



Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

**APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN A SELECTED
AUTOMOTIVE COMPONENT FACTORY IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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degree**

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ABSTRACT

Globalisation has placed increased pressure on South African organisations to transform in order to compete against the world's best. Low cost manufacturing countries such as India, China, Brazil, and Thailand pose a threat to businesses across a variety of sectors in South Africa. The prospects of failure are real, even more so in light of the current economic climate in which businesses operate, as competition is on the rise. In today's world of work, change is constant and organisations are required to continually renew their business and practices in order to meet the evolving needs of their clients. An organisation's inability to phase out strategies, policies, procedures and businesses that are no longer relevant may shorten the lifespan of the business. Successful management of organisational change processes is thus essential for survival in the global market.

This research was prompted as a result of production line employees being resistant to the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014, with the result of low commitment to change, at a selected medium sized automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa.

Traditional change management considers fixing problems and may be outdated, especially in light of the introduction of Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**). **AI** is a structured change intervention that uses positively directed questions. **AI** attempts to involve people to share their experiences of what worked well in the past in order to create a shared vision and an action plan that can be implemented to realise their set vision. **AI** has created a shift in thinking in change management, as it seeks to find the positive, whilst creating hope and a sense of triumph over past victories.

The main objective of the research was to improve change management practices when implementing new work procedures at the selected Cape Town automotive component manufacturer by using **AI**.

A qualitative descriptive research design was selected. Descriptive data was collected and analysed by using a literature review and focus groups in order to create understanding

of a particular subject matter, which relates to the research problem. Purposive sampling methods were used during this research. A majority of the participants believed that they had not resisted the implemented changes during 2013 and 2014. The participants proceeded with implementing the changes even though they were dissatisfied with the manner in which they were implemented. All of the participants opined that the **AI** method of implementing changes, could potentially benefit the company.

The limitation of this study was that the study had only been conducted at the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa, and considered implementation of change between 2013 and 2014. Results were based on the examples that were provided by the participants in the production area of the selected company, and may thus not be generalised.

Recommendations were made in the form of a step by step guide of how changes can be implemented within the selected company by using **AI** predominantly. However, it should be noted that the recommendations did factor in certain elements of the traditional change management approach.

Hence, the research confirmed that change management practices in the selected company needed improvement, and the research objectives and aims were achieved.

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GLOSSARY

(Not to be seen as definitions but instead as descriptions of the terms used)

Terms/Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition/Explanation
Appreciative Inquiry (AI)	“Appreciative Inquiry involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential” (Cooperrider, Sorenson, Whitney & Yaeger, 2000:5).
Conceptual analysis	Mouton (2001) describes a conceptual analysis as being the analysis of the meaning of concepts or words. A conceptual analysis provides clarity, and further elaborates on the meaning of the concepts and words from various angles.
Globalisation	Hough and Neuland (2001:24) explain that globalisation, in its most simplistic definition, refers to the sale of the same product worldwide. Carley and Christie (1992:100) define globalisation as integration in the international economic system.
Organisational change	<p>Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003) describe organisational change as the modification of behaviours and attitudes, in response to an incident or problem occurring or as a result of a process being changed.</p> <p>Nel <i>et al.</i> (2004: 502) refer to change as “making things different”, and opine that successful change requires the “unfreezing of the status quo, a movement to a new state and refreezing the new change to make it permanent”.</p>
Organisational Development (OD)	Robbins <i>et al.</i> (2003) state that Organisational Development (OD) is a term that is used to encompass a collection of planned change interventions, which are built to improve employee well-being and organisational effectiveness, through collaborative and participative processes.

Organisational renewal

Organisational renewal is described as the organisation's ability to adapt. Furthermore, organisational renewal involves the investment in resources for activities that will improve the organisation's future net worth, for example, research and development (Nel, van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2004).

Resilience

Resilience may be described as the ability to recover quickly to change and handle adversity (Pulley & Wakefield, 2001).

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND AIM OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Most businesses endeavour to be sustainable, but success is not guaranteed (ITO Focus International & LHRS, 2003). Globalisation has placed increased pressure on South African organisations to compete against the world's best. Low cost manufacturing countries such as India, China, Brazil, and Thailand pose a threat to businesses across a variety of sectors in South Africa. Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003:404) explain that "more and more organisations face a dynamic changing environment", and contend that organisations should either "change or die!". An organisation's inability to adapt quickly enough to the constantly evolving needs of their clients, may be considered as a possible reason for its failed survival in today's global economy (Mallak, 1998).

Competition within the automotive component manufacturing industry, globally, is no different. For South African multinational automotive component manufacturers, its ability to transform is essential for its sustainability and survival in the global economy. Organisational leaders should, therefore, ensure that appropriate change management interventions are mobilised in an attempt to secure the sustainability of their respective organisations. Change management tools that will facilitate adaptability to meet the evolving needs of their clients is key for survival in the global market. It is thus vital that leaders within any organisation should pave the way for future change through a positive vision that inspires people to persevere in spite of turbulent times. A challenge, therefore, exists for organisations to identify and use change interventions that positively contribute to organisational transformation and survival in the global market.

Organisational Development (**OD**) literature on change management suggests various approaches to manage organisational change (Robbins, Judge, & Campbell, 2010.; Robbins *et al.*, 2003; Mullins, 1999). People are at the heart of any change agenda, and leadership has a direct influence on the success or failure of a change initiative. Furthermore, it is widely accepted that people are regarded as a competitive advantage that one business has over another. However, Senge *et al.* (1999:5) state that "most

change initiatives fail". It is thus important to assess why change initiatives fail with specific emphasis on the people element so that appropriate change management tools can be identified.

The question that remains is, *which of these change interventions will assist in ensuring the longevity of the organisation in today's fast paced and competitive environment?* The traditional approach to managing change may be outdated in light of the introduction of a more contemporary approach, namely Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**). **AI** centres around improving the organisation by initiating change, which is built on using past successes of what works well in an organisation. **AI** focuses on what is right in the organisation, which assists in envisioning and creating actions that are required to generate a positive change for the future. Whereas, traditional change management focuses on fixing problems which can be overwhelming for many. Appreciative Inquiry challenges conventional change management approaches (Bushe, n.d.).

The father of Appreciative Inquiry, David Cooperrider, was quoted as saying: "The most important thing we do as consultants is inquiry. We try to read situations; we do organizational analysis and diagnosis. It all starts with inquiry. The key point is that the way we know is fateful. The questions we ask, the things that we choose to focus on, the topics we choose determine what we find. And so the seeds of change are implicit in the very first questions we ask. Inquiry is intervention" (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:85). In essence, Cooperrider believed that change began with the act of asking a question. Furthermore, he believed that the manner in which the questions were directed would determine what you would find, that is, either the positive or negative.

Traditional change management focused on the negative by diagnosing existing problems that required attention. Conversely, **AI** focuses on the positive. The **AI** process is a collaborative way of learning by asking positively directed questions to create a platform for people to discover their untapped individual and collective potential, values and strengths, whilst unleashing their energy and imagination, which is necessary to transform the future (Learning Resources, 2004). Cooperrider and Srivastva explain that

organisations “are not problems to be solved but are centers of infinite human capacity, ultimately unpredictable, unknowable, or, a mystery alive” (Appreciative Inquiry Commons, 2015). **AI** taps into the hopes and dreams of people for the future by inviting them to engage in building the kind of working community that they desire (Learning Resources, 2004). Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2001:85-86) state that: “When individuals or organisations discover and tap rich, inspiring accounts of peak experiences and link the positive core to any change agenda business transformations never thought possible can emerge”. Appreciative Inquiry “shifts people into a space of unlimited potential and possibility by creating synergy between personal and organisational purpose” (Learning Resources, 2004). Keefe and Pesut (2004) note that Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) is required in today’s world of work because of the accelerating pace of change.

The view that **AI** contributes positively to organisational change is further substantiated on the home page of The Appreciative Inquiry Commons, where a few remarks of people who use the **AI** methodology are shared. A senior executive at one company commented on her assessment of **AI**'s uniqueness, saying that: "I know what **AI** is about...it is about creating a positive revolution in change" (<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>). Positive sentiments on Appreciative Inquiry are shared by Professor Robert Quinn of the University of Michigan in his acclaimed book, *Change the World*, where he states that Appreciative Inquiry is transforming the field of organisational development (Quinn, 2000). Appreciative Inquiry has thus created a shift in thinking in terms of change management, and could be regarded as a potential alternative means for South African organisations to manage transformation.

1.2 Background of the research problem

Continuous improvement is vital for the survival of a business, specifically in light of the fact that it competes globally. The existing management of change is a concern in a selected multinational automotive component manufacturing company. The company is a medium sized organisation, which employs less than 250 employees and is located in Cape Town, South Africa. The problem relates to production line employees being resistant to change when new procedures are introduced. Work procedures are changed

on a regular basis in the production area in order to improve productivity levels and quality standards.

Change within the selected automotive component manufacturer may arise for a number of reasons, and would typically occur when, for example, a new product is introduced, there are modifications of an existing product to meet new requirements of a customer, process layouts have been changed to increase productivity, and product specifications have been changed owing to the quality requirements of the customer.

When changes are implemented, in most cases there appears to be negativity amongst production line employees about the change. Negativity could in turn lead to low morale and employee commitment towards the implemented change, which is a concern. In addition, there have been problems with the implementation of new work procedures across shifts. The company operates over three shifts. There have been instances where new work procedures were implemented on one shift in a production area, with the expectation that this change would be relayed over to the next two shifts, but to no avail. The result would often be that only one shift would implement the change and the remaining two shifts would use the old method. The impact in this case would be that the quality of the product would be compromised. If the changes were not properly introduced, production line employees may be using the incorrect procedure or specification by continuing with the old method.

Successful change management is thus essential if the company wants to create a continuous improvement culture, where employees embrace change instead of displaying negativity. The effective implementation of new work procedures in the business, even more so within the production department, is key. If unaddressed, unsuccessful implementation of change may hamper the business survival in the long term, particularly if implemented changes are short lived and product quality is compromised. Leaders and change agents must, therefore, be equipped with the necessary tools and techniques to successfully facilitate change, which includes managing resistance to change. Literature on change management, including overcoming resistance to change, is available.

Traditional change management is centred on resolving a workplace problem. However, companies are so consumed with problems that they may often fail to highlight the positive. Staff, in turn, may become too overwhelmed with their current obstacles that it becomes increasingly difficult for them to envision a positive future. Morale levels may also be negatively affected as a result of the increasing number of problems that are addressed. Traditional change management approaches may be outdated in light of the introduction of Appreciative Inquiry. Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) is a contemporary method to manage change, since it focuses on the positive, and is explored in this research.

Appreciative Inquiry has created a shift in thinking in terms of change management, since it seeks to find the positive, which creates hope and a sense of triumph over past victories. **AI** methodology may be regarded as a fairly new approach in the South African context, however, it could be considered as a potential alternative change management tool (in contrast with traditional approaches) for South African organisations to outlive turbulent times. **AI** has benefited many companies across the globe. The impact of this research is that **AI** may be regarded as a potential tool to overcome the negativity and resistance to change in the selected automotive component manufacturing company in Cape Town. Furthermore, this research can be viewed as a means of introducing Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) in other manufacturing companies, specifically where the introduction of new processes, procedures and equipment is required.

This research attempts to establish possible reasons why production line employees resisted the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014. The research aims to improve change management practices at a selected multinational automotive component manufacturing company in Cape Town through the use of **AI**. In addition, the research builds on the existing theoretical knowledge of **AI** in a South African context.

1.3 Literature study

A literature study was conducted with the aim of creating a better understanding of the research problem by providing relevant background information to guide the study. Data

was mainly obtained from related publications such as textbooks, journal articles, periodicals, previous research studies and internet sources amongst others.

1.4 Statement of the research problem

Scientific research is aimed at solving a research problem by using a systematic process. Furthermore, scientific research involves the collection and analysis of data from literature, observations and/or experiments in an attempt to address a specific research problem (George, 2011). The problem that is addressed in this research pertains to a real problem in a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa.

Problem identification

1.4.1 Problem statement

Due to the poor implementation of change management, in particular resistance to change with the implementation of new procedures amongst production line employees, resulted in low commitment and low morale at a selected automotive component factory in Cape Town, South Africa, between 2013 and 2014.

1.4.2 Explanation of the main problem

Production line employees are resistant to change when new work procedures are introduced at a selected automotive component factory in Cape Town, South Africa. As a result, the change that is implemented is not sustainable, since employees revert to old methods, which may lead to quality defects occurring. A lack of buy in from employees into the implemented change has resulted in low morale and negativity. The organisation's inability to continuously improve and adapt to the changing needs of their customers may negatively impact the organisation's global competitiveness and business survival. If unaddressed, this may ultimately hamper the production of good quality parts, which may affect the business' survival to maintain its existing clients, and whilst sourcing new clients in the long term.

1.4.3 Research question

The research problem is either described in the form of a hypothesis or is posed as a question about the nature of a real situation. A hypothesis is an assumption, which is made about a problem, and is formally tested to prove whether or not the assumption is true. Conversely, research questions are more appropriate for qualitative studies since data collection depends on descriptive methods to develop the hypotheses (Grinnell, 1997:12). The research is aimed at answering the following research questions in an attempt to address a practical workplace problem:

- *What are the shortcomings of the current change management techniques?*
- *What change management techniques will help to solve the problem?*
- *Is AI a possible change management technique?*

1.5 Aims and objectives

The objective of the research is to address the main research question. In order to address the research problem, a conceptual analysis was conducted on the successful implementation of change management, which includes overcoming resistance to change and sustainable change. The Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) concept is then explored. The purpose is to analyse and describe the **AI** concept, create clarity on **AI** as a change intervention through a structured process, and highlight the shortcomings of traditional change management approaches to further validate the use of **AI** as an alternative change management approach in the South African context.

Main research objective

The main objective of the research is to improve change management practices when implementing new work procedures at the selected Cape Town automotive component manufacturer, by using **AI**.

The broader aim of this study is to conduct a conceptual analysis on how Appreciative Inquiry can improve the management of change initiatives at a selected multinational automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa.

1.6 Research design and methodology

1.6.1 Research methodology

Research methodology refers to the group of data collection methods, which is used during the research (Henning, 2004; Mouton, 2001). Below is an outline of the data collection methods that were used in the research.

1.6.2 Research approach

Qualitative research is aimed at gaining a better understanding of human behaviour and experience (Babbie, 2014; Mouton, 2001; Garbers, 1996). Qualitative research is characterised by a real life experience or real situation. The research problem that is addressed relates to a real situation, which pertains to poorly implemented change initiatives in a selected automotive component manufacturer. In addition, the research problem is concerned with understanding reasons why production line employees resisted the implementation of new work procedures at the selective automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. The qualitative research method established the real views of production line employees in terms of what they believe contributed to the poor implementation of changes in the workplace. A qualitative approach was thus adopted.

1.6.3 Research design

A research design is the plan, which is compiled to adequately complete the study and address the research problem (Mouton, 2001). A qualitative descriptive research design was selected for this study. It requires descriptive data to be collected to create an understanding of a particular subject matter, which relates to the research problem. A literature review was used to provide the necessary information on change management, resistance to change, and Appreciative Inquiry. Data was also obtained from focus group sessions.

1.6.4 Research data collection methods

Data collection is an integral part of the research process. The purpose is to ensure that collected data provides the necessary information to adequately answer the posed research questions in the case of qualitative research. A literature review and focus groups

were selected as data collection methods that were primarily used in the research. The rationale for the use of a literature review and focus groups is also briefly described.

1.6.4.1 Literature review

A literature review aims to provide information, which relates to studies that are completed in a particular discipline or field. A literature review was appropriate to provide an understanding of change management, reasons for failed change initiatives, the role of leadership in change, and the meaning of **AI**, together with other relevant subject matter, which relates to the research problem. There are many success stories and knowledgeable employees at all levels of organisations. Lessons can be learned from both past successes, and the 'know how' of all these people can be tapped to the advantage of the survival of the company. **AI** can be considered as a potential alternative change management tool, since it will assist with addressing the poor implementation of change.

The literature review was aimed at creating clarity around the existing subject to provide perspective on the research problem and to address the aims of the study. Data was obtained mainly from related publications such as textbooks, journal articles, periodicals, previous research studies, and internet sources, amongst others as part of the literature review. The rationale was to ensure that the change methodology that was analysed in the literature, covered both traditional approaches to managing change, as well as recent developments in the organisational development (**OD**) field, more specifically **AI** (which was first introduced in a research paper in 1987).

1.6.4.2 Focus groups

A focus group interview is described as a purposeful discussion with individuals who have similar interests or background on a particular topic (Barbour, 2007; Schurink, Schurink and Poggenpoel, 1998). The purpose of the focus group sessions was for the participants to:

- share their views about the implemented changes between 2013 and 2014;
- state whether or not they were satisfied with the implemented changes;
- identify possible reasons for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction;
- indicate whether or not they resisted change; and

- establish whether **AI** would be viewed as a possible alternative change management intervention.

The views of the focus group should not be generalised. Feedback from the focus groups was used to further validate the research.

Specific tools were used to ensure that the information is accurately transcribed. The discussion was in the form of open ended questions, which used specific themes with sub categories related to the research problem. The themes that were selected were the reasons for failed change and **AI** as an alternative approach in the specific workplace. Field notes made during the discussions and the transcript were relied on during the data analysis phase of the research.

1.6.5 Sampling methodology

Purposive sampling is where the researcher selects the sample that is deemed appropriate for the study (Flick, 2011). Purposive sampling was used in the research study to identify related literature for the study, and for selection of participants for the focus groups.

1.6.6 Target population

The research population may be described as the sample of units that is studied. De Vos (2005:199) explains that units that are studied are units of persons, events, case records, or organisation units. The selection of participants for the focus groups was made from the target population, namely the total number of production line employees who were affected by workplace changes between 2013 and 2014 in the selected company. The units of analysis used in the research are discussed below.

1.6.6.1 Units of analysis

The units of analysis used in this research would include the body of scientific knowledge to provide descriptive data, namely literature on change management, inclusive of resistance to change, and **AI**. Schools of thought and scientific concepts, which are relevant to the subject matter linked to research problem were hence covered. Another

unit of analysis was persons, which in this case was a sample of production line employees (excluding production supervision) in a selected automotive component manufacturing company in Cape Town, South Africa, who were involved in the implementation of new work procedures during 2013 and 2014.

1.6.6.2 Literature

A total of approximately eighty reputable Change Management, **AI** and research methodology literature sources was analysed (both South African and international). It should be noted that the literature that was assessed was limited to publications from 1985 to date. The aim was to present a conceptual framework (as per the objectives), which attempts to capture the most recent developments in **AI**. Furthermore, purposive sampling was used to select production line employees.

1.6.6.3 Size of selected focus group

Barbour (2007) recommends that group members within a focus group should share at least one important characteristic to assist with conducting comparisons in the research. The common characteristic shared by participants that were selected in this research was that they were all production line employees who were affected by changes in the workplace at the selected company between 2013 and 2014.

Barbour (2007) highlights that social science research is more concerned with finding a comprehensive understanding of participants' views, and the manner in which these perspectives were socially constructed. A minimum of three to four and a maximum of eight participants is recommended per focus group (Barbour, 2007).

Data gathered that was through focus groups was limited to one company, that is, a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. Participants were selected purposely and their involvement was voluntary. A sample was taken of production line operators that were involved in the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014. Production supervision was not part of the sample, since their

buy-in to organisational change was not an area of concern, at the time of the study being conducted. Twelve participants participated in the research. However, this was subject to the availability of the target group. Two groups, which comprised of six production line employees formed each focus group.

1.6.7 Data analysis and interpretation

Data that was collected from the literature review was analysed by using the conceptual analysis method (Mouton, 2001). Focus group data, conversely, was analysed by using a recognised approach from Huberman and Miles (Silverman, 2014). Data analysis and interpretation are discussed in further detail below.

1.6.7.1 Analysing data

A conceptual analysis may be described as an examination of the meaning of a particular concept (Mouton, 2001). The aim of a conceptual analysis is to provide clarity on the concept that is studied from various angles. In this case, the conceptual analysis involved both change management and Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**). South African literature on **AI** was found to be limited. **AI** can thus be regarded as a fairly new concept in the South African context, and the research would build on the existing body of knowledge.

Textual data was analysed to assess the critical success factors to traditional change interventions, with specific emphasis on overcoming resistance to change, and to also assess the possible benefits of using **AI** as an alternative approach in South African organisations.

Transcripts were used to analyse participants' views, together with field notes that were made during the focus group sessions. Data was tabulated into set themes, described above, using a recognised method, namely the Huberman and Miles approach (Silverman, 2014).

The aim of the research was to conduct a conceptual analysis of change management, and of the **AI** concept, as well as the role of **AI** as a change intervention in developing positive change at the selected company in Cape Town, South Africa.

1.6.7.2 Presenting results

The results were based on literature that was obtained on change management and **AI**, together with participants' responses that were obtained in the focus group sessions. A number of tables were constructed to share the findings of the study, and the shortcomings of existing change management practices, which were used in the selected company. The findings of the focus group sessions were compared to existing literature on change management. A comparative table was compiled in order to highlight participants' concerns, together with required change interventions based on the change management literature, including **AI**. This was aimed at identifying areas to be improved in change management practices at the selected company. A practical step by step guide was outlined by way of recommendations for future implementation of change at the selected company.

1.6.8 Reliability

Reliability is related to the accuracy and consistency of the research measures that are used. The reliability test involved assessing whether the same data would be produced if the same measuring instruments are used by different observers or researchers (Silverman, 2014; Silverman, 2011; Hammersley, 1992a). Qualitative research is aimed at understanding participants' views. It was, therefore, important that the trustworthiness of the data should accurately be reflected. The trustworthiness of the collected data was secured by ensuring that the data from participants in the focus groups was obtained in a transparent and open manner, where consent was obtained. The focus group sessions were recorded and transcribed. Notes were also used to ensure that the views that were expressed were accurately reported. The participants were given an opportunity to review the findings to ensure that the data that was obtained was captured in the correct context under the specified themes. Verbatim responses, where applicable, were used to support the findings. In this way, attempts were made to eliminate bias possibilities.

1.6.9 Validity

Validity pertains to the extent to which the research design achieves or measures what it is intended to measure (Silverman, 2014). Content validity refers to the correctness and appropriateness of the information that is included in the research study to answer the research problem. Qualitative research further validated information that was found in the body of scientific knowledge around the successful management of change, resistance to change, and **AI** as an alternative approach. A semi-structured interview questionnaire was formulated to obtain data on the views of production line employees around the implementation of new work procedures and the possible implementation of **AI** as an alternative. The validity test was passed, as the procedures that were followed, were above board, open and transparent.

1.7 Feasibility of the study

There is increasing evidence, which supports the benefits of work based projects, especially those linked to the long term success of companies (Raelin, 2008). Furthermore, Nixon (2008) postulates that insider led research can make significant contributions to work practices. The impact of the research that was undertaken was dependent on the initial buy in and commitment from management to take the necessary action to address the concerns raised, following the insider led research. Permission was obtained from management and the participants in the selected automotive component manufacturer, where the research was conducted. The findings of the research will be presented to the role players with the aim of implementing the recommendations at the end of the research.

1.8 Demarcation of the research

The research was further delineated as follows:

- The research is a study, which concerns change management, specifically relating to the poor implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014 at a selected automotive component factory in Cape Town, South Africa;
- The selected company employs fewer than 250 employees;
- The literature that was reviewed selected publications, dated from 1985 to date. In this way, both traditional approaches to change management, as well as the contemporary tool for change, namely Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**), was consulted;

- Data that was gathered through focus groups was limited to one company, namely a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa; and
- The focus group participants were all production line employees that were required to use new procedures or processes between the period 2013 and 2014. Participation was voluntary. The goal was to have at least twelve participants. However, this was subject to the availability of the target group, and it should be noted that literature was largely relied on.

1.9 Ethics statement

Ethical conduct in research is pertinent (Costley, Elliot & Gibbs, 2010). Research often requires personal information to be released during the research process (Babbie, 2014). Hence, it is essential that ethical issues should be addressed in the research. The management and participants in the research were informed of the intended use of the released information (Henning, 2004). Participation in the research was voluntary and sought and received informed consent (Babbie, 2014, Henning, 2004). The information that was received was handled in a responsible manner, and was not misused in any way. Participants were given the reassurance that their contributions would be handled in a confidential manner, and where information was required to be released, it would be to serve the personal interests of the groups that were researched, namely the participants (Babbie, 2014).

1.10 Chapter outline of the research report

Chapter One provided a background of the research problem, and the overall objectives of the research.

Chapter Two presents an in depth literature review on change management, which provides orientation regarding the traditional approach to managing change, and includes the topic of managing employee resistance to change.

Chapter Three provides a comprehensive conceptual overview of Appreciative Inquiry, which aims to create an understanding of the concept, and the potential benefits that it could have for the selected automotive component manufacturing company.

Chapter Four explains the research design and the methodology that were used in this research study.

Chapter Five discusses and interprets the research results.

Chapter Six presents the recommendations that were made in order to remedy the concerns raised in the selected company by way of this research.

Chapter Seven summarises the aims and results of the research project.

1.11 Chapter summary

In summary, this chapter provided an outline for the research study by providing a background and rationale for the study, the problem formulation, the research question, the research aims and objectives, as well as the research design and methodology.

Chapter 2 presents an in-depth review of change management, which provides an orientation of the traditional approach to managing change, and includes the topic of managing employee resistance to change.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

2.1 Introduction

In today's world of work change is constant and organisations are required to continually renew their business and practices in order to meet the evolving needs of their clients. The prospects of failure to survive are real, even more so in light of the current economic climate in which businesses operate, and where competition is on the rise.

There has hardly been a greater need for a culture of learning and continuous improvement in organisations. Organisational renewal is an organisation's ability to continuously adapt and learn through process improvement (Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz; 2008). Nel *et al.* (2004:498) suggest that "organisations must engage in self renewal", and state that "without renewal, organisations become less competitive and many simply die off." Organisational transformation is critical for all businesses, since it is "not simply a search for a new organisational identity, but rather a positioning of the organisation in response to new forces so as to stave off obsolescence" (Nel *et al.*, 2004:500). Self renewal demands learning new approaches and requires realignment to evolving practices. An organisation's inability to phase out strategies, policies and businesses that are no longer relevant may shorten the lifespan of the business. Change management is, therefore, essential.

Management of the change process, both internally and externally, should be viewed as part of the core mission of the survival and growth for any business (Alberts, Coetsee, Coleman, Eloff, Marsden, & Payne, 1993). Drucker (1995:75) supports this view by stating that "our age is such a period of transformation", and added that the management of change must be built into the structure of the organisation. Organisations should adopt change management strategies in order to assist with their survival in the global market. However, most change interventions do not necessarily succeed (Senge, 1999). According to Senge *et al.* (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, & Smith, 1999:10), in the pioneering book, *The Dance of Change*, "most change initiatives fail" because of the lack of "sustained momentum". In addition, it is the norm for people to fear and resist change

(Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz, 2008). Resistance to change may arise as a result of a number of reasons, but is generally owing to perceptions that the change may threaten individual self-interests (Nel, *et al.*, 2008). Organisational leaders must, therefore, be equipped with the necessary skills of managing the change process, and the ability to positively influence employees to overcome their resistance or face failure in transforming their organisations. Organisational development literature on change management, including managing resistance to change, is well documented. The traditional and contemporary approach to change management is hence explored in an attempt to address the research problem.

This research was prompted as a result of production line employees being resistant to the implementation of new work procedures at a selected medium sized automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. Hence, Chapter Two reviews literature, which relates to the main problem to assist in assessing the shortcomings in the change management practices, which have resulted in employees being resistant to the implementation of new work procedures. The aim of the research would thus be to improve change management practices within the selected organisation.

In answering the research question, it was important that the following literature was examined: the meaning of organisational change; scope of organisational change; stimulants of organisational change; challenges faced by South African organisations; possible reasons for failed implementation of change; the role of leaders in change; common reasons for resistance to change; typical negative reactions to change and possible interventions; approaches to managing resistance to change; traditional approaches to managing change; and shortcomings of the traditional approach.

2.2 Meaning of organisational change

Change involves modification of the status quo or simply making something different. Furthermore, change may arise owing to various forces, for example, competition, technology or legislative changes, to name a few. Managing change encompasses the management of responses to change, and also covers resistance to change when

attempting to implement a change strategy within an organisation (Nel, *et al.*, 2008). In examining change management whilst addressing the research problem, it is important to provide clarity on the meaning of organisational change.

Changes in the workplace may be regarded as an alteration of the current state into a new status quo in response to a need, which is driven by either internal or external forces. Internal and external forces that affect the company may give rise to organisational change, which may either be planned or an unplanned change intervention (Nel, *et al.*, 2004).

Planned change is when decisions are made to deliberately alter the organisation, for example, a change in structure, as well as introducing new technology and processes (Nel, *et al.*, 2004).

Unplanned change refers to change that may occur as a result of mandatory conditions that are imposed on an organisation, for example, economic conditions, government regulations and natural disasters, which may lead to abrupt and unexpected changes (Nel, *et al.*, 2004). Both forms of change must be managed and may require a modification in work processes, procedures, organisational culture, structures, behaviours or attitudes. In discussing change, it is important to note the three scopes of change, namely incremental change, strategic change and transformational change (Nel, *et al.*, 2008), which are briefly explained, in the text below.

2.3 Scope of organisational change

There are three scopes of organisational change (Nel *et al.*, 2008; Nel, van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2004: 503). Incremental change relates to small changes that are made, for example, small changes to work procedures. Strategic change refers to larger scale change, for example, the restructuring of an organisation. The final scope of change is transformational change, which involves change that occurs when the organisation moves to a radically different state and at times an unknown state for example

changing the organisational culture (Nel *et al.*, 2008). The research problem can thus be classified as an incremental scope of change, since it involved the implementation of new work procedures, which can be viewed as a small scope of change. In assessing the research problem further, the need for organisational change is discussed below.

2.4 Stimulants of organisational change

The need for organisational change may differ from organisation to organisation. Typical examples of stimulants, which give rise to the need for change include, amongst others (Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003; Dawson, 2003):

- changing customer needs;
- laws and regulations (tariffs and trade, labour laws);
- where deficiencies between the actual versus targeted performance exist, as seen in key performance indicators such as decreases in total net profit, sales per employee, labour costs, accident rates, and so on;
- changes in the nature of the workforce (for example, increased diversity in the workforce and the number of professionals employed in organisations);
- the need for technological advancements and increased automation, as well as the use of information technology (so that the organisation is more responsive to change, since organisations have the ability to produce or deliver services faster than before);
- economic shocks, which impose a need for change within organisations (for example the volatile SA rand, international oil price, and so on);
- globalisation, which results in increased international competition, hence threatening local business;
- increased need for innovative and flexible businesses to adapt to competition quickly and, if necessary, customise;
- social trends changing, which could have an influence on the organisation (for example, increased divorce rate, increased single parent households and demands for smaller homes, and so on); and
- world politics (the opening Chinese market, Apartheid).

In order to contextualise the research problem further, it is important to discuss some of the challenges, which South African organisations face in order to manage change and possible reasons for the poor implementation of change.

2.5 Challenges that South African organisations face: The need for change

South African organisations face a number of challenges in today's global economy. All changes, including external and internal, should be managed properly to ensure that the organisation operates smoothly, efficiently and effectively. By not taking note of changes,

organisations take the risk of staff unhappiness and frustrations, which further affect morale and motivation. This will create relationship problems with further ripple effects on the success of the organisation.

Globalisation and the global market

To view globalisation simplistically, refers to borderless trade across the world. Nel *et. al.* (2004) explain that in the global market, “countries have become like companies” that are in competition with one another. Globalisation may also be regarded as a phenomenon that stimulates organisational renewal. In today’s global economy, organisational success can no longer be based purely on excellence in one area, for example, quality or cost (Nelson & Quick, 1997). Nelson and Quick (1997:540) opine that in order “to be truly global, organisations must have the capability and efficiency in all areas”, whilst they add that good relationships must exist between the organisation and their clients. The ability to customise products or services in a more convenient way is vital (Nelson & Quick, 1997). SA organisations have only recently entered the global market and face competing against world class companies that are highly competitive. South African organisations are threatened by international competition and their survival depends on their ability to adapt accordingly to customer demands.

World class companies are innovative and able to adapt their products and services to the needs of their environment, whereas in SA “most organisations are highly centralised rigid and mechanistic” (Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003:404). This could be detrimental to adapting responsively to changing customer needs, while SA organisations should review their structures to facilitate adaptability, innovation and quick decision making. Appropriate change management strategies should also be considered by leadership to assist organisations to overcome resistance to change, whilst adapting in turbulent times.

Lack of knowledge of global practices

Managers may be poorly informed about global practices. Robbins *et al.* (2004:404) explain that “world class companies operate in a multinational or in a global context and are characterised by high performance and high involvement”. SA organisations should

engage their businesses in benchmarking activities in order to improve their overall operational excellence, structures to facilitate continuous improvement and involvement.

Lack of knowledge of change management practices

A lack of knowledge exists around change management practices in the SA context. Burger, Theron and van Rooyen (1996) contend that SA skills and competencies, which relate to the post-modern world (information revolution) should be strengthened. In today's global economy, it is crucial that SA leadership should familiarise themselves with change management practices, including transformation in order to assist with the effective implementation thereof, and for the ultimate survival of their businesses. A lack of knowledge could result in failed implementation of change.

Cultures and economies

Wilson (1992:128) argues that organisations must seek ways to align and adapt their business much like global players have, yet the impact of different national cultures and economies, which are in different stages of advanced or declined growth could have a major impact on the change process. The challenge for SA organisations is that leaders should address the change process, taking into account the cultural diversity of the workforce. Perceptions of certain issues may be different based on an individual's cultural background, while leaders should manage this in conjunction with the change, and identify the reasons for resistance to change.

Technological advancement

Limited resources for technological advancement and information technology enhancement also play a role. Technological advancements such as new computerised systems, hi-tech machinery and equipment also pose a threat to South African organisations' competitiveness particularly if these cannot be implemented as a result of limited financial resources. The Internet and e-commerce have also revolutionised consumers' accessibility to a wider variety of products and services both locally and internationally, making shopping an activity that is literally at the consumer's finger tips. In

this way, globalisation and technology have increased competition and pressure for South African organisations to adapt or risk their market share. Adaptability is thus essential.

Retention of human capital (key talent, knowledge and skills)

Brain drain, which is the loss of key technical and professional skills to global companies, also places a threat on SA organisations. This could arise owing to a number of reasons, for example, uncompetitive pay and reward structures, crime, and the countries' economic and political position. Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod (2001) argue that the only competitive advantage that organisations have over one another is its human capital. Attracting, developing and retaining talented employees is a crucial business practice, which is required from Human Resources professionals. Competence and skills is key to being able to adapt to the evolving needs of clients. Employees must be given appropriate training in order to adapt to clients' needs.

The negative psychosis

Negativity is experienced by all in their daily lives. The problem so prevalent in South Africa, according to Nasser and Vivier (1993:4), is "the present negative psychosis", and they hence propose that it should "be replaced by a focus on the creation of a self destiny" through "a frame-breaking approach, envisioning the future and the removal of the fear of failure". Table 2.1 below presents the negative vocabularies often used by individuals and organisations.

Nasser and Vivier (1993:4) further explain that "the point from which the seeds of enthusiasm vision and direction-finding grow, originates in the individual and collective psyche. Mindset is a determinant of destiny". However, it should be acknowledged that mindset on its own cannot ensure business sustainability, leadership that drives the change should influence the organisational culture, strategies, structure and processes, whilst persevering with a positive focus in spite of times of uncertainty.

Table 2.1: Examples of negative vocabularies

Vocabularies of Human Deficit	Vocabularies of Organisational Deficit
Depressed	Organisational Stress
Paranoid	Work Alienation
Midlife Crisis	Low Morale
Low Self-Esteem	Groupthink
Identity Crisis	Authoritarian Management
Dysfunctional Family	Role Conflict
Extremely Controlled	Labor-Management Mistrust
Obsessive Compulsive	Job Dissatisfaction

(Adapted from Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003:17)

With the above in mind, it is evident that SA organisations should improve their ability to transform, or they may fail to survive. Approaches to managing organisational change exist, but some still fail. Possible reasons why change initiatives have failed are explored below.

2.6 Possible reasons why change initiatives fail, and the consequences

There are a number of reasons why change initiatives fail, and could be as a result of any one or a combination of the following possible reasons:

- Insufficient management support and buy-in from key role players. The lack of support from crucial role players can hinder success of the change initiative;
- Focusing on the wrong idea or problem. This may occur, for example, when an external consultant is sourced to identify and resolve the problem, but the focus may be on the incorrect problems;
- The change initiative that is introduced may be done for the wrong reasons, and may not align with the long term strategy, whilst is possibly introduced as a *'quick fix'*;
- Not leading by example and *'walking the talk'*, since leaders' actions, in reality, do not reflect the objectives or aims that are spoken of, which creates cynicism and disbelief that things will ever improve;

- Neglecting the people aspect during the change process and instead only focusing on the goal. Hence, there is an increased resistance to change, which could hinder the change from being effectively implemented;
- Change agents not being empowered with the required tools to facilitate change and others not being aware of their role, as their work must fit into the organisational culture;
- Leadership that lack good business entrepreneurship and strategic skills;
- Serious strategic misjudgments and poor decisions, which are made by management could be disastrous for the company, and will create distrust amongst employees;
- Insufficient involvement, training and communication with staff in the early stages of the change initiative will hinder their buy-in to the process;
- A lack of knowledge of market trends;
- Failing to listen to customers and their needs could result in contracts being lost to other competitors;
- Lack of enhancement of company competitiveness and steering company activities into new directions;
- Losing sight of the overall objective or purpose of the initiative by becoming either too involved in the process or showing a lack of interest; and
- Misunderstandings that are created, which no communication can correct.

Leadership is at the forefront of bringing about change, while the scope of change may vary. It is thus imperative for top management pave the way for future change through a positive vision that inspires people to persevere and renew the organisation continuously in spite of turbulent times. The role of leaders in the change process is discussed next.

2.7 The role of leadership in change

For the purpose of this research leadership includes management, as well as informal leaders within the organisation. As with any change agenda, organisational leaders are required to lead the effort, and play a pivotal role in the success and sustainability of change interventions. Krieg (2002) suggests that a correlation between effective change and leadership exists and state that they go hand in hand. A definition of leadership, as described by Kouzes and Posner (2002), is that it is the process when ordinary people use to bring out the best in others including themselves. In this context, leaders are believed to be credible, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and recognise employee contributions. Taffinder (1998) suggests or defines leadership as getting people to go beyond what they believe is possible in their actions. A pivotal need is a leader's ability to apply lateral thinking so that it provides a helicopter vision to overcome previous paradigms. Burger, Theron and Van Rooyen (1996:266) posit that

managers and leaders should subscribe to: “We will not suffer, we will shape it. We will not simply grow, we will manage our growth, we will not passively experience change. We will make change but to shape the future, we need a new vision”. Organisational leaders must adopt a positive mindset by leading the organisation through change and transformational change, where the final destination is unknown.

2.7.1 The role of leadership in times of turbulence – A case study at an assembly test manufacturing company

Remarkable results were achieved at an assembly test manufacturing company, which was under great pressure. The Vice President, David Marsing, for Intel, stated that their success was attributed to the following:

- *‘Walking the talk’* facilitates meeting objectives, adopting a participative approach by meeting with all, listening to and sharing ideas;
- *Creating value* in every aspect of the plant was important and was done by viewing the workforce as a whole and as individuals;
- *The key focus was on the people* of the organisation, rather than exclusively relying on data. Examples of using this approach is by finding out how people are doing, and motivating them by observing them in their work setting. In this way an understanding of the employee and their frustrations is created. Reflecting, using listening skills, problem solving skills, analytic problem solving and systems thinking to resolve these situations;
- *Tapping into the true potential* of the organisation by clarifying roles and establishing levels of accountability;
- *Staying focused* in spite of negativity or non-motivated people;
- *Mentoring and developing* other potential managers through succession planning and promoting people who experiment and provide feedback. Encourage people to take other opportunities by modifying their behaviours in the organisation;
- *Providing the highest opportunities for people* to reach their full potential when they can and are motivated to try; and
- *Celebrating milestones and recognising staff* so that they stay positive.

2.7.2 Key leadership attributes in transmitting change and transformation

Based on the above, key leadership attributes have been identified that leaders should display throughout the change and transformation process, and these are describes as:

- *Top Management Buy-in*: Leadership must buy-in to the change process;
- *‘Walk the talk’*: Leaders should lead by example and their actions should tie in with their objectives;
- *Show support*: Leaders must support the change, which can be facilitated through presentations, meetings, applying good listening techniques, giving feedback, reward and recognition;

- *Trust*: It is important that staff should trust management and that they should display openness and honesty;
- *Sense of urgency*: Leaders must demonstrate a sense of urgency when decisions are made in order to avoid people from losing interest;
- *Decision making*: Leaders must be equipped to make the right decisions for the business. Poor decisions can be detrimental for the business and relationships;
- *Involvement*: Allow for employee involvement in various phases of the change process, that is, the planning, implementation and follow-up phases. This assists with gaining commitment;
- *Communication*: Communicate with all throughout the process, especially regarding reasons for the change and benefits thereof. Encourage both upward and downward communication. Leaders must apply good listening techniques and consider all suggestions that are made;
- *Inspire and motivate*: Leaders must inspire and motivate their employees by creating a shared vision, and by encouraging their participation in spite of turbulent times;
- *Promote collaboration and teamwork*: Leaders must promote teamwork by motivating their teams and being enthusiastic and open to new ideas to assist in building team commitment;
- *Consider employee satisfaction*: Promote openness and two way feedback to enhance satisfaction levels. Surveys could be used to assess levels of employee commitment;
- *Be encouraging*: Encourage creativity, innovation, team orientation, appreciation, accountability, coaching, openness and listening throughout the change;
- *Mentor and coach*: Develop staff through mentoring and coaching, and by providing them with opportunities for growth;
- *Recognise and reward*: Recognise staff for contributing to the change, for example, taking risks, giving ideas, being innovative and rewarding accordingly;
- *Be consistent*: Leaders must be consistent with their approaches, else they will lose trust and credibility amongst staff; and
- *Be ethical*: Organisational leaders must display ethical behaviour. Again, this could hinder levels of trust and credibility if ethical behaviour is not displayed.

When implementing change, it is important that the management of resistance to change is covered, as it is an important aspect of managing the change process. Approaches to managing resistance to change are detailed below.

2.8 Resistance to change

One of the key steps in managing change is handling resistance to change. People generally fear change owing to the unknown, and thus show resistance. Similarly, according to Robbins and Finley (1996), resistance to change occurs as a result of fear, anxiety, discomfort or inconsistency. Resistance could also be a result of individuals perceiving the change as being a threat to their self-interests, or a negative reaction as

people feel that their personal freedom is threatened. Swanepoel *et al.* (2000) opine that more care should be taken to design a gradual, non-threatening participative implementation process of future changes, if an organisation has a track record of people who oppose change. Other possible sources of resistance, from an individual and organisational level are illustrated in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 below.

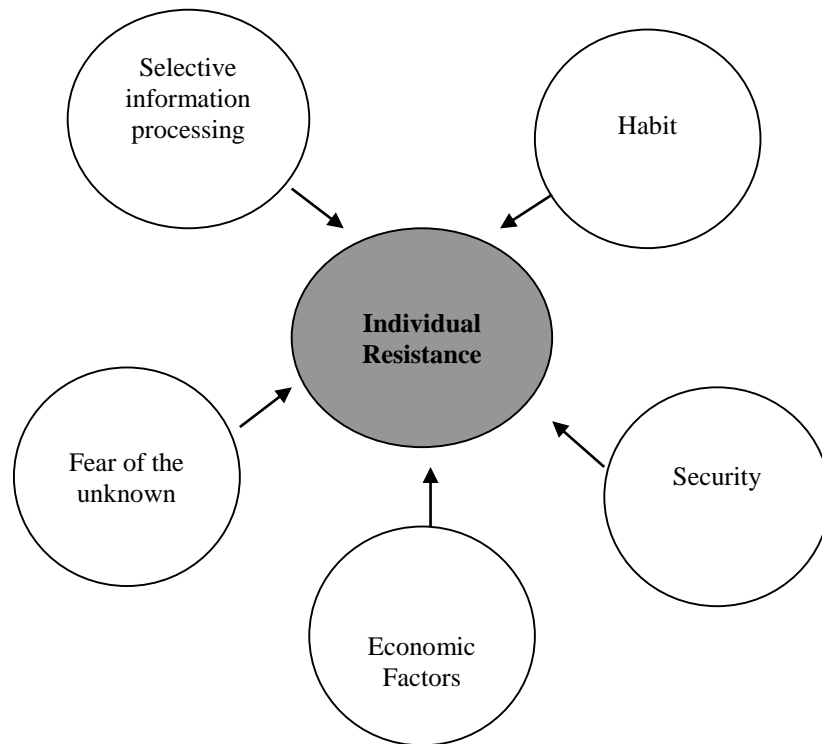


Figure 2.1: Sources of individual resistance to change

(Adapted from Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003:408)

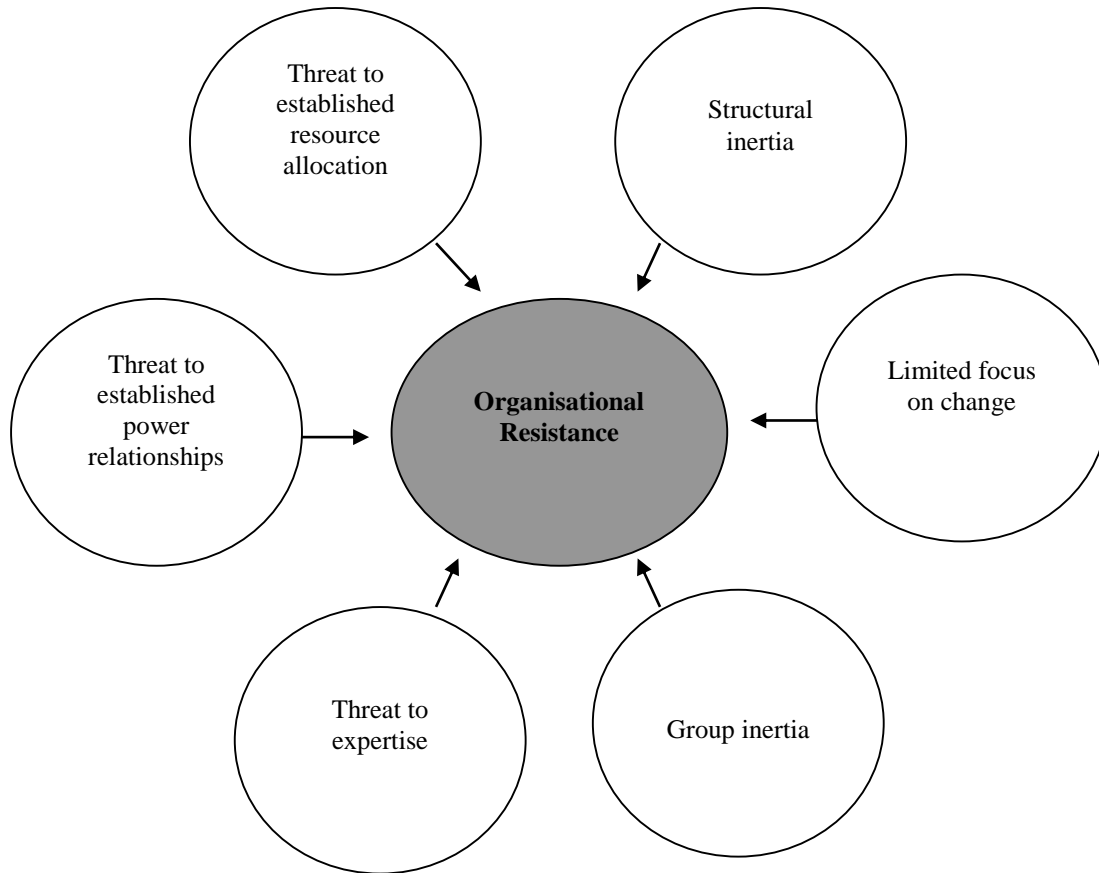


Figure 2.2: Sources of organisational resistance to change

(Adapted from Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003:409)

Some common reasons for resistance to change are described below (Nel *et al.*, 2008; Stone, 2002:579).

2.8.1 Common reasons for resistance to change

1. *Fear of the unknown* relates to a lack of understanding of the current situation, the way forward, or why the change is introduced.
2. *Disrupted habits* occur when employees feel distressed because they are not able to follow their old routines.
3. *A loss of confidence* as a result of employees feeling incapable of performing well when using the new methods.

4. *A loss of control*, when employees feel that things are done for them rather than being part of the process.
5. *Poor timing* pertains to employees feeling inadequate or humiliated because the old methods are no longer perceived as being good enough.
6. *A lack of purpose*, when employees are unable to identify with the reason for the change, or do not understand or see the benefits of the change.
7. *Economic loss*, when employees feel that their jobs might be lost, or pay and benefits may be reduced.
8. *Conflicts or negativity* may arise as a result of some employees fearing change, because it may introduce new colleagues to their team with different attitudes. This could potentially lead to conflicts in the workplace, and here employees feel that their needs are not being addressed.

To provide further context to resistance to change, some typical negative reactions to change and proposed interventions are presented in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Typical negative reactions to change and interventions that leaders or change agents can use

Description of typical negative reactions to change	Interventions that leaders or change agents could use
<p><i>Disengagement</i> occurs when there is psychological withdrawal. An employee may be physically present, but mentally absent. There appears to be a lack of commitment and drive to perform and the employee is prone to only doing the minimum.</p>	<p>The leader should confront the disengaged employee and establish his or her concerns. The next step is to offer reassurance of the organisation's plans and intentions. The leader should ensure open communication, display empathy and actively listen to feedback.</p>
<p><i>Dis-identification</i> is a negative reaction, which is associated with employees who feel that their identity is being threatened by the change, and as a result, cling to past procedures.</p> <p>Furthermore, the typical negative reaction would be an employee that sulks, displays sadness and worry, often reminiscing about the old ways. There would be a sense that the employee feels like he or she is a victim in the change process, saying things like "I used to".</p>	<p>The leader should help the employee to transition from the old state to the new state by encouraging him or her to expose their feelings in the new situation. This involves assisting employee to identify things that worked well in the old situation, and to demonstrate to them how it is possible to have the same positive experience in the new situation.</p>

Table 2.2: Typical negative reactions to change and interventions that leaders or change agents can use (continued)

Description of typical negative reaction to change	Interventions that leaders or change agent could use
<p><i>Disenchanted negativity</i> or anger as a result of the change.</p> <p>This refers to employees who are angry that the past is over. Typically, they display destructive behaviour such as sabotage or back stabbing. It may be difficult to reason with disenchanted employees. Comments that are generally made by disenchanted employees are: "This will never work..."; and "I am getting out of this company as soon as I can". Badmouthing and rumour mongering are chief weapons of sabotage. The danger with disenchantment is that it is quite contagious in a company.</p>	<p>The leader is required to help negative, emotionally charged employees to move to a neutral state. This involves allowing employees to share their frustrations and let off the necessary steam so that they can come to terms with their anger.</p> <p>The second part is to acknowledge that anger is normal, and that no grudges are held against them. Sometimes disenchantment is a mask for one of the other reactions, which must be worked through in order to get to the core reason for the employee's reaction.</p>
<p><i>Disorientation</i> is the final reaction to change. Here, employees are lost and confused and are often unsure of their feelings. They waste energy on trying to figure out what to do instead of how to do things.</p> <p>Disorientated employees have a lot of questions and become detail orientated. They appear to need a good deal of guidance and may leave their work undone until all their questions have been answered. They are characterised by analysis paralysis. They feel that they have lost touch with the priorities of the company. They might want to analyse the issue to death before acting on them. They typically ask: "Now what do I do, or what do I do first"?</p> <p>Disorientation is common amongst people who are used to having direction and goals that are clear. They do not cope well with unambiguous direction. When change is introduced, it creates uncertainty and a lack of clarity.</p>	<p>Leaders should explain the change in a way that minimises any ambiguity. Information that is shared about the change should cover the overall vision so that the individuals can see where they fit into the grand scheme of things. This gives the employee a sense of direction, that is, priorities to work on. Leaders are required to demonstrate their ability to diagnose these reactions.</p>

(Adapted from Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz, 2008:534)

The research assessed possible reasons for resistance to change amongst production line employees at the selected automotive component manufacturer by using focus

groups. Now that the possible reasons for resistance to change have been listed, the focus shifts to the management of resistance to change.

2.8.2 Managing resistance to change

Management of resistance to change is an essential component, which ensures the successful implementation of the intended change. Managing resistance to change involves predicting possible reasons for resistance and finding ways to overcome it. There is a traditional and contemporary view for managing resistance to change (Nel. *et al.*, 2008).

Table 2.3: Managing resistance to change: the traditional and contemporary view

Managing resistance to change	
Traditional view	Contemporary view
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance to change is viewed as something to overcome. • Past experience showed that efforts to overcome have been counterproductive since resistance intensified in spite of efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance to change is viewed as a form of feedback. • Feedback is used to improve the implementation of change.

(Adapted from Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz, 2008: 532)

In addition, literature offers a variety of change management techniques that can be used to manage resistance, which is briefly summarised below.

2.8.3 Strategies to manage resistance to change

Managers that plan change must predict why people resist change. The mismanagement of resistance to change could hinder the process, and contribute to the failure of change intervention. Traditionally, resistance to change is treated as something that individuals need to overcome. Here, a variety of strategies are formulated to help employees negotiate the transition. The contemporary view, however, holds that resistance is simply a form of feedback, and that feedback can be used productively to manage the change process.

A number of strategies that deal with managing resistance to change is available and some ways of managing resistance to change have been outlined below (Robbins, Judge & Campbell, 2010: 520-521; Stone, 2005; Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003; Swanepoel, Erasmus, van Wyk & Schenk, 2003, Stone, 2002; Swanepoel, 2000).

Mobilise commitment: Facilitate commitment through joint diagnosis of the business problems. Help all employees to develop a shared diagnosis of what is wrong in an organisation, and what can and must be done about it.

Communication, awareness and education: The purpose is to create mutual trust and credibility between and amongst employees and management. Examples of communication tools could be via one on one sessions, memos, presentations, reports and feedback sessions. Management should build awareness and educate staff by giving advance information regarding the reasons for change, the nature of the change, planned timing and the foreseen impact on the organisation and employees. Furthermore, communication is aimed at preventing misinformation and misinterpretation. Factual information is presented to employees about the need for change, and information that is shared should be mindful of the interest of all stakeholders.

Participation: Wherever possible, management and employee participation should be encouraged to facilitate commitment, buy-in, whilst giving everyone a sense of ownership and involvement in the decision to introduce the change. Employees who are opposed to the change are given an opportunity to provide input in the decision making process prior to the change. However, the disadvantage is that it is time consuming and poor decisions can be made.

Develop a shared vision: A shared vision of how to remain competitive is needed. Once commitment is obtained to analyse a problem, management must lead employees by redefining their new tasks, which should be aligned to the new shared vision of the organisation.

Building support and commitment can be achieved through employee counselling and new skills training to assist with gaining commitment to the change, instead of embracing the status quo. Non-directive counselling has proved to be a useful management tool in change situations.

Foster consensus and develop competencies to achieve the vision: Not only should consensus be fostered for the new vision, but the necessary competence to enact it should also be developed. Identify role status and explain what the change means to employees. Indicate the role of training in the change process, and the benefits for employees. Set goals of what should be achieved.

Spread revitalisation: Spread revitalisation to all departments without pushing it from the top. Use teams to list their reasons for resistance prepare feedback on how their tasks can be organised differently to overcome their resistance by using the new approach.

Align policies, systems and structures: Institutionalise revitalisation by incorporating changes through formal policies, systems and structures. Enact changes in, and structures and systems that are consistent with change and transformation during this step.

Monitor and adjust strategies: Monitor and adjust strategies in response to problems in the revitalisation process. Monitoring change and the transformation process should be shared by all employees through the use of an oversight team. Regular attitude surveys across all levels could aid this process and assist in monitoring behaviour patterns, which are also essential.

Guarantee: This is when employees are given the reassurance from management that they will not be disadvantaged as a result of the change. Management could assure employees that their positions are guaranteed, for example, while they undergo training.

Reward and recognition: Rewards are offered and recognition is given to management and employees for their roles in successfully implementing the change.

Negotiation: Negotiation of reward packages may be necessary and may be necessary if resistance comes from a powerful source.

Implementing changes fairly is critical, since most people might not be in favour of change. Hence, it is vital that employees see the need for change and perceive that the changes are implemented consistently and fairly.

Manipulation and co-optation: *Manipulation and co-optation* is another form of overcoming resistance. Manipulation involves twisting, distorting or withholding information as well as creating false rumours so that employees can accept change. Co-optation, conversely, is a form of manipulation and participation, which seeks to obtain buy in from leaders of resistance to change. This is done by giving them a key role in the change decision.

Selecting people who accept change involves selecting people who are more open to change based on a resistance to change scale. The more open to change, the better they are suited. Research shows that there is a link between the ability to easily adapt to change and personality. Some people simply have a more positive attitude than others, and are open to change.

Coercion involves the application of direct threats or force on the resisters to change. Examples would include threats of transfer or loss of promotion or negative performance evaluations.

There are various approaches to managing resistance to change, and a common thread is joint identification of problems, communication, creating a shared vision, training and

participation. Managing resistance to change is, however, a mere component of managing change successfully. It is thus important to ensure that other elements of managing the change process, are also discussed.

The climate of the organisation must be conducive to change, while employee understanding, participation and support is required to facilitate this process. Some of the changes should be incremental, step by step, and congruent with the existing culture. Changes that are implemented should thus be done with the outmost care and sensitivity. The management of change is discussed next.

2.9 Managing change

Organisational change forms part of Organisational Development (OD). Hence, it is important to briefly explain Organisational Development (OD). According to Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003:413), “the OD paradigm values human and organisational growth, collaborative and participative processes, and a spirit of inquiry”. In short, OD is aimed at developing the growth of both the organisation and the individuals within the company in order to ensure continued business survival. Underlying values that are commonly associated with most OD initiatives comprise of:

- Respecting people, by displaying mutual respect and treating individuals with dignity;
- Trust and support, by promoting a climate of openness, trust and support;
- Power equalisation emphasises hierarchical authority and control;
- Confrontation by openly confronting problems; and
- Participation through the involvement of individuals in the change so that commitment is gained in the decision making process.

Leaders and change agents are implored to adopt these values throughout the change process (Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003). An important aspect to consider before implementing any change initiative is whether or not the organisational climate is ready for the change to be introduced. Organisational readiness for change or a lack thereof could either contribute to the success or failure of the change. Symmetrix, a Massachusetts consulting firm, identified 17 key elements to successful change. According to the firm, the more affirmative answers you get to the following questions, the greater the likelihood that the change initiative will succeed and vice versa (Robbins *et al.*,

2003:411). This is particularly important and should be incorporated into the change management approach. Key questions to ask when assessing organisational readiness for change is reviewed below (Robbins *et al.*, 2003:411).

2.9.1 Key questions to ask when assessing organisational readiness for change

1. Does the sponsor of the change have power (high authority in the organisation) to deal effectively with resistance?
2. Is leadership (various role players in the organisation) supportive of the change and committed to it?
3. Does senior management show a strong sense of urgency about the need for change, and is it shared by the rest of the organisation?
4. Is there a clear vision by management of how the future will differ from the present?
5. Are there objective measures in place to evaluate the efforts to change, and reward systems to reinforce them?
6. Is there a specific effort to change, which is consistent with other changes in the organisation?
7. Are functional managers willing to sacrifice own personal interests?
8. Does management pride itself on closely monitoring the changes and actions of competitors?
9. Is the importance of customers and knowledge of the customer needs accepted by everyone?
10. Are managers and employees rewarded for taking risks, being innovative and looking for solutions?
11. Is the organisational structure flexible?
12. Are the communication channels open, upward and downward?
13. Has the organisation implemented any major changes recently?
14. Is the organisation's hierarchy relatively flat?
15. Is employee satisfaction and management trust high? According to Powley *et al.* (2004:68), one study found that high degrees of trust and enhanced organisational commitment were evident when strategic decision-making processes were seen as being fair, procedures were consistently applied across all business units, and where there was involvement in the final decision making process. **AI** may assist in facilitating this process.

16. Is there a high degree of cross boundary interactions and cooperation between units of the organisation?

17. Are decisions made quickly, taking into account a variety of suggestions?

In discussing successful organisational change, it is important to review other conventional strategies to manage change.

2.9.2 Conventional strategies to managing the change management process

Drucker (1995) suggests that organisations and management should build change into its structure. Products, procedures, and policies should be reviewed and managers should abandon items that do not work and rather devote time to create new ones. Innovation and knowledge management is promoted by Drucker (1995), who recommends that organisations must use a systematic approach to do so. Managing change should be done in an ethical manner and should encompass the values of OD efforts, as mentioned above. Conventional practices to manage change are described include Lewin's well recognised change model, which is briefly reviewed below.

2.9.2.1 A change model presented by Lewin

Lewin argues that three steps should be followed in order to ensure successful change, as seen in Figure 2.3 below.

For example, implementing a new work procedure to improve customer service in a vehicle services division.

Driving forces

The need for change arose owing to a rise in the number customer complaints, which stated that they did not receive timeous feedback regarding the status of their vehicle that was serviced.

Restraining forces

Restraining forces were considered such as employee resistance to change work methods, costs of implementing the new system, as well as the time that it would take to implement the new system.

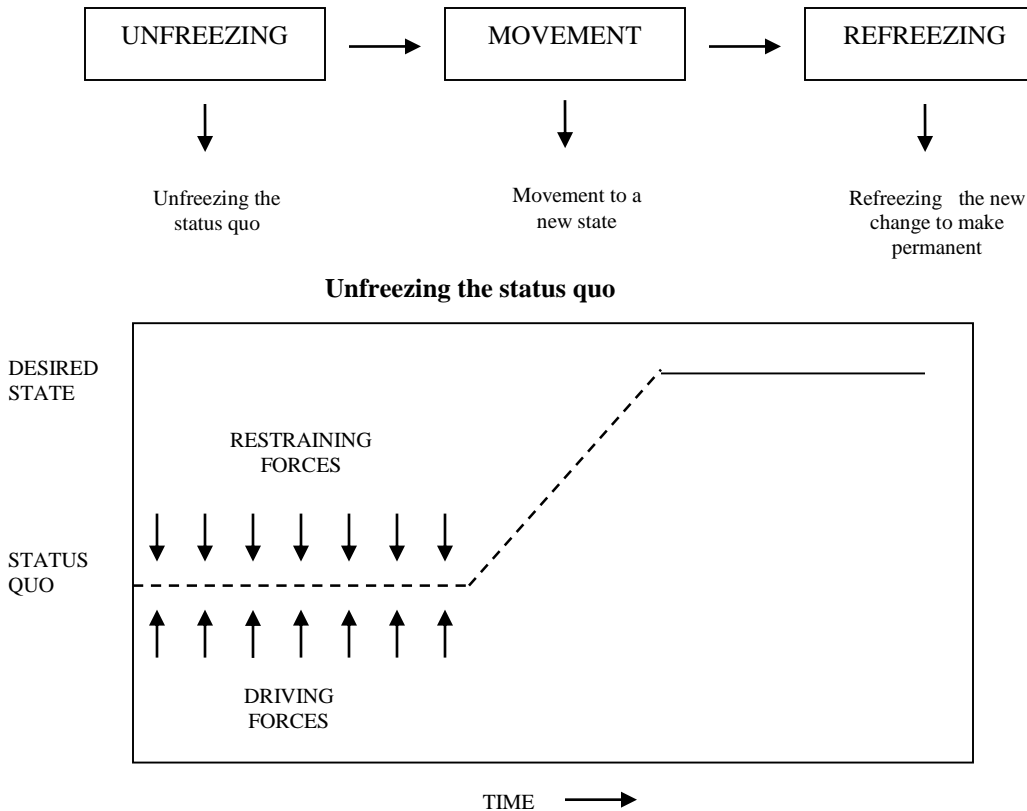


Figure 2.3: Lewin's model of change

(Adapted from Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003:411)

- Step 1: Unfreezing the status quo

The current practice was that customers were only contacted once their vehicles had been serviced; no other interaction took place with the customer. Staff in the vehicle service division were informed about customer concerns, and in the interim, the existing method was placed on hold.

- Step 2: Movement to the new state

Service division staff were given an opportunity to brainstorm suggestions of how to improve overall customer satisfaction, and to provide timeous feedback to customers. Staff felt involved when their current practice was reviewed. They were thus more cooperative to the new approach because of their involvement in the process, and assumed responsibility to manage the new approach.

Step 3: Refreezing the new change, making it permanent

The outcome was that staff would contact the customer once the service commenced, and a second call would be made while the customer's vehicle was being serviced. In this way, customers were informed about whether everything was on track, or whether any delays should be expected. A follow-up call was also given to the customer two days after the vehicle had been serviced, as a way to assess if all was in order, and also to rate the service that was delivered. Staff evaluated the new approach over a four week period and believed that it worked well, since the number of complaints were dramatically reduced and customers were more satisfied owing to the increased interaction with the service team, and based on the service rating scores. However, the three step approach does not cover all the aspects that are covered in the seventeen key elements of successfully bringing about change which were presented earlier. The three step model may not necessarily be easily adapted to all change scenarios, and, hence other approaches should be explored. An overview of change management is presented next in order to assess current practices or the traditional approach.

2.9.2.2 A change management process model and typical change process team

Galpin (1996) presented a change management process model (see Figure 2.4 below), in which eight steps for the change process are highlighted.

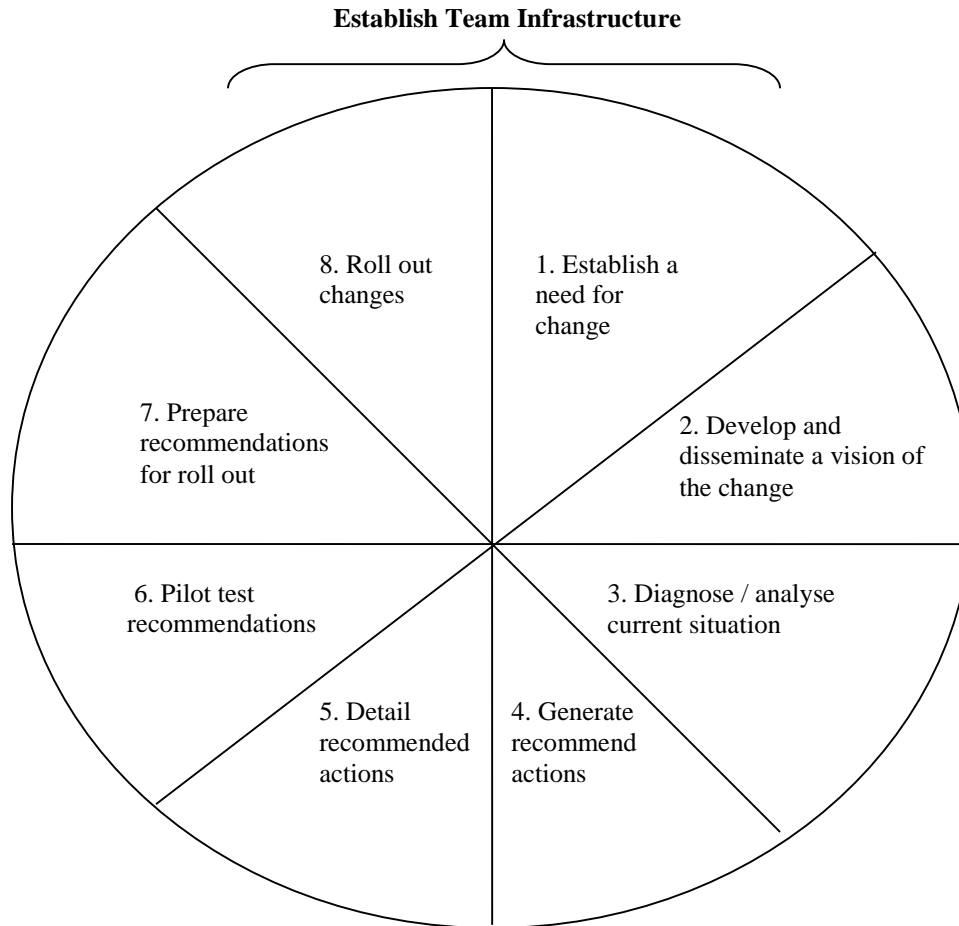
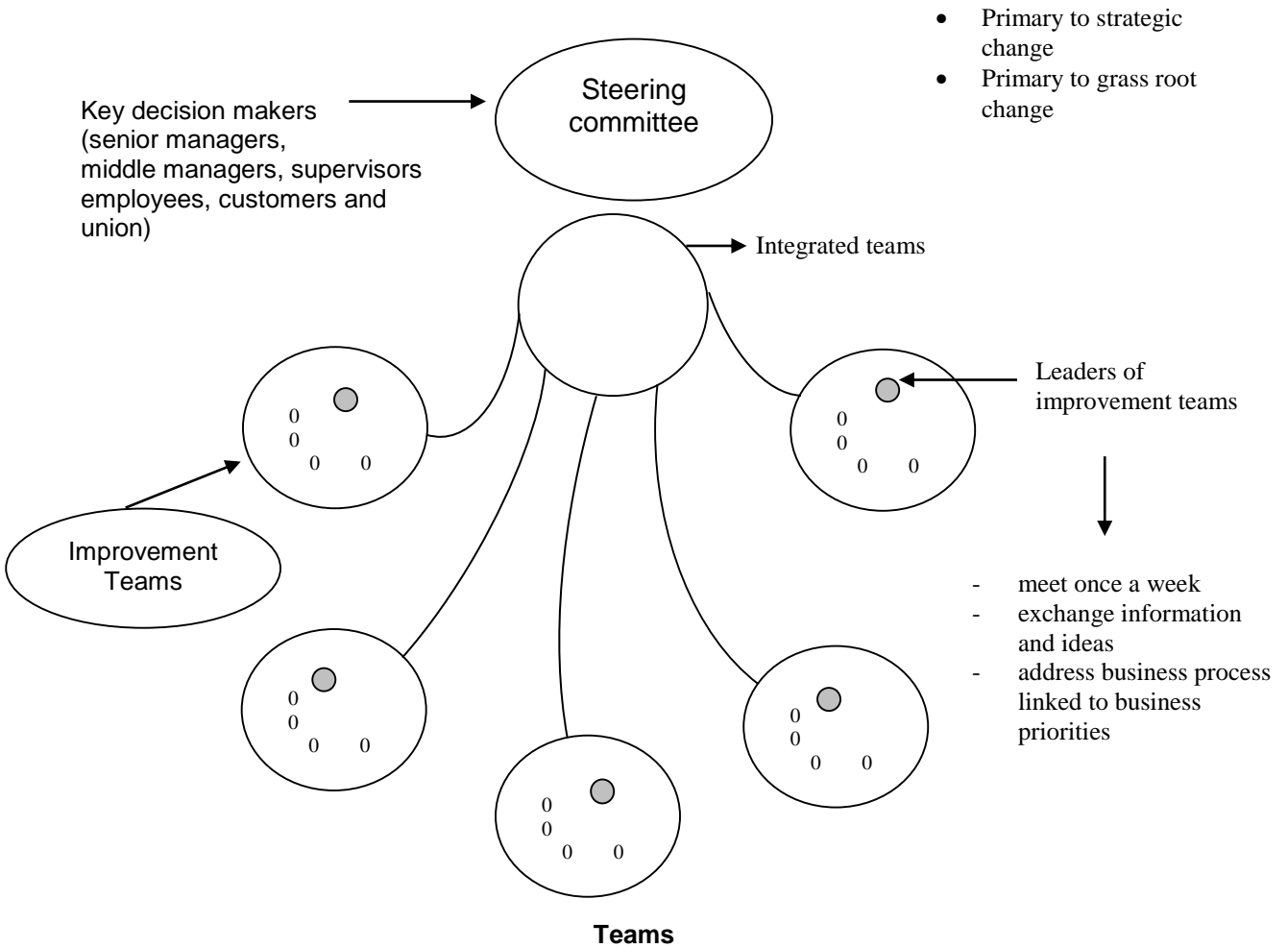


Figure 2.4: The change management process model
(Adapted from Galpin, 1996:18)

In Figure 2.5 below, Galpin (1996) constructed a typical change process team, as he believed that teams created better results, rather than individuals, when handling change.



Teams consist of one leader per group of six people. A total of five teams exist in this model, with only four to six people doing the work of change.

Figure 2.5: A typical change process team

(Adapted from Galpin, 1996:19)

The operations or improvement teams are responsible for facilitating change and are involved in the following activities:

- Teams meet once a week;
- Have an agenda;
- Brainstorm and note ideas on a flipchart; and
- Identify tasks to be completed between meetings.

The process of change, using change process teams, according to Galpin (1996), entails:

- *Understanding*: The reason why the change is needed, what the change, and how the change will be implemented. For example, improving a stores system;
- *Setting clear goals*: A clear goal should be set in terms of what should be achieved as a result of the change. Assess the benefits of the improvement. For example, reduce cycle times;
- *Communication*: Communication is vital throughout the change;
- *Involvement*: Involving others in the working process is important to gain buy in;
- *Diagnosing or analysing*: Analysing the process from beginning to end is vital as well as identifying whether processes enhancement is possible. Although the time taken to analyse the situation may be viewed as a disadvantage, the reduction in costs and increase in quality could be a potential advantage;
- *Mapping steps*: to assist teams in seeing opportunities to improve the process;
- *Drafting ideas*: A list of any ideas presented by team members is drafted to resolve a specific problem, and the resource requirements (cost, time, equipment, materials and people needed to implement the change, the projected return on investment and the time and measurement of return) for the improvement, is reviewed;
- *Review potential obstacles*: Identify potential challenges and ways to address team timing, skills and the available technology;
- *Responsibilities*: Identify the responsibilities of the project team;
- *Action plan*: Develop an action plan for pilot testing and the roll out. (This will include identifying training needs in line with an action plan, and accordingly conduct and review the timing plan, which involves evaluating the timing of the change and identifying the best time to implement it);
- *Measurements*: Identify the performance measurements that will be used to evaluate the success of the change; and
- *Reinforce*: The change or improvement can be reinforced by recognition and rewards, where applicable.

Another well recognised means to manage change is action research. Action research is an example of knowledge management and is a systematic method of managing planned change, which is executed in five steps.

2.9.2.3 Action Research

Step 1: Diagnosis involves assessing the views of employees, reviewing records and listening to the employees' concerns.

Step 2: Analysis entails examining problems or concerns, and the role of the change agent/s would be to list primary concerns or problem areas, together with possible actions.

Step 3: Feedback refers to sharing information regarding findings in step one and two above.

Step 4: Action is where employees and change agent(s) follow a set of actions to rectify problems. People who are involved in problems must actively participate in creating a solution.

Step 5: Evaluation is aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the action plans that are implemented, and considers evaluating the performance before the change and action, and thereafter.

Organisational Development (OD) literature on change management suggests various approaches to manage organisational change, and is summarised in sixteen steps (Robbins, Judge & Campbell, 2010; Nel, *et al.*, 2008:535; Nel, *et al.*, 2004; Krieg, 2002:25; Dawson, 2003; Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003; Anderson, 2001; Kotter, 1999; Mullins, 1999; Lombard, 1998 & Robbins, 1998).

2.9.2.4 16 steps to manage change

Step 1: Equip management and change agents with change management skills

Ensure that managers and change agents are equipped with the required skills to manage change before any change can be implemented successfully. This includes knowledge on how to conduct change efforts in a fair, consistent and ethical manner. Staff will thus be given the required support during the change process. Allow staff to participate throughout the change process to assist in gaining their commitment to the change. For example, brainstorming can be used to generate ideas to overcome the problem that was initially identified. These ideas could be used to formulate an action plan with stakeholders and decision makers to change wrong behaviour.

Step 2: Identify the need for change

Determine the need for change. Management must use knowledge management, skills and their experience to identify and assess the need for the change, and the internal or external forces that drive change. For example, when a problem arises or needs addressing, or for planned change initiatives.

Step 3: Top management commitment and buy in

Top management should be buy in to the change and their commitment should be visible. They should 'walk the talk' by displaying their support throughout the change process.

Step 4: Develop strategies and goal setting

Develop the strategies and goals of the purposeful change initiative(s). This is aimed at facilitating the goals of the planned change, which should be able to adapt to the environment, and change employee behaviours for business survival. Goals require modification to assist with organisational renewal.

Step 5: Identify change champions

Identify the individuals who will be responsible for change. Determine change agents in relation to the position that he or she holds, his or her power, trust and interaction. Internal (employees or the employer) and or external (field experts) change agents can be used. Outsiders have expert knowledge but lack understanding of the culture and history of the organisation. Conversely, insiders may fear offending others internally. Ensure that change agents understand and execute their roles effectively during the change process.

Step 6: Identify obstacles to overcome, including managing resistance to change

Swanepoel (2003), postulates that more care should be taken where an organisation has a history of being resistant to change. It is recommended that future changes should be planned more carefully, and introduced gradually in a participative and a non-threatening manner. Conducting analyses on factors that should be changed includes assessing who might resist change, and evaluating what cooperation is essential for change. Management must identify obstacles of the change and ensure that adequate resources for carrying out the change are available. Use change agents to communicate reasons for the change, as well as the benefits of the change to assist in overcoming resistance to change. Human Resources are also able to provide relevant support to employees who are resistant to change. Concerns that are raised should be used as a feedback mechanism to improve the change process. Encouragement and facts can potentially assist employees to address their anxiety towards the change, which can be regarded as a natural response to change.

Step 7: Develop a communication strategy

Communication can be regarded as the golden rule in the change process. A lack of communication or ineffective communication can lead to increased resistance to change owing to miscommunication or misinterpretation. Management should communicate the vision to assist in creating an understanding amongst people, and hence avoid panic. In addition, management should ensure that employees are informed in advance about the rationale for the change, nature of the change, the planned timing and the foreseen impact on the organisation and employees. Staff should be kept informed throughout the change process. Communication should be both upward and downward. Worker leaders must be informed, while consultation with the union and bargaining parties is crucial.

Step 8: Create a shared vision

Gain commitment by developing a shared vision for change, which should include participation by all employees in the planning process. A clear idea must be created of where the company wants to go.

Step 9: Joint diagnosis and analysis of problems

Management, change agents and employees should conduct organisational analyses of the current situation to review the current status before the change is implemented to assess potential problems or gaps. Possible problems and needs should be analysed, while the importance of the problems and the time required to address the problems, should be viewed together with added scenarios to avoid additional problems. The role of the change agents is to assess the problems and gain commitment from staff. A climate and culture survey should be conducted to gather information, and to provide feedback to stakeholders and decision makers.

Step 10: Select intervention strategy and develop an action plan

Selecting the change strategy involves determining the speed of change, the amount of planning, tactic groups and the individuals who are involved. An intervention strategy should be chosen to establish how the change should be implemented. The action plan should be developed by using the change agents to facilitate this process.

Step 11: Align policies, procedures, systems and structures

Remove hindrances by reviewing and aligning policies, procedures, systems and structures to facilitate the change. Integrate changes with other organisational processes. Mainstream changes should be treated as part of the organisational process, and measures should be implemented to encapsulate the changes.

Step 12: Implement and monitor changes

Selected change agents may either make or break the change and are crucial. They should buy-in to the change, and should also be equipped with skills to successfully implement change and overcome resistance to change. The change must be monitored while it is implemented, and any issues that arise must be addressed accordingly.

Step 13: Reinforcement of new behaviours by using a reward system

Reward systems could be used to reinforce new behaviours, not old ones. Participation in the change process should also be recognised and rewarded, especially those employees who have contributed to the successful implementation of the change.

Step 14: Evaluation

Senge *et al.* (1999) identified that assessment and measurement of change as an important part of the change process. Mechanisms to evaluate change must be set in place to assist change agents and decision makers to evaluate the progress of change. Another important aspect of the change process is measuring the impact of the change effort, which follows implementation. Examples of measurements include, amongst others: absenteeism levels; customer satisfaction (increase or decrease); number of injuries on duty; employee job satisfaction levels; cost increases or decreases; and so forth.

Step 15: Sustaining the momentum

The leadership of the organisation must take ownership of change, and will be responsible for enforcing sustainable change; and change long standing individuals through a change

in the customs, norms, values, attitudes and traditions of people that have developed over years.

Step 16: Continuous improvement

No plan or project is cast in stone, as change is a work in progress. The business must continually review and renew the change effort, even after implementation. Change agents must ensure that change and improvements should continue even after the successful implementation of the change initiative. Innovation must be stimulated and employees must be empowered into work teams for planned activities to respond to the environment. Leaders should encourage an innovative culture and the appropriate structures should be in place to facilitate this.

Despite the techniques mentioned above, the traditional change management approach may be regarded as being outdated, with the introduction of a contemporary method, namely Appreciative Inquiry, which is explored in further detail in the text that follows.

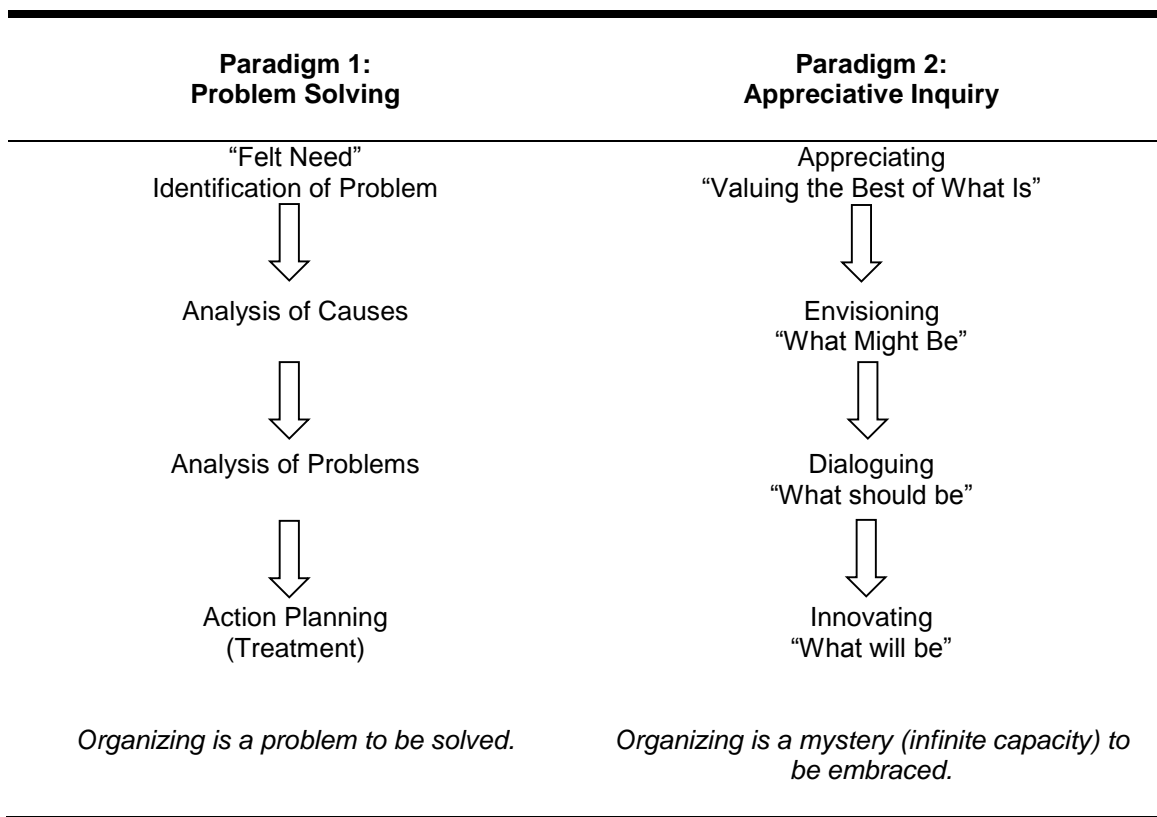
2.10 Shortcomings of the traditional change management approach

A paradigm shift: Traditional Change Management versus Appreciative Inquiry

Traditional change management approaches focus on problem solving by identifying the problem and then attempting to 'fix it'. The problem, which is prevalent in South Africa, according to Nasser and Vivier (1993:4), is "the present negative psychosis" and these authors had proposed that it should "be replaced by a focus on the creation of a self-destiny" through "a frame-breaking approach envisioning the future and the removal of the fear of failure". Drucker (1995:49), in his book *Managing in a Time of Great Change*, cites that "problem solving is damage containment", and adds that the best-performing individuals should focus solely on opportunities that produce results and growth, rather than being assigned to problems. Appreciative Inquiry seeks to find the best of 'what works' in the organisation. Hammond and Royal (2001:13) distinguish between the two paradigms by indicating that traditional change management operates on the basic assumption that "an organization is a problem to be solved", whereas Appreciative Inquiry (AI) views the organisation as being a "mystery to be embraced". A summary of common

characteristics that both organisational development and the renewal process share, as presented by Nel *et al.* (2004), are: it is planned; uses a systems approach; is problem orientated; forms an integral part of the management process; is an ongoing process; and not a 'fix it' strategy; focuses on improvement; is action orientated; and is based on sound theory and practice. Cooperrider's approach to managing change, namely, Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**), differs somewhat from Nel *et al.*'s (2004) theories and traditional Organisational Development practices. The differences between the traditional and new paradigm are illustrated in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4: Two paradigms for organisational Change



(Adapted from Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003: 15)

Traditional approach versus AI

One similarity that exists in most approaches to organisational change is that it attempts to enable employees to think differently about processes, which are formed by habit or things that they are comfortable with doing. Johnson and Leavitt (2001:130) state that, frequently, organisational change approaches have been premised on the belief that

something is wrong or requires fixing. This approach has the potential to lead to blame. OD interventions have a tendency of becoming gripe sessions or exercises which are centered on problem solving. According to Cooperrider *et al.* (2003) organisations have become trapped by the language of deficit negative focused talk (refer to Table 2.2).

Traditional approaches to problem solving are, by definition, a way of seeing the world as a glass that is half empty, whereas the **AI** theory or process views the glass as being half full in the organisational change process context. **AI** differs from traditional organisational change approaches in that it intends to build on what works well in the organisation. Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:19) contend that “transforming the human system and its organisation toward an affirmative learning and working environment requires a conscious effort to maintain a positive focus on the dialogue”.

AI's approach assists to accelerate change, create a new vision and generate new knowledge of better ideals, unlike problem solving. In contrast, problem solving is painfully slow with the aim of finding ways of closing the gaps to the causes of yesterday's problems, and does not result in a new vision being created (Hammond & Royal, 2001). Furthermore, it is suggested that in human terms, problem solving approaches are more notorious for generating defensiveness and a shift of the problem (it is not my problem, but yours). In an OD proposal (Hammond and Royal, 2001:148), it suggests that relationships thrive where there is an appreciative eye, when people see the best in one another, when they can share their dreams and ultimate concerns in affirming ways, and when they are connected in full voice to create not merely new worlds, but better worlds. **AI** facilitates this process and encourages positive dialogue through positive affirmation or comments and avoids or discourages negative talk. **AI** seeks to find the best of what is and recreates it, rather than being problem orientated. Appreciative Inquiry is an “affirmative approach” that embraces an “organization's challenges in a positive light” (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:15).

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:15) state that “since the 1930's, organizations have used a deficit-based approach to problem solving”. Typically, change management

approaches involve diagnoses of problems, recommendations for solutions, and action planning their solutions whereas Appreciative Inquiry focuses on an affirmative approach.

Appreciative Inquiry “challenges conventional change management” approaches (Bushe, n.d.). Appreciative Inquiry seeks to find the best of ‘*what works*’ in the organisation. Table 2.4 shows that Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:15) support Hammond and Royal’s (2001:13) view, and differentiate between these two paradigms, namely Paradigm 1: Problem Solving versus Paradigm 2: Appreciative Inquiry. Further to this, they explain that “Paradigm 1’s basic assumption is that an organisation is a problem to be solved”, whereas Paradigm 2 is that an “organization is a mystery” that should be embraced “as a human centre of infinite imagination, infinite capacity, and potential” (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:15). Mystery in this context, literally represents an unknown and unpredictable future.

“Paradigm 1 pictures organizations as broken down machines in need of fixing; they are problems to be solved. Every analysis begins, therefore, with some variation of the same question: What is wrong? What are the problems? What are the causes?” (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:15).

Conversely, Paradigm 2 does not view the organisation as a problem, but rather “life-centric” in that it searches “for everything that gives life to a living human system when it is most alive . . . **AI** is an approach to organizational change that is unique and refreshing. Observers of **AI** say that it is of the greatest yet largely unrecognized, models available in the **OD** field” (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:16). The role of democracy, participation and dialogue in change, is discussed below.

Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) has had positive results across the globe and is introduced as a contemporary method to manage change. However, **AI** is a fairly new concept in the South African context. **AI** embraces transformational elements, as it entails envisioning a positive

future destiny. **AI** could potentially assist, as it involves all stakeholders in the change process and focuses on past positive experiences.

Similarly, with the traditional approach, **AI** promotes communication but on a larger scale where there is involvement of the majority, if not all stakeholders. Unlike the traditional method, **AI** is directed towards finding past and present positive experiences rather than the negative in order to recognise victories to encourage hope amongst individuals and create a sense of achievement rather than adding to the number of problems that they already have. In this way, it is easier for individuals to envision a positive future and create an action plan to achieve this vision based on the fact that they had previously accomplished those results. Innovation and enhanced results is encouraged through positive dialogue and brainstorming amongst all stakeholders (customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders, and so on). Based on the above, it is clear that **AI** could potentially be a new approach to managing change and may benefit SA organisations.

2.11 Chapter summary

In summary, Chapter Two reviewed: the meaning of change; scope of organisational change; stimulants of organisational change; challenges that South African organisations face; possible reasons for failed implementation of change; the role of leaders in change; common reasons for resistance to change; typical negative reactions to change and possible interventions; approaches to managing resistance to change; traditional approaches to managing change; and shortcomings of the traditional approach. The aim was to provide an overview of change to assess possible reasons for failed change initiatives and resistance to change. Chapter Two also reviewed traditional approaches to manage change so that the potential shortcomings are highlighted, which emphasise the need and rationale for an alternative approach, which is required in SA, and **AI** was introduced as an alternative. This research reviews the merits of Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**), as it is introduced in Chapter Three as a possible alternative change management tool for a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW: APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

3.1 Introduction

Change is an integral part of business operations today. Leaders and employees are required to embrace change in a continuously evolving working environment. In the automotive sector in South Africa, for global players such as the selected automotive component manufacturer that was chosen in this research, adopting a positive approach to change and continuous improvement is non-negotiable, particularly if the business intends to remain sustainable.

All automotive companies require the in ISO TS 16949 quality certification in order to be viewed as a world class manufacturer and to export globally. Continuous improvement is also a requirement, which is set by the International Standards Organisation (ISO) for all automotive companies that want to achieve the ISO TS 16949 quality certification. The certification requirements for ISO TS 16949 is more stringent than the well-known ISO 9000 or ISO 9001 quality standard. Automotive companies are audited annually against the standard by a recognised quality assurance certification body such as the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS). Continuous improvement must, therefore, be ingrained and institutionalised in the way in which the business operates on a daily basis through company policies, procedures and how the business is managed. Change and continuous improvement are interchangeable and must both be viewed in a positive light at all levels of the organisation.

With this in mind, the previous chapter pointed out that there is a need for a specific change management system to aid change in the South African (**SA**) context. Furthermore, it highlighted the need to manage resistance to change in a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. Although approaches exist, some change initiatives continue to fail and shortcomings have been highlighted. One key factor of all traditional change management approaches is that it involves diagnosing problems by asking questions to determine the root cause so that actions may be taken to address them accordingly. These approaches are problem orientated.

Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) is a contemporary method, which views change as a mystery to be embraced via positively directed questions. Table 3.1 below differentiates between the traditional and **AI** approach.

Table 3.1: Traditional approach versus AI approach

Traditional Approach	AI Approach
Problems	Possibilities
Problem solving	Vision lead
Critical thinking	Generative thinking
Professionally directed	Self and group directed
What problems are you having?	What is working here?

(Adapted from Johnson & Leavitt, 2001:5)

The principles and characteristics of **AI** have merits and have assisted in delivering results and rapid change across the globe. However, **AI** is still a fairly new concept but a worthy alternative to explore. **AI** has been introduced as a potential change management tool in a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa in order to improve change management practices. The background and meaning of **AI** is explained to provide a better understanding of the theory.

3.2 Background

Watkins and Mohr (2001:15) describe the history of **AI** as the “history of a major shift in the practice of organisational development and transformation”. The development of **AI** was an unplanned, unintended shift in organisational development practice (Watkins & Mohr, 2001). Initially, **AI** was introduced as a theory building process and not as an approach to organisational change. The thought that **AI** would become a major approach to change in human systems was far from the minds of its father,s David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva, of Case Western Reserve University.

David Cooperrider and others discovered that **AI** is a powerful way of enabling organisations to learn about their systems in ways that result in transformational change.

The theory of Appreciative Inquiry was presented by David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva in a paper, which was published in 1986. According to Bushe (n.d.), almost all change processes are predicated on some form of inquiry before or during the process of trying to change it. The form of inquiry that is used in Appreciative Inquiry is 'positivism', which is a kind of inquiry that treats the social reality as if it had objective properties (Bushe, n.d.). **AI** facilitates transformational shifts by learning from their most exceptionally positive moments by enabling the organisation to build their own generative theory.

3.3 The meaning of Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Literature presents various definitions and descriptions of Appreciative Inquiry, and these are presented below.

The term Appreciative Inquiry was first coined by David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva in their 1986 article, *Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life* (Appreciative Inquiry Commons, 2015). The term appreciative refers to "valuing; the act of recognizing the best in people or world around us", or "to increase in value" that is, when something increases in value it 'appreciates' (Cooperrider, Sorenson, Whitney and Yaeger, 2000:4). Therefore, the term appreciative comes from the idea that something increases in value when it appreciates. Inquiry refers to seeking to understand and by asking questions.

Appreciative Inquiry focuses on the generative and life-giving forces in the system, that is, the things we want to increase. Inquiry refers to "the act of exploration, discovery" or a process of seeking to understand by asking questions (Cooperrider, Sorenson, Whitney and Yaeger, 2000:5). Positively directed questions are asked in order to elicit past successes so that these lessons can be shared amongst employees and applied to various other areas of the business through a shared vision and the implementation of the jointly formulated action plan. The **AI** concept is described below.

Cooperrider, Sorenson, Whitney and Yaeger (2000:5) depict **AI** as "the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them. . .

AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential". Another definition, which is presented by Watkins and Mohr (2001:14) states that **AI** is "a collaborative and highly participative, system-wide approach . . . **AI** seeks to build a constructive union . . . of what people talk about as past and present capacities: achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations . . .". Similarly, Keefe and Pesut (2004) express **AI** as not only a set of tools and techniques but also a philosophy that support discovery, dreaming, design and the creation of a vision that inspires people to move toward a collective destiny in the organisation. The heart of Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) is summarised as a system wide search within the organisation for "the best of what is", visualising "what might be", "dialoguing what should be" and "innovating what will be" (Hammond & Royal, 2001:13). **AI**, as a change intervention, is discussed below to provide further perspective.

Appreciative Inquiry is a cooperative search for the best in people and their organisations. Hubbard (1998) describes **AI** as a paradigm of conscious evolution that is geared towards the new century realities. Gergen (1994) describes **AI** as a methodology, whereby the idea of the social construction of reality is taken to the positive extreme. Bushe (1995) argues that **AI** has been the most important advancement in action research in the past decade. **AI** is also described as being the offspring and heir to Maslow's vision of the positive (Chin 1998, Curran, 1991). According to Powley *et al.* (2004), **AI** is an approach that takes seriously the idea that public inquiry transforms organisational systems, and an organisation will move in the direction of the questions that are asked.

Watkins and Mohr (2001:14) describe **AI** as a collaborative and highly participative, system-wide approach to seeking, identifying, and enhancing the 'life-giving forces' that are present when a system is performing optimally in human, economic, and organizational terms".

Appreciative Inquiry challenges conventional methods of providing leadership and managing change. Bushe (n.d.) states that "**AI** is based on a deceptively simple premise,

that organizations grow in the direction of what they repeatedly ask questions about and focus their attention on . . . it invites people to engage in building the kinds of organizations they want to live in”.

In its broadest focus, **AI** involves a systematic discovery of what gives life to the organisation and the system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic and human terms. “**AI** involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a systems capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential” (Cooperrider, Sorenson, Whitney, Yaeger, 2000:5).

AI is described as a methodology, a process and a way of being, which intentionally seeks to discover, celebrate and expand on what works in an organisation rather than fixing what is broken. It facilitates change through the identification of ‘what is’, the current situation and the inclusive cooperative action process of determining ‘what might be’, ‘what should be’ and ‘what will be’ so that organisations may achieve their destiny. With **AI** in mind, Powley *et al.* states that “through discovery, organization members learn the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to apprehend, anticipate and heighten positive potential” among employees and in the organization (Powley *et al.*, 2004:69).

AI involves the mobilisation of inquiry through the crafting of the ‘unconditional positive question’, which often involves hundreds or sometimes thousands of people, in other words, all stakeholders in the business. **AI** seeks fundamentally to build a constructive union between people and the massive entirety of what people talk about as past and present capacities such as achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, high point moments, lived values, traditions, strategic competencies, stories, insights into deeper corporate spirit or soul and visions of valued and possible futures. Taking all of these together, in everything it does, **AI** deliberately seeks to work from the past accounts of this ‘positive change core’, and it assumes that every living system has many untapped and rich and inspiring accounts of the positive, linking the energy of the core directly to any change agenda, and

changes that were never thought possible, are mobilised. **AI** interventions give way to the speed of imagination and innovation. Hammond and Royal (2000:4) emphasise that **AI** is a “large system change philosophy.” Johnson and Leavitt (2001:129) describe Appreciative Inquiry “as an organizational transformation tool that focuses on learning from success”. Johnson and Leavitt continue by saying that instead of focusing on deficits and problems, Appreciative Inquiry focuses on discovering what works well, why it works well, and how successes can be extended throughout the organisation. **AI** is both vision and the process for developing the vision, which create the energy to drive change throughout the organisation. Their article is a study on how the Appreciative Inquiry process was modified to meet the need of city government in the city of Hampton Virginia in 1998.

French and Bell (1995); Porass (1991) and Mirvis (1988/89) describe **AI** as the second generation to **OD** practice. Harman (1990) describes **AI** “as a model of a much needed participatory science, a new “yoga of inquiry”. White (1996) describes **AI** as a profoundly affirmative approach to change, which discards problem based management, and in so doing critically transforms strategic planning, culture change, survey methods, measurement systems, merger integration methods, approaches to TQM, socio-technical systems, and so forth. Head and Sorenson (1996) describe **AI** as “OD’s philosopher stone”. The heart of Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) is summarised as a system wide search within the organisation for “the best of what is”, visualising “what might be”, “dialoguing what should be”, and “innovating what will be” (Hammond & Royal, 2001:13). **AI** could thus be considered as a possible alternative tool to manage change and transformation in South African organisations. A summary of assumptions, which relates to **AI**, is presented below.

3.4 Key assumptions of AI

Most change processes are based on problem solving processes, whereas **AI** is based on a different set of assumptions. Some of these assumptions include:

- Reality is determined by what is focused on in the organisation;
- Change begins with the act of asking questions;
- In every organisation there are things and processes that work well;
- Looking for what works assists towards motivating people;

- Organisations move in the direction of what is focused on and the questions that are asked;
- People have more confidence in the journey to the future when they bring forward parts of the past, namely the positive;
- Change is possible because it feels better to start from a point where you are pretty good already, and would like it to be better. More effective organisations are created by focusing on what they want more of, not less of, and whatever you want more of already exists even if only in small quantities;
- It is easier to create change by amplifying the positive qualities of the group or organisation, rather than trying to fix the negative qualities;
- Through the act of inquiry, social realities that are trying to be understood are created;
- Getting people to inquire together into trying to find the best examples of what they want more of creates its own momentum towards creating a more positive organisation;
- Organisations are responsive to positive thought and knowledge;
- Both the image of the future and the process for creating that image create energy, to drive change throughout the organisation, and by engaging people in dialogue about what works well based on their own experiences, employees notice that there is a lot that works reasonably well already; and
- **AI** is based on a belief in the power of affirmations, hence if employees and the organisation can envision what they would like to achieve, there is better chance of it happening.

The next section describes the need for **AI**.

3.5 The need for AI

3.5.1 Overcoming negativity through AI

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:17) state that “a fundamental assumption underlying **AI** is that the language one uses creates one’s reality. Therefore, the emotional meaning of words such as dysfunctional, co-dependent, and stressed out affect one’s thinking and acting”. The vision for a better and brighter future and growth could thus potentially be inhibited by the use of this deficit based vocabulary, which is often used in everyday conversation. The media is also filled with negativity, which creates a lost sense of hope. At an organisational level, management is continually being focused on solving problems and identifying issues with the aim of ultimately creating a better organisation. Table 2.1 provides examples of deficit based vocabularies at both an individual and organisational level.

Conversely, **AI** seeks to break the negative framework by using an affirmative vocabulary for organising the future and building a positive organisational destiny. Cooperrider,

Whitney and Stavros (2003:18) postulate that “the sooner the unconditional positive question is asked, the sooner the right answers can be obtained”. An appreciative mindset and eye, together with positive thoughts and a vocabulary based upon the following concepts, are required:

- Organisations are made and imagined;
- Virtually any pattern of action is open to alteration, no matter what the durability to date;
- An organisation must be encouraged to experiment. This will facilitate the conscious evolution of positive imagery and will assist organisations to continuously improve. “There is an observable self-reinforcing, educating affect of affirmation” (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:18);
- “Paradoxically, the following is also true: The greatest obstacle in the way of group and organizational well-being is also the positive image of the affirmative projection that guides the group or organization” (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:18);
- Organisations need constant reaffirmation and do not need fixing;
- Leadership should drive the affirmation process; and
- Widespread appreciation is the challenge, which organisations face. Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:18) believe that this is “the singular most important act that can be taken to ensure the conscious evolution of a valued and positive future”, and further add that “once these simple yet powerful concepts are internalized, the conditions that are essential to becoming an affirmative organization of change fall into place”.

3.5.2 Motivation for the use of AI

According to Cooperrider, “Appreciative Inquiry builds momentum and success because it believes in people. It really is an invitation to a positive revolution. Its goal is to discover in all human beings the exceptional and essential. Its goal, is to create organizations that are in full voice” (Hammond and Royal, 2001:12). **AI** is an alternative approach to the traditional change management approach that may be considered owing to the following reasons:

- It is purposefully positive;
- **AI** is highly participative;
- It facilitates creativity, commitment and development of the vision;
- **AI** is based on the assumption that positive words create positive worlds;
- People learn by doing and use positive images and audio to promote positive actions;
- It emphasises the power of dialogue and relationships;
- **AI** brings all the voices into the room; and
- **AI** is a generative process with innovative results.

3.5.3 Positive outcomes of AI

A background to the need for positive reinforcement in the SA context is provided, below. Sunter (1993:124) states that a myth exists that South Africa is second rate. Sunter, (1993) argues that South Africa has been bombarded with so much negativity, which has resulted in South Africans not believing in themselves, in spite of having the potential to astonish the world. Sunter (1993:125) further states: "We are all pilgrims setting to an unknown destiny. With perseverance and courage, we shall arrive safely and savour the thought that we destroyed the myth that South Africa is not the best place in the world to be". This can be tied in with the **AI** theory on achieving a positive collective destiny. SA organisations may use **AI** to overcome negativity and unleash their true potential through positive dialogue and reinforcement.

AI has demonstrated that human systems grow in the direction of their persistent inquiries, and this propensity is strongest and most sustainable when there is a positive correlation to the means and ends of inquiry (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003). This implies that if people, focus on the positive, and if the questions have positive connotations to it, and vice versa. **AI** uses a conversational, collaborative and generative process that is based on applied research in business and psychology, as well as successful results in organisations throughout the world and in a variety of industries. A conference can typically be held on **AI** is which was aimed at providing leaders in **OD**, **AI** and change strategists or champions with an opportunity to share their experiences with **AI** and reflect on how it benefited their organisations and industries. The aim of the conference would be to promote the use of **AI**. **AI** features innovative initiatives that have been accelerating positive organisation change and delivering extraordinary results around the world.

Johnson Leavitt (2001) presented a case study of the city of South Hampton in Virginia, where the **AI** processes were validated, since the outcomes were positive and the processes worked well.

Positive outcomes included:

- Many new ideas were generated;
- Participants were overwhelmingly positive in the evaluation of the workshops;
- Two thirds reported that they would be willing to work on implementation teams that resulted from the process; and

- Some comments that captured their reaction to the process: “Great workshop! A wealth of information came as a result of the various city employees getting together and sharing their ideas on how we can better our community as a whole through city involvement”; “I am committed to becoming a reformed pessimist from this process”; and “I am honoured to have been given the opportunity to have participated in this process ...I feel more a part of the city for having attended”.

Committed leadership, and sustained and supported energy from the top of the organisation was identified in the case study as being critical in the **AI** process and from those who volunteered to work on the implementation teams. Time and resources were allocated to individuals who led the changes, while their efforts were reorganised, rewarded, and publicly celebrated. A need for more future **AI** workshops was identified from the cases with the aim of engaging more employees in their ongoing process for valuing what they do, as well as moving towards their vision in future.

The case study, which was conducted by Mellish (1998) at the University of Australia is another practical account of **AI** having a positive outcome. The focus of the study was to use **AI** in the strategic planning process, and the methodology that was used was the 4D model where the majority who were affected by change participated in three 4D workshops. The outcome was that a blueprint for a new faculty was formed with an agreed transition plan of how it would be actioned. **AI** assisted in facilitating widespread support and providing unique opportunities to manage the transitional phases in the strategies, structure and culture of the university.

3.5.4 Other benefits of AI

AI is useful as it assists in:

- Achieving accelerated, committed, sustained results and performance from major change initiatives that rely on successful strategic planning, decision making and organisation wide implementation;
- Building a common vision, where one is currently lacking;
- Improving communication;
- Allowing decision makers to incorporate the voices of all their stakeholders of the entire system (residents, community, employees, clients, customers and vendors) because the, ‘whole system’ is included in the dialogue ‘what is’, ‘what might be’, ‘what should be’ and ‘what will be’;
- Creating openness and rapport amongst people and groups;

- Developing new approaches to human resource issues that could lead to positive change;
- Increasing confidence, competence and comfort and change;
- Facilitating individual creativity and commitment to action;
- Enhancing team creativity, collaboration and performance;
- Increasing capacity for systems thinking and resilience;
- Creating a positive work climate where negativity previously prevailed;
- Discovering, understanding and amplifying the positive forces that already exist within the organisation;
- Promoting innovation;
- Accelerating the development of new teams;
- Community development;
- Teambuilding processes for existing teams and for new team formation; Bushe (<http://www.gervasebushe.ca/aimeaning.htm>) considered, at the application of **AI** through the best team inquiry by encouraging people to talk about positive accounts of past experiences to build a more effective team;
- Stronger and faster collaboration;
- Faster and improved decision making;
- Better and faster implementation;
- Creating transferable life skills for their personal and life development; and
- Generating real time results.

These benefits are particularly important for SA organisations that compete in today's global market. Two principles that are important in building transformational organisations are *mobilising capabilities* – creating a positive shift in culture through a collaborative approach and *energising people* – inspiring people in spite of pressures and constraints to continuously improve and renew the organisation. The heart of **AI** is discussed further in the text that follows.

3.6 The heart of Appreciative Inquiry: summarised core principles

Literature reveals common core principles for **AI**. Two sets of principles enunciated in the evolution of **AI**. The first set, in Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987), states that:

Principle 1: The inquiry begins with appreciation;

Principle 2: The inquiry is applicable;

Principle 3: The inquiry is provocative; and

Principle 4: The inquiry is collaborative.

Principle 1: The inquiry begins with appreciation

The first principle implies that **AI** examines the best of the system. Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) viewed problem solving as a deficit based approach to change, whereas in contrast, **AI** focuses on examples of the system at its best, its highest values and aspirations, and so on.

Principle 2: The inquiry is applicable

This relates to ensuring that the outcomes of the inquiry are applicable to the system, and validates the required actions.

Principle 3: The inquiry is provocative

The inquiry should provoke people and system members to take action by creating knowledge, models and images that are compelling to system members.

Principle 4: The inquiry is collaborative

Involvement of system members must be part of the design and execution of the inquiry.

Principles 2 and 4 are core to **OD** practice while 1 and 3 are some of what distinguishes **AI** from traditional **OD** practice. In an important theoretical statement, Cooperrider and Whitney (2001) responded to concerns about the place of problems and problem solving in organisational change efforts, and articulated another set of 5 principles of Appreciative Inquiry. The following five principles inspired and moved the foundation of **AI** from theory to practice:

1. *The constructionist principle;*
2. *The principle of simultaneity;*
3. *The poetic principle;*
4. *The anticipatory principle; and*
5. *The positive principle.*

1. The constructionist principle

According to this principle, there is a close link to how we know and what we do. The purpose of the inquiry and the action that should be taken are inseparable and can be classified as the creation of the generative theory. The questions that are asked become the material from which the future is conceived and constructed. Based on the positive questions, **AI** facilitates the creation of positive future outcomes. The focus should be on considering tomorrow's possibilities, rather than explaining why things happened the way they did in the past. **AI** attempts to engage as many members of the system as possible in the inquiry, with the aim of articulating desirable collective futures.

2. The principle of simultaneity

This principle is based on the belief that inquiry is intervention. Here, the assumption is that as we inquire into human systems, we change them and this implies that inquiry and change can occur simultaneously. "The seeds of change – that is, the things people think and talk about, the things people discover and learn, and the things that inform dialogue and inspire images of the future – are implicit in the very questions we ask", according to Cooperrider and Whitney, (2001:20). The questions that are constructed will set the stage for what is found and discovered, and the data that is obtained will become the stories out of which the future of the organisation will be conceived, discussed and constructed.

This principle argues that the traditional action research model, where an inquiry is first held, followed by the system being diagnosed, change options generated and selected, before the change is implemented. Rather, **AI** theorists, opine that questions are fateful and that change begins the second the system begins to engage in inquiry. **OD** literature has certainly acknowledged for a long time that observation changes is that which is observed. That is, until **AI** that led to a change in the action research model. In **AI** practice, the simultaneity principle requires considerable time and effort to identify what the inquiry is about, and pays close attention to the exact wording and provocative potential of the questions that will be asked from the consultant's entry into the system.

3. The poetic principle

An appropriate metaphor to describe this principle is that human organisations are like an open book. Organisational life is expressed in the stories that people tell each other everyday, where the story of the organisation is constantly co-authored. The words and topics that are chosen and spoken about have an impact far beyond the words themselves. They invoke sentiments, understanding worlds of meaning. In practice, this means that the language of the inquiry has an important outcome in and of itself. In all phases of the inquiry efforts, words should be chosen that enliven and inspire the best people.

4. The anticipatory principle

Collective imagination and discussion about the future is the most important resource to generate a constructive organisational future. The anticipatory view of organisational life is that the image of the future is guided by what is being done today and current behaviour. “Much like a movie projector screen, human systems are forever projecting ahead of themselves a horizon of expectation (in their talk in the hallways, in the metaphors and language they use) that brings the future powerfully into the present as a mobilizing agent. To inquire in ways that serve to refashion anticipatory reality – especially the artful creation of positive imagery on a collective basis, may be the most prolific thing any inquiry can do” (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2001:21).

5. The positive principle

This principle states that momentum and sustainable change require large accounts of positive affect and social bonding. **AI** theorists argue that positive sentiments such as hope, inspiration, camaraderie, and the joy of creating with one another are central to the change process. “What we have found is that the more positive the question we ask in our work the more long lasting and successful the change effort. . . . The major thing we do that makes the difference is to craft and in better and more catalytic ways, the unconditional positive question” (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2001: 22). Organisations, like human constructions, are largely affirmative systems and are thus responsive to positive thought and positive knowledge. The more positive the questions, which are used to guide

a group building and an **OD** initiative, the more long-lasting and effective the change should be.

In important respects, people and organisations move in directions of their inquiries. Thousands of interviews about empowerment or being the easiest business in the industry to work with, will have a completely different long term impact in terms of sustaining positive action than a study, which relates to low morale or process breakdowns. These five principles are central to **AI's** theoretical basis for organising for a positive revolution in change. These principles clarify that it is the positive image that results in the positive action. The organisation must make the affirmative decision to focus on the positive in order to lead the inquiry.

3.7 The uses of AI and the role players involved

The problem, which is prevalent today is negativity and there is an even greater concern with the current global economic state. Globalisation is threatening SA organisations. Organisational renewal and a new level of awareness regarding turnaround on a scale never witnessed before in SA business, is required. **AI** can be used to change both leadership and employee mindsets positively. Leaders are at the forefront and should stay focused with a positive mindset when leading the change and the organisation into an unknown future. **AI** could be used to facilitate transformation from a negative to a positive mindset.

3.7.1 Uses of AI

An organisation may consider **AI** when:

- High levels of participation is required;
- The change process needs acceleration;
- There is resistance to change;
- Innovation is needed amongst diverse groups in a high risk environment; and
- Multiple change initiatives should be implemented.

Examples of when **AI** could be used, include the following, amongst others:

- Restructuring;

- Clarifying members' / clients' expectations;
- Community issues that are highly debated;
- Diversity management;
- Communication and performance initiatives;
- Mentoring;
- New initiatives;
- Mergers and acquisitions;
- Strategic alliances;
- Leadership and development initiatives;
- Organisational renewal strategies;
- Strategic decision making and implementation; and
- Strategic planning.

3.7.2 Role players in AI

AI encourages participation by as many stakeholders as possible in the inquiry. Teams could also be used to select a theme or topic for the inquiry process and may include members of: senior management; Board of Directors; middle management; staff or employee groups; unions; customers; suppliers; strategic partners; and trade and professional associations. A more diverse group that is used (in the intervention) will allow the participants to capture the true spirit of development. **AI**, as a potential change intervention, is explored.

Furthermore, Table 3.2 below illustrates how **AI** may be integrated into business operations.

Table 3.2: Areas for integrating AI into business operations

Organization Design	Employee Satisfaction	Process Improvement	Learning & Development	Measurement	Customer Satisfaction	Planning
Communication Architecture	Employee Orientation	Work Process Redesign	Supervisory Development	Performance Management	Focus Groups & Surveys	Strategic
Joint Ventures	Staffing & Development	Continuous Quality Improvement	Leadership & Management Development	Metric Standards	Customer Feedback	Business
Strategic Alliances	Coaching	Benchmarking	Team Development	Reward & Recognition	Supplier Feedback Systems	Operations
	Diversity Initiatives	Innovations	Training	Surveys	Public Relations	Marketing

(Adapted from Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003: 182)

3.8 AI as a change intervention

The impact of globalisation for some South African organisations may be seen as being negative because of its by-products such as retrenchments, loss in revenue, decline in economic growth, and increased unemployment, to name a few. Deming (2004) constructed a number of useful activities that leaders or change managers / **OD** practitioners can use to dialogue the positive. All activities are focused on bringing out the positive and could be useful in facilitating the **AI** process. These activities are aimed at improving communication, increasing productivity and bringing out the best in employees and may be linked to the principles of **AI**. Examples of these activities are presented below.

A Great Moment

In this change intervention or practical, employees are required to describe a great moment in their personal and professional life. The activity is aimed at inspiring employees and giving managers valuable assignments in relation to their personalities and values.

Remembering Greatness

Here employees recall a favourite leader from their past such as a teacher, coach or mentor, and describe why that person made a lasting impression. This is a good tool for managers to improve their management skills.

In both examples, past positive experiences are used, which is similar to that of the **AI** theory. The rationale for the use of **AI** as a change intervention is discussed in Bushe's paper, *Five Theories of Change Embedded in Appreciative Inquiry* (Bushe, n.d.). He highlights the foundation for using **AI** as a change strategy as:

- Organisations have an inner dialogue (refers to conversations that people have amongst peers that are not mentioned in official discussions or forums of the organisation);
- This inner dialogue is a powerful stabilising force in social systems (failure to follow through on rationally arrived at decisions could be as a result of people's real thoughts and feelings about what is discussed in official forums); and
- This inner dialogue is mainly carried through the stories that people tell themselves and each other (justifying their interpretation of events, decisions and actions taken).

Furthermore, he states that the change theory is: "If you change the stories you change the inner dialogue. Nothing the *rational mind* decides it wants will actually happen if the *inner dialogue* is resistant to it. When people talk in the hallways and over coffee, it is often stories of past events that they use to justify the interpretations and judgments of current events. These stories get passed on and embellished with time, and their historical veracity is irrelevant to the impact they have on how people make sense of organizational events. From this point of view, **AI** can change an organization if it changes the stories that circulate in the organisation's inner dialogue" (Bushe, n.d:4).

The **AI** intervention, therefore, has the potential to positively change the organisational stories and organisational culture through a structured process, which is driven by the leaders of the organisation. The above suggests that **AI**, as a change intervention, has the potential to positively change the organisational stories and organisational culture through a structured process, which is driven by the leaders of the organisation. **AI**, as a structured process, is explored below.

3.9 AI as a structured process to facilitate change

The concern that the research attempts to address is around resistance to change and negativity amongst production line employees around the implementation of new work procedures within the selected automotive component manufacturer. Changes have been

implemented in the workplace, but it is often perceived in a negative light. **AI** will be introduced as an alternative approach that can potentially be used in the selected organisation to address the implementation of change, resistance and negativity.

The Appreciative Inquiry process builds generative learning through collaborative inquiry and creates a platform for people to discover their untapped individual and collective potential, values and strengths, while it unleashes their energy and imagination, which are necessary to transform the future (Learning Resources, 2004). In contrast to the traditional change management approach which is focussed on identifying and solving problems, **AI** taps into the future hopes and dreams of people through their engagement in creating their desired community (Learning Resources, 2004). Cooperrider and Srivastva (Appreciative Inquiry Commons, 2015), explain that organisations “are not problems to be solved, but are centers of infinite human capacity, ultimately unpredictable, unknowable, or, a mystery alive”. Appreciative Inquiry creates synergy between the individual’s personal and organisational purpose by helping them tap into their unlimited potential (Learning Resources, 2004).

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003) explain that the hallmark of **AI** is a deep exploration of questions that are positively directed and engage the entire organisation. In addition, the art and practice of asking positive questions assist the organisation’s ability to attain its potential. Questions that are used in the **AI** process are designed to elicit positive experiences. However, Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2001:85-86) explain that **AI** is more than simply “crafting questions and conducting interviews . . . **AI** is best learned and understood through the 4-D cycle of Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny, which can be as formal as a company-wide process involving every stakeholder . . . on the other hand, it can be as rapid and informal as a conversation between two colleagues trying to make a difference in their organisation.” Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2001) describe the 4-D cycle of Appreciative Inquiry as a structured process, and its essence is summarised below:

Discovery - each member of the system is asked to share past and present positive experiences based on a specific theme;

Dream - positive experiences are shared amongst the organisation through storytelling to assist in creating a shared vision or dream for the future;

Design - action orientated propositions (relating to systems, processes, structures and actions required) of the envisioned future are formulated and implemented; and

Destiny - a collective appreciative organisational culture with a largely unknown end result is created.

AI could thus be considered as a change management tool for facilitating the achievement of the key principles to overcome resistance to change, namely communication, creating a shared vision and participation to build support and ownership of the decisions that are taken. The difference would be that it would focus on the positive in contrast to the traditional view, which considers analysing problems.

The positive change core is embedded in inviting people to participate in dialogues and sharing stories about their past and present exceptional moments, visions of valued and possible futures. **AI** links the energy of the positive directly to any change agenda. **AI** differs from conventional managerial problem solving and may be regarded as an approach to organisational analysis and learning. **AI** focuses on discovering, understanding and fostering innovations through the involvement of all stakeholders in the organisation by reviewing and renewing the organisation.

What works well

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003) describe **AI** as being based on the simple assumption that every organisation has something that works well, and these strengths can be the starting point of creating positive change within the organisation. An organisation learns to develop the art of appreciating by being able to identify what works well (Cooperrider, Whitney, and Stavros, 2003).

Appreciative Inquiry is an energising process that is centred on finding '*what works*'. Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:83) explain that "when individuals or

organisations discover and tap rich, inspiring accounts of peak experiences and link the positive core to any change agenda, business transformations never thought possible can emerge”.

Based on the aforementioned viewpoints, it is clear that the Appreciative Inquiry intervention may have significant benefits for the selected automotive component manufacturer to overcome resistance to change. Further to this, other South African organisations also stand to gain from the use of **AI** as an alternative change management tool.

3.10 Characteristics of AI

Bushe and Khamisa (<http://www.gervasebushe.ca/aimta.htm>) conducted a Meta- case analysis on whether or not **AI** was transformational. The study concluded that two **AI** qualities that should be focused on are how people think and not what they do, and self organising change processes that flow from new ideas rather than implementing consensually agreed upon changes. In addition, it concluded that **AI** brought about the importance of ideas, creating a social science in aid of new ideas.

3.10.1 AI and employee involvement

Powley, Fry, Barret and Bright (2004) suggest that employee involvement has steadily increased within organisations over the past few decades. Further to this, Powley *et al.* (2004) add that today’s world of work is moving towards a participative era and to one where the focus is on democratising the workplace. The aim behind this is to create a greater sense of contribution and sense of responsibility amongst participants for the welfare of the entire organisation, thereby positively affecting productivity and increasing organisational effectiveness. Employee involvement empowers employees to have an input in decisions that affect them. Benefits thereof include increased employee job satisfaction, commitment and productivity. These authors postulate that the organisation may benefit from involving more of the organisational participants in strategic actions (Powley, *et al.*, 2004). Examples of possible organisational gains would include, accelerated innovation, enhanced employee focus and organisational well-being, and

wide spread commitment to positive change. (Powley, *et al.*, 2004:68). The key focus of this article is to highlight to managers and executives that a whole system change process that specifically engages multiple stakeholder groups in creating policies and programs, directly affect an organisation's strategy and cooperative capacity. The use of a case study of the **AI** summit, a large system change intervention that uses deliberate, and dialogic democratic processes to ignite rapid organisational change, could thus be useful.

3.10.2 AI as a structured process

According to Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:2), "**AI** is an organization development (OD) process that grows out of social constructionist thought and its applications to management and organizational transformation, is through its deliberately positive assumptions about people, organizations, and relationships". **AI** leaves behind the negative (deficit) orientated approach to management and vitally transforms the ways in which organisational improvement questions are approached. Related questions could include culture change, survey feedback, strategic planning, organisational learning, customer focus groups, leadership development, team building, quality management, measurement systems, joint ventures, and alliances, diversity training, performance appraisal, communication programs, internal on-line networks, corporate history writing, and so on. Furthermore, these authors (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:2) add that "we may have researched the end of problem solving", and believe that **AI** is a powerful approach to transformation as a mode of inquiry, which is capable of inspiring, mobilizing, and sustaining human system change". **AI** taps into the positive core of the organisation, which is a useful resource to manage the change process and consciously constructing the future based on the positive core strengths of the organisation. Leaders of the organisation could thus benefit from using **AI** as an approach to shift the organisational culture and stay focused on the positive in spite of turbulent times.

3.10.3 AI as a structured process to facilitate change

Questions that are used in the **AI** process are designed to elicit positive experiences based on past exposure. However, **AI** is more than merely crafting questions, and is best explained through the 4-D cycle (see Figure 3.1, 3.2, 3.3) of Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny, which can be as formal as a company wide process, which involves every

stakeholder and conversely, it can be viewed as being as rapid and informal as a conversation between two colleagues who are trying to make a positive difference in their organisation. **AI** could thus be considered as a change management tool to facilitate achievement of the key principles of the transformational and learning organisations as previously highlighted by Nasser and Vivier (1993) and Senge and associates (1999).

Launching an **AI** initiative requires a fully grasped understanding of these principles of the **AI** theory and to internalise the basis of the 4-D cycle. The 4-D cycle demonstrates how the organisation will find the best of what works. Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**) could facilitate this process of forging a positive destiny by using the 4D cycle of Appreciative Inquiry (see figure 3.1, 3.2, 3.3), and is examined below.

3.10.4 The 4D cycle / Process of AI

Appreciative Inquiry as an alternative change management tool

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:83) explain that “the hallmark of **AI** is an intense exploration of questions, the unconditional positive questions. The art and practice of asking questions that strengthen the organization’s ability to realize its potential. **AI** engages the whole organization in crafting and posing positive questions”. The Appreciative Inquiry 4-D cycle (Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny) is a structured change management process to unleash the positive potential within the organisation.

The 4-D cycle involves the following facets:

Discovery – all stakeholders are asked to share past and present positive experiences, using a specific theme;

Dream - positive experiences are shared amongst the organisation through storytelling to assist in creating a shared vision or dream for the future;

Design - action orientated propositions (relating to systems, processes, structures and actions required) of the envisioned future are formulated and implemented; and

Destiny - a collective appreciative organisational culture with a largely unknown end result is created.

Based on the aforementioned viewpoints, it is apparent that the Appreciative Inquiry intervention may have significant benefits for South African organisations. As an alternative transformational change management tool, **AI** could possibly assist to create positive transformational change within South African organisations, by encouraging positive dialogue amongst all, and promoting positive attitudes whilst assisting with the elimination of negative perceptions.

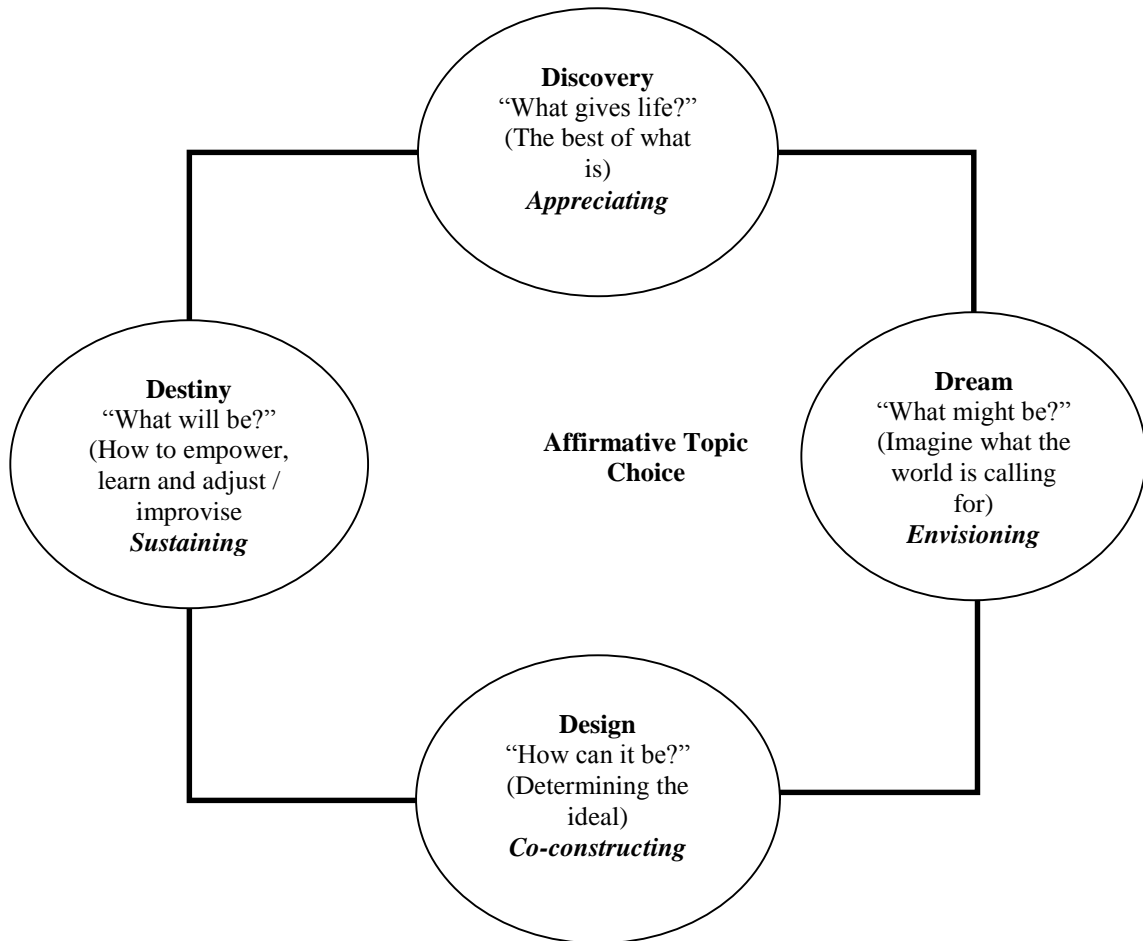


Figure 3.1: Appreciative Inquiry "4D" cycle

(Adapted from Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003:5)

3.10.5 How AI works through a structured process

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003) describe the 4D cycle as a tool to assist in mobilising the positive core of the organisation. Figure 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 illustrates the 4D cycle, and considers how **AI** and the 4D cycle can be integrated into business operations.

Johnson and Leavitt (2001) describe **AI** as a structured process through a series of steps. This Appreciative Inquiry process is aimed at allowing people in their respective organisations to explore what works well, why it works well, and to identify how those successes can be extended across the entire organisation. Similarly, Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, (2003:182) describes using the 4D cycle.

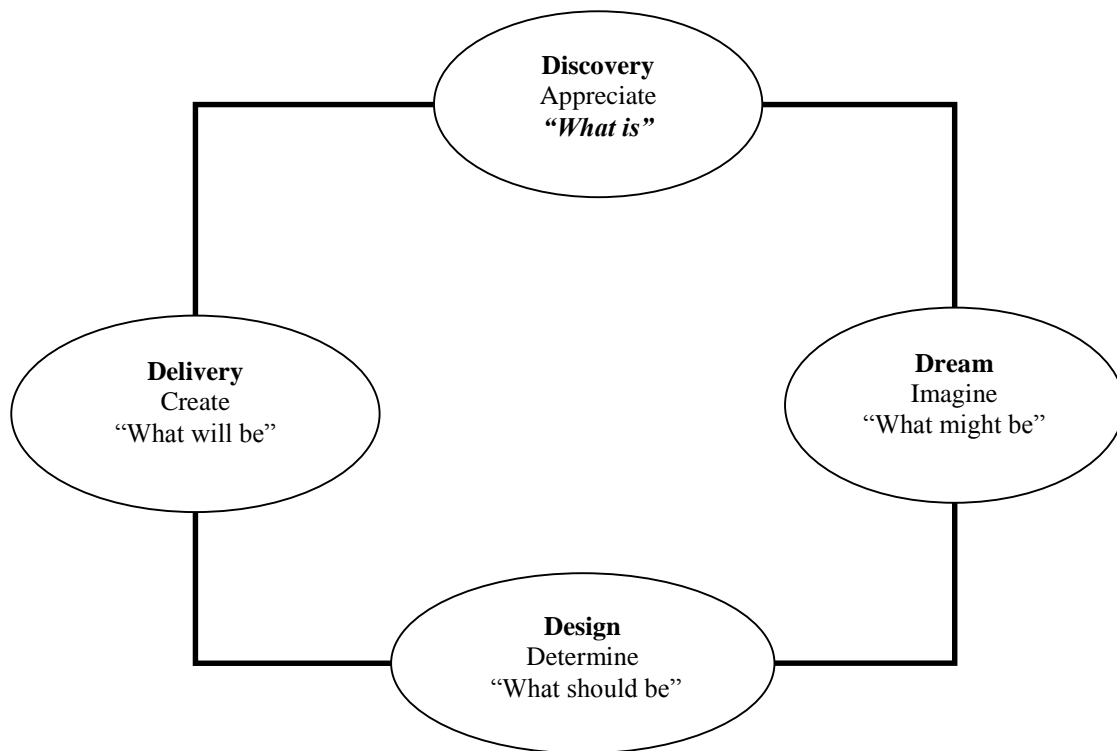


Figure 3.2: The 4D cycle of Appreciative Inquiry

(Adapted from Johnson & Leavitt, 2001:4)

Step 1: Discovery phase - Find the best of what is

The initial step of the **AI** process, using the 4D cycle, is to identify a positive affirmative topic that will ultimately become the focal point of the change intervention. Examples include innovations, vision and values, best business practices, and so on. The topic is used as a guide to formulate positive questions. Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003) presented examples of **AI** foundational questions that may be used to begin this process, namely:

- Describe a time when you felt the most alive and engaged in your company?;
- What was the highlight of your career?;
- What do you value most about your organisation, actual work activities and yourself?;
and
- What is essential to the business survival, which it cannot operate successfully without?

Through dialogue and using these questions, individuals are able to share stories that ultimately uncover successes and positive ideals around the chosen topic. In these conversations individual appreciation becomes collective appreciation, with the aim of evolving individual vision into a cooperative shared vision for the organisation. **AI** facilitates social bonding through positive questions, and at the same time organisational members get to know their organisation's history and view it as positive possibility.

In the discovery phase appreciation comes alive, hope grows, organisational capacity is enriched and storytelling begins. The Discovery process shifts the organisation's attention away from what does not work to what may possibly work well in the future.

Step 2: Determine common themes

Themes or topics are stated in an affirmative fashion and are related to an area of inquiry that is regarded as being important for the business.

Step 3: Dream phase: Envisioning what might be

Participants are challenged to think out of the box and are encouraged think about 'what could be'. Propositional statements are developed with the objective of creating a positive image of the desired future, whilst articulating the positive possibilities envisioned for the

organisation. The interview stories that are derived from the Discovery step is used to identify stories and elicit key themes that underlie times when the organisation was the most alive, and operated at its best. The dream phase is practical, as it is grounded in the organisation's history and seeks to expand in the organisation's potential. One differentiating aspect between **AI** and other visioning or planning methodologies is that images of the future emerge from grounded examples from the organisation's positive past and extraordinary moments. In the dream phase, participants become energetically engaged in recreating the organisation's positive history, and simultaneously give life to its positive future and destiny. Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2003:40) state that "dialogue about the organization's calling and the unique contribution it can make to global well-being, catalyzes a furtherance of images and stories of the organization's future".

Step 4: Design phase: How it can be?

The design phase begins with the use of provocative propositions that are focused on and, which create action around these possibilities. Inspiring statements of intension are compiled with a strategic intent, based on the organisation's own past successes and successes that have been experienced elsewhere. These statements encompass the ongoing activities, which are required for the organisation to realise its dream (step 3).

Step 5: Support analysis

This involves assessing existing organisational resources and forward thinking about what additional resources should be developed. It requires in-depth dialogues about the best structure and processes to support the new system. See Table 2.2 in this regard.

Step 6: Design phase: Develop action agenda

It is the collective construction of positive images of the organisation's future in terms of provocative propositions. Design 'what will be' involves the development of an action plan so that provocative propositions may be realised.

Step 7: Delivery / Destiny phase: Implement the action to create what will be

The delivery phase involves the organisational commitment to action plans, as well as its implementation. The focus is for both personal and organisational commitment and implementation. Innovation and action assist in facilitating the organisation's destiny. Building an appreciative eye into all the organisation's systems, procedures and ways of working, is key to sustaining the momentum. The destiny phase is ongoing and brings the organisation back, full circle to the Discovery phase, in a systemic fashion. Continued appreciative inquiry may result in new affirmative topic choices, continuous dialogue, and continued learning.

Step 8: Evaluate the implementation

This phase assesses whether the outcomes of the **AI** process have been effective in order to stimulate organisational change. Powley *et al.* (2004:70) modelled **AI** into a 4 phase process (the 4D model Figure 3.1), discovery, dream, design and destiny through a summit with the aim of facilitating change and developing new organisational structures and practices. An **AI** summit is typically a three to four day working meeting that incorporates Appreciative Inquiry in a whole system context. This contrasts with small group strategy formulation based on an agreement and collaboration amongst a select group of board members, executives or senior managers. These authors state that "unlike change interventions that emphasize a deficiency orientated lens, in the **AI** summit participants uncover positive organizational histories" (Powley *et al.*, 2004:70).

Aligned to the underlying assumption that change occurs through inquiry, these discoveries of core strengths begin to initiate large scale change initiatives. An **AI** summit is designed according to the 4D model, with each representing one part of the **AI** process. It emphasises consensus, collective participation across organisational levels and building of cooperative teams. Powley has worked with the **AI** summit in a variety of systems such as the US Navy, Roadway Express Corporation Inc, providing key insights into the process of deliberate democratic organising. The power of **AI** in organisations is that principles of dialogic democracy can be used to initiate large scale change. A key characteristic of the **AI** summit is its democratic and participative design from beginning to end.

A typical summit hosts between two to three hundred individuals, but summits have ranged up to one thousand participants. This large group design seeks to include voices from all stakeholder groups so that there is a complete representation of voices from these groups that they come together to inquire about and discover core success factors in the organisation. Participants generate strategic opportunities and voluntarily self organise to work on specific projects or initiatives to transform the system towards a shared ideal state. Action teams develop strategic plans with actionable time bound goals that they commit to achieve after the summit. All this is done on a public forum, where everyone at once sees and hears thinking, debating, imagining and acting of the whole system in the room (refer to Figure 3.3, the phases of **AI**).

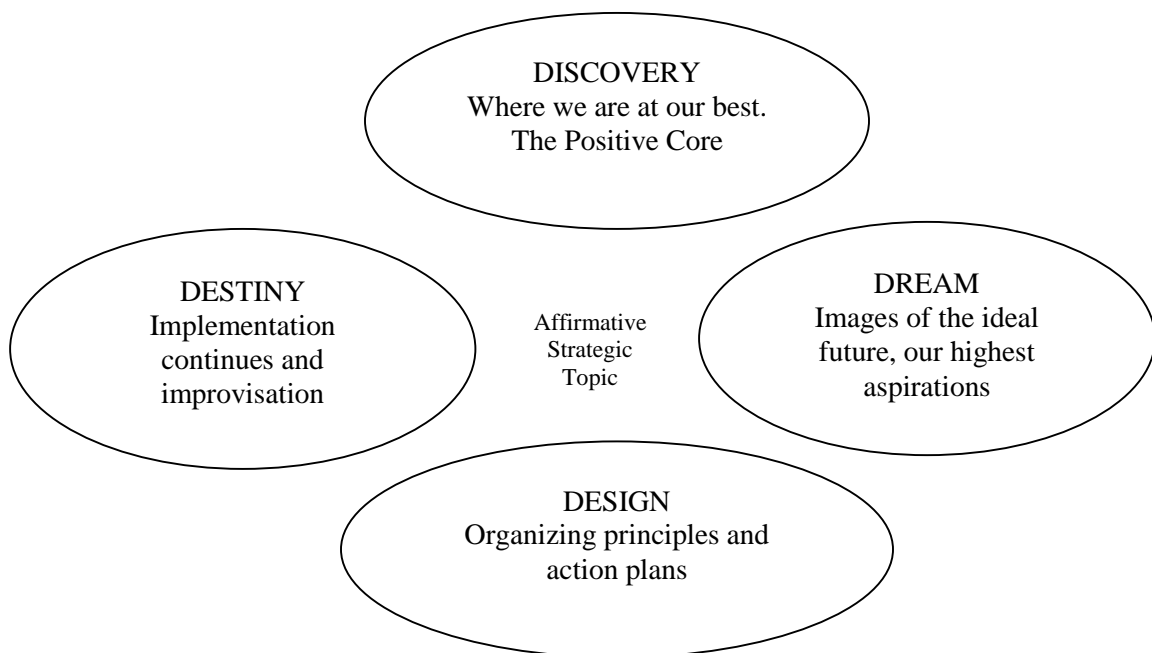


Figure 3.3: The four phases of AI

(Adapted from Powley, et al., 2004:70)

Creating Appreciative Learning Cultures

Organisations need to adopt an innovative culture (think out of the box) and strive to create new ideas and products to assist with their survival. **AI** facilitates innovation and a culture of appreciative learning. Appreciative learning goes beyond adapting to challenges and solving problems; instead, it focuses on imagining possibilities and generating new ways of looking at the world.

The Destiny phase in the 4D Cycle allows and facilitates appreciative learning cultures, since it nurtures innovative thinking by creating a positive focus, a sense of meaning, and systems that encourage collaboration.

Destiny: An improvisational capacity

“AI has achieved remarkable results in the areas of productivity improvement, efficiency, and performance” (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2003:181). The goal of the AI process is to create highly improvisational organisations. Improvisational organisations are required to demonstrate consistent strengths in the following four key areas of competence through ongoing application of the skills that are applied during the 4D cycle (Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny).

1. Affirmative Competence

This requires the organisation to draw on human capacity to engage in appreciative positive possibilities by selectively focusing on current and past strengths, successes, and potentials. In nurturing affirmative competence, leaders direct attention to members strengths as a source of the organisational vitality by celebrating achievements.

2. Expansive Competence

Expansive competence involves that the organisation makes expansive promises that challenge members to stretch themselves in new directions in line with the new shared vision that is created. This allows for a set of higher values and ideals that are evoked that inspire members to passionate engagement.

3. Generative Competence

Generative competence refers to the organisation’s ability to inspire member’s best efforts. Integrative systems are constructed, which allow members to see the results of their actions, to recognise that they are making a meaningful contribution, and to experience a sense of progress. The assumption here is that members of the organisation are most

likely to feel a sense of hope and empowerment when they perceive that their efforts are contributing towards a desired goal.

4. Collaborative Competence

Forums within the organisation are created so that members are engaged in ongoing dialogue, where varied perspectives are exchanged so as to transform systems. Collaborative systems allow dialogue in order to promote multiple perspectives and to encourage continuous, active debate. In this way, an environment is created that fosters participation and highly committed work arrangements.

Sustaining appreciation and inquiry into the way that work is completed requires some sense of the same 'design elements' that were central to the original crafting of provocative propositions. **AI** should be incorporated into the organisational system and culture in the way that work is done on a daily basis rather than being viewed as a distinct cultural or change program that fades away.

3.11 Chapter summary

Chapter Three is a conceptual analysis of Appreciative Inquiry, which aims to provide an understanding of the theory, whilst reviewing the benefits of the use of **AI** as a possible alternative to addressing transformational change in the South African context. In doing so, it examined the following in terms of the meaning of **AI**; background and history of **AI**; reviewing the key assumptions and core principles of **AI**; reasons why **AI** should be considered, together with its benefits; **AI** as a change intervention; reviewing the transformational characteristics of **AI**; and why it could be considered as transformational change management tool.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

In scientific research it is essential that the research design and methodology is adequately covered. The purpose is to ensure that the research meets recognised research standards. Any research must be completed with not only the highest level of ethics, but should also demonstrate credibility through the reliability and validity of the collected data.

Chapter Four provides an outline of the research methodology that was used in this research and the procedures, which were followed during the research. This would include the research approach, research design, research procedure, data analysis and interpretation methods that were used, aspects related to reliability and validity, the research feasibility and, finally, the limitations of the study. With this in mind, the research methodology is covered.

4.2 Research methodology

The group of data collection methods that was used during the research process is known as the research methodology (Henning, 2004; Mouton 2001). Data collection methods can either be quantitative, qualitative or a combination thereof. The manner in which the data is processed and analysed is also encompassed in the research methodology, or the approach that was used. A qualitative research approach was adopted, and the rationale for this selection is briefly outlined.

4.3 Research approach

Qualitative research is characterised by a real life situation or experience (Silverman, 2014). Qualitative research is aimed at gaining a better understanding of human behaviour and experience (Babbie, 2014; Mouton, 2001; Garbers, 1996). Conversely, quantitative research, involves understanding the relationship between variables by using numerical

analysis (Silverman, 2014). Table 4.1 differentiates between the qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Table 4.1: A comparison between quantitative and qualitative research

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generates data that allows numerical analysis. - Uses statistical calculations. - Uses statistical software and protected scales. - Seeks explanations and correlations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describes phenomenon context. - Interprets processes and meanings. - Uses theoretically based concepts. - Seeks understanding.

(Adapted from Junstesen and Mik-Mey (2012:15-17) in Silverman, 2014)

The research problem that is addressed relates to a real situation pertaining to the poor implementation of change initiatives in a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. In addition, the research problem is concerned with understanding the reasons why production line employees resisted the implementation of new work procedures at the selective automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. The qualitative research method would establish the real views of production line employees with regard to what they believe contributed to the poor implementation of changes in the workplace. A qualitative approach was thus adopted.

4.4 Research design

A research design is the plan that is compiled to adequately complete the study and address the research problem (Flick, 2011; Mouton, 2001). Creswell (1998) presents a number of qualitative research models that researchers can use. A qualitative descriptive research design was selected for this study. It requires that descriptive data should be collected to create understanding of a particular subject matter, which relates to the research problem. Flick (2011) highlights that the research design must reflect the conditions under which the research was conducted in order to maintain consistency for future research.

AI is a fairly new concept in the South African context, and thus the rationale for this design. As described in Chapter One, the aim of the research is to conduct a conceptual

analysis of both traditional change management, managing resistance to change, and the potential role that **AI** could play as an a possible alternative change management tool. The objective would be to motivate the use of **AI** as an alternative change management approach in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. Literature reviews were used as a data collection method in order to provide the necessary information on change management, managing resistance to change and Appreciative Inquiry. Data was obtained from participants by way of focus group sessions.

Ryan, Lillie, Thwaites and Adams (2013) summarise focus groups as a type of group interview where targeted questions are prepared and used to collect views on a specific subject matter. Wilkinson (2011:168) describes focus groups as deceptively simple. Focus groups is a qualitative data collection method which involves the recruitment of six to eight participants that usually share a characteristic, and who are engaged in a discussion around a particular topic so that the views and experiences are captured by the researcher (Silverman, 2014; Silverman, 2011; Wilkinson, 2011).

The rationale for selecting this design is an attempt to address the main problem: *What are shortcomings of the existing change management practices in a selected automotive component factory in Cape Town, South Africa, which has resulted in production line employees being resistant to the implementation of new procedures between 2013 and 2014?*

Textual data analysis was conducted to assess the critical success factors for traditional change interventions and the role that leaders play in transmitting this type of change process, and to also assess the possible benefits of using **AI** as an alternative approach in South African organisations. With the main problem in mind, textual data was analysed to:

- describe the change management concept and approaches, as well as resistance to change;
- establish possible reasons why production line employees resisted the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014, and reasons for the poor implementation of change initiatives in the selected automotive component company;
- highlight the shortcomings of traditional change management approaches;

- emphasise the recognition of other approaches, such as Appreciative Inquiry, as alternative positive change interventions and processes to traditional change management approaches;
- clarify the **AI** concept, since it is a fairly new concept in the South African context; and
- explain how the use of **AI** may potentially benefit the selected automotive component manufacturer, and be the possible answer to address the main research problem.

Over and above the textual data that was collected and analysed, focus group discussions, which used semi-structured interview questionnaires were held in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. The purpose was to:

- assess if the production line employees were satisfied with the changes that were implemented such as new work procedures or processes that were implemented within the workplace between 2013 and 2014;
- ascertain whether or not the production line employees resisted the implementation of new work procedures or processes;
- determine the shortcomings of the implemented changes; and
- determine whether or not the participants would view **AI** as a potential alternative change management tool to existing practices.

The participants for the focus groups were selected to create an understanding of the research problem. The research population and target group is described below.

The research population may be described as the sample of units being studied. De Vos (2005:199) explains that the units that are studied are units of persons, events, case records or organisation units. Safford and Jupp (1996:26) define a population as being the “total collection of elements actually available for sampling”. The population in this research is the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa, with the element being the total number of employees from which the sample can be taken. The target population for the research was the total number of production line employees who were affected by changes in the workplace between 2013 and 2014. The research procedure that was used during the research is covered to provide a further perspective.

4.5 Research procedure

The procedure that was used to collect the focus group data is explained below.

4.5.1 Permission to conduct research

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the research from senior management at the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa.

4.5.2 Ethics in research

Ethics plays a critical role in terms of the credibility of any research that is conducted. Ethics is commonly associated with knowing the difference between right and wrong. In research ethics pertains to the conduct of the researcher during the research process. The researcher is ultimately accountable for ensuring that the research is conducted in an ethical manner, and that ethical matters are appropriately addressed (Costley, Elliot & Gibbs, 2010). Henning (2004) advises that the researcher should seek the appropriate advice when there are any ethical dilemmas or uncertainties, which are experienced during the research process. Babbie (2014) highlights that the following elements (4.5.2.1 – 4.5.2.5) described below should be incorporated into the research to ensure ethical results.

4.5.2.1 Consent

Consent must be obtained from the necessary authorities as well as the respondents participating in the research (Babbie, 2014; Robson 1993). Consent was obtained from the selected company, as well as from the participants. In this study participation was on a voluntary basis, and participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time. Furthermore, respondents were informed about what would be done with the information that was obtained.

4.5.2.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents is an important aspect in research. The trustworthiness of the views that are shared by respondents in the focus group might be compromised if anonymity and confidentiality are not adequately addressed. The respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, and were also informed that they could review the research findings prior to it being publically made available for professional purposes.

4.5.2.3 Harm to respondents

Babbie (2014) states that respondents should not be harmed during the research process. Harm in the context of the research could, for example, be victimisation as a result of the

comments made during the focus group session. Participants in this study were informed that there were no risks associated with their participation.

4.5.2.4 Deception of respondents

The researcher ensured that respondents were not misled in any way, while the research was being conducted by displaying openness and transparency.

4.5.2.5 Release of findings

The findings of the research were shared with the respondents prior to being used. In this way the researcher ensured that the views that were shared were captured in the correct context. The researcher further endeavoured to acknowledge all sources, which were used in the final research report.

4.5.3 Logistics

The researcher obtained permission from the necessary authorities to secure the availability of the respondents. The focus group discussions were held during shift change at the selected company's premises in order to reduce the impact on the working activities of the production line employees. The focus group sessions were approximately thirty to forty five minutes each.

4.6 Selection of focus group members

For this study purposeful selection was used to identify the participants in the focus group. Purposive selection was deemed appropriate in this research for the selection of participants in the focus groups and literature. This selection technique assists the researcher to be able to perform a systematic comparison (Barbour, 2007; Barbour, 2001; Kuzel, 1992). Purposive selection occurs when the researcher selects a group or a case that is deemed appropriate for the study (Flick 2011; Patton 2002). The rationale for using this technique, is to ensure that the collected data illustrates some feature(s) or process that is relevant to the study (Silverman, 2014). Furthermore, the selection that was used was to meet the aim of the research, which was to gain a better understanding of change

management, **AI** and the actual change management practices in the selected automotive company in order to improve it.

4.6.1 Target population

The selection of participants for the focus groups was made from the target population, which in the case of this research, was the total number of production line who were affected by workplace changes between 2013 and 2014 in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. The units of analysis that were used in the research are discussed below.

4.6.2 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis refers to what is studied in the particular research (Garbers, 1996). The units of analysis that were used in this research includes the body of scientific knowledge to provide descriptive data, namely literature on change management, inclusive of resistance to change, and **AI**. Schools of thought and scientific concepts, relevant to the subject matter, and linked to the research problem, were also covered. Reputable change management and **AI** literature sources were analysed (both South African and international). It should be noted that the literature that was assessed was limited to publications from 1985 to date. Over one hundred literature sources were obtained. The aim was to present a conceptual framework (as per the proposed objectives) that attempts to capture data, which reflects both the traditional change management schools of thought and the contemporary method of change, namely **AI**.

Another unit of analysis comprised employees, which in this case was a selected focus group of production line employees in the selected automotive component manufacturing company in Cape Town, South Africa, that has been involved in the implementation of new work procedures during 2013 and 2014.

4.6.3 Size of selected focus groups

This data collection source was from two focus groups. Data that was gathered through the focus groups was limited to one company, that is, a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. The selected automotive component manufacturer employed a total of 192 employees at the time of the research, which comprised the total population. Participants were selected purposefully and on a voluntary basis. The goal was to have at least twelve participants, reflective of the sampling frame criteria. However, this was subject to the availability of the target group.

Selection of focus group members

The selection of focus group members for this research consisted of the following selection criteria:

- they must be production line employees at the selected company;
- they must have been involved in the implementation of change between 2013 and 2014;
- the participants had to be representative of any one of the following three production sub departments, namely the assembly, stripwound and bellow manufacturing areas; and
- the production area is further subdivided into three shifts, namely A shift, B shift and C shift. The participants were selected from the largest two production shifts at the time of the conducted research, namely A shift and B shift.

Focus group size

Barbour (2007) recommends that group members within a focus group should share at least one important characteristic to assist with conducting comparisons in the research. The common characteristic shared by the selected participants in this research was that they were all production line employees that were affected by changes in the workplace at the selected company between 2013 and 2014.

The number of focus group sessions that should be held in the research is determined by the required comparisons to meet the research objectives (Barbour, 2007). Barbour (2007) shares that there is no fixed number of focus group sessions that is required for research, and argues that holding more focus groups is not necessarily superior than running less. However, she contends that “holding two focus groups with similar

characteristics may place the research on firmer ground in relation to making claims about pattering of the data, since it would suggest that the differences observed are not a feature of a one off group, but are likely to be related to the different characteristics of the participants reflected in the selection” (Barbour, 2007:60).

Another aspect to consider when conducting focus groups is the number of participants that is required per focus group. Barbour (2007) highlights that social science research is more concerned with finding a comprehensive understanding of participants’ views and the manner in which these perspectives were socially constructed. A minimum of three to four and a maximum of eight participants is recommended per focus group (Barbour, 2007). Smaller groups are recommended for more sensitive topics, and a maximum of eight is recommended to facilitate the analysis of transcripts.

The sample in this research consisted of twelve (12) production line employees that were involved in the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014. The sample of twelve was divided into two groups of six production line employees in each focus group representative of the A and B shifts and all three production sub-departments.

Intergroup comparisons is a likely possibility in this research, since each participant will possess a variety of different characteristics such as age, gender, socio-economic and educational background (Barbour, 2007). Group characteristics that were considered in this research were the participants’ position, age, gender, years of experience in the selected company, shift worked and production sub-department in the selected company.

4.7 Research data collection methods

Data collection is an integral part of the research process. The purpose is to ensure that the data that was collected provides the necessary information to adequately answer the posed research questions in the case of qualitative research. Literature reviews and focus groups were selected as the data collection methods to be used in the research. The rationale for the use of literature reviews and focus groups is briefly described below.

4.7.1 Literature review

A literature review is aimed at creating clarity on the existing subject and to provide perspective on the research problem, while addressing the aims of the study (Babbie, 2014 and Mouton, 2001). A literature review was appropriate to provide an understanding of change management, the reasons for failed change initiatives, the role of leadership in change management, and the meaning of **AI**, together with other relevant subject matter related to the research problem. **AI** can be considered as a potential alternative change management tool to assist with addressing concerns raised with regard to the implementation of change in the selected automotive component factory in Cape Town, South Africa.

Data was obtained mainly from related publications such as text books, journal articles, periodicals, previous research studies, and internet sources, amongst others, which all comprised the literature review. The rationale was to ensure that the change methodology that was analysed in the literature covers both the traditional approaches to managing change, as well as recent developments in the organisational development (**OD**) field, more specifically **AI** (which was first introduced in a research paper in 1987).

4.7.2 Focus groups

A focus group is described as a purposeful discussion with individuals who have similar interests or background on a particular topic, and where the researcher actively promotes group interaction (Barbour, 2007; Schurink, Schurink and Poggenpoel, 1998).

4.7.2.1 Advantages of focus groups

Barbour (2007) describes the following advantages of the use of focus groups:

- Commonly used in research that is exploratory in nature;
- Able to provide a platform for people's views to be shared, which may have otherwise been silent;
- Appropriate for action research; addressing 'why not' type research questions, or for evaluating perspectives on particular subject matters;
- A qualitative approach that excels in "providing insights into a process rather than an outcome" (Barbour, 2007:30);
- An effective method for closing the gap in terms of understanding, if applied correctly;

- A useful tool that is used to obtain participants' views about a particular subject matter, and excels at gaining insights on why they think the way they do; and
- It can produce a most meaningful contribution if the researcher actively engages the participants.

4.7.2.2 Challenges to be addressed by the research

Challenges may occur if the researcher is unable to effectively understand and record the individual views. This may occur if the discussion is dominated by a few vocal participants (Barbour, 2007). The researcher should ensure that all participants are fully engaged throughout the focus group discussion. The role of researcher is to facilitate the discussion in a manner so that each respondent is given an opportunity to share their experiences in spite of their initial reluctance.

4.7.2.3 The purpose of a focus group in the selected company

The purpose of the focus group sessions was for the participants to share their views about the implemented change in which they were involved, in and the reasons for their views in terms of whether or not they were satisfied with the way in which the changes were implemented, together with whether or not they resisted change, and to establish whether **AI** is viewed as a possible alternative change management intervention. There are many success stories and knowledgeable employees at all levels of the organisation. Lessons can be learned from both past successes, while the 'know how' of all these people can be tapped for the longer term survival of the company. The views of the focus group should not be generalised. The feedback from the focus groups were used to further validate the research.

4.7.2.4 Planning and conducting the focus group

The process that was followed to plan and conduct the focus group discussion is described here. Planning is required in terms of ensuring the availability of participants, venue, materials, and an adequate back-up recorder to record the focus group discussions (Barbour, 2007). Permission was obtained from management to release the participants for the two focus group sessions, which were split into one (1) group per day. An internal meeting room was booked for the two focus group sessions that were held at the selected

company. The participants were informed prior to the time of the focus group session about the date, time and venue. Semi-structured interview questionnaires were compiled in advance (refer to Appendix B), and covered questions that were pertinent to address the research problem and question. The participants' were informed about the ethical aspects of the research and their consent letters were discussed prior to the session. The researcher was trained on how to use a dictaphone, and was required to ensure that the battery was fully charged prior to the session, whilst verifying that there was sufficient memory on the device to accommodate the session. The digital tape recorder or dictaphone was used and was positioned in the centre of the table to ensure maximum sound quality. The participants were asked for their views using the prepared semi-structured interview guide. The focus group session was tape recorded, while written notes were also taken. A maximum of forty five minutes was allocated for each session.

The focus group sessions were held at shift change to minimise any impact on production build requirements for those particular days. The discussion assumed the form of open ended questions, using specific themes with sub categories that related to the research problem. The themes that were selected were the reasons for failed change and **AI** as an alternative approach in the specific workplace. Field notes were also taken during the discussion and relied on during the data analysis phase of the research.

Research has shown that there is no significant difference in the quality of transcript that is derived from audio versus video recording (Barbour, 2007; Armstrong *et al.*, 1997).

4.8 Data analysis and interpretation

Data that was collected from the literature review was analysed by using the conceptual analysis method (Mouton, 2001). Conversely, focus group data was analysed by using a recognised approach, from Huberman and Miles (Silverman, 2014). The data analysis and interpretation is discussed in further detail below.

4.8.1 Analysing data

A conceptual analysis may be described as an examination of the meaning of a particular concept (Mouton, 2001). The aim of a conceptual analysis is to provide clarity on the concept that is studied from various angles. In this case the conceptual analysis dealt with both change management and Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**). Limited South African literature exists on **AI**, but international sources are available. **AI** can thus be regarded as a fairly new concept in the South African context. A conceptual analysis of **AI** and the potential role that it plays in positively contributing to change in the South African context was thus conducted. This study would add to the existing body of knowledge on **AI** from a South African viewpoint in the selected organisation. Textual data was analysed to assess the critical success factors to traditional change interventions, and the role that leaders play in transmitting this type of change process, with specific emphasis on overcoming resistance to change, whilst assessing the possible benefits of using **AI** as an alternative approach.

The broader aim of the research was to conduct a conceptual analysis of the **AI** concept, as well as the role that **AI**, as a change intervention, plays in developing positive change in the South African workplace. The proposed study is based on a specific case, and the rationale for selecting this design is to analyse and describe the change management and **AI** concept; create clarity around **AI** as a change intervention, inclusive of overcoming employee resistance; ascertain the need for **AI** in business; highlight the shortcomings of traditional transformational change management approaches that are used and common areas of failure; and to explain the role of **AI** as a change intervention in the selected South African organisation.

Existing **AI** and organisational development (**OD**) literature was analysed and textual data was reviewed. Transcripts were used to analyse views, together with field notes that were made during the focus group sessions. Data was tabulated into set themes that are described above by using a recognised method, namely the Huberman and Miles approach (Silverman, 2014; Poggenpoel, 1998). It should be noted that the information that was obtained from the focus group discussions were discussed in the findings in conjunction with the relevant literature.

4.8.2 Interpretation of data

The evaluation process will verify the relevance and validity of the data that was collected (Silverman, 2014; Costley, 2010). The relevance of the collected data is measured by the extent to which the research problem and question were addressed, as well as whether or not the research objectives were met. The data that was collected from the focus groups was analysed by conducting intergroup comparisons to check for any similarities and differences in their views. Likewise, the responses were analysed by the participant characteristics as a basis to conduct the comparisons. The purpose was to assess whether or not there were any similarities or differences in the responses. By conducting two focus groups, it provided an opportunity for the research to be able to evaluate where improvements were required to change management practices, and whether it was only applicable to one production shift or in specific production areas.

Moisander and Valtonen (2006) argue that critical features that should be included in research report should encompass the following:

- The importance of the topics and issues that are addressed in the research;
- The contribution that the research will make to the existing body of knowledge and theoretical arguments;
- The conceptual rigour of the research in terms of the detailed explanation of concepts, theoretical views, clear research objectives, appropriate use of literature in a logical and systematic manner, together with the reasoning used in the research;
- The use of appropriate research methodology to adequately collect data to meet all the research objectives; and
- Clarity of writing and effectively presenting the research arguments. Interpretation of information plays a pivotal role in research, since the findings provides meaning to the data that was collected. Interpretation of the data, conversely pertains to “the process of attaching significance to the results and if appropriate, theorising for them and considering their implications” (Costley, 2010:100).

Both sets of data were analysed by comparing the findings of the focus group sessions with the literature obtained, namely recognised practices in literature with regard to change management and **AI**.

4.8.3 Presenting results

The results are presented in the next chapter and are based on change management and **AI** literature that was reviewed, as well as responses that were obtained in the focus group sessions. The findings of the study were compared to existing literature, to reflect the

shortcomings of existing change management practices in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. A comparative table was compiled in order to highlight the participants' concerns together with the required change intervention based on the change management literature including **AI**. This was aimed at identifying areas that should be improved amongst the change management practices in the selected company.

4.9 Reliability

Reliability is related to the extent of consistency, which is achieved by different observers or the same observer on a number of instances using the same research measures (Silverman, 2014; Silverman, 2011; Hammersley, 1992a). Another perspective hails from Kirk and Miller (1986), where reliability is described as being the extent to which the research findings are independent of accidental conditions while they were produced. Seale (1999) associates high reliability in qualitative research with low inference descriptors, namely verbatim responses of what was as opposed to a general overview of what the participants said, which may distort the essence of the response and data. Reliability can be achieved with the use of recognised standardised research methods (Silverman, 2014). The reliability test would involve assessing whether the same data would be produced repeatedly using the same measuring instruments that were used by other researchers (Silverman, 2014).

Qualitative research is aimed at understanding the views of the participants in a real life situation, supported by the appropriate theoretical sources. It is thus important that the trustworthiness of the collected data should be accurately reflected. Moisander and Valtonen (2006) recommend the following ways to meet the reliability criteria in qualitative research:

- the research process should be transparent through a comprehensive description of the research strategy and data analysis methods used; and
- sufficient attention must be given to theoretical transparency. This implies that theoretical views must be clearly outlined, since this will be the basis upon which the views will be measured.

The trustworthiness of the collected data was secured by ensuring that the data was obtained from reputable sources on change management from both the traditional to the

contemporary view, namely **AI**. Furthermore, participants in the focus group discussions were conducted in a transparent and open manner, where consent was obtained.

The focus group sessions were recorded and transcribed. Notes were also used to ensure that the views that were shared were accurately reported. Respondent validation means that participants are requested to verify the information that is transcribed (Silverman, 2014). The participants were given an opportunity to review the findings to ensure that the data that was obtained was captured in the correct context under the specified themes. Verbatim responses were used to support the findings. In this way, the research was an attempt to eliminate any possibility of bias.

4.10 Validity

Validity pertains to the extent to which the research design achieves or measures what it is intended to measure (Silverman, 2014). Content validity refers to the correctness and appropriateness of the information that is included in the research study to answer the research questions around the research problem.

Qualitative research was further validated with information that was found in the body of scientific knowledge around the successful management of change, resistance to change and **AI** as an alternative approach. The literature content covered in this research addressed all the aspects of the research question, and it can thus be deemed as valid.

A semi-structured interview questionnaire was formulated to obtain data during focus group sessions with production line employees to gauge their views on the implementation of new work procedures, and the possible implementation of **AI** as an alternative. Validity is about the extent to which the truth is recorded and the accuracy of the information is prepared (Roulston, 2010). Roulston (2010) postulates that validity is influenced by how credible the interviews are, and states that the following conditions are required:

- Participants are required to share their true feelings and views;
- The researcher should accurately record the proceedings as the witness to the responses; and

- Credibility of the findings is established by demonstrating that the research presented adequate information through multiple sources, and evaluated the interpretations with sources.

The validity test is passed if the procedures that were followed were above board, open and transparent, which was the case in this study (Babbie, 2014; Silverman, 2014; Silverman, 2011), as the research complied with this validity test.

Another form of validation is called respondent validation, as mentioned previously. The participants verified that their responses were accurately recorded prior to the publishing of the research (Silverman, 2014). All the questions that could give answers to the problem statement were answered in the focus group sessions. Therefore, this study can be seen as being valid for this specific case.

4.11 Feasibility of the study

Raelin (2008) recognises the increasing body of evidence, which suggests that work based projects may prove immensely beneficial to the long term success of companies. In addition, Nixon (2008) demonstrates that engaging in insider led research can make significant contributions to work practices. The impact of the research study is dependent on the practical action that is taken by the selected automotive component company once this research is completed. It is thus crucial that the necessary buy in and support was obtained from both management and the relevant role players upfront, before the research was conducted. Permission was sought and obtained from management as well as from the relevant role players at the selected automotive component manufacturer, where the research were conducted. The findings of the research were presented to the role players with the aim of implementing the recommendations that were followed from the research.

4.12 Limitations of the study

The research study was limited to one automotive component manufacturing company in Cape Town, South Africa, hence generalisations cannot be made.

Limitations exist in the data that was collected, since the literature that was reviewed was based on sources from 1985 to date. A sample of the well-recognised change

management literature was covered. However, it should be noted that the change management field is broad, and that other techniques that were not covered may also be available. In addition to change management, literature on Appreciative Inquiry was focused on as a potential alternative approach to assist with improving change practices in the selected company. This was done by describing the concept and benefits thereof. It should be noted that there may be many other contemporary change management approaches that may also be suitable for this organisation.

The following limitations exist with the data that was collected during the focus groups. Participation from respondents were on a voluntary basis and not all production line employees that were approached based on the sampling frame was keen to participate. This may pose a problem in terms of meeting the time plan of future research. The change management practices that were reviewed were between 2013 and 2014 in the selected company, and was limited to examples, which were provided by participants. There may be many other examples of changes that were implemented in the production area during the period, which may have had different outcomes in terms of how the changes were implemented.

Further empirical studies would be required to assess actual implementation of the recommendations, and whether or not the techniques that were used, improved change management practices in the selected company in Cape Town. Future studies should focus on the same examples that were to evaluate whether or not change management practices had improved or not.

4.13 Chapter summary

Chapter Four dealt with the research design and methodology that were used in the research study in order to answer the research questions and to address the main research problem. This included the research approach, research design, research procedure, data analysis and interpretation methods that were used, as well as aspects related to reliability and validity, the research feasibility and, finally, limitations of the study. A presentation of the results and findings is outlined in the next chapter, Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This research study was aimed at improving change management practices in a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town by using Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**). Chapters Two and Chapter Three outlined literature on change management and **AI** in order to assist in identifying the shortcomings of existing change management practices in the selected company. In addition, the literature explored various change management tools and techniques that could be used to successfully implement change in the workplace.

Focus groups is a qualitative data collection method, which involves the recruitment of six to eight participants that usually share a characteristic, and who are engaged in a discussion around a particular topic so that the views and experiences are captured by the researcher (Silverman, 2014; Silverman, 2011; Wilkinson, 2011).

Focus groups were used in order to collect data from production line employees in the selected company. The research group consisted of 12 participants who worked on the production line. Two focus groups, consisting of six participants in each group participated in the research, totalling twelve employees in the sample.

Two (2) focus group sessions were held with production line employees in order to establish possible shortcomings of the existing change management practices between 2013 and 2014. Furthermore, participants' views of **AI** were shared. The objective was to assess whether **AI** would be an appropriate change management tool to use in the selected automotive component manufacturer. Chapter Five reviews the research findings of literature on change management, and the focus group sessions that were conducted in the selected automotive component manufacturer, which is discussed in further detail.

5.2 Data collection and analysis

Data was collected through the use of literature review. Literature on change management and **AI** was obtained from various sources such as books, journals and articles. The purpose was to gain a better understanding of change management and the tools and techniques that could be used to successfully implement change in the workplace. Textual data was analysed by using the conceptual analysis method. A conceptual analysis may be described as an examination of the meaning of a particular concept (Mouton, 2001). In this way a conceptual analysis would provide clarity on the concept that is studied from various angles, namely both change management and Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**).

Data was also collected through the use of focus groups in the selected automotive component manufacturer. Semi-structured questionnaires were compiled and used to conduct the focus group discussions with the sample of production line employees in a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. The information that was obtained from the production line employees during the focus group discussion was transcribed and analysed manually by using the recognised Huberman and Miles approach, (Silverman, 2014; Barbour 2007; Poggenpoel, 1998). Feedback from participants were categorised accordingly (AC 01 to AC 12).

The purpose was to understand possible reasons why production employees resisted change when new work procedures were implemented between 2013 and 2014 in the selected automotive component manufacturer. The purpose would be to improve change management practices, and a possibility was the use of **AI** in the selected company. The questionnaires were also used to assess the production line employees' views on the possible introduction of **AI**.

Data that was collected during the focus group sessions was categorised into the following areas:

- the employees' years of experience with the selected automotive component manufacturer;
- the employees' exposure to the implementation of new work procedures;

- how the employees viewed the implemented changes, that is, in a positive or negative light;
- whether employees resisted change; and
- the employees' views of **AI**.

Table 5.1: An overview of themes and categories identified by using the Huberman and Miles approach

Themes	Categories
Theme 1: Production line employees experience with change management	1.1. Exposure to the implementation of new procedures 1.2. Satisfied or unsatisfied with the implemented change 1.3. Resistance to change 1.4. Improvement ideas to manage change better
Theme 2: Production line employees' views of Appreciative Inquiry	2.1. Teach employees about their past successes 2.2. Employee involvement 2.3. Need for a shared vision 2.4. Everyone to participate in creating an action plan

5.3 Analysis of findings

5.3.1 Employees' years of experience in the selected automotive component manufacturer

The production line employees' working experience referred to in Table 5.1 was only applicable to experience gained within the selected automotive component manufacturer, and does not factor in previous working experience. The participants' working experience in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa varied and was analysed to see whether or not there were any differences in views about the implemented changes based on the participants' length of service in the selected company.

5.3.2 Employee experiences with change management

The intention here was to gain an understanding of the employees' experiences with the implementation of new work procedures or processes. All of the participants were exposed to some form of change in the production working environment in the last year. It was noted that the majority of the participants were not satisfied with the way in which the change was implemented in the production area. This indicated that there is room to

improve the change management practices in the selected automotive component manufacturer.

5.3.3 Employees' overall view of Appreciative Inquiry

The second theme was aimed at establishing employees' views on Appreciative Inquiry. It was unanimous that, overall, all of the participants believed that **AI** could assist with change management in the selected automotive component manufacturer.

5.4 Discussion of the research findings

5.4.1 Characteristics of the participants

Barbour (2007) recommends that group members within a focus group share at least one important characteristic to assist with conducting comparisons in the research. The common characteristic shared by the participants that were selected for this research was that they were all production line employees who were affected by changes in the workplace at the selected company between 2013 and 2014.

Table 5.2 reflects supplementary biographical information of the participants in terms of the following: position; gender; race; years of experience; production sub-department; and production shift.

Table 5.2: Characteristics of the participants

Position within the company	Total
Machine Operator	10
Machine Operator (SPC)	2
Gender	Total
Male	8
Female	4
Race	Total
African	3
Coloured	9
White	0
Indian	0
Years of experience	Total
Less than 2 years	0
2 years to 5 years	0
More than 5 years, but less than 9 years	4
More than 9 years, but less than 15 years	5
More than 15 years	3
Production sub-department	Total
Assembly	6
Stripwound	4
Bellow manufacturing	2
Production shift	Total
A shift	6
B shift	6

The characteristics of the participants are outlined in Table 5.2 and are discussed in further detail below.

5.4.1.1 Position in the company

All participants were employed as machine operators and worked in the production department. Two of the participants although appointed as machine operators, were responsible for mainly statistical process control (SPC) functions on the production line. None of the participants could recall the exact date of when the changes were implemented, but believed that they were introduced in 2014, and not in 2013. The participants were affected by the changes that were introduced.

5.4.1.2 Gender

The sample consisted of 8 males and 4 females. A total of 3 of the participants, comprising of one female and two males, were satisfied with the way in which the changes were implemented. A majority (9) of the remaining participants comprising of 3 females and 6 males were not satisfied with the way in which the changes were implemented in the selected organisation. This shows that the need for improvement in change management practices were across the board, and not gender specific.

5.4.1.3 Race

A majority of the sample was from the Coloured population group, and the remaining participants was from the African group. The participants that were satisfied with the implemented changes were one from the African population and two from the Coloured population. The participants who were not satisfied with the implemented changes comprised of two from the African group and seven from the Coloured group. This shows that the need for improvement in the change management practices were the views of the majority, and was not limited to a specific race group only.

5.4.1.4 Years of working experience in the selected company

Working experience refers to experience gained only within the selected company. All of the participants had more than five years of working experience in the selected company. Years of working experience was analysed to see whether the views of the participants with a shorter length of service differed from those with longer years of service. The number of participants that were satisfied or unsatisfied with the implemented changes had varying lengths of service within the selected company (see Table 5.3). Since the majority of participants that were unsatisfied with the implemented changes had lengths of service across almost all the levels of working experience, it indicates that the need for improvement in change management practices was not restricted to participants with a certain number of years of experience.

Table 5.3: Participants' views about the implemented changes based on participants' years of experience

Years of experience	Total number of participants	
	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Less than 2 years	0	0
2 years to 5 years	0	0
More than 5 years, but less than 9 years	1	3
More than 9 years, but less than 15 years	1	4
More than 15 years	1	2

5.4.1.5 Production sub department and shift

Changes were implemented throughout the plant, even more so in the production area. It was thus imperative to gain insights into the views of production line employees from all the production sub departments within the plant.

The respondents that were selected to participate in the research comprised of machine operators / SPC operators from three sub departments within the production area. The aim was to have a focus group that was representative of each sub department. This would help to gauge whether or not the implementation of change was managed well in certain production sub departments in the selected company, versus other production sub departments.

The participants were representative of each of three production sub departments in the selected company (see Table 5.4). The selected automotive component manufacturer operated three shifts, five days a week at the time that the research was conducted. The sample of participants was selected from two of the three shifts consisting of the majority of employees within the selected company. The purpose was to review whether or not there were any similarities or differences in views across the two shifts. But, also to have a deeper understanding of how employees experience change within the organisation.

Six participants represented each shift, namely A shift and B shift. The data was analysed to assess whether change management practices were successfully implemented only in certain production departments or shifts, and whether or not improvements were required to the change management practices in all production sub departments and shifts.

A majority of the participants in the assembly department were unsatisfied with the implemented changes, with only one participant being satisfied with the changes on the B shift. None of the participants in the stripwound department were satisfied with the changes that were implemented across both shifts. The bellow manufacturing participants were representative of only one shift, namely the A shift, and both were satisfied with the implemented changes.

Table 5.4: Participants' representation per production sub department and production shift

Production sub-department per shift	Total number of participants	
	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Assembly		
A shift	0	2
B shift	1	3
Stripwound		
A shift	0	1
B shift	0	3
Bellow manufacturing		
A shift	2	0
B shift	0	0

5.4.1.6 Views on AI based on the characteristics

All of the participants, regardless of gender, race, length of service, production sub department or shift believed that **AI** could potentially assist the selected company with improving change management practices.

5.4.2 Implementation of new work processes or procedures

Changes are constantly required within the production environment within the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town. There are various driving forces for change (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010). Change is often brought about as part of the

business competitive strategy to continuously improve. The emphasis of this research was thus on change management, specifically in the production area of the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town.

Each participant was required to share an example of a work process or procedure that had changed, and where they were directly affected. The participants could not recall the exact date of when the changes were implemented, but indicated that the changes occurred in 2014. The new work processes or procedures that were implemented were as follows:

- the pre-start up audit in the production assembly area;
- additional quality checking procedures introduced at the Statistical Process Control (SPC) station in production;
- operators being moved from the production assembly area to the bellow manufacturing area;
- operational processes being changed;
- machinery being moved from the production assembly area to the bellow manufacturing area;
- introduction of lasers resulting in the reduction of staff in the production stripwound area;
- machine layout changes in the production stripwound area;
- introduction of lean manufacturing in production; and
- running of two stripwound machines, whereas in the past only one operated a shift in the production stripwound area.

5.4.3 Views about the implemented changes

The participants were required to share their views regarding the particular change that they had each experienced between 2013 and 2014, and had to substantiate their reasons. A majority of the staff was not satisfied with the way in which the changes were implemented within their specific production areas, and felt that there was room for improvement. The participants' views about the implemented changes are outlined below.

The pre-start up audit in the production assembly area

Three participants referred to the introduction of the pre-start up audit in the production assembly area as their example of a change that was implemented in their work area. Two of the participants were from the A shift and one was from the B shift. The pre-start up audit is a housekeeping audit, where operators are required to complete daily checks in the production assembly area. The purpose of the audit is to ensure that the working area is neat, free from obstacles in order to prevent unnecessary scrap from being produced, and injuries. The participants believed that this was an effective tool, if properly implemented. The pre-start up audit check is required to be verified and signed off by all the role players, but this is not done by all. Role players included the production team leader, supervisor and engineer. As a result, the participants believed that there was poor follow-up by the role players following the implementation of the change. The lack of follow-up resulted in not all operators being compliant with carrying out the pre-start up audits. There appears to be a lack of accountability and the pre-audit is only done correctly on certain shifts. Hence, the expected housekeeping standards are not being met, and components often lie around and may fall into the machine. When components fall as a result of poor housekeeping, they become damaged and often cannot be salvaged, which results in more scrap being produced.

Additional quality checking procedures introduced at the Statistical Process Control (SPC)

New procedures were implemented at the SPC station in the production area. The employee responsible for SPC is expected to complete additional quality checks. Two participants referred to this example, namely one on the A shift and one on the B shift. Both participants felt that the time was not sufficient to complete all the tasks within a shift, which could compromise quality if this is not done. One of the participant's suggested that a work time study should be conducted prior to implementation of the change in order to ensure that time is allocated adequately in order to complete all the required quality checks. This would have assisted in assessing the impact of the expected change, and to see whether the actual tasks could be completed in the allocated time. One participant believed that there was a lack of effective training that was given to SPC operators in order to fulfill the new SPC functions or procedures adequately.

Operators being moved from the production assembly area to the upstream bellow manufacturing area

Due to upstream production processes and layouts being changed, some of the production operators were moved from the final assembly area to the upstream bellow manufacturing area. Two of the participants were affected by the move from the assembly area to the bellow manufacturing area. One participant was satisfied with the change and believed that the change would assist with reducing the scrap levels. Despite this the participant believed that there was room to improve communication levels between operators, team leaders and engineering staff. Training was also raised as a concern, since the operator believed that insufficient training was given around the revised procedures or processes.

Operational processes being changed

Operational processes were changed in the stripwound area. The concern was that staff members were not trained effectively when the changes were introduced and operators had to basically “figure things out” for themselves. Staff are not communicated with or involved prior to changes being made. As a result, the employees believe that their views are not respected. A lack of follow up was also mentioned as a concern.

Machinery being moved from the production assembly area to the upstream bellow manufacturing area

Machines were moved from the production assembly area to the upstream bellow manufacturing area. The participant initially believed that the change was a good idea, but after a few months it appeared that the change that was implemented was not thought through, and that there was a “*lack of homework being done*”. The reasoning was because with the new procedure, the Tubemill area always operates behind target. Furthermore, absenteeism also affected production targets that were not achieved, which was not adequately considered when the change was introduced. Communication and involvement in the implementation of change was a concern that was raised since the operator may have valuable input, but this is currently overlooked. A participant believed that an autocratic approach was adopted which discouraged staff. In addition, certain machinery cannot meet the required quality standards, for example, the plasma cutter.

There was also no follow-up where the operators were involved to see how the operators coped with the change, and if any further modifications could be made.

Introduction of lasers resulting in the reduction of staff in the production stripwound area

Lasers were introduced in order to eliminate manual cutting of stainless steel components called detagging. Staff were reduced as a result of the introduction of the lasers with the aim to improve productivity. Due to quality issues, detagging is still in place. This is in spite of the lasers also being in production. The concern raised by a participant was that the number of staff members has not been increased. Hence, an operator is required to operate two or three machines, and the set production targets are not being achieved. In this case there will be a number of unmanned machines as a result. Further to this, there is no “back up” when employees are absent, which also results in a loss of production. Inadequate staff training was also mentioned as a concern.

Machine layout changes in the production stripwound area

Machines were moved and the layout of the machines was changed, but without the involvement of operators. One participant indicated that the “space is cramped, looks untidy and items have to be moved around in the area” in order to perform the tasks.

Introduction of lean manufacturing in production

With the introduction of lean manufacturing, operators are required to operate more machinery. Lean manufacturing is a method of improving productivity by producing and supplying the right number of goods to suppliers on time and at the required quality level. It promotes the manufacturing of one product at a time instead of creating batches of parts that may be defective. In this way quality is not compromised, and more can be produced in a set time. One participant viewed lean negatively, and associated lean with additional injuries in the workplace. This was the opinion of an employee, however, injury statistics should be reviewed in order to validate this statement.

Running of two stripwound machines

Operators are required to operate two stripwound machines, whereas in the past only one was operated on a shift. Two participants believed that quality may be compromised, while two lines are running, since you may not be able to complete all the required quality checks during the shift.

5.4.4 How satisfied participants were with changes that were implemented

It was noted that a majority (9 out of 12) of the participants were unsatisfied with the way in which the change was implemented in the production area. The remaining participants (3 out of 12) were satisfied with the change. However, it should be noted that in spite of participants being satisfied with the implemented changes, all of the participants believed that the manner in which the changes are implemented needed improvement, and stated the reasons why improvement was required. The reasons for dissatisfaction varied from participant to participant. The participants' reasons for dissatisfaction, together with required interventions to improve the concerns that were raised, are illustrated in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5: Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction with the implemented changes

Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction	Required intervention based on change management practices
Lack of communication - Lack of engagement and communication between staff responsible for introducing the change with operators prior to implementation of the change.	Communication appeared to be inadequate during the change process in the selected examples of changes made between 2013 and 2014. To assist, management should communicate the vision to assist in creating an understanding amongst people whilst avoiding panic (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Krieg, 2002). In addition, management should ensure that employees are informed in advance about the rationale for change, nature of change, the planned timing, and foreseen impact on the organisation and employees. Staff should be kept informed throughout the change process (Galpin, 1996). Communication should be both upward and downward. Worker leaders must be informed, while consultation with the union and bargaining parties is crucial (Krieg, 2002).

Table 5.5: Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction with the implemented changes

Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction	Required intervention based on change management practices
<p>Lack of Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of employee involvement of operators directly affected by the change in the actual planning of change. - Lack of "homework" done prior to implementation of change, referring to a trial period used to test and modify the change with the operator's input. - Production floor and machinery layouts were changed without involving operators. - An autocratic approach is adopted to implement changes in the production area, where new procedures or processes are enforced without the operator's input. 	<p>Involvement of the role players throughout the working process is critical (Galpin, 1996). Management, change agents and employees should conduct an organisational analysis on the current situation to review the current status before the change is implemented to assess potential problems or gaps. Joint diagnosis and analyses of problems should be done. Diagnosis involves assessing the views of employees, reviewing records and listening to the concerns of employees (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003). The role of the change agents is to assess the problems and to gain commitment from staff by listing the primary concerns or problem areas, together with possible actions (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003). The possible problems and needs should be analysed, while the importance of the problems and time needed to address the problems, should be viewed together with added scenarios in order to avoid additional problems. A participatory approach, which promotes employee involvement should be adopted in the selected company, rather than insufficient involvement or an autocratic style.</p>
<p>Insufficient resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two participants from two different areas and shifts indicated that insufficient time was allocated to complete the required quality checks after change had been implemented. - Two participants from different sub departments on the same shift believed that not enough staff had been allocated to achieve the set targets in the case of absenteeism, and the way in which the new process had to be operated. - Certain production equipment was highlighted as being inadequate to meet the expected quality specifications, and as a result, daily targets were negatively impacted. 	<p>Adequate resources (for example, people (staff), money, machinery, material) should be made available in order to assist with facilitating a smooth transition from the old method to the new approach. Hindrances to the change should be removed by reviewing and aligning policies, procedures, systems and structures to facilitate the change (Krieg, 2002). Changes should be integrated with other organisational processes. Selected change agents may either make or break the change, and are crucial (Krieg, 2002). They should buy-in to the change and also be equipped with skills to successfully implement change and overcome resistance to change. The change must be monitored while it is implemented, and any issues that arise must be addressed accordingly. This would be applicable to addressing time constraints and inadequate machinery. Galpin (1996) recommends that a pilot study should be conducted when implementing the changes initially.</p>
<p>Lack of follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of participants said that there was a lack of follow-up once the changes had been implemented. "Inspect what you expect" was not done. As a result, a number of staff failed to comply with the set changes, and soon the implemented changes were no longer functional. 	<p>Once the changes have been implemented it is essential that the changed procedures should be reinforced. The leadership of the organisation must take ownership of change, and will be responsible for enforcing sustainable change. Reward and recognition for demonstrating the newly expected behaviours is another way of reinforcing the change actions (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Galpin, 1996).</p>

Table 5.5: Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction with the implemented changes (continued)

Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction	Required intervention based on change management practices
<p>Evaluation and continuous improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A participant shared a concern about the reduced output that was achieved once the change had been implemented. Production employees were required to operate more machines following change. However, the same output of operating one machine was achieved, thus negatively affecting the attainment of the daily production targets. - One participant viewed, lean manufacturing in a negative light, since it was associated with more work and workplace injuries in production. 	<p>The monitoring and evaluation processes of change appeared to be inadequate in the selected company. Senge <i>et al.</i> (1999) identified the assessment and measurement of change as being an important part of the change process. Another important aspect of the change process is measuring the impact of the change effort, following implementation. Examples of measurements include: absenteeism levels; customer satisfaction (increase or decrease); number of injuries on duty; number of quality defects; employee job satisfaction levels; cost increases or decreases; and so forth.</p> <p>The business must continually review and renew the change effort, even after implementation (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Krieg, 2002). Change agents must ensure that change and improvements continue even after successful implementation of the change initiative.</p>
<p>Training prior to implemented changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of participants believed that training was not effective or adequate prior to the changes. 	<p>Staff should be equipped with the necessary skills and training prior to change implementation. As previously mentioned, the change must be monitored while it is implemented, and any issues that arise must be addressed accordingly (Krieg, 2002). This includes addressing skills gaps.</p>

5.4.5 Resistance to change

Managers who plan change must predict why people resist change. The mismanagement of resistance to change could hinder the process and contribute to failure of the change intervention. Traditionally, resistance to change is treated as something that individuals should overcome. A variety of strategies are formulated to help employees to negotiate the transition. The contemporary view, however, holds that resistance is simply a form of feedback, and that feedback can be used productively to manage the change process (Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz, 2008).

The research was based on the premise that production line workers were resistant to changes that were implemented. However, this was not the case, since a majority of the participants indicated that they did not resist the change in spite of being dissatisfied with the manner in which the changes were implemented.

A majority (11 out of 12) of the participants indicated that they did not resist the implemented changes. One participant said (Anonymous, 2015) that “if you are not happy about something, you will resist even though you will do it and will not put in as much as when the change was implemented in a good way”. All the participants went ahead with the new process or procedures, even though they were not satisfied with the manner in which the changes were implemented.

5.4.6 Improvement ideas

The participants suggested the following to improve change implementation.

- Communicate the proposed changes with staff, and ask their input to see how the new targets can be achieved, or how the change can be implemented.
- Involve the relevant role players in the change.
- Trial the changes for a period of time, for example, three (3) months to iron out any issues, and with the operator’s input, modify accordingly until the process is operates smoothly.
- Train staff effectively prior to change implementation.
- Follow-up and monitor changes once they have been implemented to see if further modifications should be made.
- Review the resources, staff, machinery and time, which are required to implement the change prior to introduction of the change. Assign appropriate resources that will enable staff to deliver the required output. “*Do not cut staff*” or minimise resources, and then the outputs are not achieved.
- Follow-up to check that staff are completing the required changes to ensure compliance; “*inspect what you expect*”.
- Assess implications of the change in terms of whether the desired expectations of the output is realistic and achievable.

All the participants’ improvement ideas and suggestions have been in line with the literature on change management, as reflected in Table 5.5.

5.4.7 Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as an alternative approach to change

The problem that prevails today is negativity, and there is an even greater concern with the current global economic state. Globalisation is threatening South African organisations and it is critical to ensure that both leaders and employees are positively engaged in the organisation. Appreciative Inquiry is a different method of implementing change. **AI** is an alternative approach (Hammond and Royal, 2001) to the traditional change management approach that may be considered owing to the following reasons:

- It is purposefully positive;
- **AI** is highly participative;

- It facilitates creativity, commitment and development of the vision;
- **AI** is based on the assumption that positive words create positive worlds;
- People learn by doing, and use positive images, as well as audio to promote positive actions;
- It emphasises the power of dialogue and relationships;
- **AI** brings all the voices into the room; and
- **AI** is a generative process with innovative results.

AI focuses on building on the successes of the organisational system. It considers at what is done well, focuses on involvement, asks people about past positive experiences, assists with creating a shared vision, and designs and implements an action plan to copy best practices in other areas of the business. Participants were asked about their views on **AI** to cover specific aspects of the approach. The following feedback was received.

5.4.8 Appreciative Inquiry (AI): Teaching other employees about their past successes

A majority (11 out of 12) of the participants stated that they could teach others about their past successes, while with one (1) participant was unsure about the question.

5.4.9 AI: Employee involvement

All (12 out of 12) of the participants agreed that everyone could be involved in making the company a success.

5.4.10 AI: The need for a shared vision

All (12 out of 12) of the participants said that there was a need for a common shared vision.

5.4.11 AI: Involving all in creating an action plan

A majority (11 out of 12) of the participants stated that everyone should be involved in creating and implementing the action plan. One participant said that not all employees should be involved in creating the relevant action plan, which is required to bring about

the change. Furthermore, the participant said that only the role players involved in the change should be required.

5.4.12 Additional comments

Five participants acknowledged that the intension behind the change was good, but the way in which it was introduced was not adequate and hence required improvement. A view that was expressed was that **AI** would assist “with better interaction with team leaders and engineers and operators, as it will help with involving the role players”. One participant appeared passionate about teamwork because it focused on involvement. Similarly, another participant stated that staff would be more satisfied if they were involved. Another participant suggested that team building could possibly assist. A concern, which was shared by one of the participants was that operators are expected to deliver higher targets with less people, and are not rewarded accordingly. In addition, this view was supported by another participant who suggested that staff would be happier if they were paid more. However, it was argued that there is a need for a balance between appropriate pay and the correct approach that is used. There should be “*more satisfiers than dissatisfiers*” in the workplace, which the participant said was not the case currently.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter analysed data that was obtained from the focus group discussions, and discussed the findings with the aim of addressing the research objectives, namely: a conceptual analysis on Change Management, resistance to change and **AI**, which was covered in Chapters Two and Three; and Identify the shortcomings of change implementation at the selected component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa, which was covered in Chapter Five.

Chapter Six focuses on recommendations for the implementation of **AI** at the selected component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa in order to improve change implementation in future.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Continuous improvement has become an essential business practice for companies, which operate in the global economy. Change management is thus key in order to facilitate continuous improvement in an attempt to survive in this global playing field. In light of the above, change management was hence the focal point of this research.

The research was aimed at improving change management practices at a selected multinational automotive component manufacturing company in Cape Town, South Africa through the use of **AI**. The research was based on the premise that production line employees at the selected company were resistant to change when new work procedures were introduced. Hence, the implemented changes were not sustainable, since employees would revert to old methods. The research was conducted in order to establish possible reasons why production line employees resisted the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014. In addition, although the results cannot be generalised, the research would build on the existing theoretical knowledge of **AI** in a South African context. To recap, the research problem statement, research questions and findings are reflected below.

6.1.1 Problem statement

Due to the poor implementation of change management, there was resistance to change with the implementation of new procedures amongst production line employees, which resulted in low commitment and low morale at a selected automotive component factory in Cape Town, South Africa between 2013 and 2014.

6.1.2 Results pertaining to the research questions

The main objective of the research was to improve change management practices when implementing new work procedures or processes at the selected Cape Town automotive component manufacturer by testing **AI** as an alternative change management practice.

The research was aimed at answering the following research questions in an attempt to address a practical workplace problem in the selected company.

Question 1: What are the shortcomings of the current change management techniques?

Chapter Five outlined the shortcomings of the change management practices in the selected company based on the examples of workplace changes, which were shared by the participants in 2014.

Question 2: What change management techniques will help to solve the problem?

Chapter Two reviewed various traditional change management approaches and techniques.

Question 3: Is AI a possible alternative change management technique?

Chapter Three presented literature on Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**), a contemporary method to manage change. A conceptual analysis was thus conducted to assess whether **AI** would be a possible alternative change management tool, which could be used in the selected company. Furthermore, the participants in the focus group sessions unanimously viewed **AI** as a potential benefit for the selected company, as detailed in Chapter Five.

Based on the above, the research questions were adequately covered to achieve the research objective.

6.1.3 Research findings

The research findings confirmed that the changes were implemented poorly in the selected company. However, contrary to the research statement, the results indicated that a majority of the participants, namely production line employees, did not resist the changes that were implemented. Furthermore, the participants stated that they proceeded with change implementation even though they were dissatisfied with the manner in which the changes were implemented. It can therefore, be concluded that the lack of buy in from participants regarding into the implemented change has resulted in their negativity towards it.

Chapter Six provides recommendations to improve the shortcomings, which were identified in the existing change management practices in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town.

6.2 Recommendations

The recommendations, which are presented below have been made to improve change management practices at the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa, by making a comparison between the traditional change management approach and **AI**. The 4D cycle of **AI** is a structured process and is referred to in the recommendations and includes the following four phases, as described by Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2001):

Discovery - each member of the system is asked to share past and present positive experiences based on a specific theme;

Dream - positive experiences are shared amongst members of the organisation through storytelling to assist in creating a shared vision or dream for the future;

Design - action orientated propositions (relating to systems, processes, structures and actions required) of the envisioned future are formulated and implemented; and

Destiny - a collective appreciative organisational culture with a largely unknown end result is created.

Table 6.1 highlights concerns, which were raised by participants, together with the interventions that were required to address the concerns from both the traditional change management and **AI** perspective. It should be noted that the required interventions that were recommended were based only on concerns, which were raised by participants. The recommendations did not cover all the required steps to bring about successful change. It is thus important that a holistic view of successful change should be covered. This is aimed at providing a practical guideline for future implementation of change in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa.

Table 6.1: Recommendations to improve change management practices

Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction	Required intervention based on change management practices – Traditional versus Appreciative Inquiry
<p>Lack of communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A lack of engagement and communication between staff who are responsible for introducing the change with operators prior to change implementation. 	<p>Traditional Change Management Communication appeared to be inadequate during the change process in the selected examples of changes that were made between 2013 and 2014. To assist, management should communicate the vision to assist to create an understanding amongst people, and hence avoid panic (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Krieg, 2002). In addition, management should ensure that employees are informed in advance about the rationale for change, nature of the change, the planned timing, and foreseen impact on the organisation and employees. Staff should be kept informed throughout the change process (Galpin, 1996). Communication should be both upward and downward. Worker leaders should be informed, while consultation with the union and bargaining parties is crucial (Krieg, 2002).</p> <p>Appreciative Inquiry Communication with as many stakeholders is key in AI. AI thus promotes employee engagement throughout the change cycle (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2001).</p>
<p>Lack of Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A lack of employee involvement amongst operators who are directly affected by the change in the actual planning of change. - A lack of "homework" that is done prior to change implementation, referring to a trial period that is used to test and modify the change with the operators' input. - Production floor and machinery layouts were changed without involving operators. - An autocratic approach is adopted to implement changes in the production area, where new procedures or processes are enforced without the operators' input. 	<p>Traditional Change Management Involvement of the role players throughout the working process is critical (Galpin, 1996). Management, change agents and employees should conduct an organisational analysis of the current situation to review the current status before change is implemented to assess potential problems or gaps. Joint diagnosis and analyses of problems should be conducted. <i>Diagnosis</i> involves assessing the views of employees, reviewing records and listening to employee concerns (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003). The role of change agents is to assess the problems and to gain commitment from staff by listing the primary concerns or problem areas, together with possible actions (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003). Possible problems and needs should be analysed, while the importance of the problems and the time that is required to address the problems, should be considered together with added scenarios in order to avoid additional problems. A participatory approach, which promotes employee involvement should be adopted in the selected company, rather than insufficient involvement or an autocratic style.</p> <p>Appreciative Inquiry AI is highly participative and focusses on past successes, hence the creation of the shared vision, action plan and the future. It aims to bring out the best in the organisation (Watkins and Mohr, 2001).</p>

Table 6.1: Recommendations to improve change management practices (continued)

Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction	Required intervention based on change management practices – Traditional versus Appreciative Inquiry
<p>Insufficient resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two participants from two different areas and shifts indicated that insufficient time was allocated to complete the required quality checks once change had been implemented. - Two participants from different sub departments on the same shift stated that not enough staff had been allocated to achieve the set targets in the case of absenteeism, and the way in which the new process had to be operated. - Certain production equipment was highlighted as being inadequate to meet the expected quality specifications, and as a result, daily targets were negatively impacted. 	<p>Traditional Change Management Adequate resources (for example, people (staff), money, machinery, material) should be made available in order to assist with facilitating a smooth transition from the old method to the new approach. Hindrances to the change should be removed by reviewing and aligning policies, procedures, systems and structures to facilitate the change (Krieg, 2002). Changes should be integrated with other organisational processes. Selected change agents may either make or break the change, and are hence crucial (Krieg, 2002). They should buy-in to the change and also be equipped with skills to successfully implement change and overcome resistance to change. The change must be monitored while it is implemented, and any issues that arise must be addressed accordingly. This would be applicable to address time constraints and inadequate machinery. Galpin (1996) recommends that a pilot study should be conducted when implementing changes initially.</p> <p>Appreciative Inquiry By considering past successes, AI should also ensure that adequate resources are covered (for example, staff, money, machinery and material). This would be covered in the Discovery and Design phase of the AI 4D cycle (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2001).</p>
<p>Lack of follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of participants stated that there was a lack of follow-up once the changes had been implemented. "Inspect what you expect" was not done. As a result, a number of staff failed to comply with the set changes, and soon the implemented changes were no longer functional. 	<p>Traditional Change Management Once the changes are implemented, it is essential that the changed procedures should be reinforced. The leadership of the organisation must take ownership of change, and are therefore, responsible for enforcing sustainable change. Reward and recognition for demonstrating the newly expected behaviours is another way of reinforcing the change actions (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Galpin, 1996).</p> <p>Appreciative Inquiry The systems, structures and procedures are reviewed based on the past successes in the Design Phase of AI. This is to ensure that all the necessary actions are taken to bring about successful change. This would encompass conducting the necessary follow-up, training, and evaluation following change implementation as well.</p>
<p>Training prior to implemented changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of participants believed that training was not effective or adequate prior to the changes. 	<p>Traditional Change Management Staff should be equipped with the necessary skills and training prior to change implementation. As previously mentioned, the change must be monitored while it is implemented, and any issues that arise must be addressed accordingly (Krieg, 2002). This includes addressing skills gaps.</p> <p>Appreciative Inquiry As with the previous concern, namely follow-up, training is covered in the AI design phase.</p>

Table 6.1: Recommendations to improve change management practices (continued)

Participants' reasons for dissatisfaction	Required intervention based on change management practices – Traditional versus Appreciative Inquiry
<p>Evaluation and continuous improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A participant shared a concern about the reduced output that was achieved once the change was implemented. - Production employees were required to operate more machines after a change was implemented. However, the same output of operating one machine was achieved, thus negatively affecting the attainment of the daily production targets. - One participant viewed lean manufacturing in a negative light, since it was associated with more work and workplace injuries in production. 	<p>Traditional Change Management</p> <p>The monitoring and evaluation processes of change appeared to be inadequate in the selected company. Senge <i>et al.</i> (1999) identified the assessment and measurement of change as an important part of the change process. Another important aspect of the change process is measuring the impact of the change effort, following its implementation. Examples of measurements include: absenteeism levels; customer satisfaction (increase or decrease); number of injuries on duty; number of quality defects; employee job satisfaction levels; cost increases or decreases; and so forth.</p> <p>The business must continually review and renew the change effort, even after implementation (Robbins, Judge, Campbell, 2010; Krieg, 2002). Change agents must ensure that change and improvements continue, even after successful implementation of the change initiative.</p> <p>Appreciative Inquiry</p> <p>Evaluation is an essential part of the change process, and must be factored in during the design phase.</p>

As indicated in Chapter Two, Organisational Development (**OD**) literature on change management suggests various approaches to manage organisational change. The following 14 steps have incorporated elements of both traditional change management approaches and **AI**, and are recommended when implementing changes in future at the selected company (Robbins, Judge, & Campbell, 2010; Nel, *et al.*, 2008:535; Nel, *et al.*, 2004; Krieg, 2002:25; Dawson 2003; Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003; Anderson, 2001; Kotter, 1999; Mullins, 1999; & Lombard, 1998).

6.2.1 14 steps to manage organisational change

Step 1: Equip management and change agents with change management skills, including AI. Ensure that all management members, line supervision and any other potential change agents are equipped with the knowledge and skills that are required for change management and **AI**. It is essential that both the theoretical background and practical application of **AI** should be covered.

Step 2: Identify the need for change

Management must assess the internal and external forces, which drive change to determine the need for change.

Step 3: Top management commitment and buy in

Top management should buy in to the change and their commitment should be visible. They should 'walk the talk', whilst displaying their support throughout the change process.

Step 4: Develop strategies and goal setting

Strategies and goals of the purposeful change initiative(s) should be developed, including a communication strategy to ensure that staff are informed of the purpose of the change, their role in it, and the possible benefits. Goals require modification to assist with organisational renewal.

Step 5: Identify change champions and employees who affected by the change

Identify the individuals who will be responsible for change, ensuring that they understand and execute their roles effectively during the change process. Identify employees that would likely be affected by the planned change. The purpose would be to include as many of these employees in the 4D cycle of **AI**.

*Step 6: Prepare positive questions for the Discovery phase of **AI***

Using the knowledge gained on **AI**, the relevant change agents are required to formulate positively directed questions that should be used in the initial inquiry with staff during the dream phase. The purpose would be to obtain information about past success stories, for example, a particular process that requires improvement.

Step 7: Build commitment through participation in the Discovery Phase of AI

Use change agents to communicate reasons for the change, and benefits of the change to assist in overcoming resistance to change. Use the positively directed questions to obtain positive stories of past successes from the relevant employees.

Step 8: Create a shared vision by using AI in the Dream Phase

Gain commitment by developing a shared vision for change, which should include participation by all employees in the planning process. This is achieved in the dream and design phases. A clear idea must be created of where the company wants to go.

Step 9: Align policies, procedures, systems and structures in the Design Phase of AI

Remove hindrances by reviewing and aligning policies, procedures, systems and structures to facilitate the change. Integrate changes with other organisational processes.

Step 10: Implement and monitor changes as part of the Design and Destiny phases

Selected change agents may either make or break the change, and are, therefore, crucial. They should buy-in to the change and also be equipped with skills to successfully implement change and overcome resistance to change. The change must be monitored while it is implemented, and any issues that arise must be addressed accordingly.

Step 11: Reinforcement of new behaviours by using a reward system

Reward systems could be used to reinforce new behaviours, and not old ones. Participation in the change process should also be recognised and rewarded, especially those employees who have contributed to the successful implementation of the change.

Step 12: Evaluation

Senge *et al.* (1999) identified assessment and measurement of change as being an important part of the change process. Mechanisms to evaluate change must be established to assist change agents and decision makers in order to evaluate the progress

of change. Another important aspect of the change process is measuring the impact of the change effort, following implementation. Examples of measurements include: absenteeism levels; customer satisfaction (increase or decrease); number of injuries on duty; employee job satisfaction levels; cost increases or decreases and so forth.

Step 13: Sustaining the momentum

The leadership of the organisation must take ownership of change, and will be responsible for enforcing sustainable change. They should change long standing individuals by using **AI** to positively modify workplace customs, norms, values, attitudes and traditions that people have developed over the years.

Step 14: Continuous improvement

The business must continually review and renew the change effort, even after it has been implemented. Change agents must ensure that change and improvements continue even after the successful implementation of the change initiative. Another 4D workshop may be required. Leaders should encourage an innovative culture and appropriate structures should be established to facilitate this.

6.3 Chapter summary

Chapter Six provided an overview of the research problem, research questions, and results in order to provide recommendations to improve the shortcomings, which were identified in the change management practices at the selected company.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In today's world of work, organisations are required to continually renew their business practices in order to meet the evolving needs of their clients. An organisation's inability to phase out strategies, policies, procedures and business practices that are no longer relevant may shorten the lifespan of the business.

7.2 Research problem

This research was prompted as a result of production line employees being resistant to the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014, with the result of low commitment to change in a selected medium sized automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa.

Traditional change management considers fixing problems and may be outdated, especially in light of the introduction of Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**). **AI** is a structured change intervention that uses positively directed questions. **AI** attempts to involve people to share their experiences of what worked well in the past in order to create a shared vision and an action plan, which can be implemented to realise their set vision.

7.3 Research objective

The main objective of the research was to improve change management practices when implementing new work procedures in the selected Cape Town automotive component manufacturer by using **AI**.

7.4 Research outline

The research comprises of the following chapters, which are outlined below.

Chapter 1 provided a background of the research problem, and the overall objectives of the research.

Chapter 2 consisted of an in depth literature review on change management, which provides orientation of the traditional approach to managing change, which includes the topic of managing employee resistance to change.

Chapter 3 provided a comprehensive conceptual overview on Appreciative Inquiry, which was aimed at creating an understanding of the concept and the potential benefits that it could have in the selected automotive component manufacturing company.

Chapter 4 explained the research design and methodology, which were used in this research study.

Chapter 5 discussed and interpreted the research results.

Chapter 6 presented recommendations that were made in order to remedy the concerns raised in this research.

Chapter 7 summarised the aim and results of the research project.

7.5 Research methodology

This research is a non-empirical study, while a qualitative descriptive research design was selected. Purposive sampling methods were used to select the research data. Descriptive data was collected and analysed by using a literature review and focus groups in order to create an understanding of a particular subject matter, which relates to the research problem.

7.6 Ethics

Ethics was addressed in the design of the research methodology. Furthermore, information was obtained in a responsible manner, which ensured that this was not misused.

7.7 Research results, discussion and interpretation

A majority of the participants believed that they had not resisted implemented changes during 2013 and 2014. The participants proceeded with implementing the changes even though the majority were dissatisfied with the manner in which they were implemented. All of the participants believed that the **AI** method of implementing changes could potentially benefit the company.

7.8 Limitations of the research

Finally, any conclusions that were presumed should consider the limitations of the study. A limitation of this study was that the study was only conducted at a selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town, South Africa. Research results may thus not be generalised.

Limitations exist in the data that was collected, since the literature that was reviewed was based on sources from 1985 to date. A sample of well-recognised change management literature was covered. However, it should be noted that the change management field is broad, and that there are a number of other techniques, that may also be available, which was not covered.

In addition to change management, literature on Appreciative Inquiry was focused on as a potential alternative approach to assist with improving change practices in the selected company. This was done by describing the concept and its benefits. It should be noted that there may be many other contemporary change management approaches that may also be suitable for this organisation.

The following limitation exist with the data that was collected, from the focus groups. The participation of respondents was on a voluntary basis and not all production line employees who were approached, based on the sampling frame, were keen to participate. This may pose a problem in terms of meeting the timing plan of future research. The change management practices that were reviewed occurred between 2013 and 2014 at the selected company, and was limited to examples that were provided by participants. There may be many other examples of changes implemented in the production area during the period, which may have had different outcomes in terms of how the changes were implemented.

Further empirical studies are required to further assess the actual implementation of the recommendations, and whether or not the techniques that were used improved change management practices at the selected company in Cape Town. Further studies that are conducted should focus on the same examples, which were used to evaluate whether or not change management practices had improved.

7.9 Recommendations

Recommendations were made in the form of a step by step guide of how changes can be implemented within the selected company by using **AI** predominantly. However, it should be noted that the recommendations factored in certain elements of both the traditional change management approach and **AI** in an attempt to improve change management practices at the selected automotive component company in Cape Town, South Africa.

7.10 Conclusion

The findings of the research was that a majority of the participants believed that that they had not resisted the implemented changes during 2013 and 2014. The participants proceeded with implementing the changes even though they were dissatisfied with the manner in which they were implemented. All of the participants opined that the **AI** method of implementing changes, could potentially benefit the company. In conclusion, the research confirmed that change management practices at the selected company required improvement, while the research objectives and aims were also achieved.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Date: _____ Participant Name: _____

Researcher: Terine Lott-Cupido

1. **Research Title:** Appreciative Inquiry and change management in a selected automotive component factory in Cape Town, South Africa.
2. **Purpose of the Research:** This research attempts to establish possible reasons why production line employees resisted the implementation of new work procedures between 2013 and 2014. The research is aimed at improving change management practices at a selected multinational automotive component manufacturing company in Cape Town through the use of Appreciative Inquiry (**AI**).
3. **Procedures:** I will be asked to share my own experiences, which relate to the implementation of new work procedures by participating in an interview.
4. **Risks and potential concerns:** There are no known risks or concerns, which relate to this research.
5. **Benefits:** I understand that by participating in the research there are no direct benefits for me. However, the results of the research may help the researcher to gain a better understanding of how we view and experience change management, specifically when implementing new work procedures in the selected automotive component manufacturer so that change management practices can be improved within the company.
6. **Participant's rights:** I may withdraw from participating in this research at any time.

7. **Confidentiality:** I understand that the researcher will treat my comments or inputs with confidentiality. The results of the research may be published for professional purposes.

I, _____, (participant's full name) understand my rights as a respondent in this research and consent to participate voluntarily in this study.

Participant's signature

Researcher's signature

Date: _____

**APPENDIX B: SAMPLE OF THE SEMI – STRUCTURED INTERVIEW
QUESTIONNAIRE: QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE FOCUS GROUP
SESSION**

The objective of the interview is to understand possible reasons why production employees resist change when new work procedures are implemented in the selected automotive component manufacturer in Cape Town. The purpose is to improve change management practices.

1. What is your position in the company?

2. How long have you been working at the company?

3. Tell me about a time when new procedures were implemented in your department during 2013 or 2014?

4. Were you satisfied with the way in which the change was implemented? Please give details.

5. Did you resist or not want to implement the change? Please give the reasons for your answer.

6. What could have been done differently to improve implementation of the change?

7. Appreciative Inquiry is a different method of implementing change. It looks at what you are doing right, and how you can apply those lessons learned into other things that are not working well. It focuses on involvement, asking people about past positive experiences, whilst assisting with creating a shared vision, and designing and implementing an action plan to copy best practices in other areas of the business.

- 7.1. Based on the explanation of Appreciative Inquiry, do you think that you can teach fellow employees about your successes (that is, your past positive experiences) in the organisation?

7.2. Do you think that there is room to involve everyone in making the company successful?

7.3. Do you think that the company has a need for a shared vision?

7.4. If so, do you think that everybody in the company should be part of designing an action plan in order to create a best practice situation in all the company's departments?

8. Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to add regarding this research?
