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Reflections on the Transformation of Meaning Making to Support the Organic Growth of a Firm

by

Michael Patrick Crowley, FCA, MBA.

A Portfolio of Exploration submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the examination for the:

DBA (Business Economics) Degree of the National University of Ireland – University College Cork

School of Economics

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Tables and Figures	iii
Declaration	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Abstract	vi
PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION	**1**
1. Introduction	**1**
2. Contents of Portfolio	**3**
3. The Role Played by Theory in Making Choices in Business	**4**
4. Construction of a Portfolio	**6**
5. Community of Practitioners	**12**
ESSAY 1: REFLECTION & TRANSITION	**15**
1. Introduction	**15**
1.1 Reflection on Business Practice	16
1.2 Transition to New Practice	17
1.3 Foundations of Practice: My Human Nature	18
2. Categories Employed in Reflection and Transition	**20**
2.1 Human Capacity	21
2.2 Morality	26
2.3 Justice	30
2.4 Cognitive Capacity	33
2.5 Truth and Honesty	37
2.6 Social Governance	39
2.7 Highest Duty	43
2.8 Individual Personality (Ego)	45
2.9 Humility	47
2.10 Individual Conscience	50
2.11 Motivation	53
2.12 My Rationality	56
2.13 Mistakes and Errors	58
3. Conclusion	**60**

ESSAY 2: EXPLORATION OF TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMITMENTS 67

1. Introduction 67

2. Transformational Commitments 70

2.1. Redefine Unthinking Respect for Authority 70
2.2. Discontinue using Absolutist and Autocratic Practices and Learn to Embrace Vulnerability 89
2.3. Advance Towards Thoughtful Thinking 113

3. Conclusion to Explorations 126

4. A Framework for Professional and Organisational Transformation 130

PORTFOLIO CONCLUSION 134

1. Introduction 134

2. Changes in Work Practices 136

2.1. Cognitive Capacity of Human Resources 136
2.2. Psychological Uncertainties 136
2.3. Cultural Instinct 138
2.4. Proper Business Conduct / Morals at Work 138
2.5. Teamwork 139
2.6. Motivation to Execute Responsibility 141
2.7. Organic Vision 142

3. Learnings to Support the Organic Growth of a Firm 144

4. Final Conclusion 154

REFERENCES 155

APPENDIX - Framework of Kegan's Theory 160

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1 – My explorations of professional change	9
Figure 2 – My journey of reflective discourse	15
Figure 3 – Leaning from the inside out	16
Figure 4 – Framework of organisational transformation	130
Figure 5 – Adaptive [transformational] learning	165
Figure 6 – Three plateaus in adult mental development	166
Figure 7 – Kegan's immunity map worksheet	173
Figure 8 – Adult mental development in the form of a virtuous circle	174
Figure 9 - Kegan's model of adult mental development	192

DECLARATION

The Portfolio submitted is my own work and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere.

_____

Michael Crowley

2nd August 2013

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One of the joys of completion is to look over the journey past and remember all the friends and close friends who have helped and supported me along this long but fulfilling road.

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My son Sean was born along the journey and my daughters Ellen and Sinead have grown up in an environment where it is normal for a forty 'something' year old dad to be attending 'school' along with themselves. Cheers guys and thanks. The final and the greatest thanks go to my wife Trish whom I could not have completed this doctorate without. Thanks for the constant support and unconditional love I got from you. Therefore it is to Trish with love.

ABSTRACT

The objective of my Portfolio is to explore the working hypothesis that the organic growth of a firm is governed by the perspectives of individuals and such perspectives are governed by their meaning-making. The Portfolio presents explorations of the transformation of my meaning-making and in adopting new practices to support the organic growth of a firm.

I use the work of other theorists to transition my understanding of how the world works. This transition process is an essential tool to engage with and understand the perspectives of others and develop a mental capacity to "train one's imagination to go visiting" (Arendt, 1982; p.43). The Portfolio, therefore, is primarily located in reflective research.

Using Kegan's (1994) approach to Adult Mental Development, and Sowell's (2007) understanding of the visions which silently shape our thoughts I organise the developments of my meaning making around three transformation pillars of change. In pillar one I seek to transform an unthinking respect for authority and break down a blind pervasiveness of thought within my reasoning process arising from an instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust. In pillar two I seek to discontinue using autocratic leadership and learn to use the thoughts and contributions of a wider team to make improved choices about uncertain future events. In pillar three I explore the use of a more reflective thinking framework to test the accuracy of my perceptions and apply a high level of integrity in my reasoning process.

The transformation of my meaning making has changed my perspectives and in turn my preferred practices to support the organic growth of a firm. I identify from practice that a transformative form of leadership is far more effective that a transactional form of leadership to stimulate the trust and teamwork required to sustain the growth a firm. Creating an environment where one feels free to share thoughts and feelings with others is an essential tool to build a team to critique the thoughts of one other. Furthermore, the entrepreneurial wisdom to grow a firm must come from a wider team, located both inside and outside the boundaries of a firm. No individual or small team has the mental capacity to provide the entrepreneurship required to drive the organic growth of a firm.

I address my Portfolio to leaders in organisations who have no considered framework on the best practices required to lead a social organisation. These individuals may have no sense of

what they implicitly believe drives social causation and they may have no understanding if their meaning making supports or curtails the practices required to grow a firm. They may have a very limited capacity to think in a logical manner, with the result they are using guesses from their ‘gut’ to make poor judgements in the management of a firm.

PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

I have worked in a managerial capacity as a chartered accountant in industry for over twenty years, and all of my experience has been in small and medium sized firms, with eighteen years of my work in the same firm in the food manufacturing sector. I completed an Executive MBA in UCC in 07/08 and on graduating I continued studying for a Doctorate in Business Administration, which I refer to as a DBA, which commenced in 2009. My primary reason for continuing to study for a DBA was to identify the variables to support the organic growth of a firm and in particular the organic growth of a firm in the food manufacturing sector. I could see from my experience of working in Industry that small and medium sized firms always have a great desire to grow but there is always an uncertainty on the optimum strategy to support such growth. Some strategies work and other strategies do not and it is difficult to articulate the reason for their success or failure.

When I started my DBA I believed that there was a fixed list of critical success factors to support the organic growth of a firm and my task was to learn what these factors were and I could then apply them in a mechanical manner in any firm. This belief was grounded on the understanding that economic development was a mechanical science and my task was to learn the mechanical rules required to support the growth of a firm. I expected that my work would require the study of economic literature to get an understanding of proven economic frameworks and I could just apply these given frameworks in my firm. However I quickly learned that my initial assumptions were incorrect. The first transformation I experienced after reading the work of MacIntyre (1981), Keynes (1936), Penrose (1995), and Drucker (2009), was that there is no fixed mechanical framework to grow a firm. MacIntyre (1981: p.88) theorised that the social science in business is not mechanical and that there are no "law-like generalisation with strong predictive power" to manage the growth of a firm. Keynes (1936: CW, XIV: 297) theorised that economics was "a science of human motives" and a "moral science" rather than a mathematical mechanical science with given rules and formulas. Penrose (1995: p.5) theorised that the key factor required to grow a firm was the vision of those individuals responsible for managing a firm which can be categorised as the managerial mental space within a firm. Drucker (2009) theorised that individuals must be able to identify with the society within a firm and dogmatic totalitarian rule

with rigid inflexible frameworks will not deliver the needs of the workforce and in turn the growth of a firm. I adjusted my Portfolio objective beyond the scope of my initial mathematical type objective to an exploration of my own meaning making[1] to develop and execute a strategy to support the practices required to grow a firm.

This redefined objective changed the focus of my Portfolio from working in an economic science with given mathematical frameworks to working in an economic science with strong social and 'epistemological' influences. A primary focus of my work is to identify the 'vision' I use to see and understand the world and test other 'visions' to increase my capacity to see the more appropriate strategies to support the organic growth of a firm.[2] I investigate the application of other paradigms to transform my 'vision' of the environment to imagine the insights required to grow a firm. I am asking the question; what is my concept of my own nature and how can I develop this concept? I am undertaking a transformational programme to increase my awareness of thought, enlarge my mentality, and change how I think, to apply new practices in my workplace. I am the object of my research in that the research I am undertaking is focussed on my consciousness to transform my meaning making.

The meaning I am using for epistemology is the meaning used by Kegan (1994) which is the organising principles we bring to our thoughts, feelings, and relationships to know and understand each other and the environment in which we live. It is an understanding of the source of knowledge and the role each individual can play in developing the nature and limits of knowledge. It is about how we make meaning every day and how the process of making meaning can evolve and transform throughout our life with a development of our consciousness (See Figure 6, Page 165).The development and growth of our mind is strongly influenced by our affective, interpersonal, and intrapersonal realms, which are all a part of our epistemology.

My DBA programme is primarily located in reflective research- it is a transformational programme focused on a relationship between personal, professional, and organisational development to develop more effective work practices at a personal level to support the growth of a firm. It is not normal for me to critique my 'vision' with the result that my mind operates from thoughtless' theories' I have developed over time and these theories, good or bad, primarily influence how I think. My Portfolio is a means to increase my awareness of the 'vision' I

[1] The definition I am using for 'meaning making' is summarised in page 167 of this Portfolio.
[2] The definition I am using for a vision is summarised in page 15 of this Portfolio.

use when thinking and a means to re-author my 'vision' in a world of greater understanding to increase my capacity to develop new insights to apply new practices at work.

A major transformational step for me was the recognition that everything I see in the world is through a lens and everybody has a different lens and has a different 'vision' of the world. Humans as a race do not have the capacity to see or describe 'facts' because they cannot see the world directly. The personal perspective I hold constructs the world I see and my perspectives are based on my beliefs and values which are unique to me. Nothing gives meaning and nothing gives results except me; the starting point for all human action is the understanding I develop from the assumptions within my mind. The assumptions we have are the starting point for our understanding of the world as Bridges (1980: p.145) explains, "Genuine beginnings begin within us, even when they are brought to our attention by external opportunities."

The contents of my introduction are the following.

Section 2 - I summarise the contents of my Portfolio.
Section 3 - I highlight the important role played by theory in making choices in business.
Section 4 - I summarise the focus of my Portfolio using Keynes (1936) framework. I identify the specific questions I want to answer and I summarise the approach I use to answer these questions.
Section 5 - I identify the community of practitioners I am writing for and the explorations I am working on.

2. CONTENTS OF PORTFOLIO

My Portfolio comprises four sections which are the following,

- Portfolio Introduction

In the introduction I outline the objective of my Portfolio and I summarise the approach I am using to explore new practices to answer the questions I raise on organisational development. It is important for me to provide my community of practitioners with a roadmap of how I am answering my question at the very start of the Portfolio to manage their understanding of my work.

- Essay 1 - Reflection and Transition

My Reflection is an analysis of the lens I use to see the world. It is a reflective summary of the 'vision' and the practices I use when engaging in a professional context with society.

My Transition is a process to identify other 'visions' and other practices which I could use as an alternative to my existing 'vision' and existing practices when engaging with society. In this section I complete a significant amount of reading to expand the 'company I keep' to develop an understanding of other options.

- Essay 2 – Exploration of Transformational Commitments

In my exploration I try out new practices in my professional workplace and I analyse their usefulness to manage the challenges of my work. These new practices are based on another 'vision', or understanding of how the world works, which was brought to my attention during the Transition process. My capacity to provide the insights required to grow a firm is dependent on developing and transforming my vision.

- Portfolio Conclusion

In my conclusion I reflect on the new practices I am applying in my workplace arising from positive experiences of using same in my explorations. I also reflect on the learnings I have articulated, from my DBA experiences, to develop an effective corporate vision to support the organic growth of a firm for my wider community of practitioners.

3. THE ROLE PLAYED BY THEORY IN MAKING CHOICES IN BUSINESS

A perspective held by Drucker (1985) of relevance to me and all practitioners is that every practice in the world today is based on theory, "Every practice rests on theory, even if the practitioners themselves are unaware of it" (Drucker, 1985: p.23) and awareness of this is not very prevalent among practitioners. Popper (1994) rated theories as indispensable because without them we could not orientate ourselves in the world. Every observation we make can only be established with the help of a theory as it is theory which decides what we can observe.

Nothing can be established by direct observation in that we must have a theory to establish the facts. We cannot see things as they are, we can only see things as we are.

Theory is abstract, it is not about a particular; theory is an apparatus of thought[3] to help us think about a general case. Theory is just a way of thinking which works in our mind, it is not a fact and it is not a belief, it is just an instrument of thought. Theories help us make sense of the beliefs and values we hold of how the world works. A theory is a solution to a problem but not by itself, in that a theory can only be used to solve particular problems with individual intuition. A combination of an abstract theory and individual intuition together choose the preferred practice to deal with the specific matters we encounter in our day-to-day business world.

Theory is an essential part of reasoning in that rationality is a process of thinking using evidence and the evidence we use to construct a rational argument are our theories. When we think we relate a particular - in a time and place- to a belief within our mind which guides a way of thinking and such a way of thinking is a theory which imposes an interpretation, a preferred practice, and ultimately a solution to a problem. The purpose of theory is to draw our attention to things. Theories are implicitly related to choice in that the attentions they draw to things guide our preferred practices. The environment we work in is neither constant nor homogeneous and theories draw our attention to different options to manage this uncertainty.

We are not normally cognisant of the theories we use to organise our thinking because they are so deeply embedded within us and one of the results of such a weakness is that we cannot directly influence the practices we apply in our interaction with the environment in our workplace. It is very difficult to imagine that the business leaders in society today have no direct influence in the choices they make and the practices they apply and I am suggesting that this could actually be the case due to our inability to engage properly with the theories which organise our consciousness. One of the issues I will be dealing with in this Portfolio is to highlight this ignorance in how we think and the possible adverse consequences of same.

[3] See page 8 for my definition of apparatus of thought.

4. CONSTRUCTION OF PORTFOLIO

I use Keynes's (1936) framework to summarise and construct my Portfolio. I use this framework as I find it an effective tool for articulating my thoughts on the focus of my Portfolio. The framework is based on answering the following questions,

- What Questions do I want to answer?
- What approach am I taking to answer the questions?
    - What Framework am I using to answer the question?
    - What is the Orienting Generalisation in my framework?
    - What is the Dynamic Principle in my framework?
    - What are the independent variables in my framework?

4.1. - What is the Question I want to answer?

I agree with the view of Collingwood (1978: p.25) who stated that "…knowledge comes only by answering questions, and ….must be the right questions and asked in the right order". I see such a questioning activity as not a preliminary activity to developing knowledge but as part of the process of developing knowledge.

I have categorised the questions I want to answer into a primary issue question and a number of supporting analytical questions.

Issue Question

My primary issue question is the following,

What 'vision' do I have of the working society in a firm and how must I transform this vision to adopt the practices required to nurture the insights which deliver the organic growth of my firm? A part of this question is to investigate the role of a team, and the empowerment of a team, and to investigate the importance of engaging with my conscience to articulate insights from my experience and from the ideas of a wider community to plan for the future.

Analytical Questions

My supporting analytical questions are setting the framework to answer my primary issue question. They are what Keynes (1936) would call 'dependent variables' in that success with my issue question depends on successfully adapting my beliefs to achieve the challenges incorporated within the analytical questions. My definition of dependent variables is those transitory and fluctuating factors, which are of concern to me in enhancing my cognitive capacity to address the primary question. My supporting analytical questions are the following,

1) How and why should I limit my mind from making sense by accident?

I must have a right to believe in the sincerity of my conviction because when I take an action, based on my convention, it is wrong or right for ever. I must ensure my convictions are based on beliefs which are "honestly earned by patient inquiring" and not "stolen by listening to the voice of prejudice and passion" (Clifford, 1999: p.290). A focus of my Portfolio is to engage in patient enquiry to audit the integrity of the beliefs I use to decide right from wrong in my professional work. Integrity is not something that transcends the realm of human affairs and the potentialities of human power; however it can be developed by those individuals who can engage with and critique their own consciousness.

A good example of an individual who could not audit the accuracy of his convictions is Adolf Eichmann. Adolf Eichmann was a German Nazi and SS-Obersturmbannführer (Lieutenant Colonel) during the Nazi regime and the ignorant theories which directed him during the Holocaust regime resulted in him behaving in a very irresponsible and immoral manner, which supported the murder of millions of Jews, "It was sheer thoughtlessness that predisposed him to become one of the greatest criminals of the period" (Arendt, 2005: p. 115). If I cannot engage with my consciousness and audit the sincerity of my convection I have no right to believe in the evidence I am using to justify the practices I am applying in my work.

2) Why must I reach for the standard of a critical thinker to support my professional development?

I need to work off the working hypothesis that there is no such thing as a fact. A mind is always subjective and it cannot see or describe facts. My mind needs to reach a level where it can see that all statements, including economic statements, are framed by implied theories. All newspaper reports, television documentaries, books, corporate strategies, and individual perspectives are based on subjective theories. Machlup noted in his work that there are no facts

in economic theory and our mind needs to apply an investigative approach to manage this reality, "…most of the so-called facts in economics are really 'implied theory'….we should demand that theory be made explicit whenever it can be done without undue effort. If this were done, people would become more critical of 'facts' and less averse to 'theory'; at least they would know that the so-called facts cannot be better than the theories implied" (1952: p.454). These circumstances require that I always question the implied facts of all other parties.

3) How do I take responsibility for the development of my own consciousness?

The best means I have available to me to manage my consciousness is to understand and use theory as a tool of thought, or an apparatus of the mind, when choosing a practice to apply for a specific time and place. The opposite to using theory as an apparatus of thought is to use theory as a 'descriptive' and apply it as a rule to accomplish a specific task.

If I am to manage theory as a tool of thought I will have to understand that theory is not fact, and it is not a belief, it is just an instrument of thought. The purpose of a theory is to draw attention to things. It is a way of thinking which can be applied to a specific time and place by the mind of an individual who perceive a specific circumstance. When theory is used as an apparatus of thought it opens up my preferred practice to a wide number of options.

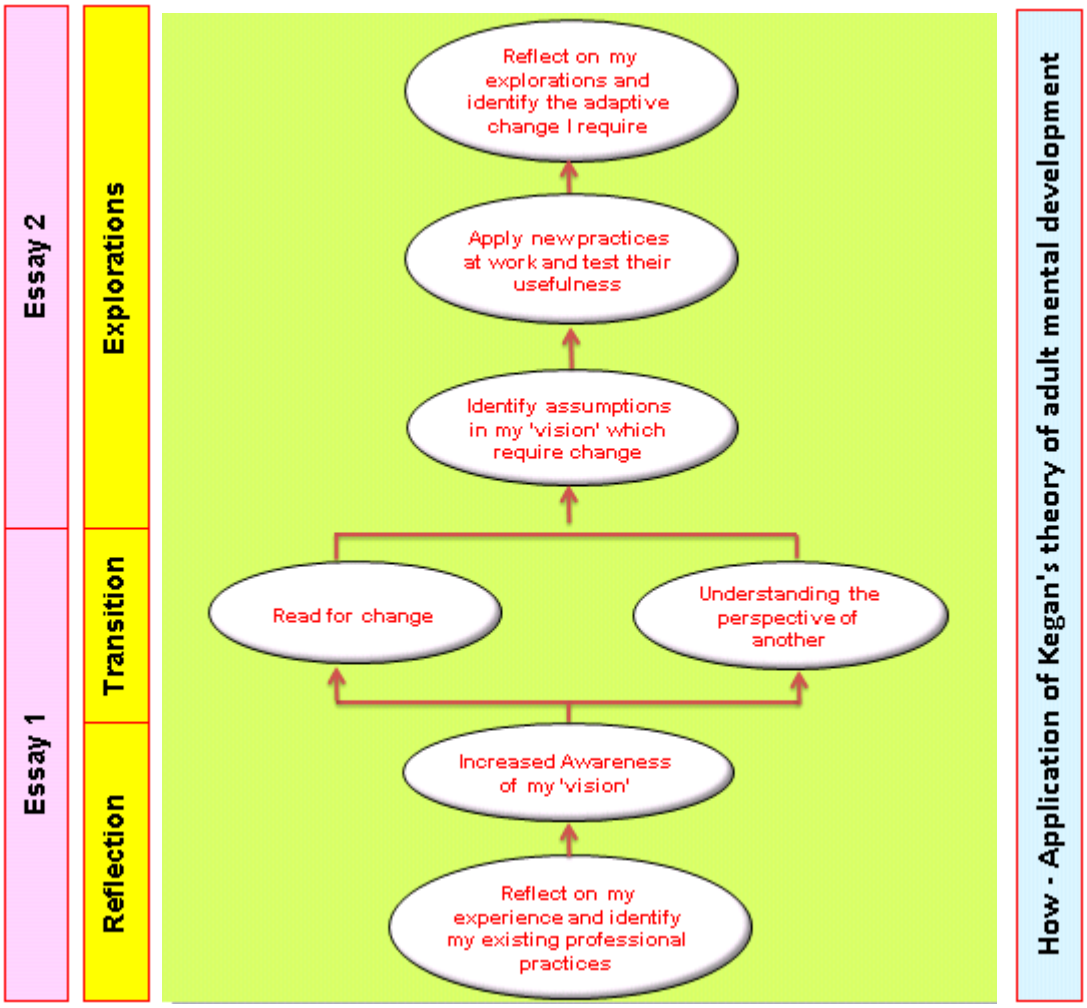
If I use theory as a descriptive I will perceive theory as a fact, or a rule, or a dogma which I can apply to select a preferred practice when I perceive a specific circumstance. There is a strong mechanical relationship between the circumstances I perceive, and the practice or rule I implement. There is very little imaginative thinking undertaken. The implication of using theory as a descriptive is that I do not utilise my conscience to consider all the options available to me when selecting a practice for a specific circumstance.

4.2. - What approach am I taking to answer my question?

1) My Framework

The setting for the explorations I undertake to develop my vision and the insights required to apply new practices to support the growth of a firm is summarised in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – My explorations of professional change



Source: Adapted from Kegan's theory of adult mental development (1994 - 2009)

My Reflection is a setting for engaging with my experience to increase my awareness of the vision I use to think and the related practices I apply. My Transition is a framework for engaging with other perspectives to see something from the perspective of another and to reflect on its usefulness. My Exploration provides a setting to try out a new vision which can support new practices, and to test their usefulness. The final step is to reflect on the results of my explorations and adapt a new vision which can support more appropriate practices to develop a team and grow a firm.

I require a framework which provides a language and space to increase my awareness and nurture a change in how I think and act. Robert Kegan provides such a framework in the form of

his method of adult mental development and I am using this framework to transform how I think and act. It is difficult to effectively use any theory unless one can make it their own and this is the reason I have prepared my own version of Kegan's theory of adult mental development which is attached in the Appendix. It is only possible to use a theory as an apparatus of thought when I have constructed my own version of the theory. I choose Kegan's transformational framework because he is at the leading edge of organisational transformation and organisational leadership.

I am theorising about myself. I am theorising about my meaning making and its relationship with the practices I apply at work. A challenge when theorising about oneself is that there is no explicit material to theorise about; there is no written material available about the thoughts and practices I use. Therefore the first task is to undertake a reflective process to articulate my thoughts and preferred practices and this is the initial process within my framework. The method of learning inherent in the framework is dynamic and in the form of 'an emerging case' where new thoughts and ideas emerge throughout the process. The solution is emerging throughout the Reflection, the Transition, the Exploration, and the analysis of the results of the exploration.

2) Orienting Generalisation

Theory is underpinned by the 'orienting generalization' a term which Keynes use that provides a brief answer to the question. Keynes (1936) theorised that the orienting generalisation is the interpretative framework within which one can read and make connections between different aspects of the model and in doing so it helps move towards a comprehensive, consistent and integrated version of the theory I am applying.

The orienting generalisation in my framework is a development in the meaning making of all individuals working in a firm to develop the insights required to support the growth of a firm. Future insights and not knowledge of past activities drive the organic growth of a firm since business development is always located in the future and not entrenched in the past. The source of future insights is our minds, since the environment is held as an image in the mind of the beholder, and if individuals within a firm can take the thinking within their minds to a more advanced level, they will have a greater capacity to build superior insights. Epistemological development is required to encourage a team to visualise a future free from ancestral authority

to adapt to an ever changing environment. Epistemological development is the means for all members in a team to accept more personal responsibility and live a more fulfilling career undertaking the tasks required to grow a firm.

3) Dynamic Principle

Keynes (1936) theorised that the dynamic principle is the concept which delivers the answer to my question. It is what makes the theory happen but it is not the result of the theory.

The dynamic principle in my model is the completion of reflective discourse on my experiences and to use such discourse to engage my consciousness to explore new practices. Reflective discourse helps my mind transform from taking direction from thoughtless beliefs, not developed in a logical manner from my experiences, to adopting thoughtful beliefs based on an understanding of my experiences and the ideas of a wider community. I must engage with my values and beliefs, challenge their usefulness, and manage them as an apparatus of thought to provide a setting to think in a rational manner using the experiences of my community as evidence.

4) Independent Variables

Keynes (1936) theorised that independent variables are the activities which are necessary to bring about a successful result and in the context of my Portfolio this means the development of my vision and the development of my team to make improved choices to support the organic growth of a firm. In successfully answering the issue question, independent variables are the transitory and fluctuating determinants of a successful result.

The independent variables I am using to transform my 'vision' and successfully adapt new practices are the following,

- I am using my experiences as a learning mechanism to develop my thinking on new practices to apply in work. Arendt theorised that all genuine thinking is grounded in personal experiences, "….thought itself arises out of incidents of living experience and must remain bound to them as the only guideposts by which to take its bearings" (Arendt, 1977: p.97) I am using my experience to identify the adaptive change I must accomplish to explore new practices to support the organic growth of a firm.

- I am using reflective discourse to establish where I am developmentally to draw a roadmap to consciously guide my epistemological development. The first step in my Portfolio of research is to prepare a memoir to identify the lens I use to see the world and the practices I apply in my professional work. A memoir is a step within Kegan's method of AMD to make my 'meaning making system' more visible. I am using it as a tool to find space to support an inner dialogue with myself to engage my consciousness and think about my professional practices. Arendt (1998) theorised that we must be able to engage our conscience to provide the required dialogue to think and Kegan (1994) theorised that we need to find space to support our adult mental development. My reflective discourse is helping me to transform my professional practice from a place dominated by my unarticulated personal experiences to a place where my choices are made from an understanding of my thoughts and the thoughts of a wider community. My reflective discourse is helping me find a calmer place to increase my capacity to make better choices on the practices I apply at work. It is helping me to avoid rushing to judgement.
- I am using the ideas of a wide community to challenge my existing beliefs. My community includes the theories and frameworks of Kegan, Arendt, Keynes, Penrose and many other theorists whom I refer to throughout my Portfolio. My community opens my imagination to a large number of ideas which provides options.

5. COMMUNITY OF PRACTITIONERS

One of my objectives is that the knowledge I advance to support my own professional development can be used to support the development of a community of practitioners. In a sense I am using myself as an ‘exploration’ to illustrate that professional thinking can change and develop and that such change can have positive implications on work practices.

One community of practitioners I am writing for are professionals who are developing and acquiring more responsibilities at work and who need to adopt new practices to manage this additional responsibility. I am writing for individuals who are promoted to leadership positions because they are dedicated workers with strong technical skills but they have not yet developed the cognitive capacity to make good strategic choices. These leaders are prone to using innuendo

and guesses from their 'gut' to make weak judgements. I want to help these individuals cultivate the virtues required to interpret their experience and master themselves in a more uncertain environment. I am writing for those professionals who cannot find values at work which satisfies the needs of their human nature - as they understand it – with the result that they find it difficult to find a strong personal motivation at work. There is a dysfunction between the values which deliver their personal satisfaction and the tasks they understand are required to deliver the goals of the organisation.

My understanding that it is inaccurate presuppositions as referred to by Sowell (2007), and which Kegan (2001) defines as 'big assumptions', built on inaccurate presuppositions all the way down which is holding up the professional development of my community of practitioners, assuming of course that I am reasonably representative. The use of inaccurate beliefs is curtailing my community of practitioners from exploring and adapting more appropriate practices to be more effective in new leadership roles. The use of old practices which were effective in lower management technical roles may no longer be effective in new leadership roles.

I have undertaken three explorations to test if the lens I am using to see the world is accurate and to explore if the practices I am applying at work are the most appropriate practices for me and my community.

5.1. In my first exploration I am testing if 'an unthinking respect for authority' is an obstacle to the development of higher standards of conduct for my community of practitioners. I try to redefine 'an unthinking respect for authority' to accept greater personal responsibility, by applying a new 'vision' which can support new practices in my interaction with others within the firm.

5.2. In my second exploration I check if autocratic leadership practices are appropriate for my community of practitioners to use to support the growth of a firm. I complete explorations to test the use of autocratic leadership practices on teamwork, empowerment of my peers, and the sustained successful accomplishment of goals and objectives of a firm.

5.3. In my third exploration I establish how my community of practitioners must engage with their consciousness, to develop their meaning making, to make good choices in an uncertain environment to support the growth of a firm. I conclude that it is not appropriate to rush to judgement or make choices based on an unarticulated 'gut' feeling to support the growth of a firm.

I am using personal explorations to support my professional development and ultimately the professional competence of a wider community.

ESSAY 1 – REFLECTION AND TRANSITION

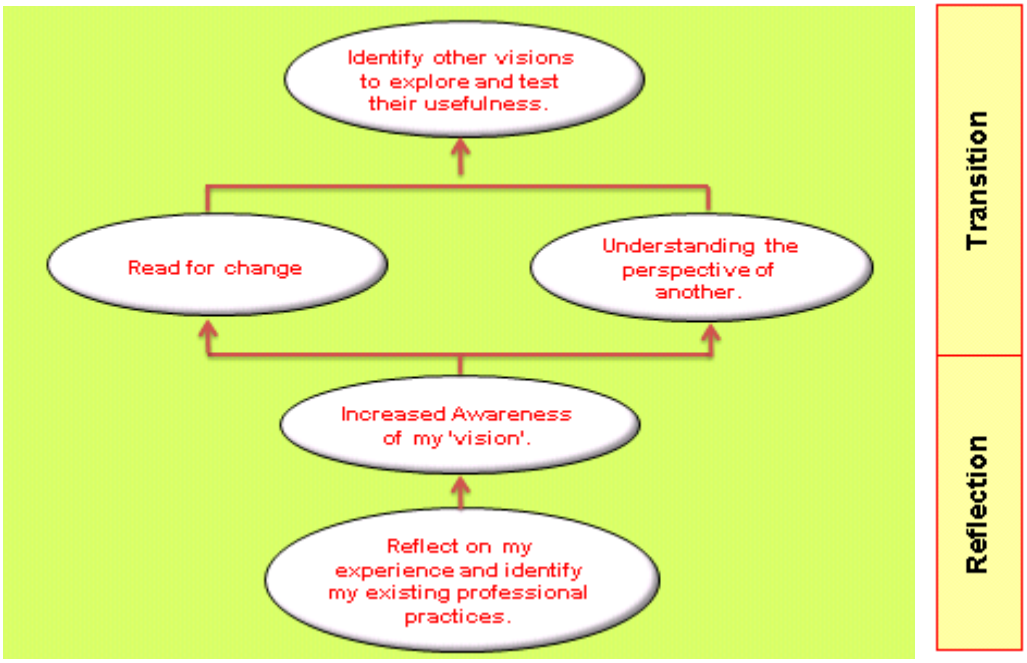
1. INTRODUCTION

In this Essay I identify my 'vision' and I critique the adequacy of this 'vision' to build a team and make good choices to support the organic growth of a firm.

I use Sowell's (2007) definition for vision which is what I implicitly believe drives social causation. It is my "sense of how the world works" (Sowell, 2007; p.4), which establishes a way of thinking which sets an agenda for both thought and action. If causation proceeds as my vision conceives it to then certain given consequences will follow. A good example of the causation created by a vision is that promotion at work will follow a strong loyalty to executive authority irrespective of my own individual capacity to deliver a good result. A vision could be compared to a map working within my mind to direct my actions to achieve a result. This map is multi-dimensional since it engages with my perception of my capacity, my morality, my cognitive ability, my ego, my motivation and my conscience.

There are two parts to this Essay which are a Reflection and a Transition and they are summarised in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – My journey of reflective discourse



Source: Adapted from Kegan's theory of adult mental development (1994 - 2009)

The following subsections set out the role of each element in this Essay.

1.1. Reflection on Business Practice

Bergson (1914) wrote that "the eyes sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend" (Bergson, 1914: p.93), and the purpose of the Reflection is to summarise what my eyes currently see with the objective of articulating how my mind works. The Reflection element relates to the practices I apply in my work environment to identify the vision I use.

Figure 3 – Leaning from the inside out



Source: White, 2012.

I am taking time out to learn 'from the inside out' to articulate what lens I use to construct the world. I am following a working hypothesis that I cannot manage my choices in an impartial manner and use theory as a tool of thought unless I can construct my own version of my vision, "To know the world one must construct it" (Pavese, 1980: 312). I need to get a proper sense of what role my vision plays in my life because right now I have no sense of the role it plays. I must always be aware that I and nobody else determine how I position my thoughts and experiences, and I might position my thoughts and experiences in a manner which is not helpful for me or a wider community to support the growth of a firm.

I apply a framework provided by Sowell (2007) to think about the vision I am using. This framework provides two polar visions which Sowell categorises as 'Constrained' and 'Unconstrained' and using these visions helps me to see myself in a more impartial manner through the eyes of another. I have identified the following categories based on a close reading of Sowell (2007) to analyse my vision in a multidimensional manner.

1. Human capacity
2. Morality
3. Justice
4. Cognitive ability
5. Truth and honesty
6. Social governance
7. Highest duty
8. Ego
9. Humility
10. Conscience
11. Motivation
12. Rationality
13 Mistakes and errors

The first step in answering this question is to define what Sowell means by a constrained and an unconstrained vision in each of the categories. The second step is to identify if my sense of how the world works conforms to one vision or another. I have tried to remember at all times that the polar concepts used in Sowell's model are only useful when I can use them as an apparatus of thought. The third and final step is to extract 'evidence' from my experiences to support my choice of vision. I use extracts from my life to identify my vision. This series of questions and answers provides the core material in my DBA and it is acquired through a process of retrospective observation.

My Reflection is the first step of a transformational programme to support a process of adaptive change. The next step is the Transition process. My working hypothesis that to go forward I must go back to find the vision I use today to establish the right roadmap to move forward.

1.2. Transition to New Practice

The objective of the Transition in this Essay is to highlight other visions which I can use to build a new sense of causation and support more effective practices in a professional environment. I read and engage with the thoughts of others to understand the lens they use to see the world. My goal is use the thoughts of others to engage with my imagination and identify other paradigms I can use to see the world. The output from this process is a list of other visions which may be more effective to make better choices in my professional workplace to support the growth of a firm.

The Transition identifies the options available to get from my existing vision to a desired destination. It is all about searching for new meanings and new understandings to develop a new vision which can support improved behaviours to support the growth of a firm.

The first Transition step is to establish where each part of my human nature fits in terms of Kegan's stages of Adult Mental Development. I use Kegan's (1982) 'Theory of Adult Mental Development' to establish my epistemological development level. The reason why I complete this initial categorisation is to provide an indication if I need to change the vision I currently hold or if my existing vision is adequate. In summary if I categorise my vision at the level of a 'Socialised Mind' I would anticipate that I need to change my vision, while if I categorise my vision at the level of a 'Self-authorised Self' I may not need to change my existing vision.

The second step in my Transition is to read the work of other widely acknowledged theorists and understand their perspective on different extracts of my vision. I find it difficult to develop the perspectives I hold without using the work of great thinkers such as Kegan, Keynes, Smith, and Drucker, to organise the options I can use to think. This step is all about opening my mind to new ideas and new practices which I previously have not considered. I engage with my imagination to actively develop new ideas and in Arendt's own words I am "training one's imagination to go visiting" (Arendt, 1982; p.43). The output from this step is a consideration of other visions available to me.

The third step is to consider changes in my practices which I should explore. This step requires reflecting back on my existing practices and contrasting and comparing them to the practices of others. I briefly explain why I believe such change may be required.

My Transition is a tool to establish a dialogue to engage with my mind to find adaptive problems to support the development of how I think. My Transition continues the progression of my transformational journey. It is part of a continuum to adapt a new vision to support my meaning making.

1.3. Foundations of Practice: My Human Nature

This section summarises why I focus on my human nature in this Essay.

Drucker (2009) asked and answered related questions around human nature when he theorised about the reasons for a revolution in society. Drucker's answer to his question was that fundamental changes in social organisation can only be achieved through a change in man's nature, or a change in the nature of society, or a change in man's place and function in society, "Since there are neither 'accidents' nor 'miracles' in political and social life, and since political and social effects always have adequate causes, a revolution that threatens the basis of society can only be changed by fundamental changes within the basis of social organisation itself. It must be owing to a revolution of man's concept of his own nature, of the nature of his society, and of his own function and place in society" (Drucker, 2009; p.xxxvi). If I apply Drucker's framework on fundamental change to the objective I have to support transformational change, I must look for changes in my own nature to transform my vision. Symptoms which are the result of my human nature are not agents of transformational and visionary change, "The reason why all resistance to the….menace has proved unavailing is that we do not know what we fight. We know the symptoms…. but we do not know its causes and its meaning. This ignorance is the main cause, both of the complacent hope…[and] for the ineffectiveness of democratic resistance. The analysis of the cases……would therefore appear to be our most important task" (Drucker, 2009; p.5).

Therefore this Essay focuses primarily on my core values and beliefs to identify the casual factors within my human nature. I concentrate on my human nature to focus on the causes of my weak vision and not the resulting symptoms. Drucker (2009) theorised that we all too often focus on symptoms and neglect causes and this paralyzes our efforts to transform.

I cannot treat the causes of my weak professional attributes until I can fully understand the phenomenon of my own human nature and this is a function this Essay accomplishes. My Reflection ensures that I can rationally analyse the causes and I am not fighting a phantom of unknown meaning and intentions. The key drivers of my professional competence which are my strategic choices, my leadership, and my entrepreneurial judgement are just symptoms with the casual factors residing within my human nature.

2. CATEGORIES EMPLOYED IN REFLECTION AND TRANSITION

Reflecting on my human nature I identify my vision and I initiate a process of Transition to develop the elements of my vision which may not support the practices required to grow a firm. I analyse my human nature in an extensive manner as I see it as the source of my core values and beliefs and the most effective means to transform my vision. I categorise my human nature into thirteen categories to facilitate a critique to help discover insightful learnings on my understanding of how the world works. The categories I create to critique my human nature are the following,

1. Human capacity
2. Morality
3. Justice
4. Cognitive ability
5. Truth and honesty
6. Social governance
7. Highest duty
8. Ego
9. Humility
10. Conscience
11. Motivation
12. Rationality

13 Mistakes and errors

For each category I ask and answer a series of questions to develop my knowledge of the vision I use to understand how the world works. These questions include the following:

Reflective

- What are Sowell's polar visions on each category of my human nature?
- What elements of Sowell's polar vision do I use to understand the world?
- What evidence do I have to support my choice of vision?

Transitional

- What plateau of mental complexity does my vision fit within Kegan's Theory of Adult Mental Development?
- What other alternative propositions or frameworks are available on each aspect of my human nature?
- What theories do I currently have which I may need to change to support the growth of a firm?

2.1. Human Capacity

Sowell's (2007) polar visions on the potential of our human nature are the following,

Constrained Vision

Man's potential is very limited, "A radical infirmity in all human contrivances" (Sowell, 2007: P.13). The great evils of the world, war, poverty, and crime are an inevitable part of life. Our human condition is flawed and fixed and this limitation cannot be changed.

One's human reason is limited to following systemic procedures with systemic being defined as things which result from human action and not from human design. One requires a constitution with a series of checks and balances to protect the process. One can undertake deliberate planning but within a given systemic framework.

Unconstrained Vision

There is no limit to human understanding. Man has unlimited potential. There is no absolute level of perfection he can achieve. "…man is in short, 'perfectible', meaning continually improvable rather than capable of actually reaching absolute perfection" (Sowell, 2007: p.18). This potential could be delivered right now if the inhibiting factors in our institutions could be eliminated.

One can seek the best results directly, "Man's understanding and disposition were capable of intentionally creating social benefits" (Sowell, 2007: p.15). One's human nature provides the will to produce social benefits directly.

My Vision

I think that the vision I possess directly relates to the level of experience I have on a specific matter. If my experience is low on a specific matter I have a low level of knowledge and my vision is constrained. If my experience is high on a specific matter I have knowledge of practices which work and this knowledge create a high level of confidence in my own ability and my vision is unconstrained.

On matters where I have little experience I see myself as imperfect and the future as uncertain. I am the imperfect man whom Drucker is theorising about without absolutes, "No

man or group of men is perfect or in possession of absolute truth and absolute reason" (Drucker, 2009: p.179). I cannot imagine with any certainty the final consequences of choices I make about the future and in the perspective of Godwin (1793), the consequences of my choices are therefore unintentional.

However, my vision is not entirely constrained. On matters where I have a high familiarity, and a high level of experience, I can have fixed and absolute perspectives on future events. My vision is more perfected and I do not want to listen to the advice of others. My perspective is more absolutist than developmental. I have absolute perspectives built up in my mind based on past experiences which gives me an internal confidence to answer questions about the future.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my constrained vision are the following,

- I participate in conference calls involving a number of our group companies throughout the world. I do not have the confidence to take the lead on these calls unless I have a high level of knowledge on the subject matter being discussed. I take a passive approach and I take direction from the perspectives of my peers.
- I was part of a team in 2011 which decided to implement a Manufacturing Information System to provide more direction to our operators and management. This software provides checks and balances to guide our team to achieve a higher performance. We do not have the capacity to choose the best results directly so we require tools to guide our performance.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my unconstrained vision are the following,

- Having worked in a financial position in the same industry for a long period of time, I have a high level of contextual knowledge of my work. My role requires planning for the future and I generally work on these plans by myself using my contextual knowledge to prepare blueprints on future options. On reviewing such plans with my peers I find it difficult to accept any perspective other than those I have included in my documents.
- I have the primary responsibility for purchasing gas in my current role and in this function

I believe I have the potential to articulate the behaviour of the market. I do not replicate the actions of others, and I do not buy forward when I can cover my budget energy rate, I just do what I know is best.

- When I work with new recruits in my department I like to enforce my preferred practices to give direction to them. I enforce my authority because I know my practices are the 'right' practices to achieve the best results. I know that the ability of new recruits is limited due to a lack of experience.

My Epistemology

My current epistemology is wavering between a socialised mind and a very low self-authored mind. A need to identify with the standards of others to overcome my limited ability in a complicated world is the standard of a socialised manager. My identity is constructed by or through others to the extent that others are responsible for my state of mind, "a socialised knower cannot evaluate other people's points of view without risk to his or her own self; the self does not know itself as separate from the interpersonal context in which is embedded" (Hoare, 2006: p.210). I am a passive participant in the creation of my experience. I have no choices, there are just imperatives. Kegan (1994) describes this paralysed conformist mind as a "family religion" (pp.266-267). Such a 'religion' does not relate to any particular notion of the divine but is rather a set of group beliefs, understandings, values, assumptions, interdictions, and prejudices that establishes the reality we create.

On matters where I have more confidence and I have a more unconstrained vision I have a weak self-authored perspective. My perception of uncertainty is limited and I have no capacity to engage with my thoughts to manage the practices I use. My unconstrained vision is not established in a thoughtful manner, it only exists on an implicit understanding of my own personal experiences.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

The founding father of biological determinism was Darwin and his proposition has been used by many including Hitler, the Eugenists, GB Shaw, and other rationalists groups from the 20th century. They claimed that man is perfectible both biologically and psychologically, "they had an absolute concept of the nature of man. They saw him as a creature of genes, chromosomes and glands; and as formed and moulded by measurable psychological experiences. Hence they

also believed in human perfection or at least perfectibility" (Drucker, 2009: p.150). Rationalist philosophy believes in the perfection of the absolute reason of mankind.

Charbis and Simons (2010) theorised that mankind has inherent limitations in perceptions, memory, knowledge, and ability, and man is not aware of his limitations. They used an invisible gorilla experiment to demonstrate the permanent limitations of man. A person wearing a gorilla suit cannot be seen by those shown the video due to their pre-occupation with counting the number of passes made by one of the basketball teams. This illustrates our zero-sum nature of attention in that when we direct our mental spotlight on the basketball passes we leave the rest of the world in darkness.

A proposition advanced by Arendt (1998) is that the optimum human nature to support good leadership is an ability to operate on the assumption that our own ability is limited and to curtail our own agenda. Drucker's work was along similar lines when he theorised that top management do not have the potential to always deliver the right answer, "The main reason that it is important to bring out dissent within the top management group…..is there is never one right answer. The answer never emerges as a logical conclusion from 'facts'. It required judgement and considerable courage. The answer rarely follows what 'everybody' knows. It should never be made on plausibility alone; it should never be made quickly; it can never be made painlessly" (Drucker, 1974: p.79). Drucker (2009) debates the capacity of mankind and his perspective is that our world does not have an 'expert', who can start with a preconceived vision of the future and knowingly rule out anything which does not fit this dogmatic pattern. He says this form of total planning is in fact total improvisation; it is the renunciation of the deliberate and conscious attempt to work out the problem in favour of a gamble on the guesses of the so called experts. In terms of Sowell's vision I expect that Arendt's and Drucker's preferred choice of leader is an individual who does not have a polar unconstrained vision.

The perspective held by Marshall (1885) and Keynes (1936) is that economics is a moral science. They did not see institutions as the primary factor limiting our choices but the moral capacity and the level of integrity which our mind can support are the factors most responsible for limiting our choices.

Frankl (2011) in writing about his experiences in the death camps in Nazi Germany illustrated to me that stimulus does not always determine the response. Humans have the freedom to choose. We cannot control the world but we can control how we react to it. Blaming others is a weak solution in that we are not prepared to accept responsibility for our own thinking.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I cannot continue to build knowledge from my experiences alone. Such knowledge is inadequate to cope with all new events in the future, of which there will be many, which I have no past experience.

I cannot continue to hide behind the perspectives of others to cope with the uncertainties of life. On the other hand I must discontinue using a dogmatic mind to manage my practices. I need to build more teamwork around my work to provide the required checks and balances to critique my practices. Teamwork is superior to a given constitution or a given culture in that the checks and balances it provides are not in a fixed form which is important as no one given pre-defined solution is adequate for the multiple issues we experience in today's workplace. I will never develop practices to support the organic growth of a firm if I rely exclusively on my absolutist individual perspectives. My ability to embrace vulnerability and a freedom from self-perfection are key independent variables to support my development and the development of my firm. I must be able to see that a freedom to think is the most important tool I have to transform and develop both me and my firm and I must work on giving this freedom to all of my peers to increase their contributions.

I must embrace Wilber's (2000) advice that everybody to some extent is right. More specifically everybody has some important pieces of the truth and all of those pieces need to be honoured, cherished, and included in a more gracious, spacious, and compassionate embrace. I must always be aware of Sowell's (2007) words of warning that some of the biggest cases of mistaken identity are intellectuals who have trouble remembering that they are not God. I must reach for a standard of global reasonableness and pluralistic tolerance and discard any god-like theories I have of myself.

2.2. Morality

Sowell's polar visions on morality are the following,

Constrained Vision

My priority is to take care of myself in that I think of myself first and foremost. Any moral good is done in the act of fulfilling my own self-interest, "Economic benefits to society were largely unintended by individuals, but emerged systematically from the interactions of the marketplace, and the pressures of competition and the incentives of individual gain" (Sowell, 2007: p.14). A fidelity to my role to serve the systemic process takes priority over sincerity to society. I can do nothing about my limited morality, I must just accept it.

Unconstrained Vision

I have an equal priority to take care of others, "man was capable of feeling other people's needs as more important than his own, and therefore of consistently acting impartially" (Sowell, 2007: P16). An intention to benefit others is regarded as the essence of virtue and the road to human happiness. Sincerity in the form of truth, candour, and frankness, to use my special knowledge take a priority over my fidelity to any role.

My Vision

Do I fit into Plato's category of a just or an unjust man as theorised by Russell (1945). Plato in a publication called 'The Republic', around 380 BC, described a just man as a man of true simplicity of character who wants to be and not just to seem good and his motive is love of justice. The unjust person wants to be seen as good rather than to be actually good and whose primary motive is to receive the love of the rewards and honours. I think that my moral vision is nearer to Plato's description of the unjust person.

The benchmark Arendt (1998) uses to judge the morality of mankind are firstly, the ability to support the making and keeping of promises and secondly, the ability to forgive others for mistakes and errors. I can make and keep promises and I can forgive others but I cannot do it all of the time.

Carter (1996) defined integrity to include three distinctive elements which are discernment, acting, and saying openly the reason for acting. I don't think that my vision would fulfil all such

criteria, I may have the ability to discern and act but I do not have the ability to say openly the reason for acting.

I do not always think for myself in the fear of not complying with the given standards of a culture and in this sense, according to Sowell's framework, my fidelity takes priority over my sincerity to live by high moral standards. My morals are limited by my indifferent state of mind. I could be the indifferent 'someone' Arendt is theorising about in the following extract, "In the unlikely case that someone should come and tell us that he would prefer Bluebeard for company, and hence take him as his example, the only thing we could do is to make sure that he never comes near us. But the likelihood that someone would come and tell us that he does not mind and that any company will be good enough for him is, I fear, by far greater. Morally and even politically speaking, this indifference, though common enough, is the greatest danger" (Arendt, 2003: P.146). Goffman's (1959) perspective is that our mind is weak and this weakness is evident in the way we think more about others than we think about ourselves. Goffman's perspective is certainly true for me in that I continually think and worry about the thoughts and feelings of others and I think very little about my own thoughts and feelings. Complying with the thoughts and feelings of others is a priority over an awareness of my own thoughts and feelings.

I have a priority to take care of myself, my family, and those close to me. My moral standards are not a fully polarised constrained vision in that I do fulfil certain minimum moral standards when making choices in a professional capacity. I do not fall within Baran's category of a beast, "A meaningful discussion of human affairs can only be conducted with humans: one wastes one's time talking to beasts about matters related to people" (Baran, 1970: p.12).

I believe that good things emerge from unintended consequences such as operating within the moral sentiment of our law. I would tend to side with the view that moral sentiments must be held by both individuals and institutions as individuals alone cannot shoulder the full responsibility to protect our society.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my constrained vision are the following,

- I go to work every day primarily for the pay I receive and not for the benefit of the other stakeholders in the firm. There is no doubt that if my employer stopped my wages I would not continue working for the benefit of the other stakeholders in my firm.
- My participation in voluntary organisations is very limited in that I am not part of any sporting, charitable, or other voluntary organisation whose objective is to support the society I live in. I have plans to join such organisations in the further but they are limited to organisations where close members of my family are recipients of the services provided.
- I do make financial contributions to charitable organisations but I believe they are primarily to satisfy my own personal guilt for a lack of consideration.
- I have shown high fidelity to my role in my existing employment. I am in the same job doing almost the same functions for the same manager for eighteen years. I think my fidelity to my role is greater than the sincerity I have shown to develop a higher level of integrity to support my work. I have not been candour with myself or frank with others in developing a greater knowledge for the benefit of a wider society.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my unconstrained vision are the following,

- I may not always give others an equal priority but on occasion I certainly do. I am very sensitive to the needs of those whom I work with and I think this is evident in the enjoyment I experience when I help others. I sometimes complete the work of my comrades, visit those who are sick, always adjust the rules to deliver a special need of another, and I always encourage their self-development even if there is no direct benefit for me or my company.
- I am good at making and keeping promises. If I make a commitment to complete something at a certain time it will always be done.
- I am a very honest person in every aspect of my life. I find it very difficult to lie or deliberately undermine another.

My Epistemology

Using Kegan's theory I categorised my epistemology as socialised in that I am taking my meaning from external sources. I cannot support the development of my own integrity until I can author my own theories and related practices.

Using Kegan's theory I would categorise my natural state of mind as a mind engaged in constant self-protection against a perceived fear which only exists within my mind. The effect is that my big assumptions are preventing me from using theory as an apparatus of thought and the consequence is a weak laissez-faire type mind. An emotional attachment with my theories through the accumulation of my theories from my experiences is reducing my ability to manage my preferred practices in an impartial manner. Such emotional attachment can be difficult to reduce since my awareness of my emotions is low.

To discover any true meaning I must know the theory such meaning is based on. However I am lazy and I do not search for the theories and beliefs behind the actions I take with the result that I will never know the real facts. I cannot claim to have high morals when I don't know the beliefs behind my choices. The result is that I can act in a very ignorant, thoughtless, and irresponsible manner.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

A perspective held by Keynes (1936) in 'The General Theory' is that high morals are important to supporting economic growth. "…economics deals with motives, expectations and decisions and with the psychological uncertainties that pervade our lives. Being a 'moral' as opposed to a 'natural' science it 'employs introspection and judgement of value' (CW, XIV; 297)" (Fanning & O 'Mahony, 1998: P.17). Keynes's perspective is built on the proposition of Marshall (1885) when he conceptualised that economics was 'a science of human motives' which 'could not be grouped than with the other Moral sciences' (1885: 171). Marshall's proposition was that economics was built on common sense and on organised analysis and general reasoning, "Economic science is but the working of common sense aided by appliances of organised analysis and general reasoning" (Marshall, 1920: 38).

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I must raise my own moral standards and reach for a higher level of integrity as integrity is a true building stone for economic development in today's society. There is no one fixed

solution to drive the economic development of any firm. We require a high level of trust within a team to discover and rediscover the methods of development, "[t]he theory of economics does not furnish a body of settled conclusions immediately applicable to policy. It is a method rather than a doctrine, an apparatus of the mind, a technique of thinking, which helps its possessor to draw correct conclusions" (Keynes, 1936; CW, XII; 856).

Drucker (1999) theorised in 'managing oneself' that organisation's today are "no longer built on force they are built on trust" (Drucker, 1999: P.107), and a perspective I hold is that high morals are required to support such high levels of trust. Drucker defined trust as a predictability which encapsulates a mutual understanding but which may not extend to a mutual respect.

2.3. Justice

Sowell's polar visions on justice are the following,

Constrained Vision

Justice is fulfilled if I comply and adhere with the process. Injustice in the end result is inevitable due to the limitations of mankind. Justice can only be achieved through "the goal of ending privilege and promoting either equality or merit" (Sowell, 2007: P91). The morals within a process take precedence over the morals of the end result.

The value of having known rules to guide the process outweigh the value of the incremental knowledge acquired from the time the rules were established to the time the event occurs, "process costs arising from unreliable social expectations outweighed the value of incremental individual knowledge, or its more finely tuned application" (Sowell, 2007: p.83).

Unconstrained Vision

Justice is only fulfilled if I achieve a just result. If promoting privilege has the lowest process cost to achieving the end result then this is the most just strategy. "Sometimes the scarce and valuable traits to be rewarded may include skills and orientations picked up almost by osmosis from being raised in families where they exist" (Sowell, 2007: p.91).

Injustice in the end result is not acceptable, “To knowingly accept injustice is unconscionable” (Sowell, 2007: P84).

My Vision

My reaction to justice is that sometimes I seek justice in the process and other times I seek justice in the end result. On occasions I am generally happy if a just process was undertaken even if a just result was not achieved. On other matters I believe that depriving society of available benefits can be a greater evil than paying unmerited rewards to individuals to achieve those end results. Therefore if promoting privilege is the most effective tool to achieve a just result then it is the best choice.

My perspective on justice in the process is that a certain level of injustice is inevitable in our world due to the moral constraints of mankind. We are all to a certain extent selfish and we do not always exercise an appropriate level of consciousness when making choices.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my constrained vision are the following,

- A member of our staff had an accident at work and was unable to work for an extended period. I had no problem paying this person full wages during his absence as I knew non-compliance with the health and safety legislation contributed to the accident. My priority was to see that justice in the process was achieved.
- I can get very annoyed at work when I perceive I am subject to an unjust act by a work colleague. An example of this may be where I am excluded from a decision-making process to recruit a new employee in a department where I am part of the management team. I find it difficult to immediately ‘forgive’ the offender for what I perceive is an unjust act.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my unconstrained vision are the following,

- I support the recruitment of overpaid consultants to support product development if the end result is an increase in the valuation of our firm. We are currently developing a new product at work which could transform our firm but we are dependent on one firm to

supply us with the technology and expertise to support the development of same. We are grossly overpaying this technology supplier and I believe that this is ok as the end result could transform our business.

My Epistemology

A vision to seek justice in the process is essential to support a self-authored epistemology but it will not guarantee a self-authored self. Justice in the process provides a more dynamic platform to manage and develop my theories. It helps to build higher levels of trust within my team which supports communication both upwards and downwards and this free communication will expose my mind to a greater level of new practices.

Seeking justice in the end result limits the capacity of my mind to manage theories as an apparatus of thought. The use of fixed end results which are descriptive in nature will limit my thinking process. My form of knowing will be to adopt the truths within the fixed end results. My mind will be forced to build big assumptions to control the stress which the expectation of fixed end results will create. I have seen work colleagues of mine experience serious health problems from seeking justice in results. They thought they had the human capacity to control the future and when they failed their health suffered.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

It is Drucker's (2009) perspective that the basic requirements of human nature must be satisfied to empower mankind. Mankind's human nature demands three values which are freedom, equality, and security, to deliver a social status and function which motivates them. If the society within a firm cannot fulfil these basic needs the end result will be a workforce who cannot deliver energy, drive, and passion at work. Therefore a need to support justice in the process is essential to empower a wider team.

Drucker's perspective is that, power must be legitimate and he explains the conditions for such legitimacy are that it must be "based upon the claim of freedom, equality or saintliness, and is exercised through institutions which are designed toward the fulfilment of these ideal purposes" (Drucker, 2009: p.32). Drucker believes that the power of a leader can only be legitimate when the framework on which it is based can deliver social status and function for the individual, "Legitimate power stems from the same basic belief of society regarding man's nature and fulfilment on which the individuals social status and function rests. Indeed

legitimate power can be defined as rulership which finds its justification in the basic ethos of the society" (Drucker, 2009: p.32). Society can only function in a free and equal manner when a leader exercises legitimate power.

It is Drucker's (2009) view that an absolutist leader with totalitarian practices can destroy a firm. The reasoning processes such absolute leaders use is not rational in that it cannot be proved or disproved by logical argument. Their style of management is illegitimate because it provides very little freedom to their co-workers. They hold a vision of a worker as an efficient, automatic, and standardised machine, who is motivated solely by economic means and such a vision eliminates the existence of the individual. An individual is just a worker in an assembly line and there is no relationship between the workers function and any individual purpose. Individuals working in an assembly line have no social status or function and their needs are not fulfilled. Workers lose a certain respect for themselves with a loss in their human dignity. They are no longer proud of their work and the result is they cannot deliver energy, drive, and passion at work.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

My vision must support justice in the process at all times to empower a team and develop a greater pool of ideas to grow a firm. It is my view that my insights and the insights of my team will be extremely limited if we do not have a vision which can support justice in the process. I must be able to treat those whom I work with in a just and honest manner and I must have the capacity to communicate with all of my team as equals to support an honest two way communication of thoughts within my team. I have experience of working in an autocratic hierarchical structure and I know such a structure limits open communication and limits the work ethic of individuals to support the objectives of a firm.

2.4. Cognitive Capacity

Sowell's polar visions on cognitive ability are the following,

<u>Constrained Vision</u>

Persons have a narrow view and possess a laissez-faire nature. They cannot support the making of imaginative choices.

Unconstrained Vision

Our epistemological mind can reach a standard of a 'thinking mind', or a 'cultivated' mind, "Implicit in the unconstrained vision is a profound inequality between the conclusions of 'persons of narrow views' and those with 'cultivated minds'. From this it follows that progress involves raising the level of the former to the latter" (Sowell, 2007: p.41). A cultivated and thinking mind can support independent and impartial discussion "What is required is independent and impartial discussion by un-ambitious and candid people" (Sowell, 2007; p.75). Our cognitive capacity to manage our perceptions can be high, "What is needed is for 'a good sense and clear and correct perceptions' to gain ascendancy in the world" (Sowell, 2007: p.75).

My Vision

Do I have an imaginative ability to step outside the framework and the culture of my firm? I don't think so, I have been captured by the culture of my firm for a very long time and I am now so familiar with the surroundings I no longer want to see beyond it. Can I train my 'imagination to go visiting' to visualise a better world and inspire a fortitude to break down the norms to get there? I don't think so, at least not in my current laissez-faire cognitive state. On a big picture living in a 'prison type' environment is very easy because I do not have to think for myself. All the basic essentials to survive are easily available if I am prepared to accept the directions of my 'prison officers'.

My mind jumps to judgement using an implicit predefined set of rules. I cannot reflect, think about alternative practices and choose the best options based on a logical analysis of my thoughts. My cognitive ability within my department at work is high as the decisions I am making are within a given framework and I have a high level of contextual knowledge working within this framework. However my cognitive ability on higher executive matters is weak and inadequate to support the making of better choices. My cognitive ability is adequate only when I have a high contextual knowledge of the subject matter and therefore very little of my cognitive ability comes from my ability to think in the abstract.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my cognitive ability are the following,

- My cognitive ability within my functional department at work is high. When my firm has a problem with our production yields, our product margins, or high costs, I know where to find the source of the problem very quickly. However I can now see that this cognitive ability comes from a high contextual knowledge rather than an ability to use a high level of cognition at work. I have little confidence in my ability to contribute to matters outside of my direct responsibilities with the result that I take a laissez-faire approach on higher executive matters. I have often attended meetings outside of my functional responsibility where I have contributed nothing to the meetings. I had no confidence in the value of my contributions and I was afraid that any contribution I may make would make me look silly in the eyes of the senior executive team. Cultural constraints are winning out over the powerful innate ability I have to imagine alternatives. I am working in a cultural comfort zone most of my time.
- I am very poor at using learning groups to support more inquiry in how I think. I even go as far as avoiding persons whose practices contrast with the theories I hold. I guess I see the objective of learning groups as an opportunity to inform others of my brilliant theories rather than as an opportunity to learn from the thoughts of others. The use of communication in this manner is not adequate to build knowledge through a process of logical debate.
- I have a very low capacity to access my consciousness. I have no awareness of the beliefs which are ruling my life and preventing me from achieving my stated objectives. I do not engage in any useful form of reflective discourse to think about the practices I use at work.

My Epistemology

What relationship do I see between cognition, internal dialogue, and epistemology? I think that cognition and epistemology is very dependent on internal dialogue. Those who hold a constrained vision cannot engage with their consciousness to exercise their imagination with the result that one's awareness is not sufficient to develop one's own theories. On the other hand an active consciousness can support a cultivated and thinking mind and a self-authored

self. This impartial mind can empathise and see reality from another's perspective which helps to break down our theories and apply new practices.

My conclusion is that I mistakenly believe my presuppositions, my visions, and my images, to be true. My ability to engage with my cognition is limited and therefore my ability to use and develop new practices is limited. I am subject to the authority of the thoughts of others.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

Arendt argued that the company we keep determine the imaginative propositions we can use to decide about right and wrong, "our decisions about right and wrong will depend on our choice of company of those with whom we wish to spend our lives….This company is chosen by thinking in examples, in examples of persons dead or alive, real or fictitious, and in examples of incidents past or present" (Arendt, 2003: P.146).

Keynes claimed that the development of new models was the single most important factor to progress economics, "Progress in economics consists almost entirely in a progressive improvement in the choice of models" (Keynes, 1936: CW, XIV: 296). The understanding I am taking from this extract is that an active cognitive mind to perceive alternatives is a key ingredient to support progress in economics.

Rolheiser (1991) defined imagination as "the power to create the images we need to understand and respond to what we are experiencing" (1991: p.10). He said that imagination is simply a way to look at life today and imagine a new way of doing things. Therefore imagination is required to continually create and apply new theories and practices in our ever changing business world.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I need to engage with my imagination to build my own roadmaps rather than just apply the solutions of others. I need a mind which can think in a critical manner to challenge existing norms and ancestral frameworks.

My narrow view has limited my ability to think in an independent and in an impartial manner. My imaginative views are limited arising from being in the same administrative role for a very long time with the result that I have developed a very limited company from which to learn.

The company I keep is not adequate to build the imagination required to support a more cultured and thinking mind. I have not given myself an opportunity to travel to broaden my mind. Travel helps us to see things differently which helps to break down the limited perspective which limit the imaginative aspect of our mind.

2.5. Truth and Honesty

Sowell's polar visions on truth and honesty are the following,

Constrained Vision

Fidelity to truth takes precedence over sincerity. Fidelity to truth is a primary canon of what is best for society, "The rationale to fidelity to the truth is very similar to the rationale to fidelity to roles. In both cases, one subordinates one's own ad hoc conception of what would be best for society in the particular case, to adherence to a broader systemic process" (Sowell, 2007: P61).

Sincerity is not considered to be of equal importance as Schumpeter indicted, "The first thing a man will do for his ideals is lie" (Schumpeter, 1954: p.43).

Unconstrained Vision

Sincerity to ideals takes precedence over fidelity to truth. Truth comes from within oneself rather than from within a systemic processes.

My Vision

My reaction is that I hold sincerity to my beliefs a priority over fidelity to systemic truths. I am an honest, reliable, serious, wholehearted sort of person, and I take my direction from these values. I think I am more loyal to my definition of the truth rather than to the 'truths' held within society. However I have a low awareness of my personal beliefs and I have never checked if my beliefs are authentic and useful to support my personal development and the development of my firm.

My vision is not limited to just one polar position in that I take direction from an external climate of opinion and I am loyal to systematic truths especially at my place of work. Every-day in different ways I comply with broad systemic truths without any awareness of my

compliance. However my constrained vision is not so strong that I could consciously lie to protect systemic truths. My morals do not allow such an extreme act.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my constrained vision are the following,

- I am always concerned that senior executives in my firm may be annoyed if my perspective may not comply with their vision of reality. It is easier just to comply with their preferred practices rather than suggest other practices which may annoy them. Another convenient option is just to avoid any form of engagement with senior executives who may act in an emotive way to alternative options.
- My position in my firm is a financial controller and everything about the role is systemic and conventional. The systemic tasks within my role must be completed month after month to comply with the given standards of internal control. I have worked in this systemic environment for the last eighteen years.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my unconstrained vision are the following,

- I require security in my life and a value I have to protect this security is to always outperform my peers. I need my peers and the authorities in charge to know the additional value I can provide to my firm. A need to be better than my peers is limiting my ability to move to a new role in that I feel a low level of contextual knowledge in a new position will limit my ability to outperform my peers. This value could have been a primary driver in my need to further my development at work through the completion of an MBA and now a DBA. I felt that my peers were catching up to my standard and I could not accept this. This value could be the reason why I can be jealous of my peers at work when they develop their career. It is not that I have a problem with my peers developing themselves; it is that I have a problem with their development beyond my standards. I can recall a recent event when a past colleague of mine was promoted to a CEO position in another firm and the feeling which dominated my thinking was jealousy, rather a sense of pride for my colleague's achievement. My jealousy was not that she got a promotion; it

was that her personal achievement had jumped beyond my role. This is an example where sincerity to my ideals is taking precedence over fidelity to social influences.

My epistemology

My desire to be perceived by my peers as elite and my fidelity with broad systemic processes are the symptoms of a socialised mind. I am subject to a climate of opinion by reaching outside for the standard by which I live my life. My form of knowing is to adopt external truths.

My sincerity to my internal ideals is a self-authored epistemology in that I am self-directed and I can make my own choices independent of society. However my self-authored self is weak since I am not aware of the beliefs which drive my behaviour and I am not aware of how accurate they are.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I must take back the control of my own authority from the external authorities who hold it right now by finding more truth from within and less from systemic authority. I must increase my awareness of my beliefs and audit their accuracy and usefulness.

2.6. Social Governance

Sowell's polar visions on social governance are the following,

<u>Constrained Vision</u>

Systemic processes and systemic authorities govern social causation.

<u>Unconstrained Vision</u>

Governance is established and upheld by those who have achieved a higher level of their potential. They are leaders with a high level of knowledge and dedication to the common good.

My Vision

What is my personal governance? Can I be legitimate to myself and to those whom I work with? Can I hold myself and others accountable? Can I accept and exercise responsibility? I

don't think I can do any of these things because my thinking is primarily influenced by the mentality of society and by the pillars of social organisation. My definition of the mentality of society is the long term climate of opinion within society which creates an atmosphere which influences how we think. My definition of social organisation is the relationship between individual subjectivity and the social organisation in which people find themselves. Dominating hierarchies with status and power and given cultures with a set of shared understandings and ways of reasoning has a major influence on how I think.

My mind is always looking back standing on the shoulders of those who came before me and using their eyes to see my world. The result is that the world I see is a world as defined by ancestral authority. The mentality of society strongly influences my thinking and creates a strong cognitive bias. I am subject to mental inertia, in the form of a 'groupthink', or an 'external paradigm', and it is often difficult to counteract its effects. The atmosphere in which I live and in which I work and the company which I keep has a major influence on the categories I use to think. I possess a high obedience to authority just like those who participated in the 'Stanley Milgram' and 'Stanford Prison' experiments. The Stanley Milgram experiment concluded that people are willing to obey an autocratic figure in preference to complying with their own personal conscience. The 'Stanford Experiment' concluded that people very easily fit in with the expectations of a given work environment and they are easily convinced to prioritise the requirements of a given organisation in preference to their moral standards.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate that my governance is determined by systemic authorities are the following,

- I do not critique the practices of those who hold senior positions in my firm because I depend on their approval for my self-worth. I perceive this form of ancestral authority as systemic.
- I have a very indifference attitude towards society arising from an inability to access my own thoughts and understand the theories I use to think. I have never expressed any public concern for our national health service and it must be one of the worst health

services in Europe. I have never expressed any serious concern for the bankrupt state of our country, and I have never volunteered to help my school to support the educational standard in my community. My indifference mind and my lack of care is a major problem for me and it is also a major problem for society.

My Epistemology

A universal instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust creates a blind pervasiveness of thought which I find difficult to control, "Our instinctive need for attachment and support from others whom we trust and the reciprocal fear that our need for attachment will be violated by separation" (Harvey, 1988: p.97). This universal instinct for attachment has limited my development beyond a socialised mind.

My form of knowing is to adopt external truths. My perspective is that knowledge is held by authorities and their knowledge is always accurate. I have little awareness of the existence of my own personal values and the role they play is establishing my personal choices.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

Harvey holds the perspective in his analysis of Arendt's work on the Holocaust that a primary driver of Adolf Eichmann's behaviour in managing the Holocaust in the manner he did was his inborn fear of separation and reciprocal desire for attachment, "I think that the dynamics of villainy are associated with our instinctive need for attachment and support from others whom we trust and the reciprocal fear that our need for attachment will be violated by separation" (Harvey, 1988: p.97). He theorises that all humans have a primitive, inborn, and universal need for attachment to others and we all fear a separation from such attachment, and if we cannot find reciprocal and mutual relationships, our feelings of love may turn to hate and deception, "Each of us, as a condition of existence, fears separation from and seeks attachment to others. Coping successfully with these reciprocal desires, leads to love. Failing to cope with them successfully leads to hate and chicanery" (Harvey, 1988: p.97). Our mind finds it very difficult to cope with actions or events which threaten to break our bonds and our need for attachment, "any act that threatens or terminates that bond creates debilitating illness, both physical and mental" (Harvey, 1988: p.97). Harvey sees the same fear of separation and need for attachment as a primary driver in the Jewish community colluding with their persecutors during the holocaust. The Jews feared detachment from the broader

German culture of which they were a part and there universal instinct resulted in they choosing to die rather than endure the pain of separation, "…that fear of separation led many Jews to opt to die in the presence of members of their faith rather than to endure the pain of separation that escape from their community would require…….It was easier to die among many than to fight alone" (Harvey, 1988: p.97).

Stanley Milgrim conducted an experiment at Yale University in 1961 which concluded that ordinary people simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in inflicting terrible pain and suffering on others. Ordinary people are prepared to carry out actions incompatible with normal standards of morality due to a universal need for attachment to others and relatively few have the strengths needed to resist the authority of a given culture. Philip Zimbardo conducted a similar experiment at Stanford University in 1971 and he concluded that everyone performing the prison experiment, including him, had been consumed by their roles as guards or prisoners. People were easily influenced and obedient when provided with a legitimizing ideology and social and institutional support. It seemed the situation caused the participants behaviour and ruled over their moral values and beliefs. The Milgram and the Stanford Experiments are another confirmation of man's inborn fear of separation and his reciprocal desire for attachment to a given 'tribe'. There is a strong relationship between individual subjectivity and the social organisation in which people find themselves.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I must adapt my mind to mitigate the guilty feeling I experience at the thought of unkind indiscretion when my preferred practices do not comply with those of a 'tribe'. I need to see that the governance provided by systemic authorities and dogmatic individuals is inadequate in today's environment where there is always uncertainty about the truth. Democracies which consider a wider range of options are required to govern when there is an uncertainty about the truth and such democracies to be truly democratic must respect the rights of the minority. I need to take more responsibility for every aspect of my life.

2.7. Highest Duty

Sowell's polar visions on man's highest duty are the following,

Constrained Vision

Prudence is prioritised in preference to developing our potential. A careful weighing off of options is essential to ensure we select the option with the lowest cost. "In the constrained vision, where trade-offs are all we can hope for, prudence is amongst the highest duties" (Sowell, 2007: P17).

Unconstrained Vision

Developing our potential is prioritised over selecting the option with the lowest cost. Our moral development and our higher sense of social duty have no limits.

My Vision

On reflecting on my experiences I believe I am more concerned with making trade-offs than to develop my moral standards and my sense of social duty. The trade-offs I make are not confined to financial goals in that they also include trade-off on freedom, equality, and security. My needs in life extend beyond financial needs.

However, my vision is not entirely a polar constrained vision in that moral standards are also important to me. I have no problem making and keeping promises and I can forgive those who failed to uphold promises.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my constrained vision are the following,

- I have traded off the development of my professional career for the security I have in my current role. I am in my current role eighteen years.
- I have traded off greater financial rewards for the comfort of living and working near home.
- I have traded off a greater freedom in my work for the security of working with an experienced team.
- I have traded off the development of my career for my academic development.

My Epistemology

A capacity to make a trade off in a conscious manner exhibits one's capacity to exercise one's own personal authority. An inability to choose and just accept what is preferred by the environment in which I work is the mind-set of a socialised mind. A capacity to develop one's morals and a higher sense of social duty is a mind-set of a self-transformed self.

I think that my vision fits into a weak self-authored category. Sometimes I can consciously make trade-offs and at other times the atmospheres of the society in which I work make my trade-offs for me. In this instance I have no control over my thoughts and I behave in a thoughtless manner.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

Keynes (1936) theorises that fixed descriptive autocratic solutions are not the frameworks required to develop a firm in today's non-homogeneous environment. We require flexible models which can incorporate politics and passions, "….what I am primarily interested in supplying is a sound and scientific way of thinking about our essential problems. Before this way of thinking can be translated into practice it has to be mixed with politics and passions just like any other way of thinking, and the nature of the outcome is something which I cannot foresee in detail" (Keynes, 1936; CW, XXI: 348).

Drucker (2009) categorises our human nature as limited with the result we must make trade-offs to adapt to unknowns which we cannot control. We do not have the capacity to see into the future and build a fixed accurate picture of future events.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I would argue that a capacity to manage and make trade-offs is essential to develop a capacity to make the choices required to grow a firm. A person with an advanced epistemology can control their theories as an apparatus of thought and is not subject to a limited number of options. One must be able to trade off one practice for another as no one option will provide the best solution for the non-homogeneous environment we live in.

I would argue that advanced morals are also a key ingredient to support the economic growth of a firm. No one solution or type of solution is the best option for the uncertainties which

pervade our lives. We make judgements for which no predefined frameworks exist to support our choices. We depend on our morals and the integrity of the society in which we work to guide our choices in this uncertain environment.

My conclusion is that a capability to grow a firm requires an ability to make trade-offs and an ability to apply high moral standards in the process we undertake when making choices. An important point is that we must take responsibility for our trade-offs rather than giving the responsibility to another authority outside of our control.

2.8. Individual Personality (Ego)

Sowell's polar visions on individual personality are the following,

Constrained Vision

One is totally self-centred and exerts a high level of frigid prudence and mercenary self-interest. One's ego may fall into an egocentricity category.

Unconstrained Vision

One is capable of acting impartially. One has a generous and magnanimous sentiment within its nature.

My Vision

My decision-making is influenced by my personal ego. I tend to have a positive perception of myself and my own ability. My self-esteem and my feeling of self-worth are high and I tend to think that I am better than the average. I do not have a mature, rational, responsible ego capable of freely participating in the open exchange of self-esteem. I have a favourable impression of myself which goes beyond the respect I could have for any other. This perception of my high value has resulted in my ego being self-centred.

However my Ego is not entirely one-sided in that I can apply impartial theories at work. My devotion to my current job over the last two decades is ample proof of my generous and magnanimous approach to other stakeholders in my firm.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate a constrained ego are the following,

- When I am very busy at work I can be totally self-centred. I cut myself off from my team by not answering the phone or answering emails. I have no time for any issues which may be concerning them. My ego is limiting my ability to work with others on broader agenda's.
- I can be jealous of others who are more successful than I. I experienced a situation recently where an old working colleague of mine was appointed to an acting CEO position in another company and rather than felling happy for her I felt a deep sense of regret and unfairness for myself.
- I am sometimes not very magnanimous towards members of my team who openly challenge the perspective I hold at meetings. I find it difficult to control a feeling of anger I have towards such people. I do not have the power to openly debate our clash of views. I can just neglect their contributions and I criticize them behind their backs.
- I find it very difficult to put my work at the same level of importance as my personal development. I think the DBA has more to offer me personally and therefore it gets priority over working for others.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate an unconstrained ego are the following,

- I have been very generous and magnanimous to the thoughts of those responsible for implementing a lean management tool in our firm. I am able to see the weaknesses in my theories and I am able to acknowledge the superior theories of our lean consultants.
- I have put my work ahead of my family and those close to me over the last two decades.

My Epistemology

A strong ego reduces my ability to see something from the perspective of another and move beyond the 'Socialised Mind' level of Adult Mental Development. We cannot engage with our consciousness in a meaningful manner to critique our own values and beliefs.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

Kim Wilber (2000) theorised that our world could be truly transformed if we could control our ego as an object rather than be subject to its control. He claims that the most radical, pervasive, and earth-shaking transformation would occur simply if everybody truly evolved to

a mature radical, and responsible ego, capable of freely participating in the open exchange of mutual self-esteem.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

My perspective is that I must behave in a humble manner to increase my capability to manage the weaknesses inherent within my human nature. I must empathise with the perspectives of others to see another reality and develop the theories I use to create my reality. A need to put myself first can sometimes lead to envy and reduce my cognitive capacity. My emotions take over and they reduce my ability to exercise my cognitive attributes fully. The result is my theories become more of a descriptive nature and I cannot manage them as an instrument of thought. I lose my ability to think clearly and I may become one with Adolf Eichmann as portrayed by Arendt, (2005) in 'Eichmann and the Holocaust'. His ego and resulting thoughtlessness not only destroyed his life but it also destroyed the lives of millions of Jews. It disposed him to become one of the greatest criminals of all.

I must behave in a humble manner to provide a framework to develop what Drucker (2009) calls a free functioning society. A free functioning society is dependent on satisfying the freedom and equality of the people working in the firm and it is a key variable to drive the growth of a firm.

2.9. Humility

Sowell's polar visions on the humility of man are the following,

<u>Constrained Vision</u>

One categorizes oneself as severely and inherently limited. One is humble, obedient, possesses an inferior complex and has a lack of pride in oneself.

<u>Unconstrained Vision</u>

One categorizes oneself as elitist and is prepared to inform others of the existence of this elite status.

My Vision

I would definitely put my humility within the constrained category. I see myself as humble and obedient and it is not my natural style to inform others of my elite status. My humble identity does not harbour feelings of hopelessness but on certain matters where my contextual knowledge is low my self-efficacy and my belief in my own capacity may limit the power I hold to produce an effect. I find it difficult to accept dogmatic personalities who prescribe doctrinaire and arrogant opinions. In general I don't see anybody as having the elite capacity to produce blueprints or panaceas to answer all of our problems.

However I also harbour elite feelings. In situations where I have a high contextual knowledge arising from a high level of experience I can get annoyed if others do not think as I do. I think that this suggests that I want to have a certain control over how others think.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my humble vision are the following,

- I finished my MBA in 2008 and I still have not told many people I work with of my additional qualification. These people are good friends of mine but I would feel a certain level of embarrassment in informing them of my academic achievement. I am happy with our existing relationship and I do not want my qualification to change it.
- I live in an ordinary house and I drive an ordinary car. I feel that a big house and a big car would increase others perception of my elite status and I do not want such a status.
- I am not the one in a room contributing to a debate just to be seen by my peers to have a superior knowledge of a subject. My preferred behaviour is to sit back and listen to those who like to share their thoughts.
- On a subject matter where I have a low level of contextual knowledge I can feel so humble that I cannot support a dialectical debate.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my elite vision are the following,

- A simple tool I use to inform my peers of my elite status is to advise them of activities in

our department which they are not aware of. This extra knowledge which I have is a symbol of my elite status.

- I like working out solutions to problems on my own. Working in teams can be sometimes annoying when the ideas of other team members are completely ridiculous. They are no help in establishing the best solution.
- I cut off communication with some of my peers at work if they do not think as I want them to think. I discard them from my team and I do not allow them to contribute on any subject matter I am responsible for.

My Epistemology

My mind oscillates between the need to direct how others think and a wish to be obedient to the theories of others. I want to be completely responsible for the reality I create or I want to be subject to the theories of others. My mind finds it difficult to be an equal with others to build a dialectical understanding. I seem to have a hierarchical structure in my mind with absolute reason and superficial brilliance at the top and plodding and pedestrian to the bottom and with little place for dialogue in between. Maybe this is why I can see myself both as a person with absolute reason and as a plodder conforming to the dogma of others.

The epistemology I hold finds it difficult to support critical debate and the management of theory as an instrument of thought. The absolute reason my mind supports hold theories as rigid solutions rather than as an apparatus of thought. My desire to be perceived as elite by my peers is very much the thinking process of a socialised mind. What others think about me is of great importance to me. My humility to comply with the perspectives of others is also a socialised mind. I do not have the epistemological ability to develop my own theories.

One of the key insights of Kegan's theory of Adult Mental Development is that we all live in a constant state of anxiety and I see the arrogance I exhibit in my work and the need to think for others as a response to control my fears. My arrogant theories are protecting the big assumptions which exist within my mind.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

A proposition Drucker holds is that common sense must take precedence over absolute reason, "It is common sense pitted against absolute reason, experience and conscientiousness against superficial brilliance; it is plodding, pedestrian and not spectacular - but dependable"

(Drucker, 2009: p.185), when designing plans to support the growth of a firm. There is no place for elite persons who exhibit absolute reason.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I must transform my mind to lose my extreme perceptions of myself. I cannot continue to consider myself as elite on certain matters and humbly comply with the theories of others on other matters.

I must build more equality in my relationship with others where open communication supports a frank exchange of thoughts and ideas. I must depend less on the ideas of individuals and more on the critical thoughts of a team. I must increase my ability to critique the theories of others and encourage a full critique of my own theories. I must take more responsibility for the development of my ideas and how I can manage them in an objective manner.

2.10. Individual Conscience

Sowell's polar visions on man's use of his conscience to guide his choices are the following,

Constrained Vision

Social rules rather than individual conscience are the means by which we successfully orient ourselves. These social rules are not consciously considered by us, "rules whose purpose or origin we often do not know and of whose very existence we are often unaware" (Hayek, 1978: p.11).

Unconstrained Vision

We orient ourselves by means of consciously constructed roadmaps, "unfettered individual judgement and individual conscience are at the heart of the unconstrained vision" (Sowell, 2007: p.85).

My Vision

Greater consciousness is developed through imagining my mind being detached from myself, observing my own self thinking about my thoughts, and choosing how I respond to a stimulus. Can my mind support this process? It certainly cannot.

Unconscious social rules rather than consciously constructed roadmaps are my guiding light. Arendt (1998) theorises that our conscience is a dialogue that build models and develop and choose theories and that it is continually engaged in a mental chatter to support this process. I have no awareness or understanding of my mental chatter and in turn I have little awareness of my conscience. I cannot tap into my conscience to manage the accumulation and chaos in my mind with the consequence that I have little control over the rules which govern my thinking.

My vision is not entirely a polarised constrained vision in that I can think about my thoughts but in a completely unstructured and unregulated manner. However I have no real awareness or understanding of what I am doing with the result that my mind can easily oscillate between day-dreaming and thinking. I find it hard to identify direction from such unstructured thoughts.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate a constrained conscience are the following,

- I find it difficult to prepare simple daily plans or to organise routine meetings to challenge my thoughts and reflect on my feelings. I am too busy doing routine tasks to have time to think about my thoughts.
- I have worked in a conventional organisational model for all of my professional life where 3rd order thinking is the norm and I have diligently complied with these standards. One of my big assumptions is to be directed by the customs and the traditions of the organisation as defined by those in hierarchical positions. I believe that my role is just to work hard comply with the given culture and rules and my firm will reward me for my commitment and hard work.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate an unconstrained conscience are the following,

- I finished my degree in 1990 and I remained outside the educational system until 2007 when I completed an MBA. I am now completing a DBA which is a further four year commitment to self-development. This roadmap of personal development is not a normal commitment for a forty year old man with a young family working in a conventional firm. My employer, my friends, and my family, sometimes think I am gone a little insane. I had the strength of mind to take direction from my conscience rather than systematically follow given social rules within my organisation.

My Epistemology

I am not a theory maker; I just use the theories of others. My constrained conscience is forcing me to live by the theories of others rather than by my own preferred theories which are defined within my values. The mentality I live within is limiting the reality I can create to the external truths of society. Arendt and Kegan could say that an innate fear present within my mind is curtailing my ability to live my own values.

I have a socialised mind in that I am subject to the authority of social beliefs. I am my role and the beliefs and values which attach to it. I cannot step outside my role and author my own thoughts. The life I am living is more a thoughtless life than a thoughtful one. It is difficult for me to manage and stretch my theory of reality when I do not know what theory is.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

Lakoff & Johnson (1980) theorised that our language has evolved from our physical senses with the result that our language is dominated by metaphors from our senses. These metaphors force our mind to categorise and consequently they reduce our ability to see things as they are. We are working with the language of the body about something which does not belong to the body. An inability to see things as they are reduces our cognitive capacity to develop our own accurate roadmaps.

Arendt (1963) theorised that Adolf Eichmann was directed by the givens within society rather than by his own conscience which resulted in the development of a thoughtlessness state of mind. She coined a phrase “The banality of evil” (Arendt, 1963: P.1) to describe the evil deeds such a thoughtless mind could be responsible for. Such a thoughtless state of mind is not the mind of a responsible individual.

However I need to be cognisant that having a constant awareness of thought is difficult and it is a standard I will not always achieve, "Being with oneself can be frightening; so don't berate yourself if you….find it difficult. Most of us - indeed, practically all of us - will find it impossible to be mindful all the time" (Rao, 2006: P.84 – 85). I will never be able to use my conscience all of the time to guide my choices.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I must step outside my role and the beliefs and values which attach to it. I must build my own roadmaps and reduce my dependence on the theories of others. I must engage with my thoughts and develop my own conscience.

I must engage in external dialogue to build a forum to critique the theories I use to build my personal understanding of the world, "A particular feature of dialogue is its capacity to enable people to become aware of their own understanding of an issue by being exposed to other people's understandings of the same issue" (Sandberg and Targama, 2007: p132). I need a source of checks and balances to constantly challenge and develop my conscience.

2.11. Motivation

Sowell's polar visions on man's source of motivation are the following,

<u>Constrained Vision</u>

Motivation is provided by external incentives. The source of my motivation is the accumulation of external rewards to satisfy the needs of an external authority.

<u>Unconstrained Vision</u>

Motivation is provided by our internal disposition. We possess an inherent will within to find our way. Our internal disposition rather than external incentives is the source of our action.

My Vision

I am somewhere in between Sowell's two polar visions on the source of motivation. I try to access my internal disposition for direction and support but my inability to access my own thoughts has resulted in me being motivated by external incentives. The result is that my

primary motivating factors are to satisfy the mentality of society and the social expectations of my working environment rather than to live my own values.

I have allowed my experiences to drive my mental structuring. I have not used my freedom of thought, which is my ultimate freedom, to manage my choices and as a consequence my choices are limited. I have allowed my experiences to bend my values to collaborate with the expectations of an external authority. These values are not very important to me personally and they cannot provide any visceral type empowerment to accomplish my objectives.

My attempts to access my internal disposition is unstructured and without any real direction. I am motivated by this burning internal desire to develop myself and keep a step ahead of my peers at work but I have little awareness of this value and I have never considered its usefulness. I have always worked very hard but I have no awareness of where this work ethic is coming from. It may be that I want to protect my-self against the fear of not living up to the expectations of others. If I use Fox's (2000) framework of Original Blessing and Original Sin, I may be using the fear of original sin as the source of my motivation rather than the promise of original blessing. My inability to engage in reflective discourse is limiting my ability to access my internal disposition.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my constrained vision are the following,

- I was primarily motivated to keep my boss happy thinking that this would deliver all I wanted in life. Seeking the acknowledgment of my boss for my work was a prime motivating factor for me. My social beliefs such as my identity and status of self and others shape my interaction and understanding.
- In my employment I incur personal expenses which I can claim back from my employer. However I choose not to claim back expenses over a three year period in the belief that I could not continue to ask my employer to continue paying such expenses in a recessionary post Celtic tiger era. The mentality which was present in the external economic environment curtailed my freedom to claim my expenses.

The exemplar I have taken from my experience to illustrate my unconstrained vision is the following,

- I have a value which requires that my competence levels at work will never fall below the competence level of my peers. I am fearful that their development will take their competence beyond my level and my values cannot allow this to happen.

My Epistemology

A self-authored self can engage with one's own identity and internal authority. They can access their internal disposition, critique its usefulness, and use their internal disposition as their source of motivation. I cannot engage with my thoughts and my theories in this manner.

My motivation falls into Kegan's category of the socialised mind, "When the [socialised mind] dominates our meaning-making, what we should feel is what we do feel, what we should value is what we do value, and what we should want is what we do want" (Kegan, 1994: p.275). I have never really stopped and thought about what really motivates me and I have no real awareness of my real values. I have no awareness of the theories I use or the values I want to achieve. I find it hard to take initiative and set my own goals to direct my life.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I need to access and increase my awareness of my internal values to deliver the motivational level required to grow a firm. I must engage with my internal disposition to find visceral feelings to motivate my work and deliver the needs I strive for in life, "We have noticed …that the more people are connected to…..'gut,' 'head and heart,' and 'hand' – the more significant their changes will be….a person must really, really want to accomplish his…goal. We must….experience sufficient need or desire, visceral feelings – which is why we say they come from the gut" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.209 – 210). I suspect that external motivational values will not deliver the real needs of my human nature. External values deliver security by being part of a tribe but it does not deliver freedom and equality. I must get to know my own mind and take direction from my own values to deliver the freedom and equality I want from life.

I must audit the usefulness of my beliefs to deliver a result I want and which is also good for the growth of my firm. Accessing an inaccurate internal disposition would not be a useful tool to support the growth of a firm.

2.12. My Rationality

Sowell's polar visions on rationality are the following,

Constrained Vision

Wisdom is without reflection and it is not located within individuals or within a special grouping of individuals. Wisdom is collective wisdom from the past, "the individual is to be guided by the collective wisdom of his culture" (Sowell, 2007: p.83).

Unconstrained Vision

Wisdom is based on reflection and it is located within individuals or within a group of individuals, "the rejection of the concept of collective wisdom leaves individuals comparisons as the standard of judgement" (Sowell, 2007: p.42). Wisdom takes the form of "the special insights of the few" (Sowell, 2007: p.88). The 'cultivated mind' eliminates the need to depend on unarticulated process to direct our wisdom, "given the ability of a cultivated mind to apply reason directly to the facts on hand, there was no necessity to defer to the unarticulated systemic processes of the constrained vision, as expressed in the collective wisdom derived from the past" (Sowell, 2007: p.40).

My Vision

My thinking and mental structuring is driven by my unarticulated experiences. My thinking is in my body in that it is tied to my physical experiences. I think using metaphorical mental images acquired from past experiences to build my reality.

I think that I am exerting my own individual meaning but the collective wisdom of a culture is influencing my wisdom with little awareness of same. Only a small share of my wisdom is based on reflection and my reflective process is not done in a very thoughtful manner. I have no strong and definite reflective routine.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my vision on wisdom are the following,

- I have a high level of inconsistency in my life and I have no conscious plan on how to

manage same. An example is that I have a great desire to develop my professional competence and my strong need for security is curtailing my ability to accomplish my developmental objective. My thinking process is in equilibrium and I cannot engage with my thoughts to progress beyond this static state. I am just floating along waiting for collective wisdom in my firm to make a choice for me.

- I have never consciously used journaling to deliberately reflect on my thoughts. I have no awareness of the theories I am using to create my reality and I have never consciously considered their usefulness. The only practice I can recount where I reflect on my thoughts is when I prepare my daily plan at work and I find even this small reflective task difficult. I generally complete a daily plan less than half of my time.
- On meetings outside the areas of my speciality at work, such as marketing and MIS, I contribute very little. I have very few theories to support any contribution due to having little experience on the subject matter. I have very few thoughts outside of my own experiences.
- On reflecting on my career in the last decade it is obvious to me that I have done very little structured reflection on my work or on myself. I was a 'worker' rather than a 'thinker' and my professional development suffered from adopting this perspective. I never asked myself at the end of each meeting, 'What did I learn from this meeting?' I never asked myself at the end of each day, 'What did I learn from today?', and I never asked myself at the end of each week, 'What did I learn from the week?' If I did reflect I got very little value from my reflective process and I did not have the ability to use the reflective process to try out new practices at work.

My Epistemology

A constrained vision is subject to the theories of the past and it has a low capacity to exercise any self-control. Its reality is based on a world of experience which is built on the collective wisdom of the past. In contrast an unconstrained vision would have the capacity to manage its theories through reflection. It has the capacity to think about the theories it is using to construct reality and it would have the capacity to try out new practices if required.

My life is currently constructed from a world of experience. I am subject to my theories in that I cannot manage my theories as an instrument of thought. I can only adopt the theories of

other external bodies. My existing source of rationality can only support a weak socialised mind.

What Frameworks Do Other Advanced Thinkers Use?

Penrose's model to support the organic growth of a firm considered that the entrepreneurial wisdom required to support the growth of a firm must come from the thoughts of a wider team, "The term entrepreneur throughout this study is used in a functional sense to refer to individuals or groups within a firm providing entrepreneurial services, whatever their position or occupational classification may be" (Penrose, 1995: P.31). Our epistemology must enhance the ability to engage with the insights of a wider team from both inside and outside of my firm. An individual's wisdom taken from their own personal experiences is inadequate.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I must avoid only seeking wisdom from implicit theories built from within my experiences. I need to develop a capacity to think about thought and utilise my conscience to make choices about the future. When I engage with my conscience I must use theory only as an instrument or an apparatus to direct my mind to review all options when choosing a response. I can no longer continue to use out-dated wisdom of the past to control today's problems. I must build a cultivated mind to extract insights from the thoughts of a wider team to support the growth of a firm.

2.13. Mistakes and Errors

Sowell's polar visions on mistakes and errors are the following,

<u>Constrained Vision</u>

Harmful action is negligent and mistakes are inevitable due to the limited potential of man. Mistakes are not intentional in that they are the consequence of our limited human nature.

It is the process and the incentives which are at fault if things go wrong.

Unconstrained Vision

Harmful actions are categorised as vice. When others make mistakes we react explosively. We cannot understand how others could reach such wrong conclusions.

We believe those making the decisions did not have good intentions. There is a lack of sincerity in the people themselves. We do not blame the perfectibility of man, or the level of their cultivated mind, we blame their intentions which are not good.

My Vision

I use both polar visions at different times when I construct my reality. In general I do not categorise my work colleagues, who make mistakes, as corrupt and evil. I generally see honest workers who have failed to achieve their objectives primarily due to a miss-match of their experience with the complexities of the task. My colleagues do not always have the resources and the competence required to complete a task.

However I can categorise persons as corrupt and evil when other individuals in my team criticize me and the theories I have used in an open forum. I can lose total respect for such individuals and I am not prepared to give them a second chance on any other matter.

My Evidence

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my constrained vision are the following,

- My right-hand man at work is an outstanding worker. Her throughput and accuracy are at a very high standard. However she does make a rare mistake, but I never see the mistake as intentional, I see the mistake a result of her having to work under too many time constraints. Unreasonable deadlines within her role cause the mistakes rather than a deliberate weakness in her performance.
- In the inquest into the banking crisis which is currently taking place in Ireland a number of bankers are being held responsible for the collapse of the 'Celtic Tiger'. I do not directly blame the bankers in that I believe they experienced a situation which was beyond their level of competence. None of these officials would have done what they did if they were aware of the consequences.

The exemplars I have taken from my experience to illustrate my unconstrained vision are the following,

- I was recently involved in a business partnership where one of my partners publicly criticised the results of my work by means of an email. I though the conclusions of this individual were totally wrong and they incorrectly tarnished my professional competence in a wider group. I lost total respect for him and from that day onwards I no longer communicated with him on any business related matter.

My Epistemology

I am categorising the criticism of other members of my team on the quality of my work as a personal judgement of me. I see such criticism as a threat to my personal identity as it is driving a division between me and a social grouping I identify with. I could lose my entire meaning of life if I am discarded from this social society. This form of knowing which is to adopt externally defined truths is the epistemology of a weak socialised mind.

What Aspects of my Vision do I need to Consider Changing to Apply Improved Practices to Grow a Firm? [Insights]

I must be able to see that I am not perfect and the perspectives I hold are not always correct. I must be able to support honest open communication both upwards and downwards to develop a learning community to challenge and develop the limited perspectives I and all other members of my team hold.

I cannot categorise the negative critique of my work colleagues on the thoughts I hold as a personal criticism of myself. I must separate the person from the perspective. I can never allow myself to react in a vice like manner to such criticism and cut such persons out of my working community.

3. CONCLUSION

The Reflection and Transition lead me to generate a summary of changes to my vision which I would like to try out and test. I work on the hypothesis that adjustments to my vision can support better practices to grow a firm. I also consider explorations which will help me acquire ‘evidence’ to test the effectiveness of new visions in my workplace.

The changes to my vision which I would like to explore relate to those aspects considered below.

Human Capacity

The vision I have on my human capacity oscillates between a capacity which is unlimited and where I insist on answering all the questions myself and a capacity which is very limited and I have no confidence in my own ability to act. I now believe after informing myself with the thoughts of other theorists that the most appropriate vision for a human nature, to support the growth of a firm, is a vision where I understand my capacity is limited and I can seek the thoughts and ideas of a wider team to develop a better understanding to build accurate plans about the future. This vision is somewhere in between Sowell's constrained and unconstrained visions on human nature.

Morality

I now think that I need to hold a vision which has high morals to support the growth of a firm. I must behave in a manner which upholds standards of right conduct to build the integrity to develop relationships which result in strong teamwork. Right now my priority to take care of myself and those close to me is limiting my ability to build strong relationships. I need to give more consideration to the thoughts and perspectives of others to limit my natural desire to put myself first. In Sowell's model I need to move my moral vision more towards an unconstrained vision.

Justice

I must have a vision which supports justice in the process rather than justice in the end result. I would define justice in the process as a capacity to treat those whom I work with in a just and honest manner, and I must have the capacity to communicate with all of my team as equals, to support an honest two way communication of ideas to build a strong team. I need to develop an understanding that projects developed using a policy of supporting justice in the process are more sustainable than projects developed by not supporting justice in the process. The teamwork available to support autocratic projects may not be strong enough to sustain these projects in the longer term.

Cognitive Capacity

The cognitive capacity I have to think about my perceptions and the perceptions of others is weak. My preferred behaviour is to sit back and not participate in discussions rather than seek new information to increase my understanding of the issues and participate in an open debate on the matters. This vision is too narrow and laissez-faire; I must develop a more 'cultivated' vision which can participate in an independent and impartial discussion. I need a more engaging vision to see and understand the thoughts of others, to test the accuracy of my perceptions, and to develop my imagination to expand my limited set of perceptions.

Truth & Honesty

My compliance to a shared set of understandings defined in a culture or held by an executive team is too strong. I need to find more meaning from my own beliefs and reduce my fidelity to hierarchical and systemic truths. I need to be less concerned about what others think and I need a greater awareness of my own thoughts and theories.

Social Governance

My instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust has developed a blind pervasiveness of thought within my reasoning process. I cannot continue to look to social authorities or to an elite group of individuals for direction and support. I must adapt my mind to overcome the guilty feeling I experience at the thought of unkind indiscretion when my preferred practices do not comply with those of a 'tribe'. I must participate in an open democratic decision making process to consider a wider range of options about uncertain choices in an unknown future.

Highest Duty

My existing vision to make trade-offs to support the growth of a firm is an appropriate vision. I will always have to make choices when the future is unknown. However I must be able to apply a higher level of integrity in the reasoning process I use to make my choices. I currently make choices in an implicit and unconscious manner and such a reasoning process is not adequate. The theorising process which my mind undertakes when making a choice must be able to collect information to consider both sides of an argument and only make a choice when there is evidence available to support the making of same. It is inappropriate to use a gut-feeling which is based on an unknown belief to support the making of a choice.

Ego

A need to put myself first can sometimes lead to envy and reduce my cognitive capacity. A need to prioritise my personal objectives can restrict my capacity to behave in an impartial and candid manner at work. I need to apply a more generous and magnanimous sentiment when managing my team at work. I need the strength to freely discuss my vulnerabilities to build a truly democratic forum to support a full exchange of ideas among all members of a team. This open exchange of ideas is essential as the options available to grow a firm lay within our ideas, and if there are fewer ideas exchanged, there are fewer options available to grow a firm. I must openly discuss my vulnerabilities to curtail any elite perception I may have to support a communication of ideas both upwards and downwards.

Humility

It is important that I always behave in a humble manner to support the teamwork required to grow a firm. However if I behave in an inferior and obedient manner I will not have the required self-efficacy to initiate projects to support the growth of a firm. I must redefine my respect for authority to reduce my obedience to the theories of ancestral authority and reduce my dependence on the approval of ancestral authority to develop a confidence to complete a task.

Individual Conscience

I need to engage with my conscience to understand my thoughts and be aware of the reasoning process I am undertaking in my mind to support the choices I am making. I must take my direction from my own considered theories rather than from the standards of an external authority to develop the ideas to grow a firm. Everybody's individual ideas are a key source of information to support the growth of a firm. If we all take our direction from an external authority the ideas available to grow a firm would be limited to the ideas of an external authority, whose capacity is limited.

Motivation

I need to find my motivating force from within my internal disposition and not from external incentives. A motivating force from within my internal disposition will provide a desire to put a greater effort into my work and it will help curtail any dysfunction between my goals and the goals of my firm. External incentives to achieve the goals of an outside authority offer

security and financial rewards but they are limited in their ability to provide freedom and equality which are two primary motivating forces for all the team working in a firm.

Basis of Rationality

Collective wisdom from the past is inadequate to manage the new challenges we will encounter in the future. I cannot allow my experiences to drive my mental structuring; I must take my ideas about the future from my reflective wisdom. I must build a reflective working community to generate new ideas to support the development of a firm.

Mistakes and Errors

I need to understand when engaging with others that nobody is perfect and we are all capable of making mistakes. Mistakes are not intentional in that they are the consequence of our limited human nature. I cannot judge mistakes as intentional and react to them in a vice like manner.

On the basis of the above I have chosen to undertake a number of explorations to try out another vision. The transformational objectives I have for each of the explorations are identified.

Exploration 1 - Redefine my unthinking respect for authority

The objectives I have for this exploration are the following,

- I will no longer look to the approval of an outside authority for the self-efficacy to complete a project.
- I will no longer look to the approval of an outside authority to share new ideas with a wider team.
- I need to find more meaning from my own beliefs and reduce my fidelity to hierarchical truths.
- I need to break down a blind pervasiveness of thought which has developed within my reasoning process arising from my instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust.
- I must overcome the guilty feeling I experience at the thought of unkind indiscretion when my preferred practices do not comply with those of authority.

Exploration 2 - Discontinue using absolutist and autocratic theories and learn to embrace vulnerability

The objectives I have for this exploration are the following,

- I will look to the thoughts and theories of a wider team for the knowledge to make choices.
- I need the checks and balances of a wider team to curtail my natural instinct to take care of myself and those close to me. Partial choices limit my ability to build trustful relationships.
- I will support greater justice in the process to support honest two way communication within my team.
- I will apply a generous and magnanimous sentiment towards others at work to provide an environment to support an open exchange of ideas.
- I will behave in a humble manner to support the teamwork required to grow a firm.
- I will provide a free and equal environment to motivate a wider team.
- I will not see mistakes as intentional and react to them in a vice like manner. Such behaviour would mitigate my capacity to build a strong challenging team.

Exploration 3 – Advance my thinking to a thoughtful standard

The objectives I have for this exploration are the following,

- I need an open and transparent way of thinking to test the accuracy of my perceptions and to develop my imagination to expand my limited set of beliefs.
- I will be able to apply a high level of integrity in the reasoning process I use to make my choices.
- I will find my motivating factors from within my internal disposition. The alternative which are external incentives is a weak motivational tool.
- I will look for ideas to support the growth of a firm from reflective wisdom and I will not look to ideas from the collective wisdom of the past.

Arthur (2000) advanced our understanding of cognition by establishing that we do not have the capacity to develop cognitive understanding in a logical manner and that it only changes when we experience failure. I see my explorations as a great opportunity to develop my cognitive view of the world and reduce the failure and related disappointment I will experience in my future professional career.

ESSAY 2– EXPLORATION OF TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMITMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

In this Essay I explore, using new work practices, an engagement with the transformational commitments I identified in Essay 1. If I discover that my new work practices are effective I will use my explorations as a tool to leverage the adaption of a new and more appropriate vision to develop the insights required to support the organic growth of a firm.

This Essay is organised around three primary commitments and eight explorations. The first commitment relates to redefining my unthinking respect for authority and the explorations I work with to explore this commitment are the following,

- Redefine my universal instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust to emancipate my mind.
- Complete my own consciously constructed roadmaps to guide my choices at work and release myself from always following the lead of ancestral authority.
- Take responsibility for my own development. Discontinue looking to my firm as the locus of my development and look to myself for the source of development.

The second commitment relates to redefining my dogmatic and autocratic leadership style and learning to embrace vulnerability within my work. The explorations I use to study this commitment are the following,

- Test how effective a less autocratic style of leadership might be.
- Check the limitations of my own human capacity. Do I hold a superior level of knowledge to always deliver the right answer?
- Can I control my own agenda and operate on the assumption that my own ability is limited?

The third commitment relates to thinking with more reflective models to guide my meaning making. The explorations I use to explore this commitment are the following,

- Audit how my mind performs without any deliberate direction and support.

- Conduct an exploration to use journaling to engage in reflective discourse. Connect with my conscience and the thoughts and theories which direct my mind.

My commitments are intentionally focused on my human nature because I believe that fundamental changes in my implicit understanding of social causation can only be achieved through a change in my nature. Symptoms which may relate to, my capacity to build effective strategic plans, my leadership style, and my entrepreneurial wisdom, are a result of my human nature and they are not agents of transformational and visionary change. A focus on the symptoms rather than the causes of my thinking process would paralyse my efforts to transform.

The framework I use to transform my human nature is Kegan's immunity map, (Kegan & Lahey, 2009).[4] This Immunity Map (2009) is an element within Kegan's theory of adult mental development. I know I require a framework because I have already identified using Sowell's considered thoughts that my human nature requires a constitution in the form of checks and balances to guide the process. I do not have the capacity to deliver my transformation directly. The introspective framework within the immunity to change model allows me to examine my cognitive and emotional state and illustrates how the way I create meaning is preventing change. The immunity map supports a process of reflective discourse to support a transformation of the lens I use to create my reality.

Kegan's immunity map transforms the theories I use to create my meaning making as follows,

Step 1 – Define my commitment.

Step 2 – Identify what I am doing or not doing to prevent achieving my commitment.

Step 3 – Identify my competing commitments.

Step 4 – Identify the big assumptions which are determining how I think.

Step 5 – Identify my transformational explorations.

Step 6 – Conduct my constructivist research.

[4] Kegan's Immunity Map is summarised in Figure 6, page 173, in this Portfolio.

Step 7 – Interpret the results of my constructive research.

Steps one to four identify the equilibrium which exists in my current meaning making preventing my ability to change. The ability to see this equilibrium is a key ingredient to support transformational development. Steps five and six are about identifying my explorations and conducting the research. Step seven is about understanding the results of my explorations and applying new theories to my meaning making. Steps one to six are of little use unless I can actually take action and change.

A Framework for Professional and Organisational Transformation

In the process of completing my Portfolio I have combined concepts and ideas from different cognitive and mental frameworks to develop my own framework to support professional and organisational transformation. I have combined ideas from Sowell (2007), Drucker (2009), Kegan (1994 – 2009), and Penrose (1995) to develop my own hybrid organisational framework which is summarised in Section 4 of this Essay.

2. TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMITMENTS

2.1. Redefine unthinking respect for authority

Step 1 – Commitment and improvement Goal

Albert Einstein once wrote in a letter to Winteler (1901), quoted in The Private Lives of Albert Einstein, by Highfield and Carter (1994), that, "Unthinking respect for authority is the greatest enemy of truth" (1994: p.78-79). This same 'unthinking respect for authority' is limiting my ability to think and contribute in a more meaningful manner at work.

My primary commitment goal is to develop my self-efficacy to apply a higher standard of critical thinking to question the theories of ancestral and executive authority. By 'ancestral' I refer to any person who serves as an influence or model for another and in my framework this is primarily the senior executive team in my firm or in other firms whom I engage with.

My secondary commitment goal, arising from redefining my respect for authority, is to build higher moral standards and higher levels of integrity in my interaction with my peers at work. My respect for authority currently limits the level of integrity I can apply at work.

Step 2 – Doing / not doing to achieve commitment

The things I am currently doing, or not doing, which are preventing achieving my stated goal include,

- Not challenging the perspectives of ancestral authority within my firm.
- My ability to separate a person's perspective from the person is low with the result that I end up criticizing the person rather than their perspective. This inability to separate the person from the perspective has reduced my ability to engage in a critical debate with ancestral authority.
- I hold a high level of loyalty and fidelity to my existing conventional world. I am in my current role for eighteen years and I have never intentionally challenged the perspectives held by my boss, in the presence of his peers. My priority is to support persons in senior hierarchical

positions and this practice takes priority over what is right and what is wrong. I don't care if this support may result in a pervasiveness of thought, collusion and a 'socialised' mind. [5]

- I am taking all of my direction from my work experience, which is dominated by a strong corporate culture. This culture puts our senior executives, which are ancestral authority, on a pedestal and from this lofty place they provide the logical insights I require to support my work. I have never consciously constructed roadmaps to think outside of this corporate culture.
- I do not participate in executive workshops, where strategic decisions are made about the future direction of our firm. I do not have the self-efficacy in my own ability to contribute and I am fearful that my presence in executive meetings may undermine the authority of my direct manager.
- My internal disposition which drives my behaviour cannot access values which could give my meaning more freedom and equality. My values on respect for others who hold a high position in society are dominating my thinking. I accept the choices of my direct manager without any proper dialogue on how the choices are made. I accept an inequality in a right to decide.
- I am not taking personal responsibility for the environment I am living in. I am just a 'good' manager fulfilling the instructions of executives in more senior hierarchical positions. The choices I make are administrative and repetitive and they are within a systemic framework.

<u>Step 3</u> – Hidden competing commitments

I have hidden competing commitments to comply with an 'old' way of knowing.

<u>Self-worth / respect</u>

I experience guilt at the thought of unkind indiscretion when I challenge my boss. I have a fear that my need for attachment will be violated by separation. I worry I cannot survive alone. I worry I do not have the capacity to execute personal responsibility. Such worries and fears are protecting a commitment to protect my universal instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust. This universal instinct is preventing me from thinking in an impartial

[5] I have defined Kegan's definition of a 'socialised mind' in page 168 of this Portfolio.

manner. I am committed to a participative style of management which protects my need for attachment.

I worry that if I criticize those whom I depend on for a sense of self, they will disown me and I will lose my basis for self-worth. I am committed to maximising my perceived self-worth and to achieve this I am committed to fulfilling a high level of fidelity to my role to delight my boss.

I worry that if I do not show a strong fidelity to my existing role I will be letting down those in ancestral authority who have supported the development of my career to date. I worry that if I criticise my boss I will not be able to support him in the manner I ought to. I am committed to always operating to a high standard at work to prove my worth to those in executive positions who had a belief in my value in the past.

I worry that my boss may understand my critique of his perspectives as a criticism of him. I worry that my personal judgement may upset and hurt the elite individuals in my firm and this may result in a breakdown in communication and a breakdown in our mutual respect for each other. I cannot put my existing good relationship at risk. Such worries and fears are protecting a commitment to take direction from the elite individuals in my firm. Those persons who hold executive positions in my firm are the most elite individuals in our firm and they have the greatest capacity to make accurate decisions about the future. I have no strong commitment to support the making of impartial choices at work. I have no problem making biased or prejudiced choices in favour of one person over another.

Security

I worry that I do not have the capacity to operate at high levels of performance without the support of the senior executive team. My perceived self-efficacy of my own ability is low. I depend on my experience to make good choices and my experience is too specialised with the result that my capacity to make decisions on a broad range of matters is limited. Such worries and fears indicate that I am committed to act in an obedient manner and accept the fact that my potential is limited when compared to those in executive positions.

I worry that if I criticise the decisions of others my own limited knowledge will be exposed. If I remain silent and do not engage in critical dialogue I will never expose my weaknesses. Such

worries indicate that I am committed to minimising the risk and anxiety in my life. Prudent choices with the lowest cost are the best means to manage my risk and anxiety.

I worry that if I act in an impartial manner I will expose myself to new persons and new practices which will not respect authority. Conformance to known practices is a much more effective means to always respect authority. Such worries indicate that I am committed to using the constitution of those in authority to protect the process.

Professional development

I worry that if I challenge the perspectives of the executive team I will be putting my professional development at risk. I believe the source of my professional development is the executives in my firm and they will not support my career if I do not support their ideas at work.

I am committed to my professional development and my ancestral leader holds the key to deliver my development. My ability to control my own development is limited.

Humility

I worry that if reach up to a higher plateau and identify with those in executive positions I will not be able to conform to my humble values. I worry that if I push and lead agenda's I will lose my identification with the 'ordinary' worker.

I am committed to retaining a strong identity with my humble background. I want to retain a strong identity with the ordinary worker. I depend on the approval of the ordinary worker for my sense of self-worth.

Fidelity to family values

I worry that if I do not show a strong fidelity to my existing role I will be letting down my family. My current workplace is near home with the result that I have more time for my family. I worry that if I move to another firm I will be threatening my commitment to my family.

I am committed to continuing to work in my existing firm to have more time available to support my family. I depend on the approval of my family for my sense of self-worth.

Source of motivation

I am committed to looking to my partial values and beliefs for my source of motivation. My respect for authority, my need for security, and my wish to identify with the ordinary workers which represents my father's way of life, are the primary values which are driving my behaviour.

Step 4 – Big assumptions

The following fixed and unchallenged theories define how I think. They are protecting my contradicting commitments and fighting against my stated commitments.

Self-worth / respect

I have almost an unthinking respect for authority to protect my self-worth. The respect I have could be compared to the respect one may have for a parent. I must have acquired this value from my family framework or from the school structure I experienced as a kid, and it still has control over how I think.

My boss and I have built up a strong bond over a very long period and I cannot behave in a manner which would threaten this bond. A challenging and dynamic mind could threaten this bond. This bond could be easily defined as a universal instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust.

Security

My logic is primarily based on the knowledge of ancestral authority rather than on reason. I like working in hierarchical frameworks where direction from top provides a high sense of security. This is the framework I have got to know best and trust best in the institutions I have lived and worked in to date. These institutions include my family framework, my educational framework, and my religious experiences. In these institutions leadership primarily comes from the top with a reduced contribution by the participating congregation.

My potential is limited. It is limited to the silos of contextual knowledge I have built up from my past experiences. My belief in myself to execute responsibility for logical decision-making has waned due to being in the same role for too long. My perceived self-efficacy is low.

Professional development

My fidelity to ancestral authority is my primary source of professional development.

Fidelity to family values

My fidelity to ancestral authority is an important tool I have to fulfil my need to support my family values.

Humility

My strong sense of humility is forcing me to seek direction and support from those who hold executive positions.

Step 5 – Transformational explorations

I need to complete developmental explorations on dilemmas I currently have at work to suspend my presuppositions and try out new practices on a trial basis. The explorations I consider along with their related objectives are the following,

- Redefine my universal instinct for attachment and support to emancipate my mind. Can I still uphold my value of respect but with a more dynamic and challenging form of relationship with authority? An objective of this exploration to free myself from my sense of social oppression. Another objective is to 'prove' that knowledge is uncertain and it is not always held by those in authorities.
- Check if I can successfully use my own consciously constructed roadmaps to guide my choices at work. I must try and change the responsibility for my choices at work, and for my own personal development, from ancestral authorities to myself. I must check if I can take personal responsibility for the environment I live in.
- Investigate if advancement of my ability to reason is the source of my development and that institutions are not the locus of my development.

I must learn that I have the ability to affect the way I feel and no one else should be able to make me feel bad about myself. I did not consider breaking my link with ancestral authority by seeking another role in another firm as the costs and risks involved were too large.

Step 6 – Constructivist research

I completed a programme of constructive research to test my big assumptions. Discourse on my inner contradictions helped me to engage in a process of reflective judgement to test the following big assumptions.

TEST 1 - Redefine my universal instinct for attachment and support from others whom I trust to emancipate my mind.

The first task I completed was to discuss with my 'boss' my unthinking respect for authority and my struggle to redefine my definition of respect.

Carter's (1996) model of integrity requires an individual to firstly recognise the difference between right and wrong, and then to act on such discernment, and finally but most importantly to communicate openly the reasons for the actions taken. I choose to follow this model and engage with my direct manager to discuss my unthinking respect for authority. I explained that the respect that I have for ancestral authority could be compared to the respect any individual may have for a father. I explained that it was my perspective that this type of fatherly respect was undermining the contribution I was making at work. It is my responsibility, acting in the best interests of my firm, that all options are considered prior to making choices and my inability to critique the perspectives of more senior executives is limiting the value I am contributing to the decision-making process. Our conversation developed to where I explained that I believed one of the primary reasons for my respect for authority was being appointed to my current position in my early twenties soon after graduating from college. I was a little overawed and I decided the best strategy to manage risk was to closely follow the direction of ancestral authority and this model has controlled how I have thought ever since. I finally explained the tools I was using to increase my ability to critique the thoughts of others in an impartial manner.

The outcome was that my direct manager did not know how to react when I informed him that I had an unthinking respect for authority which was similar to the respect a son may have for a father. I don't think he said anything. Maybe he could see that I found the topic difficult to discuss and he choose not to engage to allow me move on to another matter.

However having this conversation has significantly helped me to progress my recovery from looking to executive authority for approval to have the confidence to complete my work. It has helped me convert my theories about redefining my respect for authority from being just thoughts within my mind to being something real. The result is that I am now more at ease with this issue and I feel very confident I can resolve it. I have concluded that it is easier to resolve a task when it is something real and I can discuss it with others rather than through reflection alone. My perception is that this was a major first step in my transformational process and maybe I could never have moved onto further stages without this initial move.

The second task I completed was to break my direct link and consequently my attachment and support with some individuals at work whom I trust.

I chose to leave the financial controller position which I had filled for fifteen years and I moved into a new Business Development role in my firm. I broke my direct chain of command to the three most senior executives in our group in that my new role was quasi-independent with no direct supervisory influence by ancestral authority. My Business Development role was to develop and implement a new firm-wide management information strategy.

My previous 'parental' relationship with ancestral authority was built around financial accounts, financial budgets, investment appraisals, and other financial outputs, and I no longer had responsibility for any of these tasks in my new role. These tasks no longer defined my sense of self and my relationship with ancestral authority. I was free to invent a new self and build a new relationship with ancestral authority.

The outcome of moving to a new Business Development role was that I found myself in a real dilemma as the basis I had always used for my self-worth no longer existed. I was in a new role where I did not have the knowledge and experience to resolve my new challenges, and ancestral authority which was my normal source of inspiration was no longer available for direction and support. Dewey (1963) would categorise my situation as a disorienting dilemma where I had to develop my meaning making to solve my problem. I could no longer just apply the direction of ancestral authority to resolve my problems in that I had to invent my own solutions.

Two years into the new role I think that the results are very positive. I formed a team which constituted stakeholders from both inside and outside of the firm to develop the insights to make the right choices to support the development of my firm. I must have chaired almost three hundred meetings to reflex on the past and the changes required in the future to help design an MIS strategy which will support the future development of our firm. We created a very innovative plan which we are currently implementing and we are very confidence that this plan along with a new management structure will realise a multi-million euro contribution for our firm. So far everybody has bought into our strategy and there is a great willingness to make it work.

I believe that this disorienting dilemma has transformed how I create my reality. I no longer use the theories of ancestral authority to create my reality and solve my problems. I can now develop my own insights to design my own development strategies. I can now see that I do not need a universal instinct for attachment and support with others whom I trust to deliver a high level of performance. I have much more confidence in my own ability to successfully lead a team to deliver a well-constructed strategy. I constructed a situation where ancestral authority 'disowned me' and I have not just survived but I have become a better and more capable person.

The third task I completed was to use frameworks and models to challenge the perspective of ancestral authority. The meaning I am using for model is a graphical illustration of my ideas by means of a flow-diagram, or a table, or a chart.

I used frameworks to challenge the perspectives of ancestral authority rather than ancestral authority itself. I critiqued ancestral authority in a non-judgemental manner in that I challenged the perspectives rather than the person. I changed my communication style in that my comments were previously based on the person, with comments such as, 'I think that you are wrong', or 'I disagree with you', and they are now based on an explicit framework summarised on a page, with comments such as, 'the perspectives I hold as summarised in my framework, are very different to the perspectives and supporting practices included in your framework'. This adjusted communication style supports a more open form of communication and a greater exchange of thoughts and perspectives.

I used frameworks to challenge the perspective of my direct supervisor on how the financial controller position should be developed. I asked my direct supervisor to prepare his own framework to summarise his vision of the financial controller position to provide the material to have an open and free debate about the frameworks. On another matter I have used team workshops to develop frameworks on how our firm can use Business Intelligence tools to develop our Management Information System. I deliberately redefined our team meetings as team workshops as I believed a category such as 'workshop' helped those present at the meetings to understand that their role was to build something new.

The outcome was that ancestral authority or the senior executives in my firm did not feel personally offended when I used models to challenge their perspective on a work related matter. I think that my direct supervisor was a little surprised with my approach, in that he was not used to using models to debating perspectives at one-to-one meetings. However he could see merits in this approach and he was prepared to go along with the idea. My thoughts and feelings at the time were that this tool increased my confidence in my ability to challenge the perspective of senior executives. I felt a new freedom to express my thoughts about the models being debated. It was almost as if the basis for my self-worth was shifting from keeping my boss happy through compliance to keeping my boss on his toes through challenging his perspectives as expressed in a model.

The forth task I completed was to use new thinking tools to critique my existing theories of universal attachment. I used the following thinking tools to help build a new impartial relationship with ancestral authority.

- I used Collingwood's (1978) application of questions and answers to support a higher level of logical debate.[6] My mind has a tendency to lose focus and drift away from conflicting matters, and Collingwood's framework helped me to keep focus and cover all of the agenda at our meetings. I regularly asked myself and others present at our meetings, 'what were the questions we wanted to answer and is our meeting dealing with those questions right now?'

[6] Drucker (2009) used the tool of questions and answers very effectively to build his theories about the development of society.

- I used the framework of causation, as used by Arendt, to explain a phenomenon and learn from the experiences of my peers. I used this tool to contribute to a debate with executive management on the best means to roll-out a new customer relationship model in our firm. I suggested that we looked at a previous experience we had in rolling out such software and we build on the positives and avoid the mistakes in our new roll-out strategy. This simple tool helped me to bring more meaning to an uncertain situation.
- I used workshops to provide an open environment and more free space to allow all persons to contribute equally on an agenda item. The restrictions imposed by hierarchical frameworks are set aside and this helps build a free and equal relationship among all peers.

The outcome of using Collingwood's framework of knowledge, and Arendt's framework of causation, and the use of workshops, is that I have brought more impartial debate into my relationship with ancestral authority in the following ways:

- Individual perspectives are more easily discovered and debated.
- A higher level of justice in the process is more easily achieved.
- The negative impact of our individual egos is curtailed.
- A greater level of teamwork can be delivered which helps curtail individuals from just taking care of one-self.
- The making of trade-offs in the decision-making process is easier to accomplish.
- It is more difficult to just stand by and adopt a laissez-faire approach.
- All parties involved in the decision-making process develop a greater confidence to work in community.
- The influence of loyal bonds in the decision-making process is curtailed.

These frameworks helped me engage with my beliefs and develop my insights about the most appropriate practices to apply in the future. They provide great supports to stretch my mental capacity. I think that my meaning making needs such supports to provide a momentum to engage with the beliefs I hold to support change.

The firth task I completed was to consciously expand the company I kept to expose my mind to new ideas.

I deliberately went outside the company to expose my mind to new perspectives. Sources from outside the company were free from the strong corporate culture which existed within my firm and this freedom gave them access to a much greater range of ideas.

One example of where I used this tool to release myself from the influence of ancestral authority was to engage personnel from Teagasc Food Research Centre to develop a new 'Early Calving Incentive Scheme' for the milk suppliers in West Cork. The personnel from Teagasc Food Research Centre had a range of new ideas which changed our thoughts on the best practices to drive milk supply in West Cork. The thoughts of this external team helped me and my team look outside our existing framework and apply more impartiality in our decision-making process.

The outcome of meeting new people from outside my firm is that I have a source of new ideas and these ideas help me adapt new conventions to support the making of better choices at work. I am supporting options which I would never have considered without the influence of those outside of my firm. A good example is the type of 'early calving incentive scheme' I am proposing for milk suppliers. I have not taken the easy option and gone with the most obvious solution to the senior executives. I have recommended a new framework not currently used elsewhere in Ireland and I am acquiring scientific evidence available from the leading authority on farming development in Ireland to support my choice. This method of working out solutions is very different to just complying with the ideas of ancestral authority. It provides many more options for analysis and debate.

TEST 2 - Complete my own consciously constructed roadmaps to guide my choices at work and release myself from always following the lead of ancestral authority.

I moved to a new business development role where I built and managed the implementation of a new MIS strategy for my firm. I built my own team to critique the choices in the process.

This exploration commenced in July 2010 and I anticipate it will not conclude until June 2013. I have attended up to three hundred meetings with departmental managers to complete a top-

down analysis of each business unit's needs and a bottom up analysis of the informational and operational processes available. We consulted vendors with a high level of expertise to help define the gaps which existed in our information systems to support the construction of a new MIS strategy for our firm. This was a very enlightening process for our team in that the final agreed strategy was significantly different from the thoughts we had when the process began. The team dynamic within the journey had successfully challenged and changed the perspectives of individual members. The reality we all held after the planning process was significantly different from the reality we saw initially.

Executive management supported our strategy by agreeing to provide a €1 million euro investment package. They have included our MIS strategy as a core element of a plant-wide Business Excellence strategy to increase efficiency and adapt to a more decentralised and evidence based decision making process. Operational management are fully behind our strategy since they were a large part of the team which put the plans together. Their participation in building the plans has empowered them to support its delivery. The feedback we are getting at plant operator level is that our plan will give the operators a much greater level of information about the processes they are responsible for managing, and this in turn will deliver a greater level of freedom in their roles and equality among the entire team. We also received very positive feedback at an industry level from other firms operating in the dairy cluster in Ireland. A number of companies have visited our site to see our plans with the intention of undertaking a similar programme in their own manufacturing sites.

The outcome of the MIS project to date has left little doubt in my mind that I have the capability to establish my own team to successfully establish my own consciously constructed roadmap to guide my choices at work. I am taking confidence from the feedback received. My perceived self-efficacy to successfully complete my own roadmap to complete a task is at a new high.

The innovative nature of our MIS project as defined in the new ideas we are applying in our project has convinced me that I have the capacity and the courage to lead a team which can 'think outside the box'. I have the capacity to move beyond my old role which was primarily administrative to support a more entrepreneurial type role. A number of enquiries from other firms in the dairy industry on the nature of our work have helped me see the innovative nature of our vision. A multi-national software vendor has asked me for permission to summarise a

case-study of our project in an international dairy magazine, to use our work as a tool to illustrate the usefulness of its software to support a dairy manufacturing operation, and this must represent a good impartial analysis of our work.

When I moved to my new entrepreneurial-type role I had a low level of experience on MIS and in turn I had a low level of contextual knowledge on the application of a new MIS strategy. In my perspective the knowledge needed to support the choices required in my new role was very uncertain and there was nobody in ancestral authority who could inform me what was right and what was wrong. A number of external MIS vendor specialists, who were part of my team, all had different ideas about the best solution to guide our choices and this range of different ideas created great options but it also made our choices more uncertain. It was easy to conclude that no one individual had the capacity to hold all the knowledge required to make decisions in my new uncertain environment. My thoughts now are that my team and I successfully managed to develop and implement our strategy in this uncertain environment. However, I did not have the capacity to manage the uncertainty myself; I needed a team to help me make the right choices in this uncertain environment.

I have learned that a key ingredient required to be successful in today's uncertain environment is the ability to support a learning community who have an increased capacity to make impartial choices about the future. I have learned that a learning community provides space to challenge the beliefs which guide our meaning making and in turn the insights we are capable of devising. However a learning community will only provide space where people feel free to speak their truth, where blaming and judging are minimal, where full participation is encouraged, where a premium is placed on mutual understanding, and where evidence and arguments may be assessed objectively and assumptions surfaced openly. Community learning was a useful tool to help me execute more personal responsibility. Exposing my mind to the wider perspectives of a community helped me to see that the beliefs my mind was using to establish reality were inappropriate and that the fears I was protecting myself against did not exist.

Another important insight I adopted from completing this exploration is that no one individual has the capacity to build the most effective plans about the future. Our limited human nature prevents us from seeing into the future and delivering a brilliant individual plan. It is very important to support a learning community where the thoughts and theories of everybody and

especially the leader can be fully critiqued by all members of the team. I think that I successfully managed to preserve this type of environment and it was a key factor to build a successful roadmap to manage the uncertainty of the environment we worked in. I think that a good example I could use to illustrate the free environment I created within my team was the open criticism I personally received from vendors on my capacity to understand the complexity of the matter I was managing. One vendor informed me on more than one occasion that my knowledge on MIS was too weak to manage a project of this nature which I accepted without any negative emotional reaction. In fact at the end of the tendering process my team and I allocated two large projects to this vendor. The best transformational teams do not have individuals with a superior human nature; they have individuals with the communication skills to support a stronger learning community.

Another important learning I made on this exploration was the fact that leading a business development function did not break my links with the 'ordinary' worker. I thought that I would be moving away from the plant operators but I did not allow this to happen in that I brought them along with me. I accomplished this by supporting the promotion of a plant operator to a supervisor position in the project team, and his strong relationship with the plant operators ensured that they formed part of an extended project team, and their thoughts were included in the development of our plans. The second decision I supported to bring the ordinary workers along with me was to promote two instrument electricians onto our project management team, where there perspective were given the same equal importance as all other members in the team. These two individuals were initially nervous at meetings but as they became more familiar with their new role they became two of the most important members of the team. In summary I would conclude that I did not break my link with the ordinary worker but I used my new position to promote the role they played in our organisation. I gave them a new sense of equality and freedom to deliver for them a greater sense of social status and function in their work.

This new role has thought me that business development is primarily about developing insights about the future and not managing the past. Reflecting on and analysing the past is only one step to accumulate evidence to build insights about the future. I have established that it is my responsibility and not the responsibility of executive authority to establish such a focus in my work. Working in an administrative department does not reduce my responsibility to think in an entrepreneurial manner.

TEST 3 - Take responsibility for professional development.

I stopped acting in an 'indifferent' manner allowing my behaviour to be influenced inappropriately. The meaning I am using for 'indifferent' is that I did not take responsibility for the factors which influenced my career. I just drifted along with no sense of direction willing to take any advice I stumbled upon. I was the indifferent person Arendt refers to, "In the unlikely case that someone should come and tell us that he would prefer Bluebeard for company, and hence take him as his example, the only thing we could do is to make sure that he never comes near us. But the likelihood that someone would come and tell us that he does not mind and that any company will be good enough for him is, I fear, by far greater. Morally and even politically speaking, this indifference, though common enough, is the greatest danger" (Arendt, 2003: p.146).

My exploration commenced in 2007 when I decided to go back into education and complete an Executive MBA at University College Cork. This was a very big step for me as the company I had kept for the previous twelve years did not support such personal development activities. My exploration took on a new emphasis in 2009 when I decided after graduating from my EMBA that I would complete a Doctorate.

My exploration created a learning community which included UCC academics, my fellow class mates, and most importantly the leading explorers we studied in the classroom. I immersed myself in the experiences of other leading explorers in an attempt to leverage how I think to a more developed level. I am reading, writing, and thinking, the work of leading theorists, to engage with myself and with my imagination. I am working hard in 'training my imagination to go visiting', with visiting being a metaphor for putting myself in the position of another. I am not looking for definite answers from where I go visiting; I am looking for a mirror in the form of mentorship to reflect on myself. The point of view I am analysing other experiences from is my-self. I am using the books as a tool, or a conceptual apparatus, to think about myself in a form of self-reflection. The company I have kept to date in the form of leading explorers includes Penrose, Drucker, Keynes, Sowell, Arendt, Frankl, and Kegan. I used a learning community because I could see that my own ability was limited and I needed to understand the insights of others to challenge and develop my perspectives to support my professional development.

The MBA I completed exposed my mind to an understanding, the application, and a reflection on new theories, through applying the theories of leading explorers to my place of work. This helped me to expose my mind to the experiences of others to engage with my imagination. I guess that for the first time I began using my experiences as a useful learning tool.

On reflecting on the usefulness of the theories I was exposed to during my MBA I took a special interest on work we completed on MIS development as I could see that this concept had a lot of potential to transform an old MIS system which existed within my firm. I discussed my perspective with my Finance Director and he saw so much potential within my ideas that he asked me to move from my existing Financial Controller position and head a new MIS business development role.

I took direction from the learning community I experienced in my academic world by creating a learning community at my place of work. This helped to support a process of self-enquiry through relating the experiences and thoughts of other work colleagues to the ancestral theories which dominated my mind. Relating to the experience of other work colleagues helped to guide my thoughts and draw attention to the specific beliefs I held. My learning community helped me build my own library of practices which I can pick and choose as required, to deal with a specific situation, in a specific time and place. My learning community also includes many individuals working outside of my firm such as officers employed by expert bodies such as Enterprise Ireland and specialised vendors who have an advanced knowledge of specific MIS practices.

Reflecting back on my MIS project, it would never have happened if I had not completed the MBA. I guess this helps prove Druckers proposition that development opportunities are always available for the prepared mind. “Successful careers are not planned. They develop when people are prepared for opportunities ….. but with opportunity comes responsibility. Companies today aren't managing their employees' careers; knowledge workers must, effectively, be their own chief executive officers. It's up to you to carve out your place, to know when to change course, and to keep yourself engaged and productive during a work life that may span some 50 years. To do those things well, you'll need to cultivate a deep understanding of yourself…….and where you can make the greatest contribution. Knowing where one belongs can transform an ordinary person - hardworking and competent but otherwise mediocre - into an outstanding performer” (Drucker, 1999: P.100).

I can see now that the library of beliefs and practices I had from my experiences alone to support the MIS business development role was totally inadequate. I would estimate that ninety per cent of the insights used to support and implement the new MIS strategy did not come from my thoughts; they were the insights of my learning community. Therefore, I would conclude that a learning community is a very effective tool to support the development of a career.

I was able to support a higher level of self-knowledge through the use of deliberately chosen developmental stimulus to expand my consciousness. My greater insights into my motives and behaviour increased the level of integrity I was able to bring to my work. This in turn helped me to adapt a more transformational style of leadership by expressing a personal value system that included such values as justice and integrity.

<u>Step 7</u> – What is my interpretation of the results of my research?

The insights I can interpret from the results of my three explorations are the following,

- I do not experience the same guilt at the thought of unkind indiscretion when I now challenge ancestral authority. I do not have the same fear that my need for attachment will be violated by separation. I have 'survived' without the direct supervision of ancestral authority in my business development role over the last two years and I will be able to survive without such direct support in the future. I now know that I have the capacity to operate at high levels of performance without the support of the senior executive team.

- Talking about my perceptions and the perceptions of others give me a greater ability to see the perspectives of others and to use same to challenge my partial views. I now have an ability to critique the perspectives of senior executives, without the fear of making personal judgement which may upset those whom I critique and the result being a breakdown in communication and mutual respect. I can now critique the perspectives rather than the person and this simple realignment has completely redefined my relationship with authority.

- I no longer believe that satisfying every need of ancestral authority is the best route to my professional development. My professional development is my responsibility and it is not

the responsibility of the senior executives in my firm. I can now see that I am the locus of my own development and amazingly I never knew this before. Having the capacity to exercise my own choices is part of my self-authoring journey.[7] Leaders in organisations do not have the power to make people change and develop; it has to come from the person.

- I can now see that security alone will not fulfil the needs of my human nature. Security which limits my freedom and curtails my sense of equality will not deliver my fulfilment. Complying with 'family values' in a 'family type environment' does not provide a visceral drive to achieve our capacity. An overly secure environment can deteriorate us into thoughtlessness unaware of our thoughtless status. We become part of the 'masses', which Drucker (2009) believes live a life of despair. Complying with the needs of authority delivers a high level of security at work over an extended period but this security alone did not deliver my fulfilment, and my inability to engage with my internal disposition in any meaningful way paralysed my capacity to change.

- Collingwood's (1978) framework of knowledge using questions and answers, the framework of causation used by Arendt to identify the reasons for a phenomenon, and the use of tools to help clarify our existing beliefs and practices, provide increased support to think and critique my perspectives before jumping to judgement.

I have experienced a number of dilemmas in my professional life and I have successfully used these dilemmas to support the transformational change required to adopt new beliefs. However, I have done more than adapt new beliefs; I have actually changed my behaviour, in the form of applying new practices at work.

[7] I have summarised the definition of Self-authoring which I am using in page 169 of this Portfolio.

2.2. Discontinue using absolutist and autocratic practices and learn to embrace vulnerability

Step 1 – Commitment and improvement Goal

My primary improvement goal is to embrace vulnerability and find a freedom away from my own autocratic and self-perfective beliefs and practices. I must learn to accept that I do not have the capacity to force others to see the same version of reality which my mind creates and this should not be a priority for me.

My secondary commitment goal is to use a transformational form of leadership to apply higher moral standards and reach for a higher level of integrity at work. My current leadership style is inconsistent and can be very transactional based.

Step 2 – Doing / not doing to achieve commitment

I tend to engage in practices which are preventing achieving my stated goal. For example,

I behave in an elitist manner in that I think I can control how others think. I do not think that I need to build an argument to convince others to apply my perspectives in that my perspectives are so obvious they do not need to be debated. I simply cut off peers who have perceptions which are different to the perceptions I hold. I will not waste my time working with colleagues who hold 'inaccurate' perceptions. I do not prioritize taking on board the thoughts of my wider team to critique my perceptions. I do not give my peers a forum to critique my work or critique the manner in which my department is managed. I am not engaging properly with other team members to build a dialectical way of thinking to support a multiple perspective. I am not working in community with others. I do not place a high priority on communication within my team, to build high levels of trust, and support true empowerment of my team. I believe I do not require the support of a team to complete my role at work in an effective and efficient manner.

I try to avoid conflict situations. Conflict situations may demand dialogue, debate, and reconciliation, and I am not good at that. My natural style at meetings is that I know the best solution to the question being debated, in advance of the meeting, and my priority is to convince others to adopt my solution. I have little interest in listening to the perspectives of the other members present as I know that their perceptions are not as good as the choices I have made. I

find it difficult to acknowledge at a public forum that the views I hold may be inaccurate or that the views held by my peers are better than the views I have. I cannot accept such vulnerability in how I think. My vision supports the creation of information silos and a specialisation of my knowledge. I have built silos around my work to protect my space from any unwelcome predator. Silos of information prevent my peers from gaining access to a contextual knowledge and it prevents them from gaining access to information which may help them develop ideas on an issue.

Step 3 – Hidden competing commitments

I have hidden competing commitments to comply with an 'old' way of knowing.

Autocratic leadership and humility

I worry that I can only support an autocratic style of leadership. An autocratic leadership style is the natural leadership style for me since I have been exposed to this form of leadership at different social forums throughout my life.

I worry that if I cannot behave in an autocratic manner, I will never be considered by the ancestral authority in my firm as elite, with the consequence that I will never be considered for an executive position in my firm. My perception is that only elite individuals with autocratic personalities can be promoted to positions with executive powers.

Such worries and fears indicate I am committed to applying the autocratic leadership practices I adopted from my parents. My parents used such a leadership type to control risk in my family home and I want to use the same leadership type to control risk in my place of work. I am committed to applying the autocratic leadership practices I adopted from the teachers who worked in the schools I attended. School teachers used the exact same autocratic style as used by our parents in our family home.

Human capacity and justice in results

I worry that if I cannot control how others think the optimum solution which is my solution, will not be adopted. I worry that if I make decisions in a democratic logical manner the best solutions - which I already know - will be impaired or unduly delayed.

I worry that conflict situations could threaten the reality I create and if I step outside of my reality my standards of performance at work will fall. I worry that the practices of my wider team may be weak and inappropriate and in some cases they do not have an idea what they are talking about. I worry that the additional benefits which I could achieve from supporting a team would be less than the cost of my personal time to support the process.

Such worries and fears indicate I am committed to taking direction from my own contextual and conventional wisdom rather than working in community. I do not need a constitution provided by a wider community to protect the process because I have the human capacity to deliver the best results directly. I am committed to working and thinking by myself. I am committed to concentrating on tasks where I have a high level of specialised knowledge to reduce my dependency on the resources of a team. I find it uncomfortable to work on tasks which require the knowledge from a wider team. I am committed to looking to my internal disposition for my source of motivation. I am finding my inspiration from my desire to develop my potential to a standard where others acknowledge my high level of competence.

I believe that justice in the end result is more important than justice in the process and I want to use my further education to increase my capacity to deliver more justice in the end result. My highest duty is to develop my potential. I am committed to a further investment in my education to develop my potential. This priority takes precedence over developing my team or truly supporting the requirements of my employer.

Self-interest and conformance to deliver a sense of self-worth

I worry that I will not be able to fulfil the expectations of others. I worry that senior executives and my own peers at work would question my ability if I exposed the weaknesses in my views to a wider team. I worry that if I do not build a silo of information to protect my perspectives my status as a good manager among my peers will erode.

I worry that the development of my peers could threaten the perception held by others of the value I bring to my work. I have a perception that ancestral authority in my firm holds an elite perception of my work. I guess that one of mankind's inherent weaknesses is that we all hold a perception that our human nature and personal capacity is at a higher level to what it actually is (Smith, 1759).

I worry that my actual performance at work will not reach my own standards of personal performance. I worry that I will not be as successful at work as some of my colleagues. I have got to drive on my own agenda at all times to prevent this from happening.

Such worries and fears indicate I am committed to delivering the needs of my ego which always wants to prioritise my own self-interest. A need to put myself first can sometimes lead to envy which in turn can reduce my cognitive ability. My emotions take over and they reduce my ability to exercise my cognitive attributes fully. I am committed to fulfilling the expectations of senior executives in my firm to deliver my sense of self-worth. I must always perform better than my peers in the eyes of my boss. This goal takes a priority over the development or fulfilment of any team objective. I am committed to fulfilling my organisational responsibility. I work in a traditional hierarchical organisation where each layer of management has a direct supervisory responsibility for the layer underneath.

Step 4 – Big assumptions

The following fixed and dogmatic theories define how I think. They protect my contradicting commitments and work against my stated commitments.

Humility and autocratic leadership

The most effective management style to manage risk is an autocratic and dogmatic style of management. This style was widely used in the society I grew up in and it is a natural process for me to adopt the same management style at work.

An effective executive must be able to outperform their peers at all times. I guess this comes from the notion that a parent must always be able to outperform a child or a teacher must always know more than the student.

Human capacity and justice in results

Knowledge is certain and I have the ability to command it. I must develop my specialist theories to consider myself effective at work.

I must control how others think. I do not fully trust those whom I work with to be guided by their view of the world.

Justice in the end result is more important than justice in the process. It does not matter how we achieve justice in the end result as long as we do actually achieve same. Injustice in the process is inevitable.

Conflict among peers is bad and it should be avoided. Conflict among a team of persons is not necessary to choose the best result. Those individuals with unlimited potential will always know the best result.

I do not need to work in community and I do not need to support a team to develop my perspectives. Therefore I do not need strong communication links with a wider community.

Self-interest and conformance to deliver a sense of self-worth

I must curtail my work to matters where I have a high level of experience and a high level of contextual knowledge to ensure I successfully complete all of my tasks. There is no excuse for failure: it is not an option.

I must always delight those in authority to achieve my personal needs.

Step 5 – Transformational explorations

Developmental explorations were organised around dilemmas I currently have at work to suspend my presuppositions and try on a new set of assumptions on a trial basis. The explorations chosen are:

Try out a less autocratic style of leadership. I must support the creation of situations where my beliefs are critiqued and my vulnerability exposed by other members in my team. I must establish how effective this form of leadership is and if I could live in a world with such vulnerability.

Check if I have a preconceived vision of the future to make choices in a dogmatic manner. Do I hold a superior level of knowledge to always deliver the right answer?

Can I transition myself where I can control my own agenda and operate on the assumption that my own ability is limited?

Step 6 – Constructivist research

TEST 1 - Test the effectiveness of a less autocratic style of leadership.

I moved into a new project where my low level of contextual knowledge forced me to use a learning community to develop the solutions to deliver an emerging agenda. I had to use the views and insights of others to deliver the best solution.

One of the primary objectives of my new role was to recruit and manage new staff and I used this opportunity to contrast two alternative styles of leadership. I managed two project teams within my business development role in contrasting ways in the hope of acquiring evidence that one of the leadership styles was more effective than the other. I managed 'Joe's' team in a very democratic and dialectical manner and I managed 'Mary's' team in a very autocratic and dogmatic manner. The time frame of this exploration was six months.

Approach 1 - Democratic leadership

The exploration with Joe was an opportunity to work more as a team to support a dialogical way of thinking and making meaning and less as an autocratic individual. I was forced to manage Joe in this manner as the project he was managing was outside my area of experience and I had little contextual knowledge of the detail.

My primary role was to safeguard justice in the process rather than try and control the end result. The framework I established enabled Joe to contribute his own views in the development of a solution. I respected Joe's judgement and I communicated with him as an equal.

I developed a learning type environment where there was a reduced level of advocacy and more inquiry to deliver greater insight into the motives and behaviour which delivered our solution. I did not just recruit Joe and give him a role with little support. I used my contextual knowledge of

our business to challenge Joe's views as an impartial spectator. My role was restricted to challenging views and I had no authority to decide the final practices Joe wanted to include in the framework to drive the solution.

I engaged in a high level of interpersonal discourse to tap into the thoughts of Joe to support my intrapersonal discourse. I used the thoughts of Joe to expose my theories and support more inquiry in how I think. I wanted to expose my mind to a new set of well thought through insights to help my mind transcend my limited personal perspectives. We constantly enquired into each other's thoughts on the projects we were working on together. Our dialogue extended to both of us asking for advice from the other about other projects we were working on with other teams. Our high level of dialogue supported the building of knowledge using dialectical meaning.

I applied a 'culture of contradiction' in my analysis of Joe's role. I raised uncomfortable questions to help me undertake self-reflection to challenge my perspectives. I embraced vulnerability and accepted it could not be avoided. I communicated in public forums that I make mistakes and I asked others to critique my thoughts and challenge them if they thought the practices I am using are weak. I had to change my behaviour and practices to adapt to my new uncertain environment.

I consciously behaved in a humble manner and I was generous and magnanimous to Joe on tasks he completed well. I did not use my individual perspectives and my individual rational analysis to drive the decision-making process. We used scenario analysis to discuss the impact of different outcomes which could arise in the future and we accepted that unexpected problems would arise as we could not predict the future. This method of working did not support absolutist views on a given solution.

The outcome was that Joe and I had space in our working relationship to support a sense of freedom to think and a sense of justice to be perceived as equals among each other. This equality in our relationship, between ourselves and among our peers released us to critique the thoughts of the other and build an insight into the others motives and behaviours. Joe and I had conversations about our values and how we reflect such values in our work performance.

Joe and I had established a learning community which supported a high level of dialogue about our work. I felt free to break down the silos around my work and share my insights with Joe. We

built dialogical insights which contained a combination of both of our views having being critiqued by the other. Our individual perspectives provided the required checks and balances to critique the views of the other and articulate group insights, using our personal reflective thoughts. The consequence of this process was that we were able to use reflective insights of today to make our choices. There was no sense of having to comply with the thoughts of ancestral authority or systemic meaning; in fact we had a great sense of moving away from the practices used in the past.

The higher level of integrity we brought to our work empowered us to transcend our own personal requirements to accomplish our project. There was a low level of dysfunction between our personal goals and our firm's goals.

In conclusion Joe's project was a great success and I enjoyed working on it. This leadership model helped to deliver the successful completion of the project for my firm and it delivered a high level of fun and job satisfaction for me.

Approach 2 - Autocratic leadership

I managed Mary in my more natural leadership style which was autocratic and instructive. The tasks which Mary was managing were more within my 'old Financial Controller' role and I had a high contextual knowledge of the information. This leadership style fitted in easily with the vertical hierarchical structure in my firm.

I did not embrace vulnerability in that the practices I applied in my relationship with Mary were only applicable to a controlled environment. I set the framework and the practices on how to complete her job and her role was just to comply with my practices. I did not want Mary to apply her own views; in fact I tried to control how Mary thought and do her thinking for her.

I recruited Mary from outside the firm and I just let her work on her own initiative to complete my instructions. I put no effort to build a team around her role to help challenge and develop her thinking. We both kept our thoughts to ourselves and Mary just did her own thing. We did not work together to engage with each other's preconceived thoughts or feelings. I deliberately avoided regular reviews with Mary on the performance of her role.

The communications between Mary and I were infrequent and they were very much business related. Mary primarily worked by herself and she delivered what she considered were final outputs without any contribution or critique from myself. She never did exactly what I informed her to do which somewhat annoyed me.

My communication style was very judgemental of Mary. I regularly commented to her that she would not have the experience or contextual knowledge to deal with a specific task. Meetings were never used to build a dialectical understanding of the best choices required to be made to progress our project. I had all the decisions made prior to the meetings, and I only used meetings to inform Mary to do what I knew was best.

The outcome was that there was a clash of views between Mary and me from the very beginning. We worked as independent persons making our own choices with little or no help from the other. We built silos around our work to protect our own perception of our self-importance and to provide the need for security in our role. There was a great sense of competition between us where the need to satisfy our ego was taking priority over the accomplishment of our project. Our personal requirements took a priority over performance at work - and we did not care.

We had no mutual respect for each other with the result that there was no synergy within our team to build on our individual resources. We avoided each other and we did anything but share our thoughts and feelings. Progress on our project was a struggle and in my perspective the work was not enjoyable.

The main insights I gleaned from applying alternative leadership models are:

- Trying to control how others think just did not work in my workplace. I found that using a team to make dialectical choices is far more useful and rewarding approach than thinking alone and criticising others for not accepting my agenda. An engaging and reflective relationship must exist in an open working environment to support a free and open process of critical thinking to develop dialectical solutions.
- An awareness of the need to use values such as humility, respect, and justice in the process, is essential to build a free and equal relationship between individuals in a team. My open relationship with Joe helped both of us get some insight into each other's motives and

behaviour which helped both of us bring a higher level of integrity to our work. This greater understanding of each other helped to reduce our fears and reduce the need to always put ourselves first. We transcended our personal perspectives to apply higher morals at work. I personally had a lower need for information silos to protect my need for security at work.

- This exploration informed me that I cannot directly control the motivational levels of my team. I can only control the setting or the environment and I cannot control how an employee's mind perceives a specific incentive. In considering the optimum environment to position high motivational levels in the minds of my team, I am inclined to agree with Drucker's (2009) perspective that people are no longer satisfied by economic incentives alone. People now have a more rounded human nature which requires freedom, and justice, to help them find what Drucker (2009) defines as 'social status and function' from the society which exists within a firm. Therefore if I can provide an environment where an employee can experience, freedom and justice there is a good chance that my environment will satisfy the innate nature of the individuals in my team and they will be more motivated at work. There will be less dysfunction in that employees will fulfil all of the requirements of their human nature working on corporate projects. I deliberately worked on providing freedom and justice in the democratic leadership model and I can conclude that these basic innate needs were the locus to help me reach high motivational levels at work.
- The democratic leadership setting provide a much greater opportunity to apply standards of right conduct in a work environment and I can conclude from this exploration that the application of standards of right conduct can create high trust levels, support free communication, and empower others to act, and accept responsibility.
- The leadership practices I chose to use in the democratic approach were grounded on free, open and equal communication, and this helped me to transcend my own personal perspectives to support a more cultivated and thinking mind. The leadership practices I choose to use in the autocratic leadership approach did not support open communication and the result was that there was a much lower level of enlightenment in my work environment. I had very much a laissez-faire type relationship with little opportunity to engage with or develop my perspectives.
- I must work less as an individual and more as a team player to inspire my team. I must provide my team with a forum to communicate their thoughts and ideas to ensure I listen longer and take on board other people's perspectives. I cannot allow myself to be tied up in

tasks which confine my thoughts to myself. I must get outside of the confinement of my office and build strong relationships with my team which are based on a mutual integrity and respect. In the past I have put the administrative performance of my work ahead of the integrity of myself and my team.

TEST 2 - I checked if I have a preconceived vision of the future to make choices in a dogmatic manner. Do I hold a superior level of knowledge to always deliver the right answer?

I discontinued using my personal judgement to drive the Gas Procurement Strategy in my firm. I developed a new plan which was not dependent on my ability to predict the market.

The background to this exploration is that I had the primary responsibility to establish the gas procurement strategy in my firm. I had a very good knowledge of the gas market from purchasing gas for ten years and I had access to a pool of very knowledgeable people with experience of the industry. I have made and lost millions of euros on the gas market using my special knowledge over the last ten years. In 2011 my inability to successfully see into the future in the gas market resulted in a high level of stress for the failure of my vision to beat the market. The factors I did not anticipate were the nuclear meltdown in Japan and the domestic wars of independence in major oil producing countries in Algeria, Libya, and Egypt. The emotions I experienced curtailed my cognitive ability and reduced my ability further to buy gas at low prices. In this situation I purchased gas at very high prices to prevent a bad situation getting worse, and gas prices fell to more normal levels a few weeks later.

I used this dilemma to develop a new vision to manage the procurement of gas in my firm. I went and met with expert consultants and I chose a new purchasing framework called a 'ladder strategy'. A 'ladder strategy' removes my dominant role in purchasing large discretionary volumes of gas: it is based on a formula to purchase a smaller volume of gas every day of the year, three months in advance of the delivery date. My role is reduced to checking the performance of our chosen strategy and comparing the results of same against other strategies. My adjusted model was based on Drucker's proposition of the limited nature of man which requires that I accept compromise and variety, "We….must start with the premise that we do not

know where the ultimate solution lies. Hence we must accept inconsistency, variety, compromise and contradictions." (Drucker, 2009: p.202).

I have analysed the results of our new strategy which I have shared with our CEO and Finance Director and we are happy, as a team, with the results of our new gas procurement strategy. We feel that the new practices provide our firm with a far greater level of stability in a very uncertain global gas market. We perceive that our new practices are superior to relying on my expert knowledge for the following reasons,

There will be less variance between our budgeted energy cost and our actual energy cost. This increased certainty is very important for planning.

My firm is no longer reacting and purchasing gas on short term spikes in the market. In the past my fear of major losses always forced me to buy gas at spiked prices to avoid any further major losses. My cognitive capacity was curtailed by the negative emotions I experienced. Of course in most cases gas prices fell back down again maybe a week later which made my reactionary purchasing strategy a financial burden for our firm. However, it is interesting to note that I could never buy at low trough prices as I did not want to buy and see the prices drop still further. My greed prevented me from taking advantage of low gas prices in the market. Our new strategy has helped us to overcome this weakness in my human nature.

Stress has significantly reduced with the application of our new practices. The stress I experienced resulted from my inability to realise my belief that I could control a future event. When I changed my big assumption about my ability to control a future event my stress dissipated. My newly adopted set of practices can now deal with the volatility in the gas market and my previous set of practices could not. My natural ability prevents me from seeing into the future and my mind needs to use a set of beliefs which recognises this fact of life.

The senior executives in my firm have formally adopted my new 'ladder strategy' as the preferred strategy to purchase our gas in the future. They would never again allow a return to a strategy which is based on one individual's ability to see into the future.

The main insights I gleaned from these explorations are:

- Knowledge of the future is not certain and I do not possess such knowledge. My human nature is not adequate to see into the future. I can nurture my mind to build more advance theories but I cannot nurture my mind to see into the future. I do not have the ability to deliver justice in the end result.
- The reality my personal theories construct is never accurate. I need to work in community to support a team to develop my perspectives. Strong and open communication links with a wider community is essential to critique and develop my perspectives.

TEST 3 - I controlled my own agenda and operated on the assumption that my own ability was limited and I checked the result of same on my effectiveness at work.

I developed a new Manufacturing Execution Systems strategy for my firm using a primary assumption that my own ability and my own agenda are limited.

I moved roles from a Financial Controller position, where I had a very high level of contextual knowledge working in a very controlled environment, to a position of an MIS business development manager where I had very little experience working in a very complex area. I could operate like a supreme individual in my old job because I had become very good at developing given practices based on habitual expectations in a relatively controlled environment. In my new role I did not have the experience to derive habitual expectations and the environment I was working in was much more uncertain. My ability was limited to deliver a useful solution by myself. I found myself in a perfect dilemma to test the consequences of leading a strategy with a given assumption that my own ability is limited.

I chose to use Drucker's (2009) framework of a 'workable society' as the setting for my new MIS department, and this framework is based on the premise that my own agenda must be limited for my power to be legitimate. Drucker's model of a 'workable society' is based on the dual criteria that individual members are given social status and function and the decisive social power is legitimate power, "No society can function as a society unless it gives the individual member social status and function, and unless the decisive social power is legitimate power" (Drucker, 2009: p.28). In Drucker's perspective the social status and function of the individual is

derived from the relationship between the group and the individual member. It is based on the integration of the individual with the group and that of the group with the individual. No real society can exist for an individual unless the purpose, aims, and ideals of a society make sense in terms of the individual's purpose, aims, and ideals. There must be commonality in values and belief's to build a functional working relationship. The first step in my exploration to build a workable society is to create a sense of social status and function for the individual. The primary tool I used to help the individuals working in my department to realise a sense of social status and function was the basic beliefs I adopted regarding the nature and fulfilment of man. Drucker's (2009) perspective is that every organised society is built on a concept of the nature of man and of his place and function in society and the organised society in my new department was no different. The model of the nature of man which I used was a man which was seen as free, equal, good, but with a limited capacity to see into the future. I chose this definition of the nature of man to fulfil man's conception of his own nature and of his place in the universal society. The framework I am using to define man's concept of his own nature, is again taken from the proposition of Drucker (2009) as defined in *The End of Economic Man*. This framework lists man's primary needs as freedom, equality and security, and the model I am building, which delivers social status and function to the individual, must be based on these moral benchmarks.

I used a working assumption that economic freedom alone will not deliver equality and, therefore, this concept of the nature of man and of his function and place in society is inadequate: "The proof that the economic freedom of the individual does not automatically or dialectically lead to equality, has destroyed the very concept of the nature of man on which both capitalism and socialism were based: Economic man" (Drucker, 2009: p.45). I need to use a concept of man which is more than just an economic man and, therefore, an assumption in my framework is that it is inadequate to pay an individual in my team a good average wage, and expect this wage alone to deliver social status and function for the individual. In my working society there is a common identity of purpose which builds a community which deliver the nature and fulfilment of man. The second part of my model to deliver a workable society is that my decisive social power is legitimate power. Legitimate power is defined as "rulership which finds its justification in the basic ethos of the society" and it "stems from the same basic belief of society regarding man's nature and fulfilment on which the individual's social status and function rest" (Drucker, 2009: p.32). Power can never be categorised as legitimate unless it has been

accepted by society as a decisive social power, and its criterion of responsibility is that it fulfils the basic beliefs of the society. The primary tool I used to ensure that the power I exercised could be categorised as legitimate power was to ensure that the institutions or the mini committees which operate within my department, function on the principles of equality and freedom, to support a free, equal society for those working in my team. The constitutions upon which my institutions were based were not constructed as panacea or rules of law; they were more in the form of checks and balances to deliver the objectives of these institutions while complying with high moral principles.

To put this approach into practice, the first step I took was to apply the framework of Daloz's (2000) to establish a challenging transformative working environment. Daloz argued that the optimal environment to support transformation was a "climate of safety in which people feel free to speak their truth, where blaming and judging are minimal, where full participation is encouraged, where a premium is placed on mutual understanding, but also where evidence and arguments may be assessed objectively and assumptions surfaced openly" (Daloz, 2000, p.114). I worked off the working hypothesis that my project could only develop when my team has the freedom to think, the confidence to share their thoughts with all of their work colleagues, and the understanding that the process of critiquing our views is necessary to select the best group solution. The selection of a best solution cannot be forced; it can only be encouraged, through our working together. I tried to build equal teams where there were no superior, subordinate, relationships forcing one individual perspective on another. This was more relevant to me, than to any other individual, since I was the leader of the team. I took advice from Kegan when implementing my model of teamwork, "To maximise this feeling of freedom…it is preferable not to have…partners with whom you have a subordinate or reporting relationship. This…means that you are not an optimal partner for one of your subordinates" (Kegan, 2001: p.15). This equality and freedom within my team encouraged a high level of dialogue and a genuine sense of justice in the process.

A learning community does not just emerge over a day or a week, it has to be encouraged and supported over a longer period. The learning community I set up was formal in that it was very focused on the goals of our project, but it operated at an informal level outside of the existing hierarchical reporting structure. The discontinuation of existing formal relationships provided

developmental space for me and my team to work as equals and to engage with imaginative thoughts free from any systemic restrictions. The company I kept within my learning community was very diverse in that it contained individuals from every department and every level of our organisation. It extended from services to manufacturing and from plant operators to senior executives. It reached beyond national boundaries since it contained individuals from our operations in the UK and individuals from our operations in the US. It extended beyond the boundaries of our firm since it considered the ideas of specialist vendors, and the perceptions of advanced theorists whom I engaged with in the UCC, MBA and DBA classrooms. The diversity of our learning community helped me develop a clearer picture of myself and the theories which dominated my thinking.

I followed Stephen Carter's model of integrity by not just recognising my limited ability but also communicating openly to my team members that I did not have the capacity to drive the optimal solution myself but that we did have the capacity as a team to implement the optimal solution together. I worked off the assumption that every individual have unique knowledge which can increase the performance of the team and it was my responsibility that each individual engaged with the team process to contribute. If any individual adopt a laissez-faire approach the overall team solution would suffer. I encouraged the critique of my knowledge and the knowledge of each individual member in my team, to discard weak theories, and only use the strongest practices to drive the best solution. A useful tool I used to support a critique of our thinking was to present our process by means of a working hypothetical framework, and then critique the hypothetical framework and not the person. This helped to transcend our close working relationship and increase the impartiality in our decision making process.

My leadership style and the integrity it was based on provided each individual with the freedom to think and talk without restraint which supported justice and equality in the decision making process. A tool I used to deliver a genuine local self-government was to give my team members a platform to report their plans and progress to the steering committee i.e. senior executives. This forum acknowledged them (not me) as the projects leaders: my role was reduced to that of a supporting coach. It provided a symbol of the social equality which existed within my team and this helped to transcend the existing hierarchical power structure.

My role was not to force everybody to believe my version of the truth; it was to challenge the thoughts of my team to free up their imagination to consider other perspectives with the understanding that consideration of a wider range of perspective generates better choices. There was a freedom in my team where each individual or minority group had the right to behave differently without being outlawed. This freedom completely changed my initial perceptions of our MIS project in that my initial thoughts were that our primary objective would be the replacement of our ERP system, but this project was parked, and the ideas of other individuals within my team was given a priority. It was a priority for me to take on the perspectives of others through suspending my judgement and listening carefully and empathically with the objective of seeking common ground. I had to open my mind and the minds of the individuals within my team to new ideas and new understandings. I used the expertise of selected vendors to provide a scenario analysis to visualise a large number of different outcomes. The multiple perspectives provided by our vendors to define our project helped to suspend our presuppositions, and encourage a critical self-questioning of our own visions and the beliefs they were based on. I set out with the assumption that we must plan for all contingencies, "…we cannot rest content with developing plans for the events which we foresee or want to foresee. We must prepare for all possible – and a good many impossible – contingencies" (Drucker, 2009: p.202).

The outcome was that my team embraced the new found freedom and equality they experienced working outside the existing hierarchical structure. They were imaginative, hardworking, respectful, and highly empowered. Their imagination was evident in the new practices and procedures they adopted to develop their departments. An example of this was the new practices adopted by the product development department. The framework which supported the practices was completely different and it gave our firm a much better chance to develop a wider range of added value products. Evidence of the great effort they put into the project was the additional unpaid hours they worked to develop the projects they were responsible for. They found a high level of fortitude within themselves to work fifty or sixty hours a week to plan and project manage their new project in addition to managing their old routine manufacturing operations. All team members acted in a respectful manner to the thoughts of their peers and to my leadership practices. They did everything in their power to comply with their promises - deadlines or financial budgets - and they embraced the need to forgive which was essential due to the uncertainty in the project. This forgiveness may be the ability to work

with a vendor who is finding it difficult to deliver a contractual obligation due to an unforeseen problem in the operation of the project. Finally evidence of their empowerment could be seen in their acceptance of the primary responsibility to deliver their individual projects. This high acceptance of responsibility eliminated my need to employ additional expert project managers to manage the projects and it freed up my time to plan the management of my department.

The legitimate power in my new department was challenging and enlightening rather than oppressive and cruel. The recognition of the equality of all individuals built high levels of trust and supported a high level of justice in the process. The resulting mutuality in our teams was always challenged and critiqued by the freedom of expression which existed within our group. There was free and easy communication both upwards and downwards without any fear of an adverse reaction to a weak idea. The majority of our communication was outside of our formal communication structure, it was conducted in our informal daily chats. Satisfactory results from our decentralised communication forums encouraged the members of the team to establish similar forums with plant operators and local supervisors to deliver an inclusive process at plant level to support the projects.

Feedback from third parties outside of my team was interesting. Senior executives directed credit directly to individual team members for the good work our department was engaged in. I viewed this direct communication as a symbol of the true equality within our team. Historically senior executive reaction would have been communicated to a project team through the departmental head. Senior Executives commented that it was great to see young managers standing up and taking responsibility for projects themselves. The normal precedent in my firm was that these young managers stood in the background and experienced departmental managers fronted the projects. I would conclude from this acknowledgement that genuine local self-government was accepted as superior to centralised bureaucracy.

Some vendors which I had included in my team criticized my knowledge and the ability of my team to drive our project forward. Such criticism was accepted without judgement or resentment. It provided the inspiration to seek further perspectives from within or outside our team on the matters judged by our vendors as being inadequate. The vendors we chose could see a genuine integrity in the team's work ethic. There was an initial uncertainty and this came to a head three months into the project when our MIS vendor misunderstood a member of our

team and they threatened to pull out of the project. After a long meeting with me they managed to understand the integrity with which we approached our work and they accepted that they incorrectly jumped to judgement. This vendor has a great working relationship with us since this meeting.

My thoughts on the exploration are that it is much more fun working in an environment where I do not have to outperform my peers at all times. It is a new experience for me to use my knowledge in an impartial manner to help others help themselves at work and it completely contrasts with my previous approach. Helping others to help themselves provides the greatest benefit to my team and to my firm.

My relationship with the managers and supervisors which worked in my team has moved to a new level. My previous relationship with this team could be defined as systemic in that it was defined by the hierarchical structure in my firm. We were shaped by the definitions and expectations of our roles in society. Our communication was instructive, task orientated, and most of it was by email. We had our own little silo of expertise which we did not want to share as such action would undermine the perceived value we thought we brought to the firm. I did not really know the people themselves in that I was not aware of their thoughts and feelings on various issues at work and the reasons why they held such thoughts and feelings. I acted on my own internal disposition but I was also not aware of the thoughts and feelings which drove my own ideology and belief system. We were all our own little isolated meaning making systems unable or unwilling to engage with the perspectives of others and therefore not able to develop our own limited view of reality. A consequence of this isolation is that we rushed to harshly judge others by our own limited view of the world with the result that we could not build any real team to support the making of better choices at work.

My new relationship with work colleagues is very much based on my ability to support a learning community. I recognise I have a limited view of the world and I must 'support my imagination to go visiting' to see things from another perspective and develop the reality I create. My learning community help me to see the thoughts and feelings which drive my internal disposition and the 'given' lens I use to create my reality. I was able to step back and reflect on the limits of my own personal authority and be friendlier towards contradiction. Free and open communication with all parties had to take a priority over the completion of our own systemic tasks. My deeper

understanding of myself and of the importance of the thoughts of others helped me to slow down my judgement of others.

The interpretation and analysis within the role provided an opportunity for freeing my-self from social oppression. Interpretation and analysis rather than just reporting systemic conclusions provides better opportunities to reflect on and evaluate our beliefs. We have to think about our own perspective and the use of our perspective to make choices at work.

My learning community provided the support to bear the anxiety that goes with realising that we may not know ourselves or the world as well as we thought. I think that this is a crucial point in that I know that I would not have had the confidence to overcome the fear of change without having a learning community to give me the reassurance that we had logically analysed all choices and the choices we are making are the best consciously constructed roadmap to drive our project forward. Just having somebody to talk to and listen to my concerns and the anxiety I was experiencing helped me to overcome my preferred option to avoid change.

The critique of my team encouraged critical reflection and helped to expand my self-knowledge. I was able to see something from a different point of view and from this perspective it was conscious-raising. Listening to the understanding of others helped me to become aware of my own understanding, “A particular feature of dialogue is its capacity to enable people to become aware of their own understanding of an issue by being exposed to other people’s understandings of the same issue” (Sandberg and Targama, 2007: p.132). The critique of a team is a very effective tool to help transcend my self-centeredness, see reality more clearly, and leverage my thoughts beyond my self-absorbed and individualistic concerns. There is a better way to manage peers with alternative perceptions than to just cut them off. I need a means to capture alternative perceptions and use such alternative perceptions as a funnel to check the reality which my team and I are creating. Absolutism does not support strong leadership; it curtails our ability to see the definite uncertainty which exists in the future.

I am more convinced that exposing my vulnerability is a key step to support transformational development and I am becoming more comfortable with this. I am becoming more comfortable with not always complying with the ‘given’ standards of a ‘given’ culture. I am becoming more comfortable with not always having to know the solution to every problem I experience. It is better for me and my firm to experience uncomfortable situations in decision-making and make

better choices, rather than avoid uncomfortable situations in the decision-making process and experience potential failure in the growth of my firm.

In conclusion to this exploration the main insights I gleaned are:

- I must behave in a humble manner to encourage a wider perspective to investigate all options to deliver the best result. Building a wider perspective is the best means to manage the innate limitations of my human nature.
- My priority should be to develop the potential of my team to overcome the inherent limitation in my own human nature. Development of my-self alone is never adequate to support the growth of a firm due to inherent limitations in my own human nature.
- I require multiple higher level challenges within my role to provide a 'culture of contradiction' to raise uncomfortable questions and promote critical self-reflection to challenge my perspectives. Developing a clear picture of my beliefs and my practices is a significant stepping stone to develop a more advanced way of knowing to support the growth of a firm.
- The fear of change is more easily overcome in a team environment. The use of a team provides a forum to challenge and overcome perceived fears which arise from using an 'old' and inadequate way of making meaning.
- The role of a leader is not to outperform its peers at all times, it is to help others to help themselves. Helping others to help themselves provide an environment to build and empower a team to work together planning for the future.

<u>Step 7</u> – What insights did I establish from the results of my research?

How has my explorations helped me develop a more advanced way of knowing? This is a very important question to ask to help my mind take direction from a new understanding rather than from an old experience.

I can interpret insights from the result of my experience relevant to supporting a new way of knowing, and they are summarised hereunder.

I have nothing to fear from embracing vulnerability and applying a less autocratic style of leadership which my big assumptions were preventing me from doing. An autocratic leadership style is not the most appropriate model to support the growth of a firm in today's business environment. In fact it is a very inappropriate model to apply as the concept of man it builds and his place and function in society does not fulfil man's perception of his own nature.

A democratic leadership model is transformative and an autocratic leadership model is not. A democratic model is an effective tool to help individuals work harder to achieve the goals and objectives of a team. Interpersonal communication is better and job satisfaction is higher. There is a reduced need for silos of information to deliver a high level of security at work as the freedom and justice in our working environment eliminate the need for security.

An autocratic leadership model is based on an understanding that man likes working in an environment where there is a high obedience to authority and he is primarily motivated by a need for security and financial rewards. I know that a high obedience to authority and high financial rewards do not fulfil my professional needs. It does not deliver a status and function for me at work which satisfies the needs of my human nature.

My preferred concept of the nature of man is based on Drucker's (2009) framework which defines the needs of man as freedom and justice and therefore my leadership must promote freedom and equality for my power to be legitimate in the mind of my team.

I do not hold a superior level of knowledge to know where the ultimate solution lies and therefore I must accept inconsistency, variety, compromise and contradictions in the construction of solutions. I do not have the personal capacity to deliver justice in the end result regardless of the level of personal development I undertake. My capacity to deliver justice in the end result is more dependent on my ability to build a learning community, to take ideas from others, rather than develop my own personal capacity to provide superior ideas. My exploration on gas procurement provided me with this insight.

Knowledge and truth is not absolute and much about knowing rests in uncertainty. A strong synthesis can only emerge from a dialectical analysis of a thesis and its antithesis, to provide the best guides for difficult and imprecise problems. I require a dialectical mind to construct what

Chandler and Holliday (1990) defined as emancipatory knowledge which helps to free the self from old conventional knowledge and old constraining ways of knowing.

A consultative form of leadership is more effective in managing a business than a coercive form of leadership. I must use a consultative form of leadership to develop a climate of safety in which people feel free to speak their truth, where blaming and judging are minimal, and where full participation is encouraged. I now have a view that each individual in my team have a unique piece of knowledge which could increase our capacity to manage the uncertainty in the environment we work in. Communication and feedback are essential to enable my meaning making free it-self from the limited perspective it uses to see the world. Unilateral power depends fully on our own limited paradigm which can result in weak leadership and weak decision-making. I require a capacity to witness rather than judge to promote options rather than restrict them.

I must engage in external dialogue to increase my understanding of the theories I use to support the making of better choices at work. I must move the basis of my thoughts from personal experiences to the reflective thoughts of a team. I should hold regular meetings with my peers where all parties step back and reflect on our thoughts of the present to have a clearer picture of the future. I should undertake cooperative inquiry to support more inquiry into how I think. This inquiry could include workshops to provide a dynamic and free environment to engage openly with a wider group.

I must use a neutral form of language in my communication at work to build relationships based on respect rather than power. I must adapt my communication to another person's perspective to try on the perspectives of others. I must openly state my understanding of another through the use of the following open communication style, 'Correct me if I am wrong, but I see your perspective on this as the following…….' To try on the perspectives of another I must have an open mind, listen carefully and empathically, seek common ground, and suspend judgement.

New challenges created a dilemma for me in that my old way of thinking no longer worked, and this forced me to alter the core assumptions I used to create my reality. I have overcome immunities by proving to myself that I have nothing to fear from the tasks my big assumptions

were preventing me from doing. My new world of understanding can support a more dynamic mind to help us overcome the challenges we experience in today's economic world.

I must work in community to develop and enhance my perspectives. My primary role should be to help others in this community to help themselves and not to outperform others.

2.3. Advance towards thoughtful thinking

Step 1 – Commitment and improvement Goal

My primary improvement goal is to engage my consciousness to support a more open and transparent way of thinking. I must recognise the unlimited freedom I have to think and I must practice how to use this freedom to think more meaningfully. I am committed to articulating the theories underlying my practices at work to manage my theories as an apparatus or an instrument of thought.

My secondary improvement goal is to apply my new thoughtful way of thinking to achieve a high level of integrity in my reasoning process. I will leverage my new constitution to build a more meaningful workplace for both my team and me.

Step 2 – Doing / not doing to achieve commitment?

Several things I am was doing, or not doing, prevented achieving my goal.

I think that I can see the world directly. I believe that the reality I create is a true and accurate representation of the world. I am not aware that I use a lens or a perceived theory to create a subjective reality.

I am not cognisant of the source of rules governing my choices. I put no time or effort into how I think. I never undertake any form of critical self-reflection or any form of deliberate reflective analysis of myself. I am not aware of the standards I apply within my thinking process.

I do not reflect and make explicit my experiential learnings. I am not aware of the 'theories' I implicitly deduce from my experience and how I apply them in work practices. If I do reflect to build knowledge, I have little awareness of the preferred practices I am choosing from the reflective process. I just comply in an almost unconscious manner with ancestral practices.

I do not find any personal meaning in my work in that I cannot relate my work to the person I am or the person I want to be. I am not aware of the dysfunction in the assumptions I use to think and the values required to-satisfy the demands of my human nature, to live a meaningful life. I am working harder and harder but things are just not getting any better.

I do not use a team dynamic to expose my theories and support more inquiry in how I think.

I find it difficult to stop and prepare a comprehensive logical analysis of the matters I am working on in that my mind will already have jumped to a judgement. I jump from my thoughts to judgements with very little emphasis on the theories I use to make my judgements. I have never deliberately recorded my thoughts on an issue I am considering and circulated such thoughts to my peers for their critique and comment. I jump to judgement in a very unconscious and thoughtless manner.

I like to limit my work to an administrative role where I have a high level of contextual knowledge and this reduces my need to think.

I look more to my boss and the cultural processes for knowledge. I do not reflect to build insights. I applied very few of the new theories I learned during my MBA experience in my work. I just continued using old conventional theories established by ancestral authorities.

<u>Step 3</u> –Hidden competing commitments

I have hidden competing commitments to comply with an 'old' way of knowing.

I worry that exposing my vulnerability to my team would undermine my reputation as a competent professional. I worry that if I cannot see the world directly my perceived value to my firm will decrease. I will have no answers for the problems I encounter at work or outside of work. I am committed to reaching my standard of professional competence. My standard is that an individual should be judged by their ability to provide answers and not by his ability to share their thoughts and feelings with others to build a solution based on the reflective thoughts of a group.

I worry that if I take my direction from my reflective thoughts I will not be able to comply with the expectations of ancestral authorities. I worry that my value to my boss may be greatly reduced if I step outside my conventional and contextual world. I am committed not to plan for the future. My respect for authority encourages me to do what they think I should do. I will just go with 'the flow of things' as directed by those in authority. I am committed to asking external

authorities in the form of my family, friends, and my colleagues at work to make my choices for me.

I worry that I do not and I will never have the ability to reflect on my thoughts in a useful manner. Reflection is a fearful process and I have no experience or confidence in my ability to deliver real meaning from the process. Implicit experiential insights are a far easier and less demanding way of knowing. I have a commitment to live a comfortable life by complying with external standards. I am committed to be loyal and to align my thoughts with the set of values and beliefs which surround me.

I worry that building a roadmap to deliver a more enlightened and rewarding professional career would create another expectation which I would not be able to deliver. Life is straightforward right now complying with external standards. I have learned to live with my failure to deliver personal satisfaction at work. I am committed to complying with the standards of others in preference to living values which may enlighten and empower my life. I am committed to being a success at work in the eyes of my colleagues and of executive authority and securing their approval. I am more committed to accomplishing the administrative tasks of senior executives in preference to my own professional development.

I worry that I am wasting my time trying to realign my practices with a new set of beliefs. I am not cognisant of my community living their life in this manner. I just want to be like everybody else and I don't want to stand out as being different. I worry about the risk such transparency and vulnerability may expose my mind to, and I want to limit this fear. I prefer to make trade-off's to protect what I have rather than expose myself to risk in the hope of developing my potential. I will not develop my potential at any cost. I am committed to satisfying my emotional connection with my existing theories. This emotional connection is preventing me from 'taking my head out of the sand', and use another perspective to consider another reality.

I worry that I will not have time to complete all of my tasks if I have to think about them. I am putting the completion of the systemic tasks ahead of my analysis of what I am doing. The conventional wisdom taken from my experience is the constitution I use to protect the processes I manage. I can only use implicit experiential insights to build a constitution. I would find it very difficult to move to a new constitution based on an explicit reflection of my thoughts. I have a commitment to live my life by the moral standards of right and wrong as defined within my

implicit experiences. The moral standards I can apply in the future cannot transcend my living experiences.

I cannot control my theories as just a tool to think with; they always have an imposing influence on my preferred practices. I am committed to using theory as a descriptive rather than as an apparatus of thought. I am committed to build my logic based on a mix of implicit experiential beliefs, based on what my boss wants, and based on conventional wisdom. I am committed to use a gut feeling, learned from experience, to make my choices in preference to undertaking reflective discourse.

Step 4 – Big assumptions

A range of fixed and unchallenged beliefs define how I think. They protect my contradicting commitments and fight against my stated commitments.

- I see no need to undertake explicit reflection of my thoughts. I want to build my reality from my world of experience rather than from a world of understanding. I assume that implicit insights based on experience are a very useful tool to build my reality of the world.
- I assume that the perception and reality I bring to a situation is factual and not flawed.
- I assume that sharing my thoughts with my colleagues is not a useful tool to challenge and develop the theories I use to think.
- I do not support Drucker's proposition that I and my colleagues require freedom and equality to live a meaningful life. In fact the reality I create is almost the opposite in that I assume that executive authority will do my thinking for me. My boss will prepare a roadmap which will enlighten my life and my only role will be to fulfil the tasks he asks me to do. If I comply with the expectation of others I will always be happy. I do not have to think and I do not have to plan for myself.
- Managing theory as a descriptive is just fine; there is no need to manage theory as an apparatus of thought.

Step 5 – Transformational explorations

I need to complete developmental explorations on dilemmas I currently have at work to suspend my presuppositions, and try on a new set of assumptions, on a trial basis. I have chosen a set of explorations.

Exploration 1 - Audit dominating thoughts and prepare a report on my 'inner chatter'. This observation report will help me see how my mind works from the standpoint of another when it has no deliberate direction and support.
Exploration 2 – Use journaling to engage in reflective discourse to manage the meaning making which establishes the practices I apply in business. I need to access my internal disposition and manage my values and beliefs as an apparatus of thought. My mind takes direction from my internal disposition and I want to ensure that the visions which form the basis of my internal disposition are useful to support my professional development *and* the growth of my firm.

My exploration is to critically analyse the conventional beliefs I use to support my choices. I seek to know how I reason to support the choices I make. I will compare my practices to the preferred practices of selected writers to have a high level of critique in my reflective process.

Step 6 – Constructivist research

I completed a programme of constructive research to test my big assumptions. Discourse on my inner contradictions directed me to engage in a process of reflective judgement on a number of 'big assumptions'.

TEST 1 - Audit how my mind performs without any deliberate direction and support.
I completed an exploration to record the mental chatter my mind was engaged in. Mental chatter is a concept examined by Rao (2006) in his frameworks on personal mastery to describe the continuous chatter in our mind. I deliberately interpreted my thoughts a few times a day and recorded in a journal what I was thinking about. I continued recording my thoughts in a journal over six weeks.

I found that I was completely focused on my earlier physical experiences in that I kept on re-thinking what happened in the past. My thoughts were completely dominated by my world of

experience and I had no exposure to any new theories. The source of my discretion was exclusively my world of experience and the only company I kept was the reality I created in the past.

After completing this exploration for six weeks I woke up one morning out of my sleep thinking that I spend three quarters of my time thinking and regurgitating old experiences in a passive, inarticulate, and systemic manner. Therefore, the knowledge such a mind can develop is predominantly passive, ancestral, with a low leverage on understanding, reason, and articulated rationality. My insightful conclusion is that my mind cannot operate at the level I require unless I take an active part in supporting its operation. I have to play a dynamic role in protecting and developing my mind. As Rao (2006: p.86) puts it, "You have to protect your mind with the same ferocity as you protect your body. You have to be mindful of what you let in".

TEST 2 – I conducted an exploration to use journaling to engage in reflective discourse. I connected with my conscience to increase my awareness of the beliefs and theories which established my meaning making and my preferred practices.

Stephen R. Covey (2003) theorised that the supreme attribute possessed by man is his self-consciousness and I chose to utilise this attribute to undertake a careful consideration of my beliefs and working knowledge. I used a daily memoir to 'detach' my thoughts from myself, observe my thoughts *as if* they were of a third party, think about the practices I apply in my work, and choose how to respond to a given stimulus. I based my journaling on Smith's (1761) 'impartial spectator' and Rao's (2006) 'dispassionate observer', to observe and witness how I think and behave. I had to learn to live in a reflective world to consider a multiple of options in a hypothetical framework.

When I finished my Executive MBA at UCC in December 2008, the professors of Economics' departing words were, 'If you have learned nothing more than the ability to prepare a daily journal to develop your self-consciousness, this course will pay for itself many times over in your future careers.' I was one of the many who failed to keep a daily journal but this changed in January 2011 and I kept a journal for 2011 and 2012. I prepared a journal every evening to reflect

on my thoughts at work and uncover patterns in my thinking, which Sowell (2007) defines as 'silent shapers'.

I tried to answer the following questions in my journal. Schon (2009) categorises such reflective activities as reflection-on-action.

- What I did – Data Observation.
- What I thought – Recollection without reflection.
- What choices I made.
- What things at work make me feel angry? This question helped me to use my emotions to identify my preferred practices.
- What are the pre-analytical cognitions which control the choices I make? I found Sowell's polar visions on the following pre-analytical cognitive categories a very useful tool to establish *my* sense of how the world works.
    - Limit of my human capacity.
    - Social possibilities – Is there a single best solution.
    - My source of freedom.
    - My source of justice.
    - My source of knowledge.
- What big assumptions do I have which control how I think? Big assumptions are a core element of Kegan's (2001) Immunity to change model.
- How do my personal bias and assumptions influence my approach at work and the conclusions I make?
- What mini explorations did I complete and what explorations should I consider for the following day?
- What theories did I use to build the facts I created?
- How was the reality I created influenced by 'old' fixed beliefs?

This exploration was extensive, my journal is seventy thousand words and it took 400 hours of reflective discourse to complete.

The feedback I received from my team, in our daily interaction at work, is that I have developed into a more autonomous individual critiquing my own beliefs and preferred practices and raising

awareness of the beliefs and preferred practices held by others within my team. I have a more challenging approach asking more questions and suggesting other options as an equal member of a team. I can build better working partnerships through delivering a higher standard of, justice in the process, and integrity in our relationships.

The feedback I received from my team is that I give more effective feedback to help them manage their day-to-day problems. One such method I use is to build simulations to help probe the assumptions used by my team and to encourage my team to constantly critique the choices they are making. I am always encouraging them to include others in the decisions they are making to take in new data. I am working with a commercial team who are developing new frameworks to make choices about the marketplace and I have used this reflective approach to help them see the uncertainty in their work, the incompleteness in their solutions, and the necessity to reconsider their assumptions prior to finalising their projects. I guess that I am like a coach challenging and critiquing the assumptions my team are using to improve the choices they are making. This approach can be very challenging and I guess sometimes annoying for my team because there is almost never a universal acceptance of their preferred solution to a problem. However, it is a very useful to help me and my team challenge the presuppositions we have of our work.

Other feedback I received revealed that I put a greater value on teamwork and collaboration over control. I encourage free and easy feedback to create a collaborative and committed atmosphere among my wider team to critique the lens we all use to see the world. I have become more cognisant of the need to undertake reflective activities at work and conduct real-time explorations to try out the effectiveness of other practices. I am more aware of the importance of questioning others and myself to find out as much as possible about a problem before acting. I can see that such a questioning process help involve others interactively in defining problems and generating solutions. It opens our mind to new information during the problem solving process and it helps us to look beyond the immediate context in order to meet the long-term needs of those affected. Argyris and Schon (1978) categorised an ability to question what one has previously taken for granted to redefine a problem, as ‘double-loop learning’, and my method of probing my assumptions is double-loop learning. My team and I must use more than our single perspective to manage the ambiguity which exists when making

choices about the future. There will always be ambiguity but we can manage the ambiguity better when we operate as a team.

My ability to self-evaluate and self-correct my work has developed. I am less dependent on others to determine if activities are on course and to initiate adjustments. My colleagues would have categorised my previous behaviour as 'very stubborn' and they do not see the same inflexibility any more. A good example of my increased flexibility may be my behaviour at a meeting with the Labour Relations Commission to negotiate a wage increase for my firm. At this meeting a colleague of mine was very complementary to me for my ability to analyse my own perspectives and determine their usefulness. He directly communicated to me that I had changed and that the 'old self' did not have the same ability to manage a change in my preferred practices.

The feedback I have got from my direct supervisor is that I can take more responsibility for what happens to me at work rather than seeing my circumstances as largely caused by others. I direct less blame on executive authority for problems at work and I am increasing my understanding that problems at work relate to the lens I have of the world. I always blamed by direct supervisor for the administrative nature of my work and I behaved as if I was a victim of a circumstance. I have redefined my Financial Controller role from a stand-alone administrative function to a highly interactive function with a major entrepreneurial focus. I am now a member of fifteen different teams working on developing our business framework to deliver an increase in profit of €5 million per annum. My ability to invent my own work rather than see it owned and created by executive authority has improved.

Feedback from senior executives is that my capacity to collect and weigh up evidence before making a choice has significantly improved. I see my direct manager more as a source of feedback to develop my own theories rather than as the ultimate source of knowledge. I have a greater capacity to step back and reflect on the beliefs I have of myself and to develop the ethical standards of my internal source of authority.

I found the reflective exploration was a very long and lonely journey. It was a journey within my mind which surfaced a high level of uncertainty and anxiety. However, it was very rewarding as I

got to engage with my consciousness to develop my meaning making. I established a great number of very useful insights.

I need a tool to develop my subjective thoughts and reflective discourse is a very effective tool to help suspend my presuppositions and develop my understanding of how the world works. Reflective discourse allows me to see that the knowledge I create is largely dependent on the vision I had of how the world works. I cannot see an objective fact. All of the facts I create are subjective in that they are built on my subjective thoughts and I have collected very good evidence of same in my daily Journal. Kitchener and King (1994) called this reflective activity epistemic cognition and they considered it the highest level of reflective judgement.

A journal is a working tool to support feedback at every level. It has helped me to identify the perceptions I hold and the consequences of holding these perceptions. Journaling is a very useful tool to create more mental space to help me see my actions and underlying thinking. Directing attention towards me and my self-evaluative standards disrupted my on-going performance as is commonly experienced when one observes oneself in a mirror. It is a good means to move one's way of knowing from their experiences to an analysis and improved understanding of one's thoughts.

My reflective discourse has been a very effective tool to transform my epistemology. I can see more clearly the need to control my assumptions when making choices and that there are multiple uncertainties to be always considered when making choices. I can now see that a capacity for reflection in the midst of action (from reflection-on-action to reflection-in action) is an essential tool to allow me to cope with the unique, uncertain, and conflicting situations I encounter at work. I have used this new self to be more flexible when faced with uncertain decisions in the development of the MIS projects. I am not bound by the previously defined rules within my mind.

I see my reflective practice as providing a framework for supporting my continuous professional development. It supports continuous feedback to consider the assumptions I use in decision-making. It is an effective tool to continually critique how I construct reality and support my constructive development.

<u>Step 7</u> – What is my interpretation of the results of my research?

My old view was that my mind was all powerful and that it did not require any input from me, and my new view is that I must actively work with my mind to protect myself against its inherent weaknesses of habit.

My old understanding was one of complete ignorance of the theories my mind uses. My new understanding is that I cannot avoid my responsibility to manage the theories I use to create reality as such avoidance can result in I behaving ineffectively. I cannot see the world directly in that I use a lens or a theory to abstract the complexity of reality and construct my own version of the world. This lens or theory creates my reality and I have never paid any attention to the lens or theory I use and in turn the reality I create.

I think that my explorations have helped me to transform my understanding of my role at work. I always believed that I and all of my management colleagues in our role as professionals should lay claim to an extraordinary knowledge in matters of great importance in our firm, and that we must use this knowledge to exercise significant autonomy in regulating the work of others. I now no longer believe that I have the capacity to fulfil such a complete role. I now see that we all create our own unique reality which creates multiple multifaceted situations and that we are all limited in our ability to manage the theories we think with, which curtails our ability to find a good solution to the problems we encounter. Schon (2009) described the work of a professional as activity that constantly calls for judgement and he considered the action a professional undertakes as action in multifaceted situations. These situations are especially characterised by ambiguity and are fraught with ethical and value conflicts. I now see my role at work more within Schon's definition of a professional. There is a high level of uncertainty and ambiguity within my work which calls for more reflection and consultation and reduced autonomy. A key insight is that I and my work colleagues do not possess extraordinary knowledge to know what will happen in the future.

The process of critical self-reflection I undertook in this exploration has helped me think about myself as a maker of my own meaning and not as a person who must comply with the command of a leader. The theories I use when I think create my meaning of the world and establish my preferred practices, and I never knew this before.

A key insight I have established from this exploration is that I have the ability to affect the way I feel and no one else should be able to make me feel bad about myself. I cannot take responsibility for my own life until I have an awareness of the fears my mind is protecting me against and introspection through self-observation and reporting of conscious inner thoughts, desires, and sensations, can help build this awareness. My true barriers to change come from within my mind.

The two years I kept my journal helped me see that I need to do more than just reflect to support adaptive change in that I must also support a change in behaviour in the way I think and feel. The experience I engage with in my journal provides me with a great opportunity to conduct explorations on using an alternative lens to see the world to support a change in behaviour. I need to consider very carefully the advice of Ferry and Ross-Gordon on the value of experience, "the key to expertise does not seem to reside in merely gaining experience, but in how the individual uses experience as a learning mechanism" (Ferry & Ross-Gordon, 1998: p.107). A key insight I established is that I must use my experience more effectively in the future to support a change in behaviour. It would be great if I could use my experience as a series of explorations to improve my meaning making and apply work practices which comply with a higher level of integrity.

My old perspective was that theories were a form of knowledge in that they provided a solution to a problem, and my new perspective is that the theories are an apparatus of thought to establish knowledge. The fact that every individual creates their own version of the truth means that we are dealing with multidimensional complex situations all of the time. The fact that the environment is continually changing means that we are continually dealing with new situations which we never experienced before. A combination of this continually changing environment and our inability to recognise the facts of a situation means that we must have the capacity to continually reinvent the reality we bring to a situation and this necessitates using theory as an apparatus of thought.

I am more cognisant of the practices I use at work and their direct relationship to my meaning making. I am cognisant that I must be more aware of the theories I use to be more effective at work. This increased awareness has increased my confidence to be an effective leader. I am

cognisant that my ability to be an effective leader is primarily dependent on the development of my mind.

A key insight I have learned in the last two years is that the more critical self-reflection I undertake the more competent I become at the process. I could only initially reflect on the theories I used at the end of each day but now I can reflect on the theories I am using on a real-time basis. However, I also learned that if I do not continually write up my journal I tend to revert back to making meaning from my experiences only. I must make a deliberate effort to manage my understanding to drive my meaning making as this process is still not my natural state.

I have learned that internal discourse in the form of critical self-reflection is a very effective tool to increase in my intrapersonal awareness, and 'move inside' to find my own real truths. It is a very useful tool to become aware of the source, nature, and consequences of taken-for-granted beliefs. It unearths the motives behind why I do what I do. It helps identify any dissonance between my theories and work which is causing emotional discomfort. I now understand that I can only support a more complex way of knowing if I can look at the world from the 'outside in' (as object), rather than from the 'inside out' (as subject). Smith (1761) theorised that we all possess an 'impartial spectator' within our mind which creates space for increased awareness to access our consciousness and utilise our imagination to support impartial choices. My means to access my 'impartial spectator' is my internal discourse.

My capacity to support reflective judgment has significantly increased. I have used Cranton's (2006) definition of reflective judgement, "….the assessment of assumptions and expectations supporting beliefs, values, and feelings…….individuals engage in abstract thinking about and critiquing of their own as well as others' perspectives" (Cranton, 2006, p.124-125). The explorations constituting my Portfolio critically analyse the contextual assumptions supporting my frame(s) of reference are practice to develop the skills and the confidence to support reflective judgement. The use of reflective judgement has helped me make more deliberate choices at work and consequently depend less on systemic supports. I find more reasons from within myself and less from the systemic process.

3. CONCLUSION TO EXPLORATIONS

My explorations have provided evidence, from the processes I undertook, to change the vision I use to understand the environment in which a firm operates. My new vision has a greater capacity to accomplish the tasks required to support the organic growth of a firm. My vision has changed substantially.

…

My exploration on redefining my unthinking respect for authority means,

I have reduced my dependence on the approval of executive authority to develop a confidence to complete a task. I have developed a confidence in myself to build a learning community to develop the thoughts and ideas required to set an effective agenda in motion. If I behave in my previously obedient manner I will never develop the required self-efficacy to initiate projects to support the growth of a firm. However I need a certain balance in my humility as it is also important that I behave in a humble manner to motivate the teamwork required to grow a firm.

I am less concerned about what others think and I have a greater awareness of my own thoughts and the theories guiding my practice. I can find more meaning from my own beliefs and I have reduced my fidelity to hierarchical and systemic truths. I now have the capacity to look at and analyse my compliance with a shared set of understandings as defined within a culture or held by an executive team. Unquestioned loyalty with a shared set of understandings is a weak means to support the organic growth of a firm.

I no longer experience a guilty feeling at the thought of unkind indiscretion when my preferred practices do not comply with those of a ‘tribe’. I now believe that everybody has weaknesses and everybody make mistakes and the best role I can play to support others is to critique their practices to improve their ideas and not blindly support their existing practices. New ideas and not a compliance with existing ancestral practices are the best means to support the growth of a firm.

…

My exploration on discontinuing the use of absolutist and autocratic leadership theories and learning to embrace vulnerability has transformed my vision since,

I accept that my human nature is limited and I do not possess the ability to exercise absolute authority over my peers in my place of work. The most appropriate behaviour I can undertake to support the growth of a firm is to seek the thoughts and ideas of a wider team to develop a better understanding about the future. A focus on teamwork and democratic decision-making in organisations today is built on such an understanding of our human nature.

I understand that my innate need to put myself and those close to me first is not an appropriate act to support a high level of integrity in my working community. I have to use the critique of others as a check or balance to uphold standards of right conduct to build relationships which develop strong teamwork. The increased corporate governance we see in organisations today is fulfilling this role.

I do not have a personal capacity to always deliver the result I want. My capacity to deliver a result is limited to managing the process and the better I manage the process the greater capability I have to deliver the end result. I now understand that the best formula to achieve successful results is to develop and manage a wider team and not to look to myself to pick a winning formula. The role of a leader is not to outperform its peers at all times, it is to help others to help themselves.

I accept that when I prioritise my personal objectives this restricts my capacity to behave in an un-ambitious and candid manner at work. A need to put myself first leads to envy and reduces my cognitive capacity. A need to put myself first curtails an open exchange of ideas which in turn results in fewer options available to grow a firm. I now understand that I need to apply a greater generous and magnanimous sentiment when managing my team at work. I need the strength to freely discuss my vulnerabilities to build a truly democratic forum to support a full exchange of ideas among all members of my team.

I now appreciate that I cannot judge the mistakes of others as intentional and react to them in a vice like manner. Mistakes are not intentional in that they are the consequence of our limited

human nature. It is completely inappropriate to exclude others from a decision-making process because their ideas always clash with my ideas.

…

My exploration on using a more reflective and thoughtful model to think about my meaning making has transformed my vision since,

I thought the means to motivate a team were financial incentives and security of tenure and I now believe that both of these are not effective tools to motivate a senior management team. Financial rewards are external incentives to achieve goals of an outside authority and they may not coincide with individual needs, and security of tenure is not a primary need for any individual at a mature state of their career. The factors which motivate me and my team are the things which deliver our personal needs and my personal needs right now are a need to find freedom and equality in my work. I must be able to engage with my internal disposition and build a roadmap to realise my personal needs and I must be able to provide an environment to help my peers do likewise. In summary I need to look within my internal disposition and not to external incentives for my primary motivating forces.

A *laissez-faire* approach to sit back and not participate in discussions is not appropriate to build a debate to engage with and develop perceptions. The cognitive capacity of any individual required to grow a firm must be at a level where they are able to critique their own perceptions and the perceptions of others. I require a more 'cultivated' vision which can participate in an independent and impartial discussion to test the accuracy of my perceptions and to imagine alternatives.

Collective wisdom from the past is inadequate to manage the new challenges we encounter in the future. Everybody's individual ideas are a key source of information to support the growth of a firm and if a firm cannot access such ideas its capacity to grow is restricted. If we all take our direction from an external authority, which may be in the form of executive team, the ideas available to grow a firm will be limited to the ideas of that external authority and their ideas are limited. I must take my direction from my own considered thoughts and I must encourage all others in my team to take direction from their own considered thoughts. I must engage with my

conscience to understand my thoughts and be cognisant of the reasoning process I am undertaking to support the choices I am making.

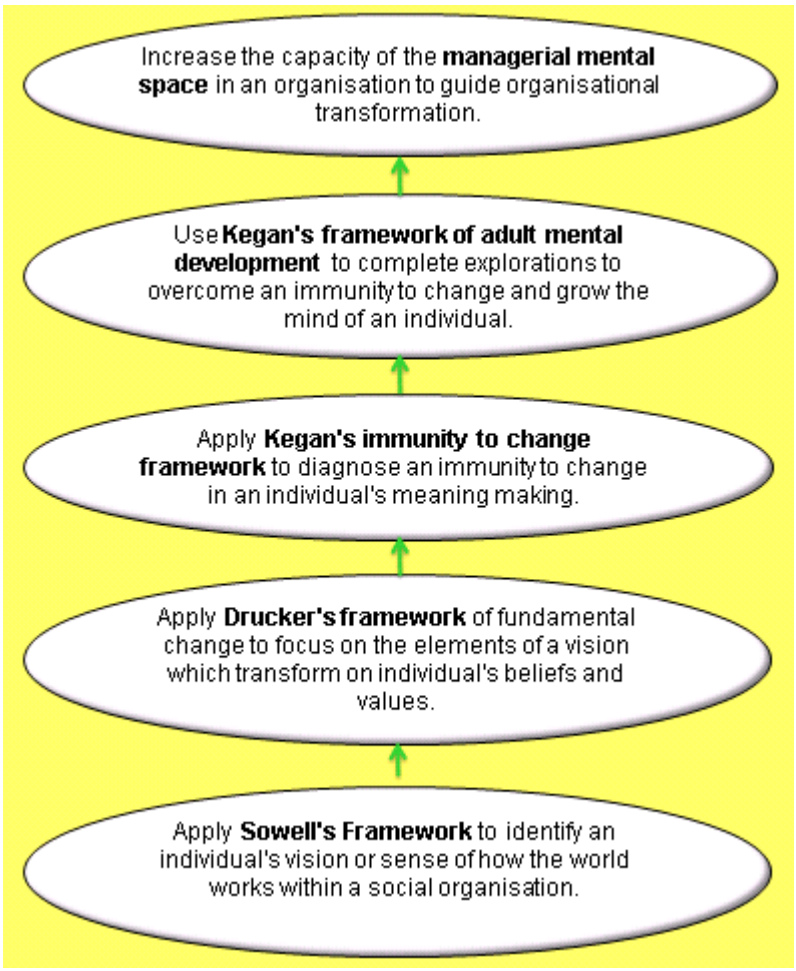
I have learned how to become much more effective on how to read for change. I have improved my ability to park my personal theories and try on the perspectives of leading theorists. I cannot just read a book or attend an information course and then just apply the new theories contained therein. I must first understand the theory of another and then see how I may be able to apply the theory in my contextual environment. I then need to carry out explorations on using this new theory to reflect on its usefulness. I will only adopt a new theory when I can see that the practices it supports are more effective than my previous practices. I will have to relate any new theory to my previously held understanding to support any change in how I think.

Overall in summary these explorations have contributed to developing my cognitive self to ensure the sense I bring to a situation is not distorted by inaccurate perspectives. The development of my cognitive self which brings sense to a situation is a key step in the process of business development as Arthur (1999: p. 9) explains, “Cognition is never extracted from the situation. You don’t make sense from the situation; you impose sense upon the situation.” The sense I bring to a situation is guided by my vision and the new vision I have adapted during the DBA process is significantly different from my old vision. I contend this new vision is much more capable to support the practices required to grow a firm.

4. A FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

A number of concepts and ideas from selected authors were combined in generating the framework applied in this Portfolio. Sowell's (2007: p.xi) approach to the "underlying assumptions behind the very different ideological visions of the world", Drucker's (2009) identification of the source of fundamental change to support a major change in a social organisation, Kegan and Lahey's (2009) *Immunity to Change* tool to diagnose an immunity to change.[8] Taken together, these concepts may be used to actually bring about a change in an individual's meaning making and develop transformational change in social organisations. In summary the Framework is presented in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 –Framework of organisational transformation



Source: Based on concepts provided in Sowell (2007), Drucker (2009 [original publication date 1939]), Kegan and Lahey (2009) and Kegan (1994).

[8] The Immunity to Change tool (2009) can be considered as an element within what is described here as Kegan's theory of adult mental development, evident across a variety of his publications.

The primary concepts and the relationship between the concepts in the framework are outlined below. The first step in the framework was developed by using Sowell's (2007) account in "A Conflict of Visions" to establish categories appropriate for individuals' meaning-making. Sowell's work provides opposite or polar visions called "Constrained" and "Unconstrained" visions on various elements of meaning making and it is used to identify - using evidence from experience - if an individual's meaning making falls into the constrained or unconstrained categories or if it contains an element of both. A useful aide to supporting this process of reflective discourse is journaling as it provides space to consider, as well as is possible, how a mind thinks.

Sowell's (2007) work provides a comprehensive summary of a constrained and an unconstrained vision but it does not identify the elements of an individual's meaning making one must identify or evaluate for the purpose of transforming meaning making, which is of interest here. I appeal to Drucker (2009) to focus the 'diagnosis' of the mind on the causal factors of interest and *not* the symptoms of meaning making: "The reason why all resistance …. has proved unavailing is that we do not know what we fight. We know the symptoms …. but we do not know its causes and its meaning …. The analysis of the causes … would therefore appear to be our most important task" (Drucker, 2009, p4 – 5). Identification of the causal factors support attempts to change while symptoms are just a sign or indication of something deeper or underlying and they are not an effective means or target to support change. It is not effective to focus the diagnostics on activities such as entrepreneurial vision, leadership skills, and strategic decision-making as I see each of these concepts as symptoms rather than *causal* factors of transformation.

The causal factors I identify and use to transform the meaning making of an individual relate to the core values and beliefs of an individual which emerged from my reading of Sowell (2007) etc… and they are the following:

1. Human capacity
2. Morality
3. Justice
4. Cognitive ability
5. Truth and honesty
6. Social governance
7. Highest duty
8. Ego
9. Humility
10. Conscience
11. Motivation
12. Rationality

13 Mistakes and errors

The next step in my Framework relates to the use of Kegan's and Lahey's (2009) "Immunity to Change" framework to diagnose an immunity to change. This tool is useful in identifying how unknown 'competing commitments' are preventing the accomplishment of the plans required to grow and transform the mind of an individual. It builds a high level of awareness of the equilibrium which exists within the meaning-making of an individual. It is a tool to help an individual to engage with their thoughts and emotional feelings and to initiate the process required to author one's own inner psychological life. It can support one to find their own sense of internal authority to evaluate and transform the values and beliefs which guides the choices they make in life.

The next step in my Framework is the use Kegan's theory of adult mental development (1994, 2009) to nurture a change in the lens I use to construct my view of the world. The application of Kegan and Lahey's Immunity to Change framework is only successful if it succeeds in changing individual behaviour and this step supports the accomplishment of such behavioural change (although it is not assured). Kegan's theory of adult mental development is based on designing explorations around the dilemmas identified in the Immunity to Change process to audit the accuracy of the "big assumptions" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.57) we use to guide our choices in professional life, in the context of this Portfolio. The results of constructive research completed on explorations of meaning making provide adaptive insights and such insights can help transform the values and beliefs of individuals which results in the testing or application of new practices at work and their incorporation into new habits, as and where appropriate.

The development of the meaning making of individuals working in a firm can contribute to enhancing the capacity or the quality of the "Managerial Mental Space" (Chen, Doyle and Fanning, 2012) in a firm to successfully accomplish organisational transformation. The source of the insights required to grow a firm are in the minds of the individuals working in a firm since the resources available for a firm to grow and the opportunities available for growth are not a fact but an image in the mind of the beholder (Penrose 1995 [1959] emphasises this point, attributing the use of the term 'image' to Boulding (1956). Opportunities for a firm to grow must always exist in the form of ideas in a visionary and imaginative world before they can be engaged with and tested in the 'real' world. If the human resources within a firm can take the meaning-making and theorising capacity of their minds to a more advanced level, they will have a greater capacity

to imagine the ideas and build the insights required to support organisational transformation and the growth of a firm. The behaviour required to transform a firm is governed by our imaginative images and our images are governed by our meaning making.

PORTFOLIO CONCLUSION

1. INTRODUCTION

Here I summarise for my Peer Community a summary of 'checks and balances' required, to employ an appropriate vision of a corporate working society, to establish effective insights to support the organic growth of a firm. My learnings are not summarised as a rigid set of rules as inevitably the circumstances of each practitioner, and their firm, will vary significantly within my Peer Community.

The insights to establish my learnings were developed from the ideas of a learning community and the evidence I collected in developmental explorations. My learning community were the students and the lecturing community of the DBA team and the extensive level of 'reading for change' I undertook during the DBA process. My developmental explorations were the following explorations I completed on my work:

- To redefine my respect for authority.
- To release my mind from autocratic leadership beliefs.
- To make better choices based on a more reflective way of thinking.

I selected these explorations because I identified them as adaptive problems requiring the transformational changes I wanted to explore. I used insights from my learning community and explorations in my workplace, to adapt a new vision to support new practices, and I articulated from my change in practices a summary of learnings relating to the objectives of my Portfolio.[9] My explorations were adaptive because I had to change the way I thought to solve the problems of each exploration.

In my conclusion I have summarised the change in work practices I have adapted, and the learnings I have articulated, to support the organic growth of a firm. I have grouped my changes in work practices and my corresponding learnings into the following categories,

1. The cognitive capacity of human resources in a firm.
2. Psychological uncertainties in the thinking process of members working in a firm.
3. The influences of culture within a firm.

[9] The approach I used is summarised in Figure 1 on page 9 of this portfolio.

4. The importance of complying with high ‘morals’ when thinking and acting in a professional capacity.
5. The importance of teamwork and the most effective behaviour to support same.
6. The most effective means to motivate individuals to execute personal responsibility.
7. The optimum practices required to develop an organic vision for a firm.

2. CHANGES IN WORK PRACTICES

I articulated my learnings summarised in this conclusion from the following changes in my work practices, over a three year period, during the DBA process. My new practices are based on a new vision I have adapted.

2.1 Cognitive capacity of human resources.

	Old Practice of an 'Old' Vision	***Insight from DBA Experiences***	***New Practice of a 'new' vision***	***Learning***
1	I have the capacity to see the world directly and therefore I do not need a process of reflective thought to articulate any facts. I must have a capacity to think by myself to reach an acceptable professional standard at work.	The vision and beliefs I hold establish the reality I see in the world. I must have the capacity to check the accuracy of the assumptions supporting my beliefs and visions, to challenge and develop how I think.	My capacity to think is very dependent on my ability to engage my consciousness, to analyse and critique the beliefs and vision on which my thoughts are based. The most effective means to engage my consciousness is to reflect on my experiences in a critical manner.	All genuine developments in economic and leadership practice are grounded in an ability to engage one's consciousness and articulate the meaning one may bring to their experience.

2.2 Psychological uncertainties

	Old Practice of an 'Old' Vision	***Insight from DBA Experiences***	***New Practice of a 'new' vision***	***Learning***
1	There was an absence of recognition of the role for	The future is uncertain because it is based on personal	A strategy should be a method rather than a	The working model of business development is

	psychological uncertainty in my original view of economic development. I interpreted economic development as a settled body of conclusions with predefined blueprints and panaceas.	perceptions and everybody holds different perceptions. No individual's personal perception is superior to see into the future and make definite decisions about an uncertain future.	doctrine, to help me draw the best conclusions for the future which evolves. A corporate strategy should be flexible, and it should facilitate a wide variety of scenarios.	a world of minds organising their lives, using common sense and general reasoning.
2	The most effective strategy I can adopt to drive a business forward is to perfect its existing core competencies.	My economic thinking must move away from physicality such as 'physical plant items' and it must move onto ideas. New ideas are the primary source of the growth of a firm.	My behaviour to support strategic development is governed by the images within my mind, and the images I create are governed by my meaning making.	Organic growth is dependent on the quality of "managerial mental space" (Chen, Doyle and Fanning, 2012) within a firm.
3	Individuals in my team who do not have predefined given solutions for the problems they encounter are incompetent.	The facts I create at work are unique to me, and therefore the challenges I encounter are also unique. It is not possible to have predefined solutions for all such one-off situations.	In business my team and I continually encounter new uncertain situations for which we will not have predefined given solutions.	Individuals at work make judgements on situations they encounter every day. Nobody have a mental capacity to know the correct answers to all their problems in advance.

2.3 Cultural instinct

	Old Practice of an 'Old' Vision	***Insight from DBA Experiences***	***New Practice of a 'new' vision***	***Learning***
1	I have a universal instinct for attachment and support for the established givens and cultures within my firm.	I have learned that complying with given theories of ancestral authority, which are inherent within a culture, limits the capacity of my mind to think. They create a blind pervasiveness of thought which results in making poor choices because I cannot see all the options available to me.	If culture is allowed to dominate the thinking inside the firm, and in particular on strategic matters, then the capacity of my team to grow a firm organically is limited.	The climate of opinion, inherent within a given culture, cannot be allowed to limit the freedom of thought of the individuals working in a firm. Everybody must be given scope, to imagine alternative options, to support change.

2.4 Proper business conduct / Morals at work

	Old Practice of an 'Old' Vision	***Insight from DBA Experiences***	***New Practice of a 'new' vision***	***Learning***
1	My understanding was that an effective executive team has the capacity to deliver justice in the end results. Any unsuccessful task is caused by	I have learned that no individual or team working in a firm has the capacity to see into the future and deliberately plan a future event. I and none	My new practice is supported by the understanding that an executive team only has the capacity to control justice in	Successful corporate strategies are not always intentional, in that the results achieved are not always

	a weak application of skills rather than a limitation in ability.	of my peers have the capacity to deliver absolute truth and absolute reason.	the process, and they can only hope that justice in the process will deliver justice in the end result.	the planned results. Standards of right conduct, by all the parties involved, have a major influence on the capacity of a team to deliver good results in the future.
2	The application of moral standards in business is an unnecessary aspiration. Any individual in my team have the capacity to successfully complete projects without complying with standards of right conduct.	I cannot operate in the future without the use of conventions. A simple change in my choice of convention redefines the future I envisage and my belief in my personal capacity to successfully accomplish a specific goal.	When I am dealing with the future I will always encounter unknowns and a good strategy to manage such uncertainty is to take direction from moral conventions.	The promises within our morals are an essential convention to plan in the future. Such promises provide a minimum level of certainty to enable a firm commit current resources to future events.

2.5 Teamwork

	Old Practice of an 'Old' Vision	***Insight from DBA Experiences***	***New Practice of a 'new' vision***	***Learning***

1	I use an autocratic leadership style where I issue instructions and monitor compliance with my instructions. I know the best means to deliver a result and I do not need the thoughts of a wider team to deliver a result for me.	In the knowledge economy I work in today, organisations are no longer built on force; they are built on teamwork and trust.	I must hold an equal relationship with all others to encourage an open communication and a high level of teamwork and trust, to stimulate a more advanced understanding for me and all my team.	A transformative form of leadership is far more effective that a transactional form of leadership to stimulate the trust and teamwork required to support the growth of a firm.
2	Dissent in a team is not a necessary tool to challenge existing norms and develop new practices. I categorised dissent in a team as a weak reflection of the ability of a manager to execute his role.	Most of the so-called facts in economics are really 'implied theory' and I must always adopt the mind of a critical thinker to critique the assumptions on which they are based.	I now believe that a high obedience to authority creates a blind pervasiveness of thought, and such an environment does not provide a good opportunity to explore new ideas to support the organic growth of a firm.	It is important to always encourage dissent in decision-making forms at all levels of an organisation. Dissent is a necessary tool to critique established practices and advance the thoughts on which they are based.
3	I have the capacity to critique my own thoughts and operate at a high level of understanding with the result that I can, and I do act in an impartial manner	All individuals working in a firm have a natural instinct to act in a partial manner and put themselves or those close to them first. I have categorised	I must learn to see the world from another perspective to curtail my natural instinct to always put me first. I must know the perspectives of	Creating an environment where one feels free to share thoughts and feelings with others is an

	at work. I always see my capacity as a little greater than the capacity of my colleagues.	this natural perception as an 'agency' problem, and I believe we require an active constitution of checks and balances to limit its adverse effects.	others to support a more advanced way of knowing.	essential tool to build a team to critique the thoughts of each other. Such a team is essential to curtail our natural inclination to always put ourselves first.

2.6 Motivation to execute responsibility

	Old Practice of an 'Old' Vision	***Insight from DBA Experiences***	***New Practice of a 'new' vision***	***Learning***
1	A secure role and a good salary are effective means to empower me and my team to deliver the values inherent within the definition of our roles, or deliver the objectives of an outside authority.	Leadership must be democratic to deliver a status and function which satisfy the human nature of me and my colleagues at work. Autocratic leadership will create a dysfunction between our personal objectives and the objectives of a firm.	Only leadership, which support democratic institutions, and provide freedom and equality for its subjects, can empower me and my peers. Security, economic rewards, and career development in an autocratic society, are not sufficient to motivate me and my team.	Leadership must be legitimate to develop a community of equals, where equality among all, provide a sense of freedom for all individuals in a team to build synergies when working together. Democratic leadership is legitimate and autocratic leadership is

				not.
2	My firm must provide a legitimizing ideology, in the form of a social and institutional framework, to support me and my peers to achieve its strategic objectives. A need to identify with such an external body is a primary source of motivation for all employees in a firm.	A legitimizing ideology, along with its social and institutional support, builds a culture of compliance. It discourages me and my peers from accepting personal responsibility for the success and development of our work. It develops an expectation for a wider team to comply with a broader systemic process.	My firm must design its workplace to provide a continuous flow of new dilemmas for me and my peers, in the form of new and more challenging work experiences. New and uncertain challenges will force me and my peers to look to our internal disposition for our source of motivation.	A supporting participative form of management with a hierarchical framework, limits the self-efficacy of individuals to the extent that their ability to act is dependent on their relationship with an external identity. This will inevitably result in biased and prejudiced choices in favour of an external authority, and or a failure for employees to find a high source of motivation from their own internal disposition.
2.7 Organic vision				
	Old Practice of an 'Old' Vision	***Insight from DBA Experiences***	***New Practice of a 'new' vision***	***Learning***

1	I have a universal instinct to protect and support the existing practices of ancestral authority.	When my peers and I think we always think in terms of models, which are a simple extraction of the world. The use of models based on the practices of ancestral authority limits our mind to use the full range of resources available to us.	The use of a limited number of models, which are confined to a given number of practices, limits our mind to utilise the resources available to us. The first step to adapt more effective practices is to identify the assumptions in the model I am using and challenge their accuracy.	The success of future corporate strategies is dependent on the development of the assumptions in our models to support new practices. Compliance with the old practices of ancestral authority is not a good strategy to support the organic growth of a firm.
2	I understood that entrepreneurship in a firm must primarily come from those individuals who hold executive positions.	No individual or small team, in my firm has the mental capacity to continually reinvent the business model, and develop the strategy to provide the entrepreneurship to drive the organic growth of a firm.	I now understand that entrepreneurial wisdom must come from all levels within an organisation, to provide a wider range of options, and an improved critique to help make the best choices.	The entrepreneurial wisdom to grow a firm must come from a wider team, located both inside, and outside the boundaries of a firm. Any resources who are not a direct employee of a firm are located outside of a firm.

3. LEARNINGS TO SUPPORT THE ORGANIC GROWTH OF A FIRM

A summary of my learnings to establish an appropriate working society to support the organic growth of a firm are summarised in this section. These learnings will help my peer community use the most effective vision of how the world works to develop the insights required to support the growth of a firm.

Cognitive Capacity of all Human Resources

The entire team in a firm must be able to engage in a meaningful manner with their conscience to challenge and develop their cognitive capacity. The cognitive capacity of all individuals in a firm has a major influence on the capability of a firm to grow.

All genuine developments in the organic growth of a firm are grounded in the meaning making of individuals and teams. An environment which is conducive to the development of the cognitive capacity of the human resource must utilise the ideas of a wider community and experiences at work to develop the meaning making of its team. However insights from experiences are only useful to develop the perspective of an individual, or a team, if they can be reflected on and used as a tool of thought. Individuals and teams need to analyse their experiences in a hypothetical manner if they are to use their experiences as a tool of thought. An individual who does not have access to new experiences, and who does not reflect on same, will not develop a capacity to challenge and develop their own beliefs and values, with the result that they may live in a paradigm which does not represent a changing environment. The cognitive capacity of this individual to support the organic growth of a firm will be limited.

The journaling project I completed in my third exploration, to increase my capacity to think in a meaningful manner, provides a useful summary of 'checks and balances' to engage with my conscience to articulate accurate insights. This exploration is included in pages 113 to 125 of this Portfolio.

Psychological Uncertainties

The reality or vision an individual brings to a situation – and to their team - is a key determinant of the organic growth of a firm. Psychological factors will always play a large part in all

organisations since the environment in which a firm operates is not a fact, but an image in the mind of the beholder, "…..the environment is……an 'image' in the entrepreneur's mind of the possibilities and restrictions with which he is confronted, for it is, after all, such an 'image' which in fact determines a man's behaviour….." (Penrose, 1995: p.5).

The working model of business development is a world of minds organising their lives using common sense and general reasoning, "Economic science is but the working of common sense aided by appliances of organised analysis and general reasoning" (Marshall, 1920: 38). No mathematical economic model can drive economic development because the theories about the future are not fixed and absolute, or in the form of blueprints or panaceas, "It is not a body of concrete truth, but an engine for the discovery of concrete truth…." (Fanning & O 'Mahony, 1998: P.19). Strategic plans should never be in the form of blueprints or panaceas to achieve a given pre-defined result. Our long-term planning must be flexible and it must consider a multiplicity of scenarios.

The development of the "managerial mental space" (Chen, Doyle and Fanning, 2012) within a firm, to develop the insights to grow a business, is a critical success factor, to support the organic growth of a firm. As Drucker pointed out, "every practice rests on theory, even if the practitioners themselves are unaware of it" (Drucker, 1985: p.26), and the practice of growing a firm is based on a theory. The most effective theories to drive business development are future insights, and not knowledge of past activities, as business development is always located in the future and not entrenched in the past. The source of future insights is our minds, since the environment is held as an image in the mind of the beholder, and if the human resource within a firm can take the theorising within their minds to a more advanced level, they will have a greater capacity to build the insights required to support the organic growth of a firm. Knowledge which is known and based in the past is only useful when the past is a useful guide to the future, and this is not the norm in today's changing environment.

Our economic thinking must move away from physicality such as 'physical plant items' and it must move onto ideas. Our behaviour to support business development is governed by our images and our images are governed by our meaning making. The experience I have of new product development in my firm is that it is all about generating, developing, and testing ideas,

it has very little to do with the existing physical plant. Penrose (1995) theorised that management cannot be categorised as competent unless they can provide new ideas which she categorises as entrepreneurial services, "…the managerial competence of a firm is to a large extent a function of the quality of the entrepreneurial services available to it" (Penrose, 1995: p.35), and the extent of opportunity available to a firm is a function of the imagination of the employees of a firm to generate new ideas, "The productive activities of such a firm are governed by what we shall call its 'productive opportunity', which comprises all of the productive possibilities that its entrepreneurs see and can take advantage of" (Penrose, 1995: p.31). My reflective analysis of my DBA experience has thought me that personal development drives professional development which in turn ignites the imagination to supply entrepreneurial insights to grow a firm.

The capability of a firm to deliver entrepreneurial ideas is dependent on the quality of the individual meaning making minds, and the quality of introspection between the individuals within a team. A firm must always look for opportunities to develop the epistemological status of the human resources within a firm to provide the impetus to search for new entrepreneurial insights, as the decision to search for opportunities is what sets the business development of a firm in motion. The decision to search is related to expectations, which in turn is related to mental capacity, and managerial mental space. Penrose (1995) theorised that a firm cannot grow without a decision to search. "….the decision to search for opportunities is an enterprising decision requiring entrepreneurial intuition and imagination and must precede the economic decision to go ahead with the examination of opportunities for expansion" (Penrose, 1995: p.34). My firm are currently looking for a new opportunity to expand its trading opportunities in Asia, and the first step to support this expansion is to appoint a resource to search for an existing business within Asia with the required resources and which is available for sale.

The process of business development requires individuals at work to make judgements on situations they encounter every day**,** and the challenge of making judgements is that there are no explicit frameworks to guide one to make the right choices. When there are no external frameworks to help make a choice, one must look within themselves for assistance to make a decision. One must look to the beliefs and visions within one's consciousness to make choices and therefore it is imperative that such beliefs and visions are accurate and reflect reality to

help make the right choice. One cannot allow one-self to fall into the thoughtless pits Eichmann fell into during the Holocaust in Nazi Germany, when a low awareness of his own consciousness, "predisposed him to become one of the greatest criminals of the period" (Arendt, 1963: p.379). While members of this peer community are unlikely to ever experience what Eichmann did, they must always know themselves first to make the 'right' judgement call, for a specific time and place.

Cultural Instinct

Cultural influences within a firm can curtail the epistemological development of the human resource. The meaning making of individuals strongly influenced by cultural instincts may not advance beyond a socialised mind, which is a low level within Kegan's epistemological categories, and a level not capable of developing the insights required to grow a firm.

All human beings have a natural instinct to comply with the practices of ancestral authority which may take the form of the established practices of a parent, a school teacher, a church leader, or an established executive management team in a firm. A high obedience to ancestral authority can create a pervasiveness of thought and the result is a strong relationship between individual subjectivity and the social organisation in which people find themselves, and this can develop into a form of seduced collusion. Harvey (1988) considered all humans to have an instinctive need for attachment and support from others whom they trust and a reciprocal fear that such a need for attachment will be violated by separation. He believed that such a bond was a basic, primitive, and inborn, feature of all humans.

If one complies with a set of shared understandings and ways of reasoning, inherent within a culture, it will limit the capacity of the mind to think and imagine alternatives. The beliefs and values of individuals will be dominated by the society in which they live. People will have little access to their own consciousness to build their own understanding and develop their own values and beliefs, and such a team of like-minded individuals will have a limited capacity to adapt a firm's strategy to a changing future environment. A firm must continually seek opportunities to provide its entire team with opportunities to experience new practices to help break down the paradigm inherent within the conditioning of a given culture. A person must

have the opportunity to see different things, to engage their consciousness, and use their imagination to turn what could be an imminent failure if one complies with a given culture, into a possible success.

Moral Factors and Standards of Right Conduct

Any roadmap to support the organic growth of a firm depends on the personal integrity of the team and the individuals within the team. Any strategy to support the organic growth of a firm must comply with standards of right conduct.

Individuals working in business do not have the capacity to build a blueprint which guarantees success in the future, and therefore as a consequence of this constraint, any successful future strategies are almost always unintentional. When planning in the future one is always dealing with unknowns and the optimum strategy to manage this uncertainty is to take direction from moral conventions. Arendt (1998) summarised that one need's a promise to overcome the uncertainty of the future and the standards of right conduct, inherent within moral conventions, provides such a 'promise'. The standards of right conduct, inherent within our moral conventions, can be used to increase the quality of our thinking, and the insights we develop, on long-tern business expectations. A moral constitution used by individuals working in a firm, provides the checks and balances to support a human mind to make judgements about unknown future events. Moral conventions built on past experiences, provide a bridge between the past, the present, and the future.

Legal contracts do not provide adequate certainty about the future as all legal contracts can be broken. The individuals implementing the legal contracts must always have a moral obligation to apply a high level of integrity when interpreting such a legal contract in the future. I have been part of a team where we created a new Joint Venture to produce and sell whey based food products and our future behaviour was governed by legal agreements. Five years into the twenty year term of the legal agreement, the contents of the legal agreement were very unfair on one party due to unforeseen changes in the world food market. My firm decided to unilaterally disregard the legal agreement and build new trading terms which reflected the new environment which we worked in. This moral obligation to comply with standards of right

conduct, and not hide behind the terms of a legal agreement, saved our Joint Venture from breaking down, and it helped both parties to continue working together in the future.

Teamwork

Teamwork is essential to establish a learning organisation to build the insights required to support the organic growth of a firm. No individual working on their own has a personal capability to compare against the capability of an effective team.

A leadership style must be transformative rather than transactional to build a learning organisation[10]. A firm must apply a transformative leadership style to develop the entire team, and to encourage all individuals to trust, respect, and motivate one another. All members of a team must be exposed to new transformative practices, such as experimenting, imagining, inquiring, performing, and reflecting, in their work experiences to provide the opportunities that can support a development in the meaning making of individuals. Leadership practices such as critical reflection, and creating disorienting dilemmas within our work, should be encouraged as they provide the background to support the transformative development of a team. Knowing must be a dialogical reflective process with others where members in a team share ideas and different ways of thinking to make new meaning for each individual. Knowing must also a dialogical reflective process with oneself to see oneself from different perspectives and uncover limitations in how one thinks. The role of a leader is to build an environment

[10] The Learning organization concept was coined through the work and research of Senge (1990) and his colleagues. A learning organization is a firm that facilitates the learning of its members to continually transform itself and adjust to an uncertain environment. A learning organisation promotes a culture of open communication, trust, and inquiry where individuals are motivated to work for a shared vision which is developed through dialogue and discussion. It challenges the ancestral practices of its culture and the beliefs of the individuals working in the organisation. Senge saw self-authored teamwork at the core of a learning organisation, "At the heart of a learning organisation is a shift of mind – from seeing ourselves as separate from the world to connected to the world, from seeing problems as caused by someone or something out there to seeing how our own actions create the problems we experience. A learning organisation is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality" (Senge, 1990: pp. 12-13). A learning organization is a group of people working together to enhance their capacities and achieve the results they really care about.

where to challenge and critique another is respected to develop individuals existing thoughts and established practices.

The imagination of a team must be nourished to continually reinvent a new lens to see the world and develop new practices to successfully support the organic growth of a firm. Individuals in a firm must be able to 'stand back' in as much as one can and analyse their views to increase their capacity to think about their thoughts and choose how to respond to a situation. The rationality we use in our reasoning process must be based on thoughts analysed in a logical manner. An autocratic leadership style using management by objectives (Drucker 1954) to implement the needs of executive authority is not an adequate tool to build the integrity within a team to support the growth of a firm. Transactional leadership no longer motivate a team because individuals working in a firm require more than a given list of tasks for a given salary to satisfy their personal goals.

All individuals in a firm must have a capacity to use open critique in a transformative manner to increase their capacity to make better choices to support the growth of their organisations. It is important to encourage dissent in decision-making forums as all individuals in a firm including 'top' management do not have the ability to always deliver the 'right' answer. Alternative critique is necessary to develop 'other' views and investigate 'other' practices to develop a vision to build a more successful future. One should never categorise the negative critique of other work colleagues, on the thoughts one may hold, as a personal criticism of oneself and a threat to their own personal identity. Our dialogue must focus on models and theories rather than making quick judgemental decisions on specific individuals. One must always be able to separate the person from the perspective.

I have experience of working with individuals who do not use open critique to develop the lens by which we see the world and such individuals find their work hard. They can work long hours and they can suffer a high level of stress to be successful in their roles. I have experience of working with individuals who use open critique at work in a very judgemental and in a very autocratic manner and this form of open critique is not a useful tool to build a learning organisation. Open critique must be applied in a democratic manner and it cannot be used as a 'stick' to beat others with.

A leader must be prepared to expose one's vulnerability to build the integrity required to develop a high level of teamwork. One must strive to achieve Carter's (1996) definition of integrity which includes three distinctive elements which are discernment, acting, and saying openly the reason for acting. One must be prepared to make and keep promises, and to forgive others for the making of mistakes, to reach for Arendt's (1998) definition of the moral standards required to sustain a high level of teamwork. One must curtail their own agenda and operate on the assumption that their own ability is limited as individuals with strong egos are subject to a natural instinct to put themselves and those close to them first. One must learn to empathise and see reality from another's perspective to increase their capacity to use a team to make impartial logical choices.

Motivation to Execute Responsibility

A leadership style which empowers and develops the entire human resource, in a firm, is required to support the organic growth of a firm. All individuals working in a firm must develop a meaning making to develop and drive an agenda forward.

Leadership must be legitimate to help all individuals find a visceral type motivation, from within their internal disposition to empower their work, and leadership can only be legitimate when the principles on which it is based collaborate with the needs of the individuals. Justice must be in the process if leadership is to deliver the needs of individuals, and in Drucker's (2009) perspective this means that leadership must be "based upon the claim of freedom, equality or saintliness, and is exercised through institutions which are designed toward the fulfilment of these ideal purposes" (Drucker, 2009: p.32). Leadership must be based on the freedom and the equality of the individuals whom are subject to it. Leadership must be participative and it must support democratic institutions to provide freedom and equality for its subjects. The explorations I have completed on using different forms of teamwork, to develop the IT strategy in my firm, have proved to me that freedom and equality empower a team and deliver the best results. I have learned from my explorations, and from my experience at work, that a good leader does not hold a vision of a worker as an efficient, automatic, and standardised machine, who is motivated solely by economic means; as such a vision eliminates the existence of the individual. An individual, who is perceived as just a worker in an assembly line, has no

relationship between his work and his personal function, with the result that he cannot find values at work which delivers his individual needs. Drucker believed that the power of a leader can only be legitimate when it delivers social status and function for the individuals whom are subject to it, “Legitimate power stems from the same basic belief of society regarding man’s nature and fulfilment on which the individuals social status and function rests. Indeed legitimate power can be defined as rulership which finds its justification in the basic ethos of the society” (Drucker, 2009: p.32).

If leadership is not legitimate a high level of dysfunction will exist between the goals of an organisation and the goals of an individual with a consequence that individuals will not deliver a sustained energy, drive, and passion at work. If the power of a leader is illegitimate all individuals will lose a certain respect for themselves and they will suffer a loss in their human dignity. They will no longer be proud of their work. Leaders who can only provide pay and security for their team will find it difficult to be successful over a sustained period of time. One can never enforce authority on a team and manage people as machines working in an environment which could be compared to an assembly line.

Leadership must be reflective to encourage all individuals and teams in an organisation to engage in reflective discourse, and communicate with their internal disposition and hopefully find the visceral type power they possess to drive an agenda forward. An internal disposition can deliver a high level of motivation, and a high level of fortitude, to help overcome the inevitable difficulties in work and in life in general. A leader must support more discussion about hypothetical models to build a high level of reflective dialogue within the team environment.

Organic Vision

Entrepreneurial insights are required to initiate and sustain a process of organic growth and a supply of such insights is dependent on the meaning making of the individuals working in a firm.

The success of future corporate strategies to drive business development is dependent on ideas to develop new business models, “Progress in economics consists almost entirely in a

progressive improvement in the choice of models" (Keynes, 1936: CW, XIV: 296). Keynes was referring to economics as a discipline in this extract but I see it applying just as much to the activities in the economy. The development of new models at a business level, always begin at a personal level within the mind of an individual, since individuals always impose cognition on a situation. A management team must always be cognisant of the models which their firm is using and they must actively search for 'new company' to expand their imaginative ideas to develop new models. An example I have from my work to support such a perspective is taken from the experience I have from participating in a team which managed a JV firm. An increase in the cost of procuring materials made the existing strategy of this firm unprofitable and its future unsustainable. However this bleak outlook was completely transformed when we choose to invest in new technology to produce a higher added value product for which there was a high demand in the marketplace. This adjustment in our business model completely transformed the performance and the perception we have for this business going forward. I expect that this model will have to be adjusted again in the next five years to respond to further changes in the marketplace.

The entrepreneurial wisdom required, to visualise the insights, to support the growth of a firm, must come from the thoughts of a wider team. Penrose (1995) theorised about building such a team, "The term entrepreneur throughout this study is used in a functional sense to refer to individuals or groups within a firm providing entrepreneurial services, whatever their position or occupational classification may be. Entrepreneurial services are those contributions to the operations of a firm which relate to the introduction and acceptance on behalf of the firm of new ideas, particularly with respect to products, location, and significant changes in technology, to the acquisition of new managerial personnel, to fundamental changes in the administrative organisation of the firm, to the raising of capital, and to the making of plans for expansion, including the choice of method of expansion"(Penrose, 1995: P.31). By this Penrose meant that everybody in the firm has potentially some important ideas to contribute, and all of those ideas need to be honoured, cherished, and embraced in a gracious, spacious, and compassionate forum to deliver the optimum strategy. All ideas cannot be pursued but they certainly help build and sustain an environment of critique and challenge among the workforce in a firm.

4. FINAL CONCLUSION

In brief my DBA project is a contract to change my meaning making so that the practices I apply in my workplace are more effective. I successfully used Kegan's model of Adult Mental Development to apply new ideas at work, to reflect on my experiences of using new ideas, and to apply improved practices to support business development based on a reflective process. My entire project is about using my experiences, and the ideas of a wider team, to build evidence to cultivate insights on the best options to achieve future objectives. I find this logical way of thinking difficult and I know I will have to work hard to make it my normal way of thinking.

I signed up to change and this is what I delivered. My meaning making has changed to increase my capacity to develop the insights required to support the organic growth of a firm. However this is not a project which will end with the completion of my Portfolio, I must continue to work with my mind to improve how I think.

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APPENDIX – FRAMEWORK OF KEGANS THEORY

1. INTRODUCTION

My objective in this doctoral programme is to examine and apply Kegan's theory of Adult mental Development. To do this effectively I begin by constructing my own version of the theory. It is never adequate to use the theories of others; one must always build one's own theory to have control over the theory in the sense of being able to use it as a tool of thought.

I use an approach devised by Keynes (1936) to construct my version of Kegan's theory. This approach is organised around the following elements:

- Question – What is the question the theory is answering?
- Givens – What are the givens which bond the theory together?
- Orienting generalisation – Theory is underpinned by the orienting generalization. It is a brief answer to the issue question.
- Dynamic principle – What is the one main factor which drives the 'story' forward and makes the theory happen?
- Independent variables – Independent variables are determining or causal factors.
- Dependent variables – Dependent variables are transitory and they are objects the theory is concerned with.

2. KEGAN'S THEORY OF ADULT MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Question – What question is the theory answering?

I have broken the question into two parts which are the issue question and the analytical questions to comply with Keynes framework.

Issue Question

I believe the one over-arching question on which Kegan's theory is based is, "How does Adult mental development occur?"

Adult mental development is achieved through transformative learning and Kegan (2001) uses a constructivist view of the world as the basis for his transformative learning. Reality is not an independent fact in that every individual uses their own lens to construct reality and development is only achieved by transforming this lens. One needs to be able to look at rather than look through the lens by which one creates reality to have control over it. Adult Mental Developmental learning is not linear and it is not quickly achieved as one's reality lens cannot be just replaced. One must first engage with one's existing reality lens to support a transformation in one's existing understanding to use a more complex lens.

Mental development occurs when one can support more complex ways of making meaning in the space between our experiences and our reactions to them, "the place where the event is privately composed, made sense of, the place where it actually becomes an event for that person" (Kegan, 1982: p.2). Mental development occurs when one can manage the assumptions within one's vision rather than they having control over self. Such control can only be achieved when one can move the assumptions within one's visions from subject to object. "if we want to increase mental complexity, we need to move aspects of our meaning-making from subject to object, to alter our mind-set, so that a way of knowing or making meaning becomes a kind of "tool" that we have (and can control or use) rather than something that has us (and therefore controls and uses us)" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.51).

Kegan's (1982, 1994) perspective is that mental development takes the form of a dialectical transformation to support a successive reconstruction from within on what had been the organisation of self and the world. One liberates oneself from meanings implicitly assimilated from others to construct new meanings for the self. The self has the introspective capacity to create an objective simulation of oneself and Kegan's *Immunity to Change* framework supports such development albeit in small steps. The self has the freedom to step back so that the simulation can be seen as a simulation and not the self in the form of a simulation.

Mental development occurs when one can use theory as an apparatus of thought rather than as a descriptive to manage our simulation. "Mental complexity and its evolution is not about how smart you are in the ordinary sense of the world. It is not about how high your IQ is. It is about developing more and more abstract, abstruse apprehensions of the world, as if "most complex"

means finally being able to understand a physicist's blackboard filled with complex equations." (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.15) The challenges of our world change over time with the result that a continually changing solution is required to be a success in managing such challenges. I have extracted the following reference from Keynes collected works on building an economic theory as I see the same technique of thinking being required to support mental development, "the theory of economics does not furnish a body of settled conclusions immediately applicable to policy. It is a method rather than a doctrine, an apparatus of the mind, a technique of thinking, which helps its processor to draw conclusions" (Keynes, 1936: CW XII p.856). Similarly to Keynes's view of economic theory, Kegan views mental progress as theory-driven where a control over theories, which Kegan categorises as beliefs and assumptions in his ITC model, rather than an accumulation of facts is used to establish a roadmap for the self. One needs ability to "step outside its own ideology or framework, observe the framework's limitations or defects and re-author a more comprehensive view – which it will hold with sufficient tentativeness that its limitations can be discovered as well" (Kegan & Lahey, Immunity to change, 2009, p.26).

The science of thinking about adult mental development is very much more than a cognitive act in that the control of our emotions is very importance to control our anxiety. Kegan's (1994) perspective is that transformational learning clicks and adult mental development occurs when one can execute responsibility to support the making of certain distinctions about commitments "so that we can uncover our hidden assumptions and discriminate what we feel, value, and want, from what we should feel, value, and want" (Hoare, 2006: p.216). However one can only execute responsibility when one can overcome one's emotional roadblock in the form of one's anxiety management system.

Analytical Questions

1. What is mental development?

Kegan (1994) considers the concept of mental development as an integrated complex concept in that it includes the cognitive domain, the emotional domain, the intrapersonal domain, and the interpersonal domain.

Kegan defines mental development not by an increase in one's IQ but by one's ability to step into higher levels of social maturity and how well one can understand the nature of the social world within which we live. Mental development is "not a matter of getting students merely to identify and value a distinction between two parts that already exist, but a matter of fostering a qualitative evolution of mind that actually create the distinction" (Kegan, 1994, p.275). Mental development is one's ability to support changes in epistemic cognition and epistemic beliefs; and it is transformational in that it supports movement across different forms of knowing. Epistemic cognition includes the assumptions about knowledge, the role of the knower in constructing and accepting knowledge claims, the certainty with which knowledge can be known, and how such assumptions are reflected in the ways epistemic beliefs about controversial issues are justified, "Development is a dialectic of a successive disembedding from within what had been the organisation of self and world" (Hoare, 2006: p.313).

Kegan (1994) conceptualises mental development as an expanded mental structure or a shift in consciousness which can engage in reflective discourse when making choices rather than activities which are of a technical format. Knowledge cannot be classified as a given fact, it is a construction based on interpretation or perception, "we have to remember that what we observe is not nature in itself but nature exposed to our method of questioning" (Heisenberg, 1962, p.58)

In the cognitive domain mental development occurs when knowledge is adopted from one's own personal process rather than accepting the knowledge of authorities. In the emotional domain mental development takes place when one can take responsibility for one's own feelings rather than they being influenced and determined by others. In the intrapersonal domain mental development occurs when one can engage in intense self-reflection to explore and choose one's own internal values rather than adopting the values of others. In the interpersonal domain mental development occurs when one can support an increased willingness to interact with diverse others and refrain from judgement as affiliation needs recede.

2. Are the leaders of organisations in "over their heads"?

Kegan's (1994) perspective was that a professional workplace at a minimum requires a self-authoring mind-set, "success at work….demands…an ideology, an internal identity, a self-

authorship that can….act upon or invent values, beliefs, convictions,…ideals…it is no longer authored by them, it authors them, and thereby achieves a personal authority" (Kegan, 1994, p.185) Competent professionals whatever their domain are expected to have internalised standards towards which they strive, rather than being guided and defined by an external influence. Kegan (1994) summarised that professional competence was related to how a person thought and not to what a person knew.

Kegan (1994) outlines through reporting the results of studies (Dixon, 1986; Goodman, 1983; Greenwald, 1991) that only a small minority of the population holds a self-authorising capacity and this is inadequate to support the professional competence our society requires. Therefore, Kegan (1994) conceptualises that a majority of all professionals are in 'over their heads' when faced with the challenges of work. Kegan sees it a major task of workplace environments to support training and education to stimulate a self-authorising way of thinking. In fact he has suggested that it is a task of professional organisations and educational institutions to challenge the discourse in their own professional standards.

3. Is society in general capable of managing the complex problems in today's world?

Kegan uses an educational metaphor to introduce his model of development, required to overcome the challenges in today's world. He sees development in a metaphorical sense as "a kind of 'school, and the complex set of tasks and expectations placed upon us in modern life as the 'curriculum' of the school." (Kegan, 1994, p.3) Just as we might evaluate a school's curriculum for young people in terms of its capacity to meet those academic challenges, he proposes that we "look at the curriculum of modern life in relation to the capacities of the adult mind" (Kegan, 1994, p.5). However, the curriculum of modern life is not explicit, it is a hidden curriculum.

To deal with the, "mental demands of modern life"(Kegan, 1994: p.76), adults' thinking needs to evolve through higher levels of consciousness. Kegan articulates that the mental demands of adult life are to guide one's life rather than to be guided by others. He argues that adults are expected to be self-initiating, guided by their own visions, responsible for their experience, and able to bring these capabilities into independent relations with diverse others (Kegan, 1994, p 302-303). Kegan (1994) uses the concept of mature capacity to capture the level of ability

required for successfully navigating the demands of adult life. With mature capacity one can practice what he calls self-authorship in which one can "see the self as the author (rather than merely the theatre) of one's inner psychological life" (Kegan 1994, p.31). Self-authorship requires more than just the cognitive skills to support reflective judgement, in that Kegan sees an integrated model of development, as the standard required to avoid being in over our heads in today's world. This integrated model of development includes cognitive, emotional, intrapersonal, and interpersonal aspects.

2.2. Main Concepts

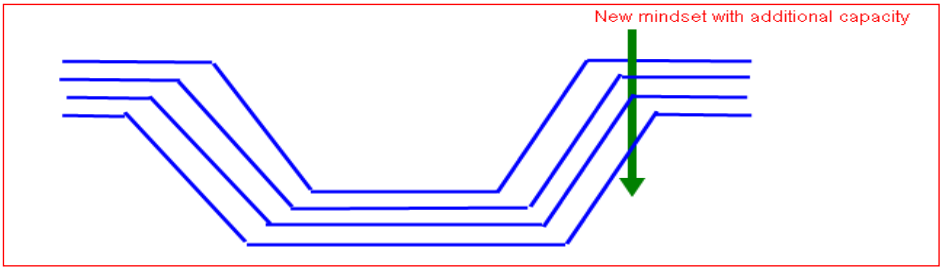
In this section I provide a formal summary of some of the main concepts I want to use in my version of Kegan's theory adult mental development.

Adult Development Theory

Adult development is "significant forward leaps in psychological complexity after adolescence" (Kegan & Lahey, Immunity to Change, 2009: p.xiii). Kegan and Lahey (2009) conceptualises mental adult development as more than adding new technical skills to one's mind-set in that it is adaptive and it requires a transformation of one's mind-set.

Adaptive learning transforms our mind. We move onto a new mind-set, a new operating system, a new epistemology with a bigger capacity for development. In Figure 5 below the expanding line is the expanding perspective we have to see the world, it encapsulates an increase in our capacity to see more in the world.

Figure 5 – Adaptive [transformational] learning

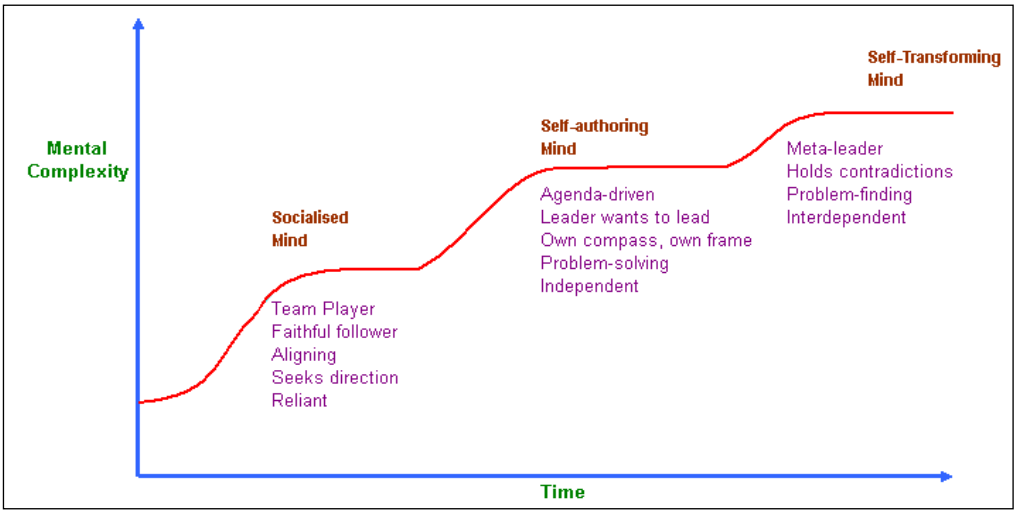


Source: Adapted from Kegan's theory of adult mental development (1994 - 2009)

Kegan theorises that there are "three qualitatively different plateaus in mental complexity we see among adults" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.16). These are "the socialised Mind", "the self-

authoring mind", and "the self-transforming mind". I have summarised these three different plateaus, along with a brief summary of the profoundly different way they operate and make sense of the world in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6 – Three plateaus in adult mental development



Source: Kegan & Lahey (2009: p.16)

Kegan's theory of adult development refers to movement along this plateau to a more advanced stage, within an existing level, or to a new higher level. Kegan (1994) sees this movement not as the inevitable result of age alone but as stemming from person-environment interactions. Movement along the plateau is difficult to achieve due to a natural dynamic equilibrium preventing such growth. This equilibrium is "maintaining a given place on the continuum of mental complexity." (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.47)

Movement along the plateau of adult mental development is not linear and it is normal to experience an overlapping in developmental learning. One part of the self may be entering a higher order of consciousness while the majority of thinking is still positioned at an earlier stage. Readiness describes the optimal time for movement from one way of thinking to the next and such readiness is not possible when a way of knowing is new and is being initially consolidated. Development movement takes time "…the transformation of talent takes a while. There is no McDonald's drive-through window for Adult Development" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.316), and it may be best represented by an "amoeba shape" (Hoare, 2006: p.480).

Immunity to change

One of the primary conclusions in Kegan's research is that most people deal constantly with fear, "we have learned something that may be very hard for successful, capable people to believe: more than we understand, most people deal constantly with fear" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.48) The self has developed an anxiety management system to protect itself from such fears and Kegan calls this system the immunity to change.

How one feels about itself is at the heart of a struggle to change and our anxiety management system is creating an immunity to protect one's feelings. However the self is not aware of the existence of its anxiety management system as it resides "at the level of feelings rather than cognitive thought" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.48).

An anxiety management system is very robust and self-sustaining and the self is very much subject to its control. One's anxiety levels are managed by contradicting commitments which protects an understanding of the world. Contradicting commitments will always win out over stated commitments because one cannot control them; one is 'subject' to them.

Meaning Making

Kegan (1982) sees meaning-making as a lifelong activity that begins in infancy and continues to evolve through a series of stages encompassing childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Each meaning-making stage is a new 'solution' to the lifelong conflict between our need to be connected to others, on the one hand, and to be independent, on the other. However, unlike physical development, it is not a matter of simply waiting for nature to take its course in that we can influence its development through reflecting on our experiences.

Kegan's (1982) view is that meaning making as a constructive-development activity in that he believes that each individual constructs their own meaning from their experiences and such meaning develops over time. Kegan's understanding is that the world is not out there to be discovered in a factual manner but that we all construct our own world. We all construct our realities because we are meaning-making creatures. All individuals make meaning of their surroundings, and that meaning is the surrounding; two people who see the same picture differently may actually, in their seeing of it, be creating two different pictures.

Two key concepts Kegan uses to explain meaning making are 'Subject' and 'Object'. Kegan describes Subject as "those elements of our knowing or organizing that we are identified with, tied to, fused with or embedded in" (Kegan, 1994, p. 32). Things that are Subject to us cannot be considered in our meaning making because they are a part of us and because they cannot be seen, they are taken for granted and taken for true. Object is the opposite of Subject. Kegan describes Object as "those elements of our knowing or organizing that we can reflect on, handle, look at, be responsible for, relate to each other, take control of, internalize, assimilate, or otherwise operate upon" (Kegan, 1994, p. 32). While things that are Subject have us, we have things that are Object. Kegan sees the development of meaning making as moving more and more things in our perception of our self from Subject to Object.

Our mind will only be able to see a different picture of society when it can move things which were Subject to Object. A new meaning making with a new form of mind occurs, according to Kegan, when we are able to step back and reflect on something and make decisions about it. Transformation is about changing the very form of the mind—making it larger, more complex, and more able to deal with multiple demands and uncertainty. A new meaning making only happens when someone changes, "not just the way he behaves, not just the way he feels, but the way he knows-not just what he knows but the way he knows" (Kegan, 1994: p. 17). Beliefs and values, which Kegan categories as big assumptions are challenged and changed which, in-turn, changes our form of knowing.

<u>The Socialised Mind – 3rd Order</u>

Someone within this order applies external formulas to define the lens they use to see the world. Their form of knowing is to adopt external truths, their form of dependence is to adopt externally defined identities, and their form of community is to hold externally defined relationships. "When the [socialised mind] dominates our meaning-making, what we should feel is what we do feel, what we should value is what we do value, and what we should want is what we do want." (Kegan, 1994, p.275) Kegan describes this order as the "family religion" (Kegan, 1994, p166).

Using Kegan's metaphor of authoring (1994), the self is subject to authority. The self complies closely with tradition and the self is its beliefs, values, and roles. The self cannot see its own

simulation, "…… the self is the simulation……there is no perspective on the simulation" (Hoare, 2006: p.314).

Kegan's (1994) definition of the socialised self has a limited epistemological dimension. Knowledge is viewed as certain or partially certain. Knowledge is held by authorities and there is no internal basis for evaluating knowledge claims. Kegan's definition of the socialised self has a limited intrapersonal dimension. There is a lack of awareness of one's values and social identity. In fact one may not even be aware that one has values and beliefs. There is poor coordination of multiple components of identity and such multiple components of identity would include, race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. Kegan's definition of the socialised self has a limited interpersonal dimension. Dependent relations with similar others are the source of identity and needed affirmation. Participation in relationships is framed as acquiring others approval. Critical feedback would be viewed more in terms of essential worthiness rather than suggestions for improvement.

The Self-authoring Mind – 4th Order

Kegan see self-authorship as a state where one can author one's inner psychological life. People discover that they have choices, whereas before there were only imperatives. The self is self-directed in that it can, "take initiative; set our own goals and standards; use experts, institutions, and other resources to pursue these goals; take responsibility for our direction and productivity in learning" (Kegan, 1994, p.303) Self-authorship is a way of making meaning in which values, beliefs, convictions, generalisations, ideals, abstractions, intrapersonal state of mind, and interpersonal loyalty emerge from being co-constructed with others external to the self, to being authored by one's own sense of internal authority. "This new whole is an ideology, an internal identity, a self-authorship that can accommodate, integrate, act upon, or invent values, beliefs, convictions, generalizations, ideals abstractions, interpersonal loyalties, and intrapersonal states. It is no longer authored by them it authors them, and thereby achieves a personal authority" (Kegan, 1994, p.185)

Again using Kegan's metaphor of authoring (1994), "the self is its own author" (Hoare, 2006: p.314). It is distinct from the story it plots. The self can see its own simulation, "The self is

reflectively conscious of how it can alter and invent aspects of the simulation" (Hoare, 2006: p.314).

Kegan's definition of the self-authored self has a more advance epistemological dimension. The self has an increased awareness and acceptance of uncertainty and of the need to support multiple perspectives to manage such uncertainty. Knowledge is adopted from one's own personal process rather than accepting the knowledge of authorities. Kegan's definition of the self-authored self has a more mature set of intrapersonal skills to support a more mature cognitive domain. One is aware of one's own values and personal sense of identity. One recognises the need to take responsibility for choosing one's own values and beliefs and can engage in intense self-reflection to explore and choose such values. Kegan's definition of the self-authored self has a more mature set of interpersonal skills to support a more mature cognitive domain. One can move from a state of supporting passive relationships to supporting more open dynamic communication. Difference is seen as a possible new source of understanding and perception to support a more advanced level of cognitive maturity. One can support an increased willingness to interact with diverse others, and refrain from judgement as affiliation needs recede.

The Self-transforming Mind – 5th Order

Kegan's description of 5th order thinking is, "the relaxation of one's vigilance, a sense of flow and immediacy, a freeing up of one's internal life, an openness to and playfulness about oneself….the same loosening up may be experienced as boundary loss, impulse flooding, and, as always, the experience of not knowing. This last can speak itself in term of felt meaninglessness…" (Kegan, 1982, p.231). The self becomes more porous and permeable: letting things out and taking things in. The self lets go its identification with systems, and mechanisms of self-control, by which its personal authority had been maintained. The self does not identify with an individual self-authored system, the self identifies with the interaction between systems as they are authored in interaction.

Kegan's definition of the self-transformed self has an advanced epistemological dimension. One can view knowledge as contextual or constructed using relevant evidence in a particular context. One recognises that multiple perspectives exist depending on how people construct knowledge claims and one must accommodate a shifting of perspectives. One has a capacity to participate in

constructing, evaluating, and interpreting judgements in light of available evidence and frames of reference. One can construct knowledge claims internally, critically analysing external perspectives rather than adopting them uncritically. One can develop an internal belief system that guides thinking and behaviour which is open to reconstruction given relevant evidence.

Kegan's definition of the self-transformed self has a higher level of intrapersonal skills to support an advanced cognitive and emotional domain. One can construct an internal identity rather than adopt an external identity to accomplish external approval. One controls its own values and beliefs which would include being aware of their existence and having the capacity to check how authentic and real they are. This self-audit of values and beliefs is necessary to support contextual knowing and taking responsibility for constructing knowledge. One has a capacity for autonomy and connection. One's coherent identity gains stability over time and it is open to growth. One develops an integrated identity which can support cognitive maturity and mature relationships.

Kegan's definition of the self-transformed self has a higher level of interpersonal skills to support a more mature cognitive domain. One can renegotiate relationships to balance internal beliefs and identity with those of others in a mutual fashion. A respect is held for both self and others' particular identities. One has a capacity for interdependence which requires openness to others perspectives without being consumed by them. An integrated identity is required to prioritise self-approval as a criterion with which to judge others' perspectives. This is not egocentricity but rather a turning away from self-sacrifice to please others. Kegan (1994) describes this as having relationship rather than being had by them. Mutuality is possible due to the capacity to explore others perspectives as well as one's own.

2.3. Subsidiary Concepts and Definitions

In this section I include some of the subsidiary concepts and definitions put forward by Kegan which I want to use in my formal summary of my version of the argument.

Dialectical Thinking

In Kegan's model of mental development we move through different consciousness thresholds, from very concrete views of the world to more abstract inferences, and finally to dialectical thinking which is the signature of mature cognitive thought. When we reach the dialectical state

of thinking we can function within a state of contradictions and ideological differences and support the mental demands of the modern world.

Dialectical thinking allows for the acceptance of alternative truths or ways of thinking about similar phenomena that abound in everyday life. We realise that our perspectives are local, partial, and dependent on context and cultural conditioning. The self needs to achieve a raised appreciation and an effective use of contradictions in actions and thoughts. A dialogical approach frees the mind of a logical linear framework

Kegan (1994) incorporates not only cognitive variables but also psychological and contextual variables into his understanding of dialectical thinking. Kegan considers dialectical thought not in the construction of theoretical wisdom, but in meeting the mental demands of the post-modern world, "Kegan's (1994) perspective…. centres on the necessity of dialectical thought for coping with the demands of the modern world" (Hoare, 2006, p.301). Kegan's dialectical model of cognitive development can accommodate socio-cultural difference. Challengers to the system are not co-opted into the existing status quo, but a common ground is discovered to create a new status quo. "It means that the old status quo is replaced by a new status quo. It does not mean that blacks can come into the office only if they act white. It does not mean that women's experience is included in the curriculum simply by changing pronouns and making a "Michael" example into a "Mary" example. It means that formally marginalised people will come into the office, and they will have their own distinctive way of seeing things, setting the agenda, getting the goals accomplished; and it means that there ways will be recognized, acknowledged, and respected, provided that some common ground can be found where all contending "cultures " in their wholeness and distinctness can stand" (Kegan, 1994, p.345).

Transformational learning

Kegan was not the first theorist to develop the concept of transformational learning but he was the first theorist to relate this concept to subject/object relations and the control of theory as an apparatus of thought. One needs to control the theory which defines one's perspectives to support a new way of knowing and transformational learning.

Kegan (1982, 1994) outlines that transformation in the structure by which subject/object relations are made. It explains changes in thinking patterns and in how meaning is made.

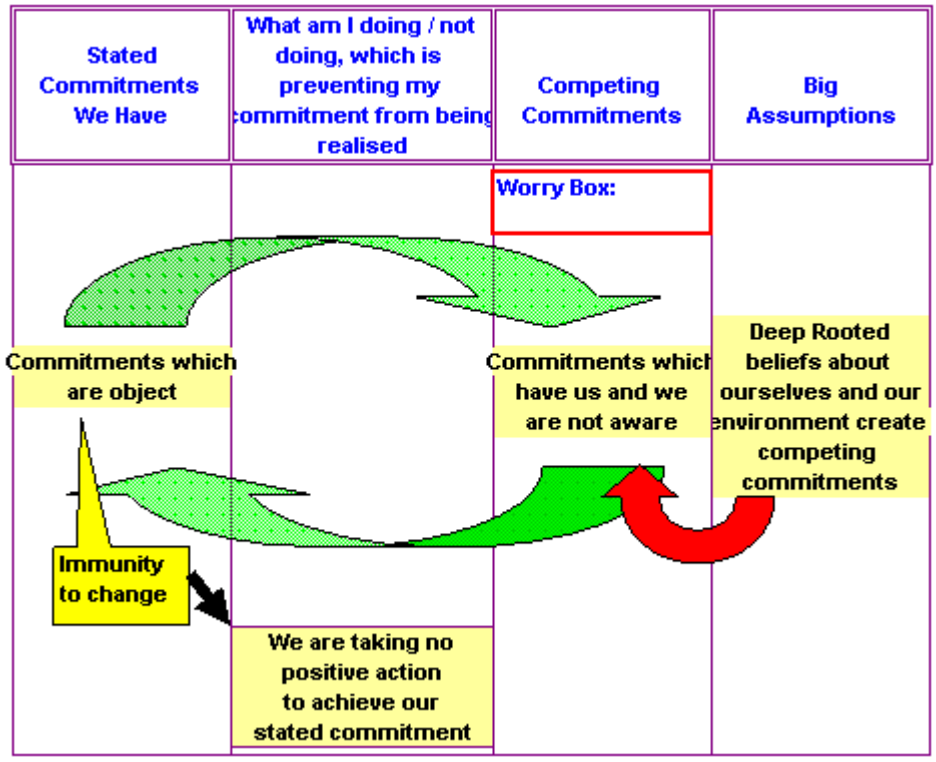
2.4. **Relationship between Concepts**

The primary relationships between the concepts which I see in Kegan's model of adult mental development are the following,

Causation Map

Kegan sees a relationship between what one is doing or not doing, and the accomplishment of one's stated commitment in his Immunity to change worksheet, and I have illustrated this relationship in Figure 7 below. One must undertake a specific course of action to achieve a specific stated commitment. Kegan also sees a relationship between one's big assumptions and one's competing commitments. Different beliefs about oneself and the environment create different competing commitments and this relationship can be determined by looking at patterns from the past.

Figure 7 – Kegan's immunity map worksheet

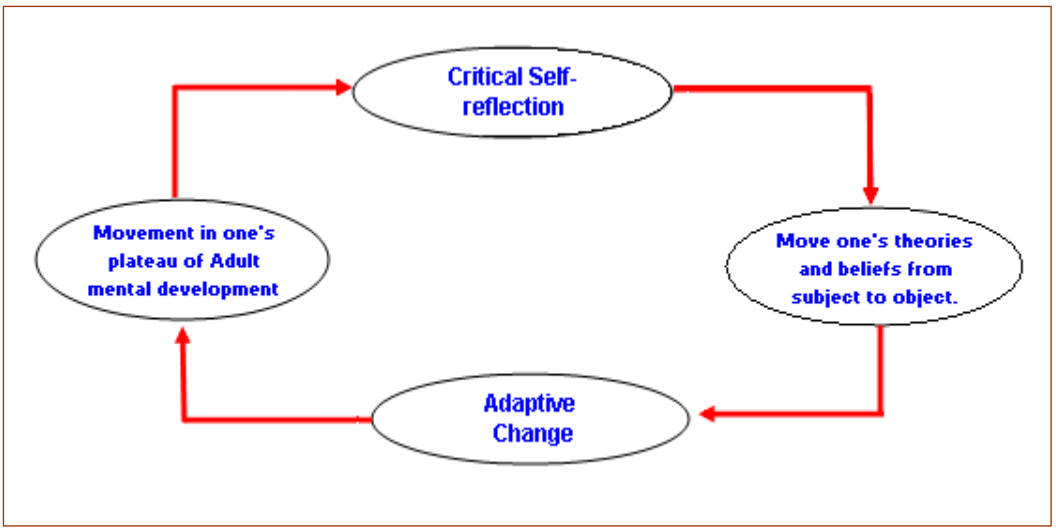


Source: Kegan & Lahey, 2009, P.281.

Equilibrium and disequilibrium movement in Adult Mental development

I see adult mental development in the form of a virtuous circle to support a spiral-like mental growth as illustrated in Figure 8 below. Critical self-reflection instigates a greater investigation of one's theories which supports adaptive change and a movement in one's plateau of adult mental development. A higher epistemology makes the process of self-reflection easier and the whole process repeats itself to support further mental development.

Figure 8 – Adult mental development in the form of a virtuous circle



Source: Adapted from Kegan's theory of adult mental development (1994 - 2009)

I see a form of continuous mental movement from equilibrium onto disequilibrium and back into equilibrium to support mental adult development. Each progressive state of development builds on each other along the way in a very given manner. One cannot go from a socialised mind to a self-transformed mind without first going through a self-authorised mind.

2.5. Orienting Generalisation

Theory is underpinned by the orienting generalization which in a sense is a brief answer to the question. The orienting generalisation is the interpretative framework within which one can read and makes connections between different aspects of Kegan's theory. In doing so it helps us move towards a comprehensive, consistent, and integrated version of Kegan's theory of Adult Mental Development.

I identify the generalisation about mental development which orients our thinking in Kegan's theory as "There is potential for development to take place in Adults."

One of Robert Kegan's major discoveries in his work as a researcher and theorist was that the mental complexity of adults had the capacity to develop into old age. "Some adults seemed to undergo qualitative advances in their mental complexities akin to earlier, well-documented leaps from early childhood to later childhood and from later childhood to adolescence….." (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.12). People can develop beyond their teens; development continues throughout one's chronological life.

2.6. Dynamic Principle

The dynamic principle is the element which drives the story forward. It is what makes the theory happen but it is not the result of the theory.

I see the dynamic principle in Kegan's theory as 'subject object separation'. "Kegan (1982, 1994) shows that transformation in the structure by which subject/object relations are made explain changes across the life span in how meaning is made" (Hoare, 2006: p. 313). Our reality is always a product of the way in which we perceive and our perception is in turn a function of our epistemology or level of consciousness. Kegan (1982) claims that we are embedded in our perceptions and our epistemology: it is invisible and we are subject to it. We cannot reflect on, observe, question, challenge, or explore our worldview because it is our worldview. Kegan (1982) theorises that only when we begin to grow beyond its limitations, when we see it as object to us, can we begin to see those limitations. When one's ability to perceive, feel, and experience, changes, it seems that everything else has changed. However the old world has not changed but we now see it in a new way.

The core of an epistemology always consists of a relationship or temporary equilibrium between the subject, and the object, in one's knowing, "That which is "object" we can look at, take responsibility for, reflect upon, exercise control over, integrate with some other way of knowing. That which is "subject" we are run by, identified with, fused with, at the effect of. We cannot be responsible for that to which we are subject. What is "object" in our knowing describes the thoughts and feelings we say we have; what is "subject" describes the thinking and feelings that

has us. We “have” object; we “are” subject.” (Kegan, 2000, p.53) At any given point in time, one’s meaning-making structures are an equilibrium of the theories over which the self has control, and theories which has control over the self. Growth of mind comes from moving one’s theories from subject to object, “liberating ourselves from that in which we were embedded, making what was subject into object so that we can ‘have it’ rather than ‘be had’ by it.” (Kegan 1994, p.34)

A socialised knower cannot hold as object the cognitive and the affective. The cognitive is the very process of having ideas, and the affective is the realization that one’s feelings originate in one-self. “You make me so angry” is the reality of the person who operates from the socialising way of knowing.

One who can accomplish a subject object separation can transform one’s ego from being merely a construction of subjective experiences to a tool one can control with little emotion. Ego becomes transparent to itself, allowing one to become aware of their defensive moves to keep the ego and only the ego in control. One who has control of its ego has a much greater capacity to witness rather than judge the action of others.

2.7. Givens

Keynes (1936) theorised that one of the important objects of an economic model was to “segregate the semi-permanent or relatively constant factors from those which are transitory or fluctuating so as to develop a logical way of thinking about the latter” (Fanning & O ’Mahony, 2000, p.24). He categorised the semi-permanent or relatively constant factors as ‘ceteris paribus’ (*all things being equal*).

I see givens as the factors which bond a theory together, although they are not of central concern to the theorist, they must be kept in mind when using the theory as a framework of thought. Keynes would say that givens should not be assumed to be constant or unchanging; they are very much part of the theory and need to be considered when applying a theory.

The givens I see in Kegan’s theory of adult mental development include the following,

All individuals can be nurtured.

Kegan is looking at adult mental development at all levels of mental capacity, which implies that mental development can occur in persons of all epistemological levels. Mental Adult Development does not depend on one's existing epistemology and in this sense there is an argument for nurture over nature.

There is a given that humans "do not develop in nature as do so many other species" (Hoare, 2006, p.310). Humans develop in society which mediates all of our contacts with nature. Humans never really know nature; they "only know nature as mediated by society" (Hoare, 2006, p.310).

The environment

Kegan and Lahey (2009) sees the environment in which one lives as having shifted from an industrial economy to a knowledge-based economy, which is a very dynamic and fast -moving space. This Transition in our economy has created a new higher standard for our mental development, "We have witnessed the Transitions from physical work to mind work as the dominant employee activity…..these developments …create new demands on our psychological resources. Specifically, these developments ask for a greater capacity for innovation, self-management, personal responsibility, and self-direction" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.25).

A knowledge-based economy requires a mind which sees one connected with the world rather than separate from it, and it is a place where people are continually discovering how they create reality. From an organisational perspective, the practical consequences of such a knowledge based economy is that decision making must be decentralised throughout an organisation to support a faster global environment. This requires the flattening of hierarchies and it calls for a more complex, flexible, and discretionary performance, from a wider portion of the workforce.

Existing state of adult mental development.

Kegan and Lahey's (2009) conclusion from their analysis of studies of mental complexity is that at least "58 percent ……of the general population" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.27), has not reached a level of a self-authoring mind and less than 1 percent has reached the level of a Self-transforming mind. The immediate emphasis in his teaching is to move the socialised-mind to a higher level in the plateau of adult mental development and this is evident in the nature of the case studies he uses to illustrate his point. The case studies are predominantly about moving a socialised mind to

a self-authored mind. The case studies I am referring to are “David doesn’t delegate” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.125), “Cathy can’t contain herself”, (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.143), and “The case of Nascent Pharmaceuticals” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.169).

Kegan’s primary task is to move the socialised mind to the next plateau and I see the following passage as an ideal illustration of the core of his work, “their writing is addressed to us primarily on behalf of their loyalty or devotion to the bonds that join us…but we would also like them to be writing to parts of themselves, conducting an inner conversation….We would like them to listen to and consider our evaluation, to be sure, but not to be determined by it. But this would require an internal system for self-evaluation [a self-authoring capacity]……We would like them to understand that when we told them to think for themselves, we did not really mean ‘be sincere, use your own opinions’ but that’s what it means to them. We want them to hear ‘think for yourself’ as something more like “take charge of the concepts of the course and independently bring them to an issue of your own choosing’….But as far as they are concerned, every single thing they are doing that we would prefer they do otherwise is highly self-directed! It’s just that the ‘self’ they are directing is not the one we want!” (Kegan, 1994, pp.284-285). The ‘their’ in the above extract are students who have a socialised mind.

2.8. **Independent variables** (Activities which are necessary to bring about mental development) Independent variables are transitory and fluctuating factors, they are the determinants of mental development, they are the “determining or casual factors” (Fanning & O ‘Mahony, 2000, p.24). Independent variables are arbitrary, and they depend on the ‘practical intuition’ of those using the framework. It can be difficult to distinguish between Independent and Dependent Variables, and indeed that any distinction between them cannot be taken to be absolute because it is a question of judgement.

Adult mental development, which requires a shift in consciousness, is not quick and it is not easy. Kegan see the independent variables as a form of “consciousness bridge” (1994: p.278), supporting a firm span enabling one to cross from one mental level to another. There is movement through a series of balances, a “dynamic stability” between the forces of simulation

(of new experiences by existing ways of knowing) and accommodation (of existing ways of knowing by new experiences) (Kegan, 1982, p.44).

Kegan's process of Adult mental development does not depend on one major trigger event, in that there is a framework available to which one can apply 'practical intuition' without the need for trigger events, "Kegan's approach does not depend on initiating or trigger events" (Cranton, 2006, p.75). Trigger events are just one of many determining or casual sources of adult mental development.

Adult mental development cannot take place instantly when an individual elects to undertake such a process. One must first engage with the following determining and casual factors to build a supportive context, and to move one's mind to a state of readiness to support development. I see the following variables as determining factors, in that they are changing beliefs and assumptions that have been previously assimilated without critique.

2.8.1. Language

The very first matter one requires to support adult mental development is a language to engage and debate the development of the mind. Kegan provides such a language to support an engagement process, in the form of his propositions on epistemology, and his roadmap to move one's epistemology to a higher level. Kegan's roadmap can be used by all individuals in all situations in that it is an apparatus of thought.

2.8.2. Experiential Learning

Most people are fairly entrenched in familiar roles in a personal and professional context. What happens once is expected to happen again and again. One develops a habit of mind, habitual expectations, and one makes meaning based on these habits. Experiences that disturb these habits can encourage critical reflection and expand self-knowledge. They encourage one to see something from a different point of view, and in this way they are consciousness-raising activities. Kegan sees experiential opportunities as a great source of engaging in novelty, reflection, and experimentation. The key to transformational expertise does not reside in merely gaining experience of a new context; it is in how the individual uses experience as a learning mechanism. Kegan's experiential learning cycle commences with a concrete experience, which is critically reflected upon, new insights are considered, and the new insights are then applied in a

new context. One could argue that an experience exists at the start and the end of the experience cycle.

"Situational experiences engage adults in doing something usually involving small groups of peer learners" (Hoare, 2006: p.210). Situational experiences help the learner to stretch and scaffold their way of knowing to support "self-reflection, self-awareness, and the transcendence of one's subjectivity and projections" (Ardelt, 2000: p.783). However if the experience one is subjected to is one of total comfort and support, there will be little opportunity to open up new perspectives and challenge existing assumptions, to support reflection and transformation.

Situational experiences scaffold transformation and increase our power of reasoning in the following manner:

Developmental space

Situational experiences provide space to engage with others' perspectives. The self can engage with the diverse perspectives of the 'other' and see that such perspectives are not to be feared, "it seems that exposure to and incorporation of the "other" into one's life helps propel a person toward a larger, more reflective, and realistic worldview" (Hoare, 2006: p.302). Developmental space exists where one is encouraged to question one's own values and assumptions.

Learning community

When the experiences of individuals in a learning community are diverse, the variety of perspectives in their stories naturally leads to awareness of alternatives, and possibly consciousness-raising. People share ideas, assumptions, and ways of thinking from their own, thus creating an environment to support the making of new meaning. Adult development is not an independent act, it is an interdependent journey built on relationships and trust. "It is easier to stay in the zone and make progress when there is a social dimension to our learning" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.223). Feedback from a learning community which can be incorporated in one's experiential learning is essential to develop a clearer picture of ourselves and support a more advanced way of knowing:

"Without such an environment, it is very difficult to see ourselves fully. Inevitably, we are limited by our own perspectives" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.223).

For the socialised knower who depends on others for his or her sense of self and whose connection to others precludes criticising them, being invited to participate in peer evaluation and self-evaluation may support a tipping dilemma. It can provide a means of freeing oneself from social oppression.

Scenario analysis

Scenario analysis helps to suspend presuppositions and define problems from multiple perspectives. It is a consciousness-raising experience, and as such it should encourage a critical, serious questioning of our own and others' beliefs. Scenario analysis permits learners to try out a new, or try on a different way of doing or seeing, without necessarily committing to it. It is consciousness-raising in that one can see familiar things from a different perspective thereby increasing one's self-awareness. Kegan (1994) used scenario analysis to encourage Harvard University adult learners to read proactively rather than as passive consumers of words. He suggested that they skim and not read hand-outs, beginning first with the conclusion, because that was where the major points were likely to be summarized, and then look for answers to one or two questions that they had formed from skimming the summary. When these adults returned to reading their regular course assignments, many discovered that by reading 'as if' they were directing their own purpose, their way of thinking about their task as readers and learners had changed.

Dilemma – Challenge and Support

Kegan (1982: p.168) calls for a culture of "contradiction" to raise uncomfortable questions, to promote critical self-reflection, and challenge one's perspectives. This is provided when one has multiple higher level challenges, and one can reflect on any conflict or dilemma such challenges provide. A conflict or dilemma may occur when an individual's current way of thinking no longer works and this may force one to alter their core assumptions about knowing. Kegan (1994) used a fictional case of Peter to illustrate this point; Peter is promoted at work but he is finding his new role a much greater challenge than his old role. Peter's dilemma is that his mental structure cannot support

the development of his own vision at work and his new role demands such a mental capacity. Peter experiences a dilemma which requires mental development to resolve.

However Kegan (1994) stresses that a dilemma must be of a certain type to support mental development, in that the dilemma must be experienced as problematic in some way that matters, and there must be opportunities to learn a new way of thinking: "Among the robust of these findings is what it takes for the mind to grow: challenge and support. Good problems, the sorts that reveal the limits of our current way of making meaning; and support to bear the anxiety that goes with realising we may not know ourselves or the world as well as we thought" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.320).

2.8.3. Reflective Discourse

The definition of reflective discourse I use follows Mezirow, "that specialised use of dialogue to searching for a common understanding and assessment of the justification of an interpretation or belief. This involves assessing reasons advanced by weighing the supporting evidence and arguments and by examining alternative perspectives. Reflective discourse involves a critical assessment of assumptions. It leads towards a clearer understanding by tapping collective experience to arrive at a tentative best judgement" (Mezirow, 2000: p.10-11).

In part one and part two of Kegan's book, "How the way we talk can change the way we work", Kegan invites us to experience seven qualitatively different forms of internal and interpersonal discourse to transform our learning and empower adult mental development. Kegan's internal and interpersonal discourse supports an engagement in dialogue and a process of critical questioning to assess and challenge one's beliefs, feelings, and values.

Those who engage in discourse try on the perspectives of others and adapt communication to another person's perspective. One who tries on the perspectives of another must have an open mind, listen carefully and empathically, seek common ground and suspend judgement. Only then can one assess alternative beliefs. Relational discourse, in the form of relational learning activities to tap the collective experience can lead to a more comprehensive level of rational discourse. In Kegan's immunity to change, immunities can be overcome by proving that one has nothing to fear from the tasks our big assumptions are preventing us from doing. We must suspend judgement and apply a new perspective to collect information on the accuracy of our

big assumption. If the tests one complete prove the big assumptions to be inaccurate one can then change the way one thinks and behaves henceforth.

Critical self-reflection and reflective judgement are two key building blocks to support reflective dialogue, "two capabilities are indispensable….to participate in discourse – the capability of critical self-reflection as described by Kegan (2000) and the capability of reflective judgement (the assessment of assumptions expectations supporting beliefs, values and feelings)" (Cranton, 2006: p.124).

- Critical self-reflection

Kegan (1982) sees an increase in one's intrapersonal awareness, a 'move inside' to find one's own truths, as a necessary tool to support the mental development of self. The principle behind Kegan's 'consciousness bridge' is that the first step of transforming one's framework is to identify one's existing disposition. Self-reflection helps us to become critically aware of the contextual assumptions supporting our frames of reference. We become aware of the source, nature, and consequences of taken-for-granted beliefs. We find the motives behind why we do what we do. We reflex on our choices, our reactions, the way we feel with less favourable outcomes, and the pain we may cause ourselves. We come to know that we all have the ability to affect the way we feel, and no one else should be able to make us feel bad about ourselves.

Kegan's framework for self-reflection is the four-column map. This framework helps us contrast what we are doing or not doing against explicit commitments, and it assists uncovering hidden commitments which are protecting big assumptions. The framework helps us examine who we are, and how we think, reflect, and function within any contextual setting. It is an examination of one's experiences of learning, and not a diary of what others said and did, in that the self needs to think about oneself in any way other than as controlled by a team leader. It makes explicit a dynamic equilibrium where our hidden commitments are fighting against our explicit commitments, and the fact that our hidden commitments will always win out because they have control over us. As Kegan outlines "Self-reflection is a central aspect of any organisational work. Self-reflection is particularly critical in all kinds of relationships…..We needed, we knew, a framework for self-reflection. And we've come to realise that the four-column work provides what we have come to call a kind of 'scaffolding'" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.78-79). Self- reflection,

with the support of the four-column map, helps one to see its life from the 'outside in' (as object), rather than only (subjectively) from the 'inside out', to support one's movement to a more complex way of knowing.

- A Working Journal

The capacity for more self-reflection can be modelled, encouraged, and supported through feedback at every opportunity. A working journal, which is a source of feedback can be a great source of self-reflection. A journal helps to identify the origin of one's perceptions and the consequences of holding them.

I see the professional development memoir which I prepared to support my reflective Essay (Portfolio pages 15-66), and Kegan's four column map, as forms of working journals to encourage critical reflection and self-knowledge. I use them to ask the reflective questions of, what tasks do I do, and why do I do what I do. Kegan (2001) used an example entitled "Susan's story" to illustrate the importance of journals to raise our consciousness levels and support transformational learning, "Susan participated in a semester long graduate seminar for education on reflective practice and transformational learning……all participants kept a journal of their own personal learning, prepared a packet of materials to give class members for consultation purposes, and wrote a final paper about their learning in the course" (Kegan, 2001: p.153). Susan's journal enabled her record her implicit thoughts and feelings in an explicit manner. This enabled Susan, or others she so choose, to analyse the beliefs and values behind her thoughts and feelings.

- Reflective judgement

Reflective judgement occurs when one engages in "abstract thinking about and critiquing of their own as well as others' perspectives." (Cranton, 2006: p.125) Reflective judgement assesses the assumptions supporting our beliefs, values, and feelings.

The testing of 'big assumptions' using Kegan's Immunity to change approach is a form of reflective judgement. We check the accuracy of the beliefs and values upon which our big assumptions are based, and we discard ill-founded values and beliefs. Kegan (2001) illustrates "the process of rejecting one's identification with uncritically assimilated assumptions by quoting Nora's speech in the closing scene of Ibsen's A Doll house. As Kegan suggests, critically questioning and imagining is not simply about coming to new

ideas, but rather coming to "a new set of ideas about…ideas, about where they even come from, about who authorizes them or makes them true". (Cranton, 2006: p.189)

2.8.4. Introspection

We cannot take responsibility for our own lives until we manage and control our fears and introspection through the self-observation and reporting of conscious inner thoughts, desires and sensations, can help us to take this responsibility. We need to do more than just reflect to support adaptive change, we must support a change in behaviour in the way we think and feel: "Reflection without action is ultimately as unproductive as action without reflection" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.222).

We must engage with our emotional immunity and overcome the fears our immunity system are protecting us from, "As always, whether in the individual or collective immunity map, the emergence of the third column simultaneously provides a cognitive awareness of a change-prevention system at work, and the emotionally unsettling insight that the true barriers to change come from within the system" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.118). Our true barriers to change are not the fear of change itself, but the "feeling of being unprotected in some way against a danger or a risk you absolutely do not want" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.240). One's real fears are "the fear of looking stupid, the fear of being humiliated, the fear of helplessness, the fear of being out of control, the fear of making a mistake, [and] the fear of allowing someone else to make a big mistake (especially someone for whom I am responsible)" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.240). Our fears are not of a passive nature, they are fears expertly managed and protected against by our immunity system.

2.8.5. Free Environment

Adult mental development occurs when one has freedom to transform. Development cannot be forced, it can only be encouraged. Daloz reminds us that the best environment to support transformative learning is one of a "climate of safety in which people feel free to speak their truth, where blaming and judging are minimal, where full participation is encouraged, where a premium is placed on mutual understanding, but also where evidence and arguments may be assessed objectively and assumptions surfaced openly" (Daloz, 2000, p.114). Kegan acknowledges the need for this mutual environment when he advises that the best

transformational teams do not have individuals with a superior, subordinate relationship, “To maximise this feeling of freedom…it is preferable not to have…partners with whom you have a subordinate or reporting relationship. This…means that you are not an optimal partner for one of your subordinates” (Kegan, 2001: p.15).

2.8.6. Education

Kegan (1994) in his study of adult mental development has found major differences in epistemological development in social groups with different education levels. Kegan’s (1994) perspective is that an educational system can foster the development and maintenance of a higher level of consciousness to support epistemological development. A new socio-cultural environment and engagement with formal study, can promote critical self-reflection if a learner is willing and ready to consider the questions which support epistemological development.

2.9. **Dependent Variables** (Critical success factors)

I have taken dependent variables to be a description of transitory/fluctuating factors which are of concern to the theorist, they are, “the objects of his concern” (Fanning & O ‘Mahony, 2000, p.24). Dependent variables are what one is explaining. They are a working hypothesis one must find to successfully support adult mental development.

One will only accomplish mental development when one has achieved or accomplished the following outcomes,

2.9.1. Visceral Courage

When one encounters new perspectives, one can simply ignore them, or one can be led to question the perspectives they currently hold. To support development one must be able to see a great need or desire to act on those new perceptions in a critical way, there must be almost a “gut-level urgency” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.210) to act. This great need must be almost at a visceral level, “To start and stay the course of doing genuinely developmental work, a person must really, really want to accomplish his or her first-column goal. It is almost never enough to have a goal that just ‘makes sense’, not even one with compelling, logical reasons behind it. Reasons can help fuel our motivation to change, but they aren’t enough to help us cross the critical thresholds. Reasons tap into the “ought” and “should” realm of inner talk. We must also

experience sufficient need or desire, visceral feelings-which is why we say they come from the gut" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.210).

One's mind-set must be able to see that the cost of remaining in the current epistemological equilibrium is too big a price to pay, and that it is "no longer tolerable not to address the goal" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.210). One must see and feel that one is left with no choice but to act to lessen the distress on oneself or the distress on someone very close.

2.9.2. Adaptive Mindfulness

One must have a concentrated awareness of one's thoughts, actions, and emotions, to support adaptive change. One must be able to recognise and meet adaptive challenges, to build more complex mental structures, and support adult mental development. "One of the things we had going for us….has been our recognition that the goal of helping people deliver on …. changes that have proven resistant to thoughtful plans and heartfelt resolutions, is intimately related to the goal of helping people to develop a new meaning-making system that can transcend the limitations of their current one. Building on our colleague Ronald Heifetz's heuristic distinction between "technical" and "adaptive" challenges, we can say that some personal-change goals … require that we ourselves "get bigger"; that is, we must adapt in order to accomplish them" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.xii). One must be able to see the conflict which exists between one's stated and one's contradicting commitments, and understand that this equilibrium will not be disturbed until one can challenge existing beliefs and values, and ultimately adopt new assumptions. Clarity of the reasons for immunity can provide hope, "As people experience the emergence of options where before there were none, they begin to feel new energy and hope" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.217). One must know that a technical solution, which is a well-known set of skills to accomplish a task, will not solve an adaptive problem in that one does not have the control to just change what they are doing to apply the skills to achieve a commitment.

Kegan with Lahey (2009) consider adaptive change as transformational in that one change values and beliefs to support a new way of knowing. Adaptive change supports a paradigm shift where one can see the same information in an entirely different way. Adding new information to our

existing library of knowledge is not adequate, because we cannot use this information due to the limited nature of the perceptions we have.

2.9.3. High Perceived Self-efficacy

Kegan lists self-efficacy as a key variable to support adult mental development, “Self-efficacy….is another….driving force for individual change” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.211). Perceived self-efficacy refers to one’s judgement of what one can and cannot do. It is one’s sense of confidence or sense of competence to complete a task; it is “a notion of what we can do to accomplish our desired change” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.211).

Knowledge of one’s inherent fears and knowledge of one’s anxiety management-system provides an understanding of why one is paralysed from acting. Knowledge of an anxiety-management map should increase the confidence and competence to complete a task. One can see that one’s limitations are a perception and they can be overcome, “readiness to change is often triggered by a sudden inspirational understanding of a truth about themselves” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.211).

Success or failure in one’s experiential learning increases one’s perceived self-efficacy. Success provides encouragement and helps reinforce facilitative, goal-directed behaviours. Failures provide information about mistaken steps towards goals and help narrow down and hone the behavioural repertoire.

2.9.4. Self- Consciousness

Self-consciousness is an acute sense of self-awareness; it is where one knows oneself. One is much more aware of the conscious nature of the self. Jung’s (1968) perspective of consciousness is, “Consciousness is a peculiar thing. It is an intermittent phenomenon. One-fifth or one-third or perhaps even one-half of human life is spent in an unconscious condition. The conscious mind moreover is characterised by a certain narrowness. It can hold only a few simultaneous contents at a given moment. All the rest is unconscious at the time, and we only get a sort of continuation or general understanding or awareness of a conscious world through the succession of conscious

moments….Consciousness is very much the product of perception and orientation in the external world" (Jung, 1968, pp.6-8).

Consciousness-raising according to Brookfield (2005) "is breaking free from one-dimensional thought, understanding and unmasking power structures, recognising hegemony, and critiquing social ideologies." (Cranton, 2006, p.143) Kegan's perspective is, one must be a "keen and focused observer of their own thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, and….learn to use these as information" to make explicit one's mind, and raise one's consciousness level (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.224). One must control one's inner consciousness, to give oneself control to achieve professional and personal developmental objectives, "If you are leading anything at any level, you are driving some kind of plan or agenda, but some kind of plan or agenda is also driving you. It is out of your awareness. You cannot take responsibility for it. And most of the time, that agenda will limit or even doom your ability to deliver extraordinary results. If you do not attend as much to "development" as to "leadership," then your leadership development will always be directed to the plan or agenda you have. It will not be about the plan or agenda that "has you," and therefore your capacity for change will inherently be limited" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.6).

One needs to have control over perceptions and emotions, rather than having one's perceptions and emotions having control over them: "If we want to increase mental complexity, we need to move aspects of our meaning-making from subject to object, to alter our mind-set so that a way of knowing or making meaning becomes a kind of "tool" that we have (and can control or use) rather than something that has us (and therefore controls and uses us)" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.51). One's perceptions, and ultimately one's consciousness, must be moved from subject to object.

One must be able to support a thinking state of mind, to make the judgements required to undertake a process of adult mental development. The following are important to accomplish a high level of self-consciousness,

- Self-knowledge

  One must know the self to free the mind to support development, "Knowing others is wisdom. Knowing the self is enlightenment. Mastering others requires force. Mastering the self requires strength" (Lao Tzu, 1989: p.35). One must be able to see and understand

the insights behind motives and behaviours, to build the integrity of the self. To expand one's consciousness, one must know themself and what they can and cannot do. One must be able to accept and feel comfortable with oneself to transcend one's subjective perceptions.

- Cognitive awareness

One must be aware of one's cognitive ability to discern the facts in a given context. One must be aware of its ability to exhibit a sharp judgement on the causes, and the consequences, of a given event, and the change in relationships which would most likely result from same. The cognitive level required to achieve the necessary consciousness level must be able to support accurate perceptions or insights, see holistically, and support a balanced view where one's own self-interest is not dominating.

- Affective awareness

Awareness and control of the affective domain is crucial to achieving the level of consciousness required to support adult development: "It should be clear by now that the work of increasing mental complexity is not a cognitive matter alone…..it draws on head and heart, on thinking and feeling" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.51). The affective domain refers to how one is feeling about oneself and towards others. It includes the ability to take multiple perspectives, offer compassion and caring, and exhibit a generosity of spirit to support an open and tolerant atmosphere.

- Epistemic awareness

One must be able to see that there is no such thing as a fact, in that one's mind determines one's perspective, and one's mind always operates in a subjective mode. One must be aware of the different levels the mind can operate from and the epistemic beliefs of each. One must be able aware of different forms of knowing. One must be cognisant of the certainty with which knowledge can be known, the role of the knower in constructing and accepting knowledge claims, and the need to engage in internal dialogical debate to resolve uncertainty.

2.9.5. Undertake New Behaviours

One cannot support adult development by thinking and feeling alone, “we can’t merely think or feel our way out of an immune system no matter how high our motivation is to accomplish a goal” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.217). One must be able to enact new behaviours to test the validity of our big assumptions, “Success follows from taking intentional, specific actions-the reaching hand-that are inconsistent with our immunity so that we can test our mindset” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.218), and “continually convert what we learn from behavioural changes into changes in our mindsets.” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.222)

It is important to establish insights on the accuracy of our big assumptions, but it is just as important to act on our insights, “Reflection without action is ultimately as unproductive as action without reflection” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p.222).

2.9.6. Freedom to Imagine

The fuse of adult mental development is lit by the imagination, where imagination includes rational, emotional, volitional, and the spiritual use of the mind and soul, “[Wisdom’s slow fuse is lit / By the imagination] – where imagination includes all kinds of uses of mind and soul” (Hoare, 2006: p.304).

One should be able to use their imagination more extensively when one knows it has the freedom to act on the imaginative options available. When one can see in the Immunity to change model that we all have the freedom to act, “increased mastery, more options, wider control, and greater degrees of freedom” (Kegan & Lahey, 2009: p.224), it liberates our mind and releases our imagination to go visiting. Reflective discourse provides one with the awareness, that old beliefs and contradicting commitments are limiting our freedom. When one can control one’s contradicting commitments, and the beliefs and assumptions which support them, one will give oneself the freedom to move to a more advanced plateau of adult mental development. This freedom can be difficult to achieve because the factors limiting our freedom reside at a feeling level rather than within our cognitive thoughts. Therefore we need a high level of affective awareness to control our fear and avoid being subject to its control.

2.10. **Model** (Setting/Abstraction)

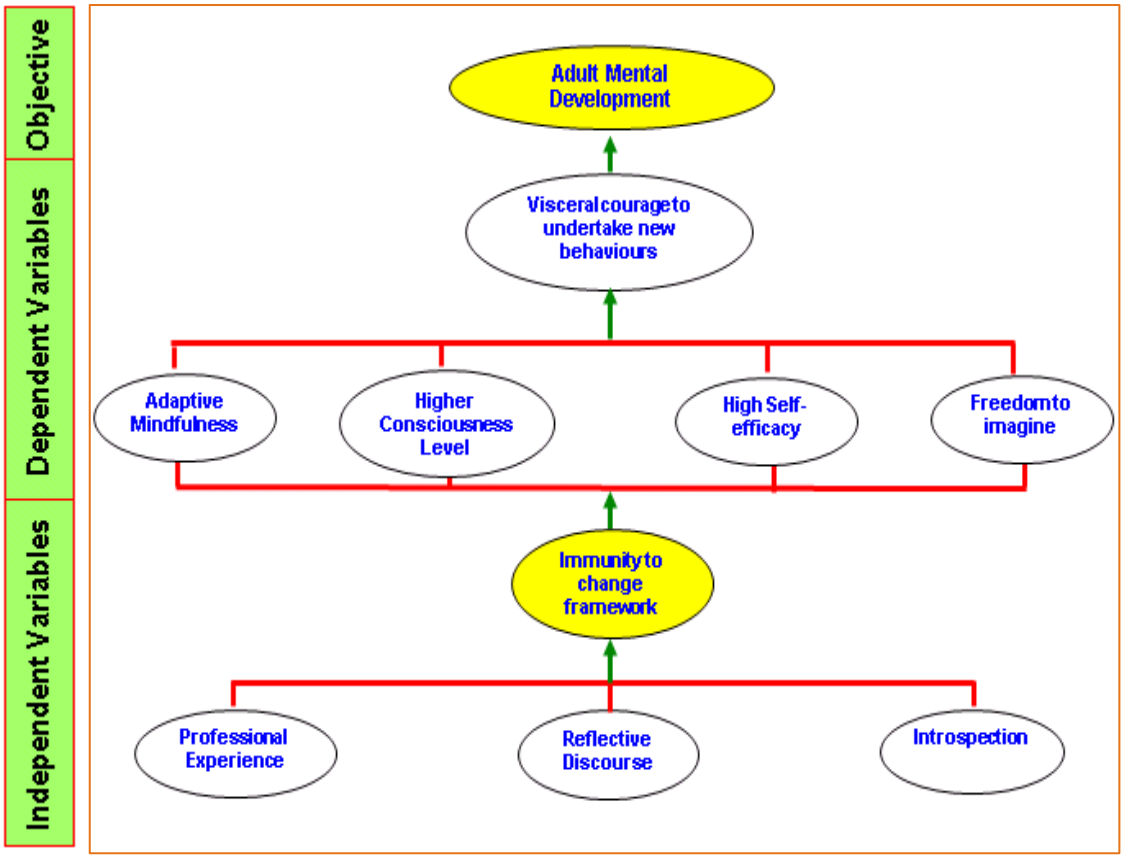
What is my understanding of Keynes definition of a model?

The model Keynes provides is not "a machine, or a method of blind manipulation, which will furnish an infallible answer" (Keynes, 1936: CW, VII, p.297), it provides, "an organised and orderly method of thinking out particular problems" (Keynes, 1936: CW, VII, p.297). Keynes model is "a general case representative of the reality…..rather than a fanciful ideal….."(Fanning & O 'Mahony, 2000, p.25), where the user has to use its "practical intuition (which can take account of a more detailed complex of facts than can be treated on general principles)" (Keynes, 1936: CW, VII, p.249). My model of Kegans' theory of Adult Mental Development must fit within the definition of this model.

What is Kegan's model of Adult Mental Development?

Kegan's model of Adult Mental Development provides a roadmap to transform our consciousness and renew our existing understanding to move our mind to a higher epistemology. My model is summarised in Figure 9 below,

Figure 9 – Kegan's model of adult mental development



Source: Adapted from Kegan's theory of adult mental development (1994 - 2009)

The orderly way of thinking, to work out problems, within this model is the following,

- One requires an experience to engage the 'practical intuition' of its user to apply the 'heads of arrangement' within the model to a specific time and place.
- The immunity to change framework supports both reflective discourse and introspection to move one's mind to a state of readiness to support development.
- The immunity to change process should result in a higher level of consciousness and a freedom to imagine. It should create a visceral need to change to support adult mental development.

3. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this Appendix is to formulate my understanding of Kegan's theory of Adult mental development and I have accomplished this objective.

I use Kegan's theory as an apparatus of thought within the DBA process and my capacity to use any theory as an apparatus of thought is limited unless I construct my own understanding of the theory. Kegan's theory of Adult Mental Development is the primary tool I use to Transition the change I require from the DBA process and my capacity to Transition such change is limited without my analysis of this theory.