* He has gone on to develop high skill levels in working with people. He saw his dyslexia as a positive factor in many ways. The only way to learn about magic was to read so that was a strong motivator; *".. it would have been so easy to fall back from reading"*. As it was he forced himself to read, as he was strongly motivated to learn about magic.

Although he appears to be skilled at reading and managing people in the immediate, **D** is struggling to read how the organisation works at a higher, especially in his relatively new role *"I don't know the answer, and not only do I not know the answer, I don't know who to go to to get the answer"*.

Appendix L: Conditions – Analysis of Impact by Individual / cont..

On being asked what he saw would be the differences and what he needed to learn at the next level he answered *"I don't know. That's the problem. I don't know".* He finds it difficult to know in tangibly what would be required. He perceives he has been successful to date primarily through delivery; *"project management - looking at the process, the risk assessment, the issue assessment, the issue management and the managing of all that to the problem solving, stakeholder management, and all of that".*

PARTICIPANT E

Table 22: Conditions – Analysis of Impact

Participant E	Base	Base %	Positive No	%	Neutral No	%	Negative No	%
Individual led	29	100	26	90	0	0	3	10
Organisational	30	100	24	80	1	3	5	17

For **E** by far the most self-generated influences on her learning and development were positive at 90%. Of all the participants **E** was the most consciously proactive in relation to her own development. From early on in her career with the civil service she had an aspiration to reach Grade 7 which is the first major visible management grade which typically provides the platform to potentially move on to the senior civil service (SCS) *"from quite an early time I remember looking at the Grade 7s and thinking oh, you're so senior. I'd love to have that job in the future".* She invested so much in that goal and, having achieved it is now uncertain. *"I've always pushed myself, and now I'm starting to think, am I that ambitious? I don't know any more... and I also don't really know much about what my options are, because Grade 7 is very visible so, even from early on I knew what they were doing and what it would be like to be*

Appendix L: Conditions – Analysis of Impact by Individual / cont..

one whereas with the Grade 6's they're less visible and I know less about what they're doing, what they're feeling, and I don't really know what it would be like to be one."

The negative factors mentioned were bad early experiences at school where she went through a phase of not getting on well with her peer group and being bullied as a result and later, lack of awareness of career options. At present she feels a lack of clarity about her direction and is aware she needs to explore career options, both inside and outside the organisation.