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A Qualitative Analysis of a Corporate Adventure Program

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A Qualitative Analysis of a Corporate Adventure Learning Program

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ABSTRACT

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Outdoor adventure learning (OAL) provides a unique environment to teach organizational change. Therefore, there is an implication these programs can be used to foster necessary specific skills such as leading change, innovation, and thriving in hostile environments to lead in the ever-changing corporate world. Little research, however, supports the efficacy of adventure learning in achieving specific outcomes. Skeptics suggested the benefits of OAL programs do not always generalize effectively from the outdoor experience to the workplace. This paper outlines how utilizing strategic skills and theory to conduct OAL programs are effective and impactful in the corporate world. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions and meaning of a based outdoor adventure learning program among corporate executives using qualitative data analysis (QDA).

Keywords: outdoor adventure, culture, motivation, self-efficacy, social exchange theory

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A Qualitative Analysis of a Corporate Outdoor Adventure Learning Program

In businesses, the ability to engage in and lead change is valuable. Business environments are dynamic and ever changing in a fast paced world. Change is ongoing and consistently modifying the corporate world and valuable to organizational leaders. Having competent, loyal, and motivated employees creates an innovative environment. Yet, change is difficult. People generally seek comfort, consistency and stability in their lives, not the disruptive nature that comes with change. One potentially effective method for teaching change is to push and stretch leaders to do new things by helping to change the mental maps of business leaders in an unfamiliar environment, like Outdoor Adventure Learning (OAL). OAL focuses on a variety of physical and/or mental exercises for individual and/or groups of participants (Wagner et al., 1991). Guided activities are facilitated to encourage and reflect on the learning experiences, and help participants transfer the knowledge and skills learned to a work context (Williams et al., 2002). Experiencing these adventures helps build competence in doing something one never thought possible. Business leaders can tie their experience back into the business world using techniques facilitators have established to help participants realize potential to change, work together supporting one another, and confidence in their ability (Williams et al). Taking business leaders on adventure learning programs is unique to the business world where employees enjoy the elite opportunity.

Outdoor Adventure Learning (OAL) offers amazing challenges to visitors who climb, bike, hike, raft and explore. For the uninitiated and challenge averse, adventures can cause terror, panic, and anxiety as participants experience the fear of the unknown and envision potential harm. To the novice, the canyon walls, whitewater, and slick rock can look imposing and deadly. A review of procedures and safety precautions with guided facilitators brings some

relief and security to the inexperienced. Following precautions, setting goals, and developing a plan set by the facilitators provide assurance for individuals where security is the underlying factor. The perception of risk is often moderated after the challenge is overcome. In fact, after overcoming a new challenge, individuals often come away with a more realistic perspective through setting their mind on accomplishments and belief in their ability to change.

The same principle applies in the work environment. We live in a sea of dynamic change. Change is inevitable, but today, it is fast paced because corporations have to meet demands of expanding technologies. Change and adversity bring a fear of the unknown and panic associated with possible failure and anxiety. Every business should strive for excellence striving to become the best in the field. As the competitive environment changes and technology advance, companies seek to quickly adapt to maintain a competitive edge. One source for helping facilitate innovation is adventure learning programs capturing what businesses are trying to imagine and create in their employees helping individuals to grasp the vision and inspire innovation (Burnett & James, 1994; Dwyer, 2006; Gass, Goldman, & Priest, 1992; Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997).

Skeptics argue adventure learning programs can be costly and time consuming. Zemke (as cited in Wagner, Baldwin, & Roland 1991), one of these skeptics, stated "outdoor programming is nothing more than an opportunity for organizations to pack whole management teams off to risk life and limb together" (p. 51). Other negative aspects identified as hindrances of a successful program include failing to achieve success, a lack of physical challenge, working and interacting with the group, instructor's expectations and personalities, and the weather (McKenzie, 2003).

A paradigm shift is critical to bring a catalyst for change and transfer of learning. Outdoor adventure learning programs can provide a unique environment to teach change leadership, promote motivation, cooperation, communication, cohesion, and support, thus producing skills associated with effective change leadership (Hattie et al., 1997). One goal of adventure learning programs is to create an atmosphere of vulnerability where all participants stand on equal ground, opening individuals up to self-reflection and enhancing the opportunity for personal change. Outdoor activities are designed to require a group to work collaboratively to solve problems, relate with one another in a new environment, and produce relationships of trust (Ibbetson & Newell, 1998). Certain activities also promote efficacy in the individual thus spanning into other areas of one's life and increasing quality of life and work productivity (Bandura, 1997). Utilizing metaphors from outdoor adventures creates images for individuals helping them to transfer learning into the work environment. Team members who experience activities collectively form closer relationships and view one another in different ways.

An individual who experiences personal change in outdoor settings finds his or her ability has changed in other settings, including the work place (Burnett & James, 1994). Competent team members work more closely to build strong and lasting organizations, gaining personal trust in one another and leading change.

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of corporate leaders concerning the meaning and outcomes of a theory-based adventure learning program. This study identified and then compared emergent themes of motivation, culture, trust, and loyalty within the data to the current literature and examined the data in the context of related theories. These themes shed new light on how social exchange and self-determination can promote loyalty and motivation within company cultures.

The use of adventure learning programs has a long history. Yet, the effectiveness of these programs in reaching specific outcomes has raised questions. Lencioni (2002) stated,

> Ropes courses and other experiential team activities seem to have lost some of their luster over the course of the past 10 years, and deservedly so. Still, many teams do them with the hope of building trust. And while there are certainly some benefits derived from rigorous and creative outdoor activities, involving collective support and cooperation, those benefits do not always translate directly to the working world. That being said, experiential team exercises can be valuable tools for enhancing teamwork as long as they are layered upon more fundamental and relevant processes. (p. 200-201)

Little research supports the efficacy of adventure learning in achieving specific outcomes. This is likely due to a lack of rigorous development and systematic *layering* of concepts and skills to *fundamental and relevant process* as suggested by Lencioni (2002). Clearly, a need exists to develop theory-based, conceptually sound adventure learning programs and study the impact of these programs on participants. OAL programs, Ewert (1989) said, leads individuals to develop leadership abilities. Initial studies should first seek to understand the fundamental experience through qualitative methods, which in turn can lead researchers to more effective program design and research methods.

Review of Literature

There are key issues regarding the purpose of this study that have been previously addressed involving the nature and disposition of the group (Ibbetson & Newell, 1998), the ability of outdoor adventure learning (OAL) to open minds, or create fractional sublimation (Hattie et al., 1997; Taniguchi, Freeman, & Richards, 2005), and the role of these experiences in creating cultures (Schein, 1984). The understanding of these key issues is important to the

investigation of adventure programming and its influences on corporate development and culture. The purpose of these OAL programs enhances skill – for instance, improving leadership skills, team building, improving problem solving skills, increasing trust, and improving communication (Williams et al., 2002). Using theories and models to build the context of OAL programs helps corporate leaders elicit change.

Outdoor Adventure Learning

OAL programs provide a unique modality to promote change leadership. Adventure programs have a rich history of producing change among its different settings. In 1957, Kurt Hahn organized Outward Bound for youth (Hahn, 1975). Outward Bound was designed to instill independence, initiative, physical fitness, self-reliance, and resourcefulness (Hattie et al., 1997). Since Outward Bound first started, adventure learning companies have provided enriching and rehabilitative experiences for many groups, including managers, psychiatric patients, and at-risk youth (Hattie et al.). Kolb described adventure learning as a form of "organizational development which uses specially designed outdoor activities to foster calculated risk taking in individuals and creative problem solving trust and teamwork within groups" (as cited in Mazany, Francis, & Sumich, 1995, p. 53). Being in the outdoors places clients in an unfamiliar setting where they are vulnerable and willing to adapt to new information. Clients are placed in a beautiful setting where they can enjoy unfamiliar surroundings and participate in unforgettable opportunities. Gass, Goldman, and Priest (1992) stated,

> In adventure experiences participants are uncertain about the outcome. They are in an unfamiliar environment, facing novel situations that are often thrilling and difficult. For these reasons, their attention is likely to be focused and their perceptions heightened. Following the experience, they are often left with an empowered vision and critical

> feedback on their newly learned skills. Because of the unique nature of adventure experiences these activities also add a learning opportunity where no one group member brings any special expertise to these activities. This places participants equally positioned and breaks down any hierarchical barriers. (p. 39)

Participating in such physical activities breaks clients away from their normal environment where logical consequences and decisions are played out. Participants in these activities may learn important lessons during these adventures. Individuals may not immediately recognize the lessons learned, but identifying and processing after the adventure often brings to light lessons around creativity, imagination, teamwork, communication, persistence and overcoming fear. Turner (1974) stated, "novelty emerges from unprecedented combinations of familiar elements" (p. 60). Dwyer (2006) claimed, in adventure activities, participants show their true selves more than in many other training seminars where they respond to what they think of as the participant's role. Participants, therefore, react and interact in adventures in ways that can be directly applied to real life work experiences. Actions and decisions in an adventure context often result in immediate and unavoidable consequences, thus providing clear and immediate feedback. This provides opportunities to discuss the implications of individual and group actions and decisions in a real time scenario. When faced with challenging situations inherent in adventure experiences the resulting emotions and anxiety break down barriers and allow people to engage in more honest self-reflection (Burnett & James, 1994). When participants are placed in a situation where everyone is accomplishing the task, the excitement motivates them to be involved and be part of the group. Sharing those intense moments of exhaustion, adrenaline, and excitement bring coworkers together to celebrate in their success of accomplishment.

Despite popularity of adventure learning amongst businesses, many organizations and training professionals have little understanding of outdoor adventure education, its etiology, or potential benefits over traditional training programs (Wagner et al., 1991). Others are skeptical of the application to the workplace (Gass et al., 1992). Lencioni (2002) specifically suggests the benefits of these programs do not always generalize effectively from the outdoor experience to the workplace. Yet, he acknowledges outdoor adventure can be an effective training tool if it is "layered upon more fundamental and relevant processes" (Lencioni, 2002, p. 200-201). This is a key issue in the literature. Gall (1987) declares field experts need solid experiential training background to lead team building activities, organizational communication, change management, and leadership development. Without these essential elements, companies are wasting their time and money. It appears many adventure learning programs are not designed around meaningful theory or research, and thus do not fully utilize the potential of these programs in leadership and organizational development.

Adventure Learning Effectiveness

> Gall (1987) identified some specific strengths of adventure training;
>
> If you can get people to risk trying something that they are sure they can't do and they discover they can do it, that realization translates into their whole attitude about how they approach life, how they approach work, how they approach managing. (p. 54)

Gall continues with seven phases necessary to instill value and produce successful outcomes: (a) group orientation, (b) preliminary assessment to establish needs, (c) ongoing metaphors linked to the work environment, (d) carefully facilitated conversations between participants, (e) development of an action plan before returning to the work environment, (f) follow up by both the provider and the participants, and (g) commitment from top management. An orientation

meeting devised to establish guidelines and set expectations of the course, address fears or anxiety participants may have towards the unknown. Introducing any unfamiliar equipment or activities helps participants determine their capabilities and builds confidence to reinforce completion of the course. Providing hard skills training establishes an opportunity for participants to ask questions and voice concerns. This allows facilitators to discuss the value and roll of fear and the value of having a healthy respect for challenges that pose both real and perceived risks. Another important element is to increase participants' efficacy in doing challenging adventure activities and systematically generalizing the emotions, skills, and principles from the experience to the workplace. This can be done by cognitively restructuring components of the experience to emphasize similarities between the experience and the work experience (Bandura, 1997; Cervone, 1997; Weitlauf, Smith, & Cervone, 2000). Facilitators can also teach sub skills that apply to both settings, or simply identify similarity of sub skills. One of the most powerful elements of challenging adventures is the overwhelming mastery experience (Bandura, 1997). These experiences occur when participants face and overcome a challenge they previously believed unattainable (Bandura, 1997).

As clients perform certain tasks during adventure activities, they often experience strong emotions and engage in associated behaviors that may be similar to emotions and behaviors experienced during stressful or challenging situations in the workplace. It is important to draw clients' attention to the potential workplace applications and make appropriate comparisons. These discussions often lead to moments of self-revelation and inspiration. Taniguchi et al. (2005) refer to fractional sublimation as a process of individual change. As people engage in outdoor adventures, the challenge and stress makes it difficult to maintain false barriers and images. People become more aware of their feelings and perceptions. The result of this process

is people become more authentic, and they are able to make meaningful change. Fractional sublimation is the process of peeling the layers away. Often one's self-reflection can develop into hopelessness, frustration, doubt, and discouragement creating a negative façade in one's mind. "Shedding the façade allowed the whole or sublime self be discovered" (Taniguchi et al., 2005, p. 136). The process of changing one's thoughts and behavior patterns can be guided and directed through proper facilitation.

Open and ongoing conversations direct clients to extract values and draw conclusions regarding their behavior and how it relates to the workplace. Gass (1992) listed debriefing with the participants as the most valuable time: (a) guiding them through a reflection of their experiences, (b) drawing on specific experiences, (c) discussing the impact of those experiences on the group's effectiveness and individual members feelings, (d) extracting learning experiences from successful and unsuccessful moments, (e) transferring the experiences to the workplace. Gass further described how leaders must commit to the new behavior the next time a similar opportunity arises. The impact of the debriefing process is essential and powerful; therefore, facilitators should avoid downplaying, omitting, or postponing the process. Closing the group discussion with a plan of action for the work environment helps clients to make the transition more foreseeable. Agreeing on a follow-up plan can facilitate accountability and reinforce key skills and principles learned in the program. Participants struggling to make connections to the workplace have the opportunity to ask questions, gain more insight and also make meaningful inferences. The combination of these phases and the commitment of top management reinforcing the changes are what make the course successful.

Other assets contributing to course success develop when clients recognize the relevance or usefulness to a trainee's job. When clients are able to overcome strong emotions or difficult

obstacles during the training and recognize how the connection impedes job performance the changes are lasting and incomparable. Overcoming challenging activities can provide individuals with a sense of fulfillment and efficacy. Taniguchi et al. (2005) stated, "As the participants viewed the beauty and immensity of their natural surroundings, they seemed to connect their sublimation process with what was happening in the environment around them. The erosion of rock, the changes in the weather, and the adaptation of the flora and fauna became models of change" (p. 137). Dwyer (2006) stated adventure activities are a powerful way of putting people in touch with their own feelings and reactions developing a sense of self-awareness. When one increases their belief in their ability to achieve and overcome any obstacles, their capacity to achieve other life's domains also may increase. According to Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen (1993), "people who will use their skills to the utmost is that they enjoy the hardships and the challenges of their task" (p. 8). It is not that they are more likely to enjoy the experiences but that they persevere when difficult challenges arise and turn them into highly enjoyable ones (Csikszentmihalyi et al.). Research suggests facing challenge, developing skills and succeeding are among the most rewarding experiences in life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This perseverance enables a sense of autonomy in the workplace for employees feeling empowered to act and acquiring a sense of ownership, which employees find job tasks enjoyable and perceivable, extending beyond job expectations.

Theories Explaining Adventure Learning

Theories provide a context to understand and explain the phenomena associated with OAL. Self-efficacy theory and self-determination theory provide substantial support on how confidence and motivation in oneself can change individuals and ultimately change organizations.

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy theory as "one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Belief in oneself is the first plan of action, to help individuals see the picture more accurately. The outcomes some people anticipate depend on their judgments of how acceptable their performance is under given situations (Bandura, 1997). Skills may vary in different conditions and circumstances; however, perceived self-efficacy is the belief about what one can accomplish. Bandura claimed individuals with high self-efficacy behavior use expressions of interest, approval, social recognition, monetary compensation, and conferral of status and power, while negative reflection of self-efficacy exemplifies disinterest, disapproval, social rejection, censure, deprivation of privileges, and imposed penalties. Individuals who do not acquire positive results often feel apathetic and critical towards oneself and do not want to exert effort to effecting changes. Helping one to overcome these negative views and realign with more positive thinking contributes to the success individuals may achieve. Skilled performances usually progress through repeated corrective adjustments and further monitoring desired behavior is achieved (Bandura).

Bandura (1997) stated, "people who have strong beliefs in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided" (p. 39). Their ability to set challenging goals, stay committed, and exert more effort during minor setbacks and possible failures is more heightened because they are willing to make things happen rather than passively observing individual experiences (Bandura). These individuals who can recover from failures and let downs can foresee their ability to exercise self-control and gain perspective of the entire picture. Bandura further stated, "Such an efficacious outlook enhances performance accomplishments, reduces stress, and lowers vulnerability to depression" (p. 39). Other theories

will be discussed later in the discussion developing a deeper understanding and a firmer focus on how participants who collaborate and affect one another in work performance can build camaraderie through social exchange logic and perceive organizational support.

Offering challenges to participants and helping them to apply principles enables them to make connections and advance their cognitive thinking. Opportunities for employees to use what was learned in training builds confidence and healthy attitudes toward team development (Jiang, 2010). Working in teams develops camaraderie and interdependence between employees producing positive results for the company.

Team Development

Dysfunction in teams is characterized by a lack of trust, the inability to engage in open and healthy conflict, a lack of commitment, and the unwillingness to hold each team member accountable (Lencioni, 2002). Sometimes dysfunctional teams have difficulty constructing common goals. A lack of support, commitment to team members, or a sense of interdependence denies the company's achievement of goals. Differences can be overcome when teams learn to cooperate, communicate, and collaborate.

Adventure activities can provide many benefits for teams in the work environment. OAL programs provide an environment away from work, where teams can focus on issues associated with trust in the workplace, and learn to engage in open and healthy conflict. Williams et al., (2002) stated, "Excursions take employees into unfamiliar realms of thought, and take their conscious minds off the problems they are currently wrangling with" (p. 47). He further states, different environments force employees to think more cognitively and gain a different perspective. The outdoors presents risks that are real enough to increase stress and conflict.

Conveniently, most of the learning in adventure activities comes from peer feedback (Dwyer, 2006). Learning to cooperate, communicate, and work under stressful situations in groups allow team members to observe and discuss individual behaviors. Nadler and Tushman (1999) identified effective teamwork as one of the core competencies organizations must have in the 21st century. Teamwork promotes networking, interdependence among participants and avoids the tendency to see the facilitator as the one to go to for answers (Dwyer). Ibbetson and Newell (1998) cited several experiences supportive of team development in adventure activities: (a) real situations require real behavior and real solutions are used, (b) participants live the consequences of the decisions made, (c) experiences develop close emotional bonds between colleagues. Maynard, manager at Du Pont said, "What you're doing when you participate in one of these programs is developing a bonding in three or four days that could take three or four years to occur in the workplace" (Gall, 1987, p. 56). Building close relationships resolves individual separation and any low trust issues. When individuals establish a relationship of trust and support for one another, feelings of competence develop.

Group competency is defined as "the collective belief of group members that the group can be effective" (Shea & Guzzo, 1987, p. 26). It is reasonable to suggest members' abilities will affect their belief in their ability to perform in given tasks. As members become competent they increase ability and effectiveness to accomplish their goal (Hecht, Allen, Klammer, & Kelly, 2002). Ability to perform effectively as a team requires determination, willingness, hard work and commitment collectively pursuing group goals. Doubt and discouragement changes the atmosphere of collective team unity, thus helping staff members to ameliorate disbelief and pushes company unity forward. Groups who envision achieving their goals increase their ability and commitment to performance.

Forming intimate relationships in the organization creates a sense of culture and closeness producing higher productivity, employee retention and efficiency (Beal, 2003). A strong culture is a necessary element to integrate new employees within the organization and maintaining morale. As individuals develop this sense of collaboration and teamwork within the organization over time team members' goals align with the goals of the organization. The ultimate goal is to achieve *effective working*, when teamwork accomplishes its initial goal to change and incorporates it into its business (Ng, 2001). Sundstrom, De Meuse, and Futrell (1990) stated team effectiveness is an ongoing process, never an end that is achieved. Teams must be continually seeking improvement and evaluating performance to obtain high productivity goals. When team members help motivate and support other members, insurmountable tasks seem less burdensome and more obtainable. For teams to survive over time, Gladstein (1984) referred to maintenance behavior where members assist others by being supportive and encouraging team cohesion. Informing staff members of the high standards and company traditions encourages employees to follow suit, helping maintain company patterns and policies. Managers who work to develop a strong teamwork attitude create an atmosphere of staff unity. Adventure training can be an effective environment to develop teams, if the program is based on sound theory and research. Unfortunately, most programs do not integrate theory into program development, but simply assume completing the adventure will build the team.

Company Culture

Organizational cultures are patterned on basic assumptions taken from external adaptations and internal integration and incorporated into how a group perceives, thinks, and feels (Daft, 2008). Integration is designed to promote coordination and collaboration within the company to accomplish the organizational task (Hill & Jones, 1998). Schein (1984) categorized

four different levels of a culture: (a) artifacts, (b) norms, (c) values, (d) and assumptions. Artifacts are the constructed environment of the organization using technology, floor layout, architecture, and documents. This level of culture is easily measured but difficult to interpret because artifacts do not explain why groups behave better in some environments than in others. Norms are perceived as appropriate and acceptable behaviors. These behaviors become routine and to some extent traditional within an organization. Over time, norms are taken for granted. Informing new members of traditions and rituals can help to welcome them to the organization and reduce feelings of alienation. Values are often the underlying cause of behavior and more observable in individuals than artifacts. Individuals show dedication and commitment to the company when one highly values the direction and leadership. Assumptions are behaviors taken for granted or expected. Within an organization, assumptions are made on how to act based on corporate culture and the most accurate way to understand a culture. Employees behave in certain ways because of the values they believe the corporation to have. Eventually, these assumptions will become innate characteristics and will have a transformation effect on the company (Schein, 1984). When company cultures reach a committed and cohesive level among employees without conscious effort a company's achievements are greater. Cultures build unity and loyalty among its employees because of the sense of commitment built between them.

Cultural strengths refer to the agreement among employees about the importance of specific values and norms. If the consensus of the group is high, the culture is strong and cohesive. Organizations observed as having clear values, integrity, goals and strategies are stronger and more effective. Leaders of companies with deep culture have the strongest influence on decision making because of their ability to steer the ship. Over time, members' experiences help them devise solutions and gain positive leadership attributes. Internal

integration helps cultures develop a collective identity and knowledge to work together effectively (Daft, 2008). Furthermore, culture guides day-to-day relationships and communication patterns in the organization.

Culture is constantly being formed and is shaped by the environment. Dynamic culture enhances companies to mitigate change. Ibbetson and Newell (1998) suggested if the culture of the organization is not supportive, the development process is unlikely to succeed. Support from management and all other employees must show commitment to the mission, values and goals of the organization to rise to higher ground. Positive changes can arise in team development benefitting the team and also the larger organization. When groups engage in challenging adventure activities participants grow closer together creating a unity of trust, persistence, and strength. These fundamental characteristics build a strong culture in the organization. Underlying company values stabilize the organization during periods of change.

Change and Innovation

Society changes at an uncontrollable rate; however, leaders can learn to effectively manage change within their companies. Jack Welch, former chairman and CEO of General Electric emphasized, "when the rate of change outside exceeds the rate of change inside, the end is in sight" (Daft, 2008, p. 454). A company's strength results from the culture, vision, mission, values, and goals designed to ensure its success as it navigates change. Leaders and employees must all be in agreement of these expectations to work towards developing motivation in employees and growth in the company. Culture plays a significant role in creating a climate of organizational learning, innovation, and challenge. A strong culture promotes adaptation and change, encouraging employees' innovative character and performance achievement. Leaders in organizations are empowered to lead strategic change when goals and priorities are aligned to

achieve the same purpose. Ng (2001) recognized during the change process positive results arise when employees are given power and influence. In companies with strong cultures, he found employees volunteered more for work, reduced tardiness, and lowered turnover rate. Through outsourcing to other areas and expanding networks, organizations generate a more resourceful business. Leaders must cultivate a nourishing environment to promote sharing of novel ideas and improve efficiency. This means employees feel free to take risks and experience failure. Autonomy and power given to the employees facilitates process of change within the organization.

Change Model

Management recognizing and adhering to necessary change, following through with recommendations, and accomplishing the movement are what Black and Gregersen (2008) refer to as the See, Move, Finish Change Model. Black and Gregersen stated individuals must change first before organizations change. This model helps businesses and its employees recognize potential goals and motivate people to start the process of change. Often efforts to change cause possible resistance and the mind sets up barriers (Black & Gregersen). Organizational leaders have to work through and get to the fundamentals of minor setbacks. Overcoming obstacles helps meet the demands of leading change and starts with recognizing and addressing the See, Move, Finish Change Model.

See. Senge (1999) stated one must be willing to abandon what does not work. Oftentimes groups or individuals have worked with the company for many years and do not recognize or have the desire to change. Change often takes hard work while disrupting the normal daily routine. The MIT model (Clawson, 2009) gives several tools for managing resistance to change: learn the old ways are not working anymore, management searches for new

approaches, change efforts are generated out of new processes and approaches, and new processes become so well ingrained it becomes a natural part of the organization. Managers have an important role foreseeing any disruptions or problems in the corporate system. Clawson stated, "A visionary leader looks ahead and 'sees' what the organization should become and uses that dream or panoramic view to guide communications with others in the organization" (p. 122). Visions grow out of studying, reading, comparing, traveling, seeing, imagining, seeking, analyzing, and a variety of other activities giving individuals a base to create and receive new views of possibilities (Clawson, 2009). Despite a majestic vision, managers and employees view change differently. Some may see it as disruptive and intrusive upsetting the balance (Strebel, 2006). The missing link is employee support. Clawson stated the reason for not changing, "many people, however, choose to stay in their comfort zone and respond to disconfirming data by systematically discounting them, distorting them, or ignoring them altogether" (p. 341). Strebel (1996) recommended three steps when employees are not committed to organizational change: (a) leaders draw attention to the need to change and revise the context, (b) revise the change process so employees have opportunity to recommit, and (c) lock in commitment from employees. Leaders who promote excellence and excitement help employees to stay motivated and encouraged to move forward.

Move. Lashaway (2006) postulated, "future is not something that simply shows up unannounced a few years down the road; instead it is created by the actions we take today" (p. 161). Leaders who can diminish or possibly extinguish the obstacles enable employees to move forward with progress while acting on the vision. Change takes time, but through celebrating short term wins employees are energized and able to see progress taking action. The cycle is continually circulating, and leaders must keep the transformation efforts moving. Encouraging

employees' perseverance to take on more difficult tasks builds confidence and innovation. The true test lies when leaders make the changes stick and have well established roots.

Finish. Even companies who have made significant efforts to change find 85% of people revert back to old habits (Clawson, 2009). This is partly due to individuals getting lost, tired, and/or frustrated. Change cannot be realized until all employees have committed to the new process (Black & Gregersen, 2008). New implemented strategies require time to take affect over the whole organization; however, if employees do not see progress many lose interest in the project and quit. Change is successful when strategies stick and new leadership in the organization can maintain company procedures. Lashaway (2006) claimed the "best organizations are those that have found a way not only to cope with change but to use it as a driving force for excellence" (p. 176). Organizations are recognizing the need for greater change to keep pace with advancing technology and potential competition with growing companies.

Summary

Outdoor adventure learning has the capacity to build stronger organizations as individuals integrate group and personal values and instill in their personal development. Coordination, communication, cooperation, and trust are characteristics fundamental to adventure learning programs. These characteristics enhance the growth of individuals and organizations. Changes in organizations start primarily with individuals and broaden to teams and eventually the corporation. When adventure learning principles are processed and changes become permanent, positive results occur. There is something about achieving a frightening rappel or accomplishing a hard mountain bike course that changes behavior and efficacy in individuals. Belief in oneself in achieving difficult tasks transfers into other domains including challenges found in the work environment. This study employed qualitative methods to examine the perceptions of corporate

leaders concerning the meaning and outcomes of a theory-based adventure learning program designed to teach principles related to leading strategic change and promote trusting and open relationships amongst colleagues by providing challenging opportunities to foster those relationships.

Methods

This study employed qualitative methods to examine the perceptions and meaning of an adventure learning program among corporate executives. Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) was utilized to examine the data (Creswell, 2007).

The adventure learning program of interest was designed and implemented based on Black and Gregersen's Change Model. The program was designed to teach participants principles related to leading strategic change. In addition, the program design integrated principles from self efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997). In the context of a high adventure experience, this program facilitated skills, knowledge and efficacy associated with successfully leading change in a dynamic business environment. Corporate leaders also hoped the program would promote individual resilience and corporate culture. Research has suggested removing leaders from their normal system (e.g., the office) and placing them in a novel environment associated with new and different stressors and risks to effectively promote the individual's ability to deal with the stress associated with change in the business environment (Gall, 1987; Gass et al., 1992; Hattie et al., 1997). Research participants completed a 3-4 day adventure learning program involving activities including mountain biking, canyoneering, river running and a culminating team adventure challenge.

Qualitative Methodology

This study utilized qualitative data analysis (QDA) (Creswell, 2007) to examine the perceptions and meaning of an adventure learning program designed to teach corporate executives to lead change. Through this framework, researchers explored themes and categories emerging from participants' perspectives and then analyzed the data for interpretation. Interpretation involves personal insights to enhance understanding and provide meaning to the data.

Wicker (1985) offered an effective method tool for QDA. Wicker identified a heuristic device analyzing data to stimulate new insights on familiar research problems. His method included: "(a) playing with data by applying metaphors, imagining extremes, making diagrams, and looking at processes; (b) considering context by placing problems within larger domains and making comparisons outside the problem domain; (c) probing assumptions and making opposite assumptions; and (d) scrutinizing key concepts" (Wicker, 1985, p. 1094). Wicker's methods were utilized in this study to discover important themes and relevant categories from the data.

Selection of Subjects

One hundred and ten corporate executives participated in the adventure excursion. Participants were from a U.S. based affiliate of an international corporation. This company develops and sells medications designed to treat individuals with orphan diseases such as pulmonary arterial hypertension.

Participation in the program was part of the expectations associated with employment in the company, although participants could have opted out at any time. Participation in the study was completely voluntary. From the 110 executives, a convenience sample of 24 executives was invited to participate in the interviews. Participants were selected by the research team based on

participants' willingness to share their experiences. Data collection was consistent with Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies and received IRB approval.

Instrumentation

Interview questions were designed to be open-ended for individuals to convey their experience and be more specific as the discussion progressed. Flick (2008) described questions in five different modes. He suggested using at least three of them when formulating questions: (a) situation narratives—personal descriptions of focused events, (b) repisodes—regularly re-occurring situations, (c) examples—metaphors and actual experiences, (d) subjective definitions—personal perceptions and/or explanations of specific terms or constructs, (e) argumentative-theoretical statements—explanations of concepts and their relations. Most questions contained situation narratives, subjective definitions, and argumentative-theoretical statements. The rationale behind these selected guidelines was to help participants use personal insights and discuss reasoning behind their behavior. The following samples of interview questions were selected by previous graduate students and faculty of the RMYL Department to glean valuable information from participants

- What do you hope to learn from this experience (subjective)?
- How do you feel about the activities in which you will be participating (situational narrative)?
- What did you expect to learn from this activity (subjective definition)?
- How did you feel during the activity (subjective definition)?
- What helped you the most to complete the activity (subjective definition)?
- How do you think that your perception of change perhaps changed during each of those activities (subjective definition)?

- What activities did you consider to be really challenging to you (argumentative-theoretical)?
- What did you learn about change that you can apply to your professional life (situational narrative)?

The researchers used a semi-structured interview format for each participant. This format uses core questions and allows a degree of flexibility for researchers to ask follow-up questions for obtaining further insight.

Procedure

Participants were randomly selected for interviews. Dyadic interviews were conducted with each participant before and after each adventure activity. The researcher conducted interviews in a quiet, safe, and comfortable location to minimize distraction to the procedures of the questionnaire. Depending on the participants' responses, interviews ranged between 10 minutes and 1 hour. Questions started on broad topics and narrowed down as each participant discussed their own personal experience. The importance of providing clear and open questions for individuals established a comfortable atmosphere for participants to open up. Researchers encouraged all participants to share personal successes/failures throughout the interview and solicited any additional comments of value.

Data Analysis

The interviews were transcribed and categorized according to participation dates, activities, and whether employees participated or not. Transcriptions were downloaded onto NVivo, a managerial QDA computer software program. The data were analyzed using open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

In qualitative research, validation is "a judgment of the trustworthiness or goodness of a piece of research" (Angen, 2000, p. 387). Several methods of validation were used to analyze the collected data. Researchers involved in data analysis consisted of graduate committee members and an undergraduate student. Utilizing constant comparative methods, the primary researcher and undergraduate student found repetitions. Repeated ideas were grouped into common themes. Each interview was reviewed approximately six times by the primary researcher and a graduate student to identify common repetitions and then categorizing the associated ideas into nodes or codes. The nodes were reviewed to identify and verify the themes. NVivo computer program used the term tree nodes as sub themes to explain more specifically the meaning or expression of the theme, and built on the primary node. The primary researcher discussed findings with the undergraduate student. Results were comparable between the two analyses. Both researchers discussed the themes extensively to uncover meaning and purpose and to determine which topics to focus on. The primary researcher combined notes from her findings and what the student found to be most valuable.

Axial coding process relates codes (categories and properties) through inductive and deductive thinking and fit into generic relationships (analytictech.com, 2012). Themes were tested and tried in order to identify patterns that were representative across cases. Each theme was compared to the others in a process of constant comparison. Through this process of constant comparison and pattern analysis, a core variable emerged that seemed to explain all other themes and patterns. Selective coding expands the axial coding process into "building a story that connects the categories" (Cresswell, 1998, p. 150). Selective coding began by mapping all the nodes into tree nodes and mapping the relationship between all the nodes. Choosing one category to explain and relate all other categories to that category developed a core

variable. The essential idea is to develop a single storyline where everything else is draped (analytictech.com, 2012). The researchers charted and diagrammed the dominant themes and linked relevant topics. Committee members recommended relevant theories relating to the themes pulled from the data. Social Exchange Theory and Self-determination Theory illustrate concepts to further research and impel the storyline forward. This allowed the primary researcher to submit detail to the research process and further data collection.

Validity Plan for Establishing Trustworthiness

The aim of trustworthiness is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.290) and establishing confidence in the findings (Lincoln & Guba). Establishing trustworthiness in qualitative data requires researchers to persuade the audience "that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). In this methodological process, confirming validity satisfies current qualitative standards and promotes trustworthiness.

To establish credibility in the research process, data were analyzed through triangulation process to establish trustworthiness. Involving a triangulation of committee members and their interpretations with those multiple perceptions validates findings. Three methods were utilized to discuss emerging themes and ideas: member checks, primary researchers, and external auditors. Because peer debriefing is "an effective way of shoring up credibility, providing methodological guidance, and serving a cathartic outlet" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 243), these discussions permitted the researcher to submit and clarify themes throughout the data analysis process. Two member checks were done to clarify any interpretations or conclusions researchers made in the research process. Interpretations were found to be correct and accurate.

The primary researcher kept a running journal of all interviews, memos, and codes in a daily journal and documented in the NVivo computer software to assure dependability. Committee members met with the primary researcher following the data collection period to review and discuss findings of the qualitative data analysis (QDA). Discussions with committee members opened up possibilities for linked theory and further research.

A detailed journal of researcher's notes provided external auditors a critique regarding the study process. The external auditors for this study included a graduate faculty member from Organizational Behavior and an undergraduate student. Neither of these individuals participated in the data collection process.

In research, data collection requires substantial relevance and cross-contextual application in the findings. Transferability is defined as "the extent to which [an inquiry's] findings can be applied to other contexts or with other respondents" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290) and determine whether application is applicable to the consumer's context. During this research process of analyzing and documenting, participants responded in similar fashions when faced with comparable situations; known as typification—people respond in similar modes. Following detailed documented methods and reporting its findings help readers to replicate the study and apply their own findings.

Confirmability is "the degree to which [an inquiry's] findings are the product of the focus of its inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). The primary researcher met with other members of the research team to collaborate following the data collection period to clarify any misconceptions and process the information. Also, member checks were also conducted to verify the consistency of the findings. They reviewed the data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations in order to validate all research findings.

Findings

The goal or purpose of this study was to examine perceived meaning and outcomes associated with an adventure learning experience designed to teach corporate leaders to lead strategic change. In addition, participants were asked about the application of the adventure learning experience to the business environment. Within this study researchers found in the data a heightened sense of motivation, trust, commitment, and loyalty amongst employees towards the organization. The executives indicated the opportunity to engage in an outdoor adventure learning experience created stronger relationships of trust among participants and commitment to the company, thus strengthening these qualities in the corporate culture.

Several topics emerged from the analysis of the data, including leading change (Gass, Goldman, & Priest, 1992; Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997; Taniguchi, Freeman, & Richards, 2005), trust (Ibbetson & Newell, 1998; Lencioni, 2002; Mazany, Francis, & Sumich, 1995), transferring experience (Burnett & James, 1994; Bandura, 1997; Dwyer, 2006), challenge (Burnett & James, 1994; (Bandura, 1997; Cervone, 1997; Weitlauf, et al., 2000), resilience (Gall, 1987; Gass et al. 1992; Hattie et al. 1997), motivation (Deci & Flaste, 1996; Deci & Ryan, 2002, Katz, 1964) and culture (Gall, 1987; Gass et al. 1992; Gladstein, 1984; Ibbetson & Newell, 1998; Jiang, 2010; Daft, 2008; Hill & Jones, 1998; Schein, 1984). Four dominant themes identified within the data were trust, challenge, motivation, and culture. After discussing themes discovered in the data with committee members, culture and motivation of company members through participation in adventure experiences seemed the most pertinent and fascinating. The culture of the organization is what drove employees to be loyal, find and gain support, instill greater work performance, and persist during hard times. Building strong cultures within an organization strengthens relationships and motivates greater work ethics. Motivation builds

strong employees to achieve their goals and reach for higher productivity. The relevance of this information seemed notable for further research.

Results from the study emphasized how employees showed appreciation and gratitude to allow employees to participate in an adventure and invest in more training opportunities. Eighty-four percent of the participants commented on how the company's investment in adventure learning for employees increased team members' motivation and dedication towards job performance. Fifty-seven percent of the members mentioned the culture of the company, and the investment managers grant individuals felt more inclined to give back to the company. Employees valued the adventure experience because it was something they would never have the opportunity to participate in on their own and wanted to give back to the employer and the company for the privilege. One employee, Gary reports, "to me, stuff like this just makes you more heavily invested in the company and builds a sense of loyalty. So, for me it's more like, okay, the company's doing stuff for me so I want to do stuff for them." John also stated, "A company like this, a go-getter attitude that invests in its people to want to make sure that they're around for the long-haul, those things create a really special culture."

The adventure experiences gave employees opportunities to connect and build unity in ways not obtainable in office settings. Gary commented, "I think anything like that any time team building and the loyalty thing and just getting to know people outside their natural work environment I think helps things." Additionally, Patty claimed, "It's really just seeing them in a different environment and getting a chance to interact in this different environment. 'Cause' it's, it can be very energizing. It's different from the energizing that you get from being in a great meeting in the office." Employee relationships built on support, trust, challenging experiences, and overcoming fears are stronger and tighter, forming closely knit bonds. One employee, Jeff,

commented, "Yeah, so now I think that this is going to be embedded in the culture of the company and the experience that we have here are going to draw us closer together. I think they're going to make us a better organization." Several commented, "Feeling of the team success was just so powerful." Many of the employees recognized what a great place it was to work and enjoyed putting in the long hours it required all because of the culture, camaraderie, and the support the company provided for growth and attaining goals. Jeff again commented, "Bringing 24 people down here and I think that to a man and a woman, they all walk away with a fulfillment that they've done something that was more than they thought they could do. And this is a very rich experience to watch people conquer their fears…. I'm actually more rewarded to see other people do it." Comments made about company investment and the loyalty employees felt are embedded into the culture from engaging in challenging activities and gaining the support of fellow coworkers. Such experiences can't be helped when connecting with one another and sharing lasting memories.

Discussion

Analysis of the data suggests three primary themes: culture, utilizing perceived organizational support (POS), and motivation. These findings can be viewed or better understood from the perspective of social exchange theory and self-determination theory. Social exchange theory corresponds with the data related to cultures and the increasing loyalty that follows when companies invest in employees' well-being. Self-determination theory builds the data supporting motivation and how one can perform intrinsically through autonomous choices.

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support explains, "Employees' commitment to the organization is strongly influenced by their perception of the organization's commitment to them. Perceived

organizational support is assumed to increase the employee's affective attachment to the organization and his or her expectancy that greater effort toward meeting organizational goals were rewarded" (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986, p. 501). Employees with higher levels of POS are more likely to value the organization and show higher levels of job commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Consequently, employees with higher POS are inclined to personally invest time and effort in the organization. The extent the company commits to an employee's personal and professional growth, the employee can be expected to dedicate greater effort towards the organization (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). Lee and Bruvold (2003) stated, "Maintaining and developing the capabilities of both individual employees and the organization as a whole… creates conditions where employees believe that their organizations value their contribution and care about their employability" (p. 981). Clearly promoting POS should be part of any organizations strategic plan.

Research suggests continuous training and support promotes POS. Providing training and support shows employees they are genuinely valued (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). Investing in training and development communicates a sense of job security to employees. It also indicates the employees' contribution is valued (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Wayne, 1997). This results in a sense of obligation among employees to make meaningful contributions to the organization and also to adhere to company goals. The cycle continues as the company investments and employees return the investment through increased job performance, improved attitudes, strengthened motivation, and innovative problem solving (Eisenberger, Fasolo, Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Katz, 1964). Placing employees in a vulnerable environment and providing an element of risk, challenge, and adventure breaks down preconceived barriers of employees to connect relationships on equal ground. When these challenges are overcome participants gain a

sense of accomplishment and a heightened sense of well-being. Tarrant (1996) claimed outdoor experiences are effective in increasing positive affect and health. Engaging in unique training programs around activities like mountain biking, rock climbing, survival and white water rafting, is engaging and fun.

Although these programs may involve higher costs and greater risk than traditional programs, these adventures may be among the most effective methods in promoting POS. The risks and investment are recognized and appreciated by employees. Employees are likely to find these programs both meaningful and enjoyable. Employees interpret organizational investment and training as indicative of the organization's commitment. Employees reciprocate with increased levels of loyalty (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). This type of training may go beyond traditional classroom seminars to include unorthodox experiences. Katz suggested these types of programs can play a major influence in organizational success (Katz, 1964). In the end, organizational commitment may be dramatically increased. These programs project a strong sense of belonging, purpose and meaning (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This process promotes constant affirmation in one's ability to perform tasks and meaningful contribution to the company.

Training programs promote a sense of competence and worth resulting in enhanced job performance. Often this enhanced performance extends to engagement beyond specific areas of job responsibilities. Research confirms choice enhances people's intrinsic motivation. Providing small choices makes a difference in one's experience and strengthens intrinsic motivation. When people participate in decisions about what to do, they were more motivated and committed to the task (Deci & Flaste, 1996). Managers and employees, when asked to work sixty-hour work weeks, are more inclined to work because they view job as rewarding,

challenging, and a source of personal fulfillment (Deci & Flaste, 1996). When employees start taking on these roles and values, organizations tend to succeed and produce highly functioning individuals and teams, ultimately promoting highly motivated employees.

Self-determination Theory

Understanding motivation is important in all areas of life. Understanding how we motivate ourselves and how others act allows us to become effective parents, teachers and leaders (selfdeterminationtheory.org, 2011). A primary cause of bad behavior is control. When individuals feel controlled they respond in two ways. First, people comply. They do what they are told without thought, passion or focusing on the outcome. Typically, this type of controlled behavior is apathetic. The second type of control is defiance. Defiance is characterized by doing nothing, or engaging in undermining behaviors. Either of these responses is problematic. The behaviors are a barrier to effective performance and a barrier to individual satisfaction and well-being. Research suggests effective performance and satisfaction result when individuals are intrinsically motivated to fully engage in challenging tasks.

Self-determination theory (SDT) examines and explains factors associated with human motivation. SDT suggests factors influencing motivation directly impacts performance and goal attainment. Given appropriate contextual elements, individuals become intrinsically motivated to accomplish assigned tasks and are likely to perform beyond expectations. Social and cultural factors contribute to people's sense of volition and initiative in addition to their quality of performance and wellbeing (selfdeterminationtheory.org, 2011). A substantial line of research on human behavior suggests a number of important benefits accrue as a result of intrinsic motivation. For example, intrinsic motivation is associated with enhanced performance, persistence, and higher levels of satisfaction and creativity (Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004; Gagne

& Deci, 2005). Intrinsically motivated people experience a heightened sense of general well-being and greater vitality (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004; Ryan, Bernstein, & Brown, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Van den Broek, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, & Lens, 2008).

Self-determination theory identifies three key psychological needs related to effective engagement and quality of life. According to Deci and Ryan (2002), autonomy/support, competence and relatedness are the foundation of health, social development and well-being. These factors are necessary for optimal functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Autonomy

Autonomy is the opposite of control. Autonomous environments allow individuals to choose a course of action from a variety of options. The need for autonomy is defined as people's desire to experience ownership of their behavior and to act with a sense of volition (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This sense of volition Van den Broek et al. (2008) stated, "can be achieved through having the opportunity to make personal choices, but also through the full endorsement of an externally induced request" (p. 279). Meyer et al. (2004) proposed, Commitment leads to increased autonomous motivation which will lead to the setting of more difficult goals, greater effort, and higher performance. Providing an atmosphere of choice and supporting choices gives individuals encouragement to increase work production.

Researchers claim people have natural tendencies to be active and grow in challenging situations and integrate new experiences into their personal sphere (selfdeterminationtheory.org, 2011). Allowing employees to engage in challenging adventure opportunities and encouraging autonomous behavior builds self-confidence and promotes skill development. When companies provide unique training opportunities, employees are more likely to take on challenging tasks in the work environment. Management support increases as companies invest and empower

employees with the proper knowledge and skills to carry out responsibilities. Deci et al. (2001) stated, work environments supportive of core psychological needs produce employees who are more proactive at work and better adjusted psychologically (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001). Evidence suggests that changing the work climate to support autonomy, competence, and relatedness changes the extent to which employees ―internalize—work rules, standards, and procedures (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Providing employees with choices and supporting their decisions builds relationships to construct a better culture and atmosphere. Supporting their decisions establishes trust and volition in employees' confidence to expand their knowledge and be more innovative. Autonomy without support is problematic because it inhibits trust and loyalty within the organization. Employees may often feel controlled leading to restricted production and decreased morale.

Managers who afford their employees significant influence in how the work gets done, permit inherent needs for autonomy to be strengthened (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Autonomous behavior is exhibited when employees engage in an activity because they consider it personally valuable or intrinsically interesting (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Opportunities to choose and explore new elements develop autonomy and shows support in the individual. Individuals often seek out support of others to satisfy their need for competence in completing difficult tasks (Van den Broek et al., 2008). Each participant in the current study was given the choice whether to participate or not. Participation was not forced on anyone; instead alternate options were provided. Subjects felt more comfortable knowing participation was not mandatory. Some believed they could overcome their fear when others showed support and encouraged participation. Research suggests intrinsic motivation is driven by emotions that emerge while engaging in the activity (Gagné, Chemolli, Forest, & Koestner, 2008). As individuals participate

and feel choices are freely chosen and supported by others attitudes change and confidence increases. These types of adventure programs include all of the key components to foster intrinsic motivation in leaders. Individuals' participation in high adventure opportunities experience a heightened sense of adventure, confidence, excitement, and the added desire to transfer experience to personal goals. Strategic programming and facilitating the events motivate individuals to work as teams, perform work responsibilities and accomplish personal goals.

Competence

Competence represents individuals' desire to feel capable of mastering the environment, to bring about desired outcomes, and to manage various challenges (White, 1959). Bandura's work on self-efficacy provides a clear perspective on the mechanisms leading to competence. Pajares (2002) stated, "Self-efficacy beliefs help determine how much effort people will expend on an activity, how long they will persevere when confronting obstacles, and how resilient they will be in the face of adverse situations" (p. 1). Higher sense of efficacy promotes greater effort, persistence, and resilience. People with a strong sense of competence approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. They have greater intrinsic motivation to set goals, and have stronger commitments to accomplish them. Furthermore, they recover quicker when faced with failures and attribute failure to insufficient effort knowledge (Pajares, 2002).

People with low self-efficacy may believe achievable tasks are beyond their ability, a belief that fosters anxiety, stress, and depression. As a consequence, self-efficacy beliefs can powerfully influence the levels of accomplishment. This function of self-beliefs can also create the type of self-fulfilling prophecy in which one accomplishes what one believes one can accomplish. Perseverance one gains from high self-efficacy is likely to lead to increased

performance, whereas giving up associated with low self-efficacy lowers confidence and well-being. Research suggests perceptions of competence, or self-efficacy is the best predictor of future success (Bandura, 1997). People are motivated to take on challenges when individuals believe they have the capability to successfully complete a task and hold an outcome expectation that when they complete the task a desirable result will follow. Bandura (1997) suggested personal beliefs about the ability to plan and carry out difficult tasks are effected by four sources of information. According to Bandura, enactive attainment, verbal persuasion, vicarious experience, and physiological states provide information individuals use in making efficacy judgments. Enactive attainment is the past pattern of success and difficulty in the task or in tasks requiring similar sub-skills. Verbal persuasion induces participation through support and encouragement to the individual to accomplish set tasks. People evaluate self-efficacy beliefs on observing others' performance and belief in their ability to master the task. Vicarious experience is powerful when observers see similarities in their capability to perform. Observing the success of participants contributes to the observers' belief in their own capability. The most effective way of establishing a high sense of self-efficacy is through mastery experience. Its fundamental practice establishes a high sense of efficacy. Successes build a strong belief in one's ability to perform while failures undermine it especially when failures occur before one establishes a sense of efficacy (Bandura, 1994).

Competence allows individuals to adapt to complex and changing environments (Van den Broek et al., 2008). During challenging portions of the activity employees gained confidence when other employees modeled the behavior. Modeling the correct behavior gave skeptical members the confidence in their ability. Researchers indicate intrinsically motivated employees develop curiosity and interest in learning, enhance cognitive flexibility, encourage willingness to

take risks, and ultimately gain access to ideas and potential solutions (Gagne´ & Deci, 2005). When employees gained confidence in their ability to perform their motivation to continue increased because their desire to excel increased. Researchers stated, "Gaining powerful new competencies in an important domain of life in which one previously may have felt powerless may prove to be a transformative experience that enhances one's overall sense of their capabilities" (Weitlauf, Cervone, & Smith, 2000, p. 625).

Opportunities to face and overcome challenges, to develop skills, and to overcome fears allow individuals to build a sense of mastery and competence. Helping individuals develop this sense of mastery will lead to higher levels of performance and an increased quality of life.

Relatedness

The need for belongingness or relatedness is defined as the human striving for close and intimate relationships and the desire to achieve a sense of communion and belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Forming bonding relationships is a key factor in businesses to promote employee camaraderie. De Dreu et al. (2000) and Grant (2007) emphasized prosocial motivation between employees—the desire to benefit others—encourages employees to consider others' perspective. Dynamic relationships benefit the company and its employees to enhance job performance and productivity. People not only need to feel effective and autonomous, they also need to feel connected with others, to love and be loved. Feeling part of a group opens people up to being socialized (Deci & Flaste, 1995). When people belong to a group, the group becomes part of their identity, and they are naturally inclined to accept the group's values and mores. Deci and Flaste (1995) suggest this process facilitates the development of greater responsibility to group goals. Employees who are connected to group and obligated to perform reciprocate the favors and adhere to responsibilities of the group. Ones dependability on others

creates a relationship of trust and camaraderie. The quality of relationship and the need to belong includes understanding, acceptance, and personal support (Clawson, 2009). As employees invest time and influence to make outside connections the relationship expands to other outside resources creating a stronger circle of unity and relatedness. Outdoor Adventure Learning (OAL) programs foster these types of relationships creating closer bonds and opportunities to connect and relate with one another. Statements from the participants suggest extended time together, overcoming fears and challenges, and working together strengthens relationships and creates bonds in the workplace. Creating such an environment helps foster greater job performance.

Such experiences give employees opportunity to talk about their successes and develop relationships. Research suggests work environment improves when company supports autonomy, competence, and relatedness. SDT provides a useful lens to understand the findings of this study. It also provides practitioners a framework for designing successful OAL experiences. Using this theory to support the data gathered provides constructive value for adventure learning programs. Strengthening culture, commitment and motivation helps improve employee job performance, an essential facet to company productivity. Subjects in this study benefitted from strategic based programs and recognized the value employers place on their training. Participants in the study were more apt to get involved when other employees showed support and encouragement. As participants struggled together to finish each activity bonds were formed where they did not exist primarily.

Autonomy/support, competence, and relatedness appear to be essential for facilitating optimal functioning for growth, social development, and personal well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Engagement in adventure type learning programs contributes to ones motivation and

autonomy to carry out tasks. Research suggests adhering to these needs helps promote well-being and personal satisfaction (Lynch, Plant, & Ryan, 2005). These programs clearly can foster important forms of motivation among employees. Implementing adventure learning programs within companies help build employee relationships, promote intrinsic motivation, and foster higher productivity in the work place. Employees gain a sense of loyalty as companies invest in their well-being and in return reciprocate the behavior to their employer. Beyond these forms of motivation, social exchange theory also helps us understand how these types of experiences can influence employee behavior.

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory (SET) posits people reciprocate favors received and feel a sense of obligation to return those favors (Blau, 1964). Gouldner (1960) also stated people often feel a tacit obligation to help those who have helped them. It is essential within the organization to create this balanced order of reciprocity to signify gratitude and also promote higher job performance. Social exchanges create "enduring social patterns" and become committed in the relationship (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005, p. 882). Without this reciprocity or social exchange, employees may feel unappreciated or burned out.

Research suggests reciprocity produces a number of benefits including positive mood, increased job satisfaction, increased commitment and positive emotional affectivity (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Relationships evolve into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments as SET is implemented (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Stronger relationships develop between individuals with high social exchange (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986), and felt obligation (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). Witt and Broach (1993) mention strong social exchange significantly increases satisfaction with training.

Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) however, posit the degree people operate reciprocity varies across cultures and norms.

A sense of trust, loyalty and investment emanate from employees when equal treatment is reciprocated. Those invested in the company also bring in others to feel likewise. Companies can create higher sense of social exchange by developing a strong culture and attitude among its employees. High adventure activities appeal to the average individuals who do not have access or opportunity to participate. When individuals learn new skills and gain confidence in their ability, the desire to reciprocate the favor is deepened through a heightened sense of gratitude. Adventure causes excitement and the desire to be motivated to accomplish other set tasks. Katz (1964) postulates recruitment is easier for companies when employees tell others about what a good place it is to work. When people feel attached to, obliged toward, or stuck into an organization they will want to, feel they should, or feel they have to, accomplish their work tasks (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Negative cultures can also have a negative reciprocity, creating the opposite effect (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). When problems within the company are not relinquished the culture is tainted and criticized. Reputation of a company is often discovered through voices of its employees. Howes, Cropanzano, Grandey, and Mohler (2000) stated, organizational support for the team was the best predictor of team performance. Companies who have established strong support from its employees, developed strong relationships, and employees feel valued, the morale reflects in the productivity in the company.

Implications for the findings of this study suggest SDT and SET interconnect with company investment in employee morale to strengthen job commitment, job performance, improved attitudes, strengthened motivation, and innovative problem solving (Eisenberger, Fasolo, Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Katz, 1964). Future research may use quantitative methods to

investigate the efficacy of OAL programs in promoting specific outcomes such as increased motivation, commitment, trust, and loyalty. Studies may also examine the relative efficacy of these programs in promoting skills associated with leading change or promoting innovation compared to similar programs in classroom settings. SET notions of reciprocity, trust, and relationship formation—are all fundamental to social exchange logic—have typically been examined in work settings where effective exchange relationships are to be expected. Activities taking place outside of typical work settings (i.e., in outdoor learning environments) show investment in employees eliciting a profound sense of reciprocity. This extends our theoretical understanding of social exchange to include alternative forms of "investments" in the well-being and development of employees. With the increasing interest by both practitioners and researchers in the effects of non-work activities, social exchange theory can add credence to a holistic perspective on how and why employees engage in their work. Further, the findings of this research help to extend the theoretical applications of self-determination theory beyond work and experimental settings through outdoor high adventure courses. This is important because, according to SDT, individuals' conceptions of their beliefs about themselves can be developed and reinforced in a variety of activities or settings, but research tends to limit such contexts.

Recommendations and Future Research

The findings of this study indicate OAL programs may produce natural benefits related to creating strong corporate cultures of loyalty, reciprocity and increase intrinsic motivation. Future research might employ field experiments to directly test the effectiveness of OAL programs in promoting motivation and culture. These studies might also examine the effectiveness of these programs increasing specific skill sets associated with leading change, innovation, collaboration, and problem solving. Comparing the effectiveness of traditional adventure type training formats (i.e., ropes courses and trust falls) with OAL programs in

promoting these key characteristics and skills would be particularly valuable. Within this form of research, studies might also seek to determine the specific mechanisms of change and the most effective program contexts and protocols for promoting desired outcomes.

Companies who promote autonomy and choices to employees through OAL experiences may show support and encouragement to their success. Employees gain appreciation for the experiences offered and a deeper desire to invest in learned opportunities. These experiences have peaked their interest and created an added desire to cultivate relationships with coworkers. Developing relationships outside of the workplace builds stronger commitment and loyalty to the company. OAL activities promote such outcomes helping companies build stronger unity and fulfill company goals. Added support from coworkers amplifies these relationships as relationships continue to build on OAL experiences and their ability to overcome challenges at work and personal lives.

Employees develop a sense of competence in themselves when others show support and interest in their success during adventure experiences. Each activity provides an element of risk and challenge where employees can gain confidence in their ability and expand their confidence to other areas of the workplace. Further research is needed on how adventures can extract support, cause risk, and gain confidence, in addition to, how these experiences can provide companies with knowledge on how to motivate and challenge employees through invested opportunities. Employees feel appreciated when companies invest in their wellbeing through challenging and exciting adventures, thus expanding employees' trust and commitment for the company. OAL programs provide experiences for employees to develop strong relationships and feel connected with others through challenge and support. A sense of belonging and connectedness creates an open and supportive environment. Employees can foster healthy

relationships through outside adventure challenges with fellow workers. The ability to work better as a team through enhanced camaraderie, communication, overcoming challenges, support, and loyalty helped employees work together in the office. Relationships formed during the adventure experience established trust and support for one another with a determination to take the experiences back to the office as they conquered preconceived doubts and fears.

Employees felt when companies invested in their training and personal fulfillment employees gained a stronger loyalty and obligation to reciprocate increased job performance. Such connection needs further examination. In this study, participants appeared to build loyalty to the company and a strong desire to give back more to the agency.

Vicarious experiences provide a way for participants to view others and model the behavior being challenged (Bandura, 1997). Participants compared ability levels with others and built upon experiences once challenges were accomplished. During the study participants utilized vicarious experiences as a powerful tool to observe others and see similarities in their capability to perform. Verbal persuasion encourages participation through support and praising remarks to the individual to accomplish assigned activities. Employees evaluated self-efficacy beliefs on observing others' performance and belief in their ability to master the task. Cognitively restructuring the experience, participants believed their capability was equal to the task building confidence and reassurance in future opportunities. Its fundamental practice established a high sense of efficacy. However, participants were given choices in what form they wanted to participate when the task seemed too daunting.

Employees felt, when the company invested into their training and personal fulfillment, they gained a stronger loyalty and obligation to reciprocate increased job performance. More research is needed on how adventure learning promotes motivation and can contribute to

organizational support and social exchange theory. Such a connection needs further study and research within the field of OAL experiences. Motivation plays an important role on job performance increasing one's ability to complete tasks uninhibitedly and be more autonomous.

Conclusion

This study examined qualitative data from participants in an OAL program and identified key themes of motivation, culture, trust and commitment. The findings indicated OAL program participants may build loyalty and trust and a strong desire to give back more to the company. The ability to work better as a team through enhanced camaraderie, trust, communication, overcoming challenges, support, and loyalty helped employees work together in the office. Relationships formed during the adventure experience established trust and support for one another with a determination to take the experiences back to the office. Employees felt increased competence in their ability to complete tasks both in personal life and in the work environment as they conquered preconceived doubts and fears. Future research should employ qualitative methods to examine contextual and programmatic factors maximizing the benefits of OAL programming in leadership development.

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Appendix A

Prospectus

A Qualitative Analysis of a Corporate Adventure Learning Program

Change is difficult. People generally seek comfort, consistency and stability in their lives. In business, the ability to engage in and lead change is valuable. One potentially effective method for teaching change is to push and stretch leaders to do new things. By helping to change the mental maps of the world in a non-business environment, like adventure recreation, business leaders can then tie their experience back into the business world.

Moab, the acclaimed adventure capital of the world, offers amazing challenges to visitors who climb, bike, hike, raft and explore. For the uninitiated and challenge averse, the adventures of Moab can cause terror, panic, and anxiety as participants experience the fear of the unknown and envision potential harm. To the novice, the canyon walls, whitewater, and slickrock look imposing and deadly. A review of procedures and safety precautions with facilitators brings some relief and security to the newbies. Following precautions, setting goals, and developing a plan provide assurance for individuals where security is the underlining factor. The perception of risk is often moderated after the challenge is overcome. In fact, after overcoming a new challenge, individuals often come away with a more realistic perspective. They gain a sense of personal accomplishment and competence.

The same principle applies in the work environment. We live in a sea of dynamic change. Change has always been inevitable, but today, it is inevitably fast paced. Change and adversity bring a fear of the unknown, panic associated with possible failure and anxiety. Every business strives for excellence; striving to become the best in the field. As times change, technology advances, and creativity escalates, companies are reaching out to other resources to bringing in more knowledge and expanding corporate boundaries. One source for this is

adventure learning programs capturing what businesses are trying to imagine and create in their employees helping individuals to grasp the vision and inspire innovation.

Skeptics argue adventure learning programs can be costly and time consuming. Zemke (as cited in Wagner, Baldwin, & Roland 1991) argues "outdoor programming is nothing more than an opportunity for organizations to pack whole management teams off to risk life and limb together" (p. 51). Other negative outcomes include: (a) failing to achieve success, (b) a lack of physical challenge, (c) working and interacting with the group, (d) instructor's expectations and personalities, (e) and the weather as hindrances of a successful program (McKenzie, 2003).

Outdoor adventure learning programs can provide a unique environment to teach change leadership, promote motivation, cooperation, communication, cohesion, and support, thus producing skills associated with effective change leadership. One goal of adventure learning programs is to create an atmosphere of vulnerability where all participants stand on equal ground, opening individuals up to self-reflection and enhancing the opportunity for personal change. Outdoor activities are designed to require a group to work collaboratively to solve problems, relate with one another in a new environment, and produce relationships of trust. Certain activities also promote efficacy in the individual thus spanning into other areas of one's life and increasing quality of life and work productivity. Utilizing metaphors from outdoor adventures creates images for individuals helping them to transfer learning into the work environment. Team members who experience activities collectively form closer relationships and view one another in different ways. This closer relationship carries forward, building trust and unity at work.

Individuals who experience personal change in outdoor settings find his or her ability has changed in other settings, including the work place. Competent team members work more

closely to build strong and lasting organizations; in the process, gaining personal trust in one another and leading change.

Problem Statement

The problem of this study is to examine perceived meaning and outcomes associated with an adventure learning experience designed to teach corporate leaders to effectively bring about change. Also, do participants perceive benefits associated with the work environment and are particular adventure-based activities perceived as the most meaningful and influential towards enhancing the learning and understanding effective change leadership? The program was designed to teach change leadership, create strong sense of culture, and build resilience and greater persistence among participants. The change leadership program was based on principles from Black and Gregersen's model of change (Black & Gregersen, 2008).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of corporate leaders concerning the meaning and outcomes of a theory-based adventure learning program. Also, compare emergent themes within the data to the current literature and determine if the data support a new explanation or model describing these experiences.

Need for the Study

The use of adventure learning programs has a long history. Yet, the effectiveness of these programs in reaching specific outcomes has raised questions. Lencioni (2002) exclaims,

> Ropes courses and other experiential team activities seem to have lost some of their luster over the course of the past 10 years, and deservedly so. Still, many teams do them with the hope of building trust. And while there are certainly some benefits derived from rigorous and creative outdoor activities, involving collective support and cooperation,

those benefits do not always translate directly to the working world. That being said, experiential team exercises can be valuable tools for enhancing teamwork as long as they are layered upon more fundamental and relevant processes (p. 200-201).

Little research supports the efficacy of adventure learning in achieving specific outcomes. This is likely due to a lack of rigorous development and systematic *layering* of concepts and skills to *fundamental and relevant process* as suggested by Lencioni. Clearly, a need exists to develop theory based, conceptually sound adventure learning programs and study the impact of these programs on participants. Initial studies should first seek to understand the fundamental experience through qualitative methods, which in turn can lead researchers to more effective program design and research methods.

Delimitations

The scope of the study will be delimited to:

1. Twelve-16 subjects will be randomly selected from participants in the adventure learning program. Subjects will be corporate executives from an international firm. All subjects represent high levels of education mostly masters and doctoral level degrees, and income between $130,000 and $600,000.
2. In addition to educational sessions, participants engaged in river running, mountain biking, and canyoneering experiences associated with the learning objectives.
3. Black and Gregersen's model of change was utilized as the conceptual foundation for the change program (Black & Gregersen, 2008).
4. The adventure experiences took place over three days. Data was collected during the entire experience.

Limitations

The results from this investigation were interpreted considering the following limitations:

1. Subjects who participated in this study were volunteers who complied with the requirements of the investigation.
2. Interviews were conducted by more than one individual where the interviewer may have probed for more response than the other.
3. Generalizability of the data is limited to the subjects due to the use of a qualitative design. The results can facilitate theory, model building, and direct future research.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

This literature review will examine the literature related to adventure programming, change leadership, team development, and company cultures. Key issues to be addressed involve the nature and disposition of the group (Ibbetson & Newell, 1998), the ability of outdoor adventure learning to open minds, or create fractional sublimation (Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards 1997, Taniguchi, Freeman, & Richards, 2005), and the role of these experiences in creating cultures (Schein, 1984).

Adventure Learning

In an ever changing corporate world, executives strive to keep a competitive edge. Managers seek resources to help the organization adapt to ongoing changes. Outdoor adventure programs provide a unique modality to promote change leadership. Adventure programs have a rich history. In 1957, Kurt Hahn organized Outward Bound for youth (Hahn, 1975). Outward Bound was designed to instill independence, initiative, physical fitness, self-reliance, and resourcefulness (Hattie et al. 1997). Since Outward Bound first started, adventure learning companies have provided enriching and rehabilitative experiences for many groups, including managers, psychiatric patients, and at-risk youth (Hattie et al.). Kolb describes adventure learning as a form of "organizational development which uses specially designed outdoor activities to foster calculated risk taking in individuals and creative problem solving trust and teamwork within groups" (as cited in Mazany, Francis, & Sumich, 1995, p. 53). Being in the outdoors places clients in an unfamiliar setting where they are vulnerable and willing to adapt to new information. Clients are placed in a beautiful setting where they can enjoy unfamiliar surroundings and participate in unforgettable opportunities. Gass (1992) exclaims,

> In adventure experiences participants are uncertain about the outcome. They are in an unfamiliar environment, facing novel situations that are often thrilling and difficult. For these reasons, their attention is likely to be focused and their perceptions heightened. Following the experience, they are often left with an empowered vision and critical feedback on their newly learned skills. Because of the unique nature of adventure experiences these activities also add a learning opportunity where no one group member brings any special expertise to these activities. This places participants equally positioned and breaks down any hierarchical barriers. (p. 39)

Participating in such physical activities breaks clients away from their normal environment where logical consequences and decisions are played out. Participants in these activities may learn important lessons during these adventures. Yet, they may not immediately recognize the lessons learned. Often, processing after the adventure brings to light lessons around creativity, imagination, teamwork, communication, persistence and overcoming fear. Turner (1974) states, "novelty emerges from unprecedented combinations of familiar elements" p. 60. Dwyer (2006) claims in adventure activities, participants' show their true selves more than in many other training seminars where they respond to what they think of as the participant's role. Participants, therefore, react and interact in adventures in ways that can be directly applied to real life work experiences. Actions and decisions in an adventure context often result immediate and unavoidable consequences, thus providing clear and immediate feedback. This provides opportunities to discuss the implications of individual and group actions and decisions in a real time scenario. When faced with challenging situations inherent in adventure experiences the resulting emotions and anxiety break down barriers and allow people to engage in more honest self-reflection (Burnett & James, 1994). When participants are placed

in a situation where everyone is accomplishing the task the excitement motivates them to be involved and be part of the group. Sharing those intense moments of exhaustion, adrenaline, and excitement bring coworkers together to celebrate in their success of accomplishment.

Despite popularity of adventure learning amongst businesses, many organizations and training professionals have little understanding of outdoor adventure education, its etiology, or potential benefits over traditional training programs (Wagner et al. 1991). Others are skeptical of the application to the workplace (Gass, Goldman, & Priest, 1992). Lencioni (2002) specifically suggests the benefits of these programs do not always generalize effectively from the outdoor experience to the workplace. Yet, he acknowledges outdoor adventure can be an effective training tool if it is "layered upon more fundamental and relevant processes" (Lencioni, p. 200-201). This is a key issue in the literature. Gall (1987) declares field experts need solid experiential training background to lead team building activities, organizational communication, change management, and leadership development. Without these essential elements, companies are wasting their time and money. It appears many adventure learning programs are not designed around meaningful theory or research, and thus do not fully utilize the potential of these programs in leadership and organizational development.

Adventure Learning Effectiveness

Gall (1987) identifies some specific strengths of adventure training:

> If you can get people to risk trying something that they are sure they can't do and they discover they can do it, that realization translates into their whole attitude about how they approach life, how they approach work, how they approach managing. (p. 54)

Gall continues with seven phases necessary to instill value and produce successful outcomes: (a) group orientation, (b) preliminary assessment to establish needs, (c) ongoing metaphors linked to

the work environment, (d) carefully facilitated conversations between participants, (e) development of action plan before returning to work environment, (f) follow up by both the provider and the participants, and (g) commitment from top management. An orientation meeting; devised to establish guidelines and set expectations of the course, address fears or anxiety participants may have towards the unknown. Introducing any unfamiliar equipment or activities helps participants determine their capabilities and builds confidence to reinforce completion of the course. Providing hard skills training establishes an opportunity for participants to ask questions and voice concerns. This allows facilitators to discuss the value and roll of fear and the value of having a healthy respect for challenges that pose both real and perceived risks. Another important element is to increase participants' efficacy in doing challenging adventure activities and systematically generalizing the emotions, skills, and principles from the experience to the workplace. This can be done by cognitively restructuring components of the experience to emphasize similarities between the experience and the work experience (Bandura, 1997; Cervone, 1997; Weitlauf, Smith, & Cervone, 2000). Facilitators can also teach subskills that apply to both settings, or simply identify similarity of subskills. One of the most powerful elements of challenging adventures is the overwhelming mastery experience (Bandura). These experiences occur when participants face and overcome a challenge they previously believed unattainable (Bandura).

As clients perform certain tasks during adventure activities, they often experience strong emotions and engage in associated behaviors that may be similar to emotions and behaviors experienced during stressful or challenging situations in the workplace. It is important to draw clients' attention to the potential workplace applications and make appropriate comparisons. These discussions often lead to moments of self revelation and inspiration. Taniguchi et al.

(2005) refer to fractional sublimation as a process of individual change. As people engage in outdoor adventures, the challenge and stress makes it difficult to maintain false barriers and images. People become more aware of their feelings and perceptions. The result of this process is people become more authentic, and they are able to make meaningful change. fractional sublimation is this process of peeling the layers away. Often one's self reflection can develop into hopelessness, frustration, doubt, and discouragement creating a negative façade in one's mind. "Shedding the façade allowed the whole or sublime self be discovered" (Taniguchi et al. p. 136). The process of changing one's thoughts and behavior patterns can be guided and directed through proper facilitation.

Open and ongoing conversations direct clients to extract values and draw conclusions regarding their behavior and how it relates to the workplace. Gass (1992) lists debriefing with the participants as the most valuable time; (a) guiding them through a reflection of their experiences, (b) drawing on specific experiences, (c) discussing the impact of those experiences on the group's effectiveness and individual members feelings, (d) extracting learning experiences from successful and unsuccessful moments, (e) transferring the experiences to the workplace. Gass further describes how leaders must commit to the new behavior the next time a similar opportunity arises. The impact of the debriefing process is essential and powerful; therefore, facilitators should avoid downplaying, omitting, or postponing the process. Closing the group discussion with a plan of action for the work environment helps clients to make the transition more foreseeable. Agreeing on a follow up plan can facilitate accountability and reinforce key skills and principles learned in the program. Participants struggling to make connections to the workplace have the opportunity to ask questions, gain more insight and also make meaningful

inferences. The combination of these phases and the commitment of top management reinforcing the changes are what make the course successful.

Other assets contributing to course success develops when clients recognize the relevance or usefulness to trainee's job. When clients are able to overcome strong emotions or difficult obstacles during the training and recognize how the connection impedes job performance the changes are lasting and incomparable. Overcoming challenging activities can provide individuals with a sense of fulfillment and efficacy. Taniguchi et al. (2005) states, "As the participants viewed the beauty and immensity of their natural surroundings, they seemed to connect their sublimation process with what was happening in the environment around them. The erosion of rock, the changes in the weather, and the adaptation of the flora and fauna became models of change" (p. 137). Dwyer (2006) states adventure activities are a powerful way of putting people in touch with their own feelings and reactions developing a sense of self-awareness. When one increases their belief in their ability to achieve and overcome any obstacles their capacity to achieve other life's domains also may increase. According to Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen (1993) "people who will use their skills to the utmost is that they enjoy the hardships and the challenges of their task" (p. 8). It is not that they are more likely to enjoy the experiences but that they persevere when difficult challenges arise and turn them into highly enjoyable ones (Csikszentmihalyi et al.). Research suggests that facing challenge, developing skills and succeeding is among the most rewarding experiences in life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This perseverance enables a sense of autonomy in the workplace for employees feeling empowered to act and acquiring a sense of ownership, which employees find job tasks enjoyable and perceivable; extending beyond job expectations. Opportunities for employees to use what was learned in training builds confidence and healthy attitudes toward

team development (Jiang, 2010). Working in teams develops camaraderie and interdependence between employees producing positive results for the company.

Team Development

Adventure activities can provide many benefits for teams in the work environment. Adventure learning programs provide an environment away from work concerns and responsibilities, where teams can work on issues associated with trust, and learn to engage in open and healthy conflict. The adventure environment can be fun, engaging and does not present the same long-term financial and practical risks of the work environment. It does, however, present other risks that are real enough to increase stress and conflict. It is an ideal environment to practice and learn skills necessary to avoid dysfunction in teams at work. Dysfunction in teams is characterized by a lack of trust, the inability to engage in open and healthy conflict, a lack of commitment, and the unwillingness to hold each team member accountable (Lencioni, 2002). Sometimes dysfunctional teams have difficulty constructing common goals. A lack of support, commitment to team members, or a sense of interdependence denies the company's achievement of goals. Differences can be overcome when teams learn to cooperate, communicate, and collaborate.

Conveniently, most of the learning for participants in adventure activities comes from peer feedback (Dwyer, 2006). Learning to cooperate, communicate, and work under stressful situations in groups allow team members to observe and discuss individual behaviors. Nadler and Tushman (1999) identify effective teamwork as one of the core competencies organizations must have in the 21st century. Teamwork promotes networking, interdependence among participants and avoids the tendency to see the facilitator as the one to go to for answers (Dwyer). Ibbetson and Newell (1998) cite several experiences supportive of team development

in adventure activities: (a) real situations require real behavior and real solutions are used, (b) participants live the consequences of the decisions made, (c) experiences develop close emotional bonds between colleagues. Maynard, manager at Du Pont says, "What you're doing when you participate in one of these programs is developing a bonding in three or four days that could take three or four years to occur in the workplace" (Gall, 1987, p. 56). Building close relationships resolves individual separation and any low trust issues.

Group competency is defined as "the collective belief of group members that the group can be effective" (Shea & Guzzo, 1987, p. 26). It is reasonable to suggest members' abilities will affect their belief in their ability to perform in given tasks. As members become competent they increase ability and effectiveness to accomplish their goal (Hecht, Allen, Klammer, & Kelly, 2002). Ability to perform effectively as a team requires determination, willingness, hard work and commitment collectively pursuing group goals. Doubt and discouragement changes the atmosphere of collective team unity, thus helping staff members to ameliorate disbelief, pushes company unity forward. Groups who envision achieving their goals increase their ability and commitment to performance.

Forming intimate relationships in the organization creates a sense of culture and closeness producing higher productivity, employee retention and efficiency (Beal, 2003). A strong culture is a necessary element to integrate new employees within the organization and maintaining morale. As individuals develop this sense of collaboration and teamwork within the organization over time team members' goals align with the goals of the organization. The ultimate goal is to achieve *effective working*, when teamwork accomplishes its initial goal to change and incorporates it into their business (Ng, 2001). Sundstrom, De Meuse, and Futrell (1990) state team effectiveness is an ongoing process, never an end that is achieved. Teams must

be continually seeking improvement and evaluating performance to obtain high productivity goals. When team members help motivate and support other members, insurmountable tasks seem less burdensome and more obtainable. For teams to survive over time Gladstein (1984) refers to maintenance behavior where members assist others by being supportive and encouraging team cohesion. Informing staff members of the high standards and company traditions encourages employees to follow suit, helping maintain company patterns and policies. Managers who work to develop a strong teamwork attitude create an atmosphere of staff unity. Adventure training can be an effective environment to develop teams, if the program is based on sound theory and research. Unfortunately, most programs do not integrate theory into program development, but simply assume completing the adventure will build the team.

Company Culture

Organizational cultures are patterned on basic assumptions taken from external adaptations and internal integration and incorporated into how a group perceives, thinks, and feels (Daft, 2008). Integration is designed to promote coordination and collaboration within the company to accomplish the organizational task (Hill & Jones, 1998). Schein (1984) categorizes four different levels of a culture: (a) artifacts, (b) norms, (c) values, (d) and assumptions. Artifacts are the constructed environment of the organization using, technology, floor layout, architecture, and documents. This level of culture is easily measured, but difficult to interpret because artifacts do not explain why groups behave better in some environments than in others. Norms are perceived as appropriate and acceptable behaviors. These behaviors become routine and to some extent traditional within an organization. Over time, norms are taken for granted. Informing new members of traditions and rituals can help to welcome them to the organization and reduce feelings of alienation. Values are often the underlying cause of behavior and more

observable in individuals than artifacts. Individuals show dedication and commitment to the company when one highly values the direction and leadership. Assumptions are behaviors taken for granted or expected. Within an organization, assumptions are made on how to act based on corporate culture and the most accurate way to understand a culture. Employees behave in certain ways because of the values they believe the corporation to have. Eventually, these assumptions will become innate characteristics and will have a transformation effect on the company (Schein, 1984). When company cultures reach a committed and cohesive level among employees without conscious effort a company's achievements are greater.

Cultural strengths refer to the agreement among employees about the importance of specific values and norms. If the consensus of the group is high, the culture is strong and cohesive. Organizations observed as having clear values, integrity, goals and strategies are stronger and more effective. Leaders of companies with deep culture have the strongest influence on decision making because of their ability to steer the ship. Over time, members' experiences help them devise solutions and gain positive leadership attributes. Internal integration helps cultures develop a collective identity and knowledge to work together effectively (Daft, 2008). Furthermore, culture guides day-to-day relationships and communication patterns in the organization.

Culture is constantly being formed and is shaped by the environment. It is dynamic. Underlying principles hold strong to the values stabilizing the organization during periods of change. Ibbetson and Newell (1998) purports if the culture of the organization is not supportive, the development process is unlikely to succeed. Support from management, and all other employees must show commitment to the mission, values and goals of the organization to rise to

higher ground. Positive changes can arise in team development benefitting the team and also the larger organization.

Change and Innovation

Society changes at an uncontrollable rate, however, leaders can learn to effectively manage change within their companies. Jack Welch, former chairman and CEO of General Electric emphasized, "when the rate of change outside exceeds the rate of change inside, the end is in sight" (Daft, 2008, p. 454). A company's strength results from the culture, vision, mission, values, and goals designed to ensure its success as it navigates change. Leaders and employees must all be in agreement of these expectations to work towards developing motivation in employees and growth in the company. Culture plays a significant role in creating a climate of organizational learning, innovation, and challenge. A strong culture promotes adaptation and change, encouraging employees' innovative character and performance achievement. Leaders in organizations are empowered to lead strategic change when goals and priorities are aligned to achieve the same purpose. Ng (2001) recognizes during the change process, positive results arise when employees are given power and influence. In companies with strong cultures, he found employees volunteered more for work, reduced tardiness, and lowered turnover rate. Today's leaders are increasing their creativity and innovation. Through outsourcing to other areas and expanding networks, organizations generate a more resourceful business. Leaders must cultivate a nourishing environment to promote sharing of novel ideas and improve efficiency. This means employees feel free to take risks and experience failure. Autonomy and power given to the employees facilitates process of change within the organization.

Change Model

Daft (2008) illustrates Kotter's eight steps in the organizational change model as: (a) establish a sense of urgency, (b) form a powerful guiding coalition, (c) develop a compelling vision and strategy, (d) communicate the vision widely, (e) empower employees to act on the vision, (f) generate short-term wins, (g) keep up the urgency; tackle bigger problems, and (h) make the changes stick. Leaders establish a sense of urgency when recognizing the need to change, and initiating the movement amongst employees. After identifying the problem, finding a way to communicate the information is critical in forming a powerful guiding coalition. For the change process to succeed members must be committed to the transformation process especially when change is overwhelming. Members also need current information while constructing a plan to present to the committee. Leaders are responsible for developing and articulating a compelling vision to guide the change effort, then pushing the strategies to achieve the vision. Daft (2008) claims open and honest communication is perhaps the single most effective way to change because it reduces uncertainty, gives people a sense of control, clarifies the benefits of the change, and builds trust. Communicating to staff the vision and empowering them to pursue company goals enhances company growth. Successful businesses recommend everyone attend meetings, clinics, and receive weekly newsletters by e-mail. In addition, the employee manual is regularly reviewed. Following these steps increases likelihood the objectives of the company are understood, company management is more accessible to listen to any concerns and staff feel more valued. Management recognizing and adhering to necessary change, following through with recommendations, and accomplishing the movement are what Black and Gregersen (2008) refer to as the See, Move, Finish technique.

See. Senge (1999) states one must be willing to abandon what does not work. Often times groups or individuals have worked with the company for many years and do not recognize or have the desire to change. Change often takes hard work while disrupting the normal daily routine. The MIT model (Clawson, 2009) gives several tools for managing resistance to change; learn the old ways are not working anymore, management searches for new approaches, change efforts are generated out of new processes and approaches, and new processes become so well ingrained it becomes a natural part of the organization. Managers have an important role foreseeing any disruptions or problems in the corporate system. Clawson states "a visionary leader looks ahead and 'sees' what the organization should become and uses that dream or panoramic view to guide communications with others in the organization" (p. 122). Visions grow out of studying, reading, comparing, traveling, seeing, imagining, seeking, analyzing, and a variety of other activities giving individuals a base to create and receive new views of possibilities (Clawson). Despite a majestic vision, managers and employees view change differently. Some may see it as disruptive and intrusive upsetting the balance (Strebel, 2006). The missing link is employee support. Clawson states the reason for not changing, "many people, however, choose to stay in their comfort zone and respond to disconfirming data by systematically discounting them, distorting them, or ignoring them altogether" (p. 341). Strebel (1996) recommends three steps when employees are not committed to organizational change: (a) leaders draw attention to the need to change and revise the context, (b) revise the change process so employees have opportunity to recommit, and (c) lock in commitment from employees. Leaders who promote excellence and excitement help employees to stay motivated and encouraged to move forward.

Move. Lashaway (2006) postulates, "future is not something that simply shows up unannounced a few years down the road; instead it is created by the actions we take today" (p. 161). Leaders who can diminish or possibly extinguish the obstacles enable employees to move forward with progress while acting on the vision. Change takes time, but through celebrating short term wins employees are energized and able to see progress taking action. The cycle is continually circulating and leaders must keep the transformation efforts moving. Encouraging employees' perseverance to take on more difficult tasks builds confidence and innovation. The true test lies when leaders make the changes stick and have well established roots.

Finish. Even companies who have made significant efforts to change find 85% of people revert back to old habits (Clawson, 2009). This is partly due to individuals getting lost, tired, and/or frustrated. Change cannot be realized until all employees have committed to the new process (Black & Gregersen, 2008). New implemented strategies require time to take affect over the whole organization, however, if employees do not see progress many lose interest in the project and quit. Change is successful when strategies stick and new leadership in the organization can maintain company procedures. Lashaway (2006) claims the "best organizations are those that have found a way not only to cope with change but to use it as a driving force for excellence" (p. 176). Organizations are recognizing the need for greater change to keep pace with advancing technology and potential competition with growing companies.

Summary

Adventure learning has the capacity to build stronger organizations as individuals integrate group and personal values and instill into their personal development. Experiencing activities involving coordination, communication, cooperation, and trust are fundamental principles gleaned in adventure learning capacities enhancing the growth of the organization.

Changes in organizations start with individuals primarily and broaden to teams and eventually corporations. When adventure learning principles are processed and changes stick, positive results will roll forth. There is something about achieving a frightening rappel or accomplishing a hard mountain bike course that change behavior and efficacy in individuals. Belief in oneself in achieving difficult tasks transfers into other domains including the work environment.

Chapter 3

Methods

This study employs qualitative methods to examine the perceptions and meaning of an adventure learning program among corporate executives. A field research design will be utilized to gather the data, and a combination of qualitative data analysis (QDA) and classical grounded theory approach will be used to analyze the data. This section clarifies both the rationale for the methods chosen and the actual methods used for the study, as well.

The general aim of the study is to design and implement an adventure learning program that will facilitate Black and Gregersen's Change Model to teach participants to lead strategic change. Using principles from self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997) this program will facilitate skills, knowledge and efficacy to confront issues of stress, change, and create team development. Sub goals of the program are to increase individual resilience and promote corporate culture. Research has suggested removing clients from their everyday office atmosphere ameliorates preconceived notions and labels of other employees thus creating an environment conducive to change (Gall, 1987; Gass et al. 1992; Hattie et al. 1997). This section will discuss: (a) grounded theory, (b) selection of subjects, (c) instrumentation, (d) procedure and analysis, and (e) plan for establishing trust and validity.

Grounded Theory

This study will utilize grounded theory methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to examine the perceptions and meaning of an adventure learning program designed to teach corporate executives to lead change. This study will seek to understand the fundamental experience of adventure learning through grounded theory methods. This research hopes to develop a theoretical model which can help to facilitate effective future program designs.

Grounded theories are *grounded* in data from the field, especially in the actions, interactions, and social process of people (Creswell, 2007). Through this framework researchers will explore themes and categories emerging from participant's perspectives and then analyze the data for interpretation. Strauss and Corbin (1998) state when grounded theory research is conducted and data is collected, personal insight enhances understanding and provides more meaningful data.

Wicker (1985) offers an effective methodology tool for grounded theory data. Wicker identifies a heuristic device analyzing data to stimulate new insights on familiar research problems. His method includes: "(a) playing with data by applying metaphors, imagining extremes, making diagrams, and looking at processes; (b) considering context by placing problems within larger domains and making comparisons outside the problem domain; (c) probing assumptions and making opposite assumptions; and (d) scrutinizing key concepts" (Wicker, p. 1094). Wicker's methodology principles will be utilized in this study to discover important themes and relevant categories from the data. This will help in establishing a concrete grounded theory.

Selection of Subjects

Subjects will be selected from a group of 130 senior leaders of an international corporation who completed an adventure learning program. Participants are from a U.S. based affiliate with headquarters in a major western city; however, participants come from across the country. This company develops and sells medications designed to treat individuals with orphan diseases, such as pulmonary hypertension. Orphan diseases are illnesses the pharmaceutical industry tends to ignore because so few people have the illness there is little financial incentive for the private sector to make and market new medications. Typically orphan diseases affect fewer than

200,000 people (MedicineNet.com, 2011). Further, the pharmaceutical industry is fraught with change due to issues associated with medical research, federal regulation, legislation, and competition. Subjects of this study work in a competitive environment of high stress and constant change. Although an international company, participants from this study work for the U.S. based affiliate in a major western, U.S. city.

The Company's chief executive officer and executive vice president invite executives to attend the program conducted in Moab, Utah. Participation in the leading change program is part of the expectations associated with employment in the company, although participants can opt out at any time. Participation in the study is completely voluntary. A convenience sample of executives will be invited to participate in the interviews. Participants' will be selected by RMYL team, based on participant responses to activities and willingness to share experiences. All willing volunteers complete a consent to participate form (see Appendix A). Data collection is consistent with Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies and under their approval.

Protection of Subjects

The protection of the study participants both for anonymity and confidentiality, as well as their physical and emotional safety, was a high priority for the researchers of this study. The measures taken will be discussed in this section.

Anonymity and confidentiality. The anonymity of the participants is guaranteed by using pseudonyms to identify individuals. Only the researchers will be aware of the participants' real names in association with the pseudonyms. Confidentiality was ensured by having study participants agree to keep information within the group of participants and not to divulge interviews or conversations related to the study to anyone not participating in their group.

The researcher will keep collected data secure and in her possession. The data from this study will be destroyed within five years of the data collection.

Physical and emotional safety. All participants were involved in hard skills training for the different activities in the program. These skills included mountain biking techniques, rappelling, white water rafting, canyoneering, and desert survival. Because participants have a wide range of previous experiences, all training was conducted on the assumption no one had ever done these activities before. Equipment knowledge, technique, and safety considerations were all taught and emphasized in these training sessions. Every participant was given the choice to participate or not participate in the training or activities offered. Non-participation was emphasized as a viable choice with no negative repercussions from either the program staff or fellow workers.

Instrumentation

The following samples of interview questions were selected by previous graduate students and faculty of the Recreation Management and Youth Leadership (RMYL) Department to glean all valuable information from participants (see Appendix B). Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggest theoretical questions containing variation, a clear process, and connections to the themes elicit concepts from the interview. The questions were designed to be open-ended for individuals to convey their experience and be more specific as the discussion progressed.

Interview questions will be designed to meet triangulation criteria of collecting at least three types of information: (a) situation narratives- personal descriptions of focused events, (b) repisodes—regularly re-occurring situations, (c) examples—metaphors and actual experiences, (d) Subjective definitions—personal perceptions and/or explanations of specific terms or

constructs, (e) argumentative-theoretical statements—explanations of concepts and their relations (Flick, 2008).

- What do you hope to learn from this experience (situational narrative)?
- How do you feel about the activities in which you will be participating (situational narrative)?
- What did you expect to learn from this activity (subjective definition)?
- How did you feel during the activity (subjective definition)?
- What helped you the most to complete the activity (subjective definition)?
- How do you think that your perception of change perhaps changed during each of those activities (subjective definition)?
- What activities did you consider to be really challenging to you (Argumentative-theoretical)?
- What did you learn about change that you can apply to your professional life (situational narrative)?

The RMYL researchers used a semi-structured interview format for each participant. This format uses core questions and allows a degree of flexibility for researchers to ask follow-up questions for obtaining further insight. Interview questions will be designed to meet triangulation criteria of collecting at least three types of information; (a) situation narratives personal descriptions of focused events, (b) repisodes regularly re-occurring situations, (c) examples metaphors and actual experiences, (d) subjective definitions personal perceptions and/or explanations of specific terms or constructs, and (e) argumentative-theoretical statements explanations of concepts and their relations.

Procedure

Participants will be randomly selected for interviews. Dyadic interviews will be conducted with each participant before and after each adventure activity. The researcher will conduct interviews in a quiet, safe, and comfortable location as to have little distraction to the procedures of the questionnaire. Depending on the participants' responses, interviews will range between 10 minutes to one hour. Questions start on broad topics and narrow down as each participant discusses their own personal experience. The importance of providing clear and open questions for individuals establishes a comfortable atmosphere for participants to open up. Some individuals have the tendency to struggle more than others with challenge and will possibly divulge more information by sharing their successes or failures than others. Researchers will encourage all participants to share personal successes/failures throughout the interview and will solicit any additional comments of value. Researchers will be careful and respectful to show no signs of bias to interviewee during the interview to allow him/her to dispose feelings.

Data Analysis

Analysis is an informed process of examining gathered data and making inferences towards the object as a whole (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Strauss and Corbin (1998) utilize a coding system to categorize and analyze data. Coding is an analytical tool to build theory and help analysts consider alternative meanings of phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Analysis of the data began in this study by utilizing microanalysis or line-by-line coding through voice recording and memos. Coding essentially categorizes qualitative data according to their properties and dimension and transmitting through conceptualizing, reducing, elaborating and relating (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This process is a dynamic process as analysts study the whole, dismantle the separate components, and study their relationship to the whole. Once the

codes are grouped together and themes surface, theory emerges to explain what is happening in the data (Glaser, 1978). Open coding organizes and assembles meaning gleaned from the data providing substance and understanding to the analyst (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This process begins by studying words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs taken from one thought on a line-by-line process. These are identified and then codes will be sorted to analyze the initial categories as stated by Glaser (1978).

Axial coding is the process of piecing the data back together to relate categories and to continue developing them in terms of their properties and dimensions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Focusing on one theme from open coding becomes the "core phenomenon" (Creswell, 2007, p. 64). Strauss and Corbin (1990) claim once this core phenomenon is identified, returning to the data to categorize what caused this phenomenon to occur, what intervening conditions influenced the matter, and what consequences resulted from this process builds on to the core phenomenon.

In qualitative research, validation is "a judgment of the trustworthiness or goodness of a piece of research" (Angen, 2000, p. 387). Several methods of validation will be used to conduct this study to establish reliability and credibility among the qualitative data. Reliability is addressed by writing field notes, transcribing taped interviews, and peers reviewing the transcribed data. Hammersley (1995) redefines validity as confidence rather than certainty. Hammersley further states, "research consists of telling stories which should be judged not in terms of their validity but, for example, according to their aesthetic appeal, their political correctness, their usefulness etc" (p. 8). Credibility involves the participant and the extent they view the interpretation results of the data analysis to be credible and accurate. Credibility is established using member checking.

Dependability and confirmability, the qualitative equivalent of reliability, is achieved through the use of an inquiry audit. Dependability ensures reliability, consistency, stability, accuracy; ability to repeat the findings in further studies. Two RMYL graduate students and two faculty members will be used to examine and confirm the qualitative data analysis process. Frequent verification with faculty members will help track repetitive patterns and confirm any themes recognized (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The data analysis will be facilitated through the triangulation process; and auditor feedback. To reduce misinterpretation of the data, collection comprised of verbal (through interviews and focus group discussions) and written (through field notes and evaluations) reflection will be used to compound the data gathering procedure. This redundancy allowed for triangulation in which multiple perceptions will be used to clarify meaning and verify reliability of the observation or interpretation (Stake, 2000). Multiple reviews of the data secure the trustworthiness (dependability, confirmability, and credibility) of the data. Constant-comparative methods of analysis, as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), will be used to continually refine the descriptive categories and the axial coding process. The researcher's memos will be analyzed as supplemental interpretations of the processes observed, in conjunction with the participants' collected data.

The use of the QSR NVivo computer software program is an aid in the organization, categorization, coding identification, and initial identification of reoccurring codes within the collected data. NVivo allows multiple analysts involved to code themes and identify relevancies in the data. The final analysis is still determined by the researcher's interpretations of all analyses done.

Validity Plan for Establishing Trustworthiness

In research establishing trustworthiness in qualitative data requires researchers to persuade the audience "that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). In this methodological process confirming the validity will satisfy current qualitative standards and promote trustworthiness.

The four research validity concepts will be discussed to evaluate criteria and substantiate the qualitative research: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. These constructs will be addressed in the following sections in order to present appropriate application of valid methodological techniques and confirm trustworthiness in the study.

Credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define credibility as "the degree of confidence in the 'truth' that the findings of a particular inquiry have for the subjects with which—and the context within which—the inquiry was carried out" (p. 290). In order to establish credibility in the research process the triangulation process of interviews will be done to collect data. Flick (2008) recommends using various types of questions including; situation narratives, repisodes, examples, subjective definitions, and argumentative-theoretical statements. Lincoln and Guba suggest gathering information from a variety of different sources or informants. Peer debriefing occurred on a daily basis during data collection. RMYL researchers will meet to discuss the day's research process and discuss emerging themes and ideas. Peer debriefing is "an effective way of shoring up credibility, providing methodological guidance, and serving a cathartic outlet" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 243). These discussions will also permit the researcher to submit and clarify themes throughout the data analysis process.

Transferability. In research, data collection requires substantial relevance and cross-contextual application in the findings. Transferability is defined as "the extent to which [an inquiry's] findings can be applied to other contexts or with other respondents" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290) and determine whether application is applicable to consumer's context. Using thick description and narrative ensures effective transferability allowing the voices of the participants to speak. Reporting the data with sufficient detail and description provides accurate precision during the collection process (Erlandson et al., 1993). Thick description is also a necessary element to allow readers to replicate their own study and apply to their own context.

Dependability. Lincon and Guba (1985) explain dependability is proof if the study is replicated with similar respondents in a similar context, its findings can be repeated. Dependability involves reliability, consistency, stability, accuracy; ability to repeat the findings (Erlandson et al., 1993). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the key to assuring dependability is to provide an audit trail for the readers. This allows an external auditor to review and offer critique regarding the study process. The external auditor for this study will be Dr. Widmer, another faculty member in the RMYL Department who will not be a part of the data collection process. Dr. Widmer will meet with the primary researcher every two weeks following the data collection period to review and discuss findings of the qualitative data analysis (QDA). The researcher will keep a running journal of all interviews, memos, and codes in a daily journal and documented in the NVivo computer software.

Confirmability. Confirmability is "the degree to which [an inquiry's] findings are the product of the focus of its inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). The researcher must gather multiple constructs to demonstrate clear interpretation of how the inquiry was contrived. Auditing procedures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) will allow

internal auditors to familiarize with documents, field notes, and categorized data and assess the findings to be accurately represented from the initial data. This should also eliminate researcher bias in data analysis. Dr. Mark Widmer, Dr. Stacy Taniguchi, and Dr. John Bingham will collaborate with the primary researcher on a frequent basis following the data collection period. They will observe the data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations. Such a thorough examination of research methods will build a broader discussion in order to represent all research findings and establish validity.

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Appendix A

Consent to be a Research Participant

This research project is an extention of previous research conducted by Dr. Widmer and Dr. Taniguchi in the Department of Recreational Management and Youth Leadership (RMYL) in the Marriot School of Management at Brigham Young University (BYU). The purpose of this research is to identify attributes of an adventure program that is designed to promote effectiveness in leading strategic change in corporations. Perceptions of the meaning and impact of the program will be explored, along with an examination of potential changes in Change Styles.

As a participant, you will be asked to complete the Change Style Questionnaire, during and after the program, and you may be asked to participate in an individual interview or focus group discussion after completing the 2009 Moab Adventure. Your participation as a subject of this study is of your own volition and understanding that you are under no obligation to participate. You understand that you will not be penalized in any way, for choosing not to participate in this study. You understand that you may withdraw from this study at anytime without any penalties. You may request to have your input be completely or partially removed from the collected data of this study. As a research participant, you will be asked to answer questions about your experience in the 3-day Moab adventure you are completing as part of your corporate training.

The Moab adventure involves white water rafting, mountain biking, canyoneering, and rappelling. It is possible you will experience extreme weather conditions and temperatures. These activities will require you to hike, ride, and with white water raft. Experts facilitate all of the activities. This Moab Adventure carries some potential risks, which include, but are not limited to, bodily injury due to your participation in the outdoor activities, hypothermia, and fatigue. Although these risks will be minimized by instruction, preparation, and supervision, there cannot be a guarantee to alleviate any of them all together.

As a research study participant, you may be invited to participate in discussion groups and one-on-one interviews with the researchers to vocalize your personal feelings and perceptions of each of the activities. These discussions and interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed for data analysis. You will also be expected to participate in taking a short questionnaire twice that measure Change Styles.

Your identity as a subject of this study will be kept anonymous to all outside of this study, but the researcher, Mark Widmer. You will not be personally identified in any publications, text, presentations, or conversations dealing with this study.

Confidentiality will be maintained by the researcher concerning personal information given out, by you, in this study. There is a risk that the confidentiality of what you share amongst others in this study may be violated by others. To minimize this risk, all participants of this study will be asked, by the researchers, to respect this confidentiality.

If you have any questions about this research study, you may contact: Mark Widmer, Department of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership, Brigham Young University, 273H Richards Building, Provo, Utah 84602, telephone number: (801) 422-3381. If you wish to speak to someone regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact: Chair of the Institutional Review Board of Human Participants, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.

"I herby affirm that I will not disclose information discussed during the Program or this research study to anyone other than other members of the Program and the researcher of this

research study. My signature below indicates that I have read, understood, and willingly comply with this consent form and have also received my personal copy of it. I desire of my own free will to participate in this research study."

NAME: _____

(Please print your full name)

SIGNATURE:

_____DATE:_____

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Moab I

What is your role with Actelion?

How did you find out that about this Moab activity?

How did you feel when you first heard about the possibility that you might come here?

What did you hear about it?

Did you read "It Starts with One"?

What do you hope to learn from this experience?

How do you feel about the activities in which you will be participating?

After each activity (Medieval Chamber, Mountain Biking, Corona Arch)

What did you think about the activity?

Did you learn anything about yourself that you didn't think you could do?

What part of the Change Model did this emphasize for you?

How does the Change Model apply to the activity?

How can you apply the Change Model back to your role with Actelion?

Charlotte/San Francisco/Salt Lake City

What is your role with Actelion

How long have you worked there?

What did you expect to learn from this activity?

How did you feel before you began the activity (rappelling, mountain biking)

How much did you trust the staff?

How did you feel during the activity?

What helped you the most to complete the activity?

How did you feel after the activity?

Did the amount of trust in the staff change?

How will the concepts you learned/experienced here apply to your responsibilities with Actelion?

How did this experience help you understand the Change Model?

Moab II

How long have you worked with Actelion?

What is your role in the company?

Do you enjoy working for Actelion?

What were your thoughts about coming back to Moab I?

Are there any differences between how you felt about coming to Moab I and now coming back to Moab II?

In regards to the Change Model, or the SEE, MOVE, FINISH, have you found the activities from Moab I helped you with your professional life somewhat in the work environment?

Before Corona Arch

Now that we are revisiting Corona Arch, have your perceptions of the arch changed since Moab I?

In regards to the Change Model, or the SEE, MOVE, FINISH, do you see its application to this activity?

After Corona Arch

Did you rappel the arch?

How do you feel about the Corona Arch activity now that we're done?

Has the activity allowed you to see more of the application of the Change Model? The SEE, MOVE, FINISH?

After doing the rappelling, was there any part of the Change Model that seemed most applicable?

How do you feel about what you did today at Corona Arch?

After Challenge Activity

When you heard about today's activity, the Challenge activity, what were your initial thoughts?

As you prepared for the activity today, did you use any part of the change model to help you prepare?

How do you think that your perception of change perhaps changed during each of those activities or, what were your thoughts on that, and change?

What activities did you consider to be really challenging to you?

Do you feel like your co-workers, the other Actelion people, helped you with the challenges today?

Did you feel safe with the activities you participated in today?

What did you learn about change that you can apply to your professional life?