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ic study of experiential learning within a South African MBA context

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**Research thesis submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Master of
Management (Dissertation)**

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February 2011

The subject of this research is ñA phenomenographic study of experiential learning within a South African MBA contextò The specific MBA context explored in this study is the Negotiation elective of the MBA programme at the University of the Witwatersrand's Graduate School of Business Administration (Wits Business School).

In her capacity as Career Advisor to postgraduate students at Wits Business School, the researcher encountered a number of MBA students who, subsequent to taking the MBA Negotiation elective, had gone through a period of considerable reflection, introspection and change. The changes observed ranged on a continuum, from basic behavioural adjustments to profound transformation. This led the researcher to question whether the Negotiation elective acted as a catalyst to this change.

The MBA Negotiation elective utilises various elements of experiential learning and has been widely regarded as an exemplar of experiential learning pedagogy within the University of the Witwatersrand/Wits Business School community. An evaluation of experiential learning pedagogy would thus prove useful to business school educators and career management practitioners who are primarily concerned with preparing students to manage work problems, lead subordinates and to make appropriate career and life choices in an increasingly complex and ambiguous global environment of business.

The research intent was to explore and analyse the qualitatively different experiences of students in the Negotiation elective, in order to discover the essence of what students experienced in the elective and how they experienced the phenomenon of experiential learning within the context described above. The intent provided the researcher with the rationale for the adoption of

Specifically, phenomenography for the research and

The researcher interviewed a purposive sample of eight students from the Negotiation elective at Wits Business School and gained their views on the research question. The respondents' narratives derived from a single open ended question namely, "Tell me about your experience in the Negotiation elective, with particular reference to your learning and development." The narratives were subjected to a process of eidetic reduction, in accordance with the phenomenological method. From this process, the researcher was able to distil the findings into nine themes, which were then cross analysed and compared to the literature review.

The researcher was able to capture interesting insights into the similarities and variances in the students' conceptions of the phenomenon of experiential learning. A number of discoveries were made. Firstly, the research findings confirmed that a causal relationship exists between the level of significance attributed to an experience and the actual learning that resulted there from. Further, individual personality, learning style and behaviour impacted upon the receptivity to the experiential learning modality. The research study was able to tap into the transformative role of experiential learning, through the analysis of the themes of double loop learning and mental models that emerged from the analysis of the respondents' narratives.

The value of reflection as a learning mechanism was confirmed and provides evidence of how learning is acquired through experiential learning pedagogy. Further, the research study was able to provide concrete examples of learning and development that resulted from the Negotiation elective and was also able to provide a critical perspective of the importance of the time dimension in development.

...sive evidence of the correlation between the learning context and the resultant learning and development. The research findings put forward a number of facilitation criteria that are essential for the provision of optimal learning within a community of learners. The possible shortcomings of this pedagogy are also highlighted through an exposure of the potential for framing and bias in the experiential learning context. Finally, the study confirms the assertion of Patel (2003) that experiential learning is phenomenological practice.

The research findings provide convincing support for the utilisation of experiential learning pedagogy as an appropriate androgogic approach for the management of ambiguity and complex change and the development of self-awareness and personal mastery. It should be adopted as modality of choice in preparing students for the leadership and management challenges of the environment of business in the 21st century.



I declare that this Masters dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (dissertation) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before, for any other degree or examination at this, or any other, university.

Charisse Drobis

15 February 2011

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	11
1.1 Purpose of the Study	11
1.2 Background to the Problem	12
1.3 Statement of the Problem	15
1.4 Delimitations	15
1.5 Limitations	16
1.6 Assumptions	16
1.7 Importance of the Study	17
2 Literature Review	18
2.1 Overview	18
Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of literature review	18
2.2 Adult Education in Business Schools	19
2.3 Theories of Adult Education and Learning	22
Figure 2: Self directed learning model	24
Figure 3: Aspects of reflective thought	28
Figure 4: Revans' five stage learning process (Drobis, 2010)	34
Figure 5: Kolb Experiential Learning Cycle	36
2.4 The Knowledge Acquisition Process	37
2.4.1 Individual Dimensions of Adult Learning	37
Figure 6: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954)	39
Table 1: Three levels of Learning	46
2.5 Models of Experiential Learning	48
Table 2: MBTI and approach to environmental interaction	50
2.5.2 Honey and Mumford's Experiential Learning Model	53
Figure 7: An integrated model of experiential learning	56
Figure 8: The components of action learning	57
2.6 Conclusion	58
2.7 Research Question	60
3 Methodology and Method	61
3.1 Framework: From Phenomenology to Phenomenography	61
3.2 Research Strategy	65
3.3 The Role of the Researcher	66
3.3.1 Background, Biases and Relationship with Co-Researchers	66
3.4 Sample	69
3.5 Data Collection Protocol	70
3.5.1 Sequencing of Interviews	71
3.6 The Interview Question	72
3.7 Data Analysis	72
3.8 Validation of Findings	73
Figure 9: Phenomenographic research process	75
4 Anticipated Ethical Issues	76
5 Analysis of Narrative Transcripts	78
5.1 Respondent Ni	82
5.1.1 Background	82
5.1.2 Reflection	82



.....ing.....	83
.....rience	84
5.1.5 Simulation.....	84
5.1.6 The Role of the Facilitator	85
5.1.7 Feedback	85
5.1.8 Moments of Truth	86
5.1.9 Learning and Development	86
5.2 Respondent R.....	87
5.2.1 Background	87
5.2.2 Orientation to learning	87
5.2.3 Simulation.....	87
5.2.4 Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	88
5.2.5 Second Order Experience	89
5.2.6 Single and Double Loop Learning	90
5.2.7 Feedback	91
5.2.8 A Community of Learners.....	94
5.2.9 Learning and Development	95
5.3 Respondent N.....	96
5.3.1 Background	96
5.3.2 Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	96
5.3.3 Second Order Experience	98
5.3.4 A Community of Learners.....	98
5.3.5 Role of the Facilitator	99
5.3.6 Double and triple-loop learning.....	99
5.3.7 Learning and Development	100
5.4 Respondent G.....	100
5.4.1 Background	100
5.4.2 Orientation to learning	101
5.4.3 Simulation.....	101
5.4.4 Feedback	102
5.4.5 Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	104
5.4.6 Learning and Development	105
5.4.7 Role of the Facilitator	106
5.5 Respondent T.....	106
5.5.1 Background	106
5.5.2 Single and Double Loop Learning	106
5.5.3 Learning and Development	107
5.5.4 Simulation.....	108
5.5.5 Role of the Facilitator	110
5.5.6 Feedback	111
5.5.7 Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	112
5.5.8 Moments of Truth	113
5.6 Respondent K.....	114
5.6.1 Background	114
5.6.2 A Community of Learners.....	114
5.6.3 Simulation.....	116



5.6.5	Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	117
5.6.6	Feedback	118
5.6.7	Learning and Development	119
5.7	Respondent E	120
5.7.1	Background	121
5.7.2	Orientation to Learning.....	121
5.7.3	Role of the Facilitator	122
5.7.4	Simulation.....	122
5.7.5	Double loop learning	124
5.7.6	Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	125
5.7.7	Moments of Truth	126
5.7.8	Feedback	129
5.7.9	A Community of Learners.....	130
5.7.10	Learning and Development	133
5.8	Respondent D	134
5.8.1	Background	134
5.8.2	Orientation to Learning.....	134
5.8.3	Role of the Facilitator	136
5.8.4	Simulation.....	138
5.8.5	Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	139
5.8.6	Feedback	140
6	Cross Analysis and Triangulation of Findings	142
6.1	<i>Graphical Representation of Findings</i>	142
6.2	Cross Analysis	143
6.2.1	Orientation to Learning.....	143
6.2.2	Second Order Experience	148
6.2.3	Simulation.....	152
6.2.4	Reflection and the Learning Journal.....	157
6.2.5	Moments of Truth	163
6.2.6	Feedback	166
6.2.7	Learning and Development	171
6.2.8	Role of the Facilitator	178
6.2.9	A Community of Learners.....	183
6.3	<i>Experiential Learning and Phenomenology?</i>	189
7	Conclusion	194
7.1	<i>Orientation to Learning and the Construction of Optimal Learning Engagements</i>	195
7.2	<i>Second Order Experience, Simulations and the Transformative Potential of Experiential Learning</i>	196
7.3	<i>Reflection and Change</i>	197
7.4	<i>Bias and Framing</i>	199
7.5	<i>Role of the Facilitator in Creating a Community of Learners</i>	200
7.6	<i>Learning and Development</i>	202
7.7	<i>The Time Dimension in Learning and Development</i>	203



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	Experiential Learning	204
		204
7.10	Suggestion for Further Research.....	205
8	References	206
9	Annexure	220
9.1	Annexure 1	220
9.2	Annexure 2. Protocol to be recited verbatim prior to each interview ..	222

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenographic study is to explore and discover the essence of experiential learning within a South African MBA context, namely the Negotiations elective of the MBA programme at the University of the Witwatersrand's Graduate School of Business Administration (Wits Business School). It is based on the experiences of a purposive sample of students chosen from participants in the MBA Negotiation elective at Wits Business School. The single pre-conceived question from which the primary research derives is "Tell me about your experience in the Negotiation elective, with particular reference to your learning and development."

Over a period spanning ten years, in her capacity as Career Advisor to postgraduate students at Wits Business School, the researcher has consulted with many students from the MBA programme. During career consultations with MBA students subsequent to the undertaking of the MBA Negotiation elective, it became apparent to the researcher that these students had undergone a process of immense introspection, growth in personal awareness and, in some cases, personal transformation.

As a result of their participation in the Negotiations elective the students developed new self-insights or, self-truths, pertaining to their awareness of certain personal and leadership competencies; or lack thereof. This led to an adjustment in current behaviour or adoption of entirely new behaviours in certain situations. In a number of cases, the students adopted one hundred and eighty degree shifts in their assumptions and conceptions about their behaviour, career and life choices and their view of the world, in general.

specific use of experiential learning pedagogy and within a number of broad definitions of experiential learning. These include activities that engage the learner directly in the phenomenon being studied (Cantor 1995:1); learning by doing through activities such as in-class simulations and discussion leadership (Domask 2007: 2) and application of practical experience and post experience reflection described by Kolb in his definition of experiential learning as a process whereby through the transformation of experience, knowledge is created, (Kolb 1984: 38).

This pre-empted a questioning of whether this pedagogy might act as a catalyst in affecting and effecting learning and development and if so, the manner in which this is achieved. Moreover, it inspired a need to explore and understand how the students within the university context experienced the phenomenon of experiential learning.

1.2 Background to the Problem

Management educators have grappled with the choice of an appropriate pedagogic model to adopt for the preparation and development of future leaders who face the challenge of an increasingly complex, ambiguous and constantly changing environment of business.

Posner (1987) emphasises that the most commonly occurring work-related problems emerge from a combination of both technical and personal elements. However, the emphasis in many MBA courses has been purely on the technical elements. These courses focus on theory and are neglectful of the 'soft skills' critical to solving problems that relate to the social factors of management such as resourcing, negotiation, communication, team work, conflict management, ambiguous and changing goals and management of change.

changes and nature of work-related problems surprising that the latter part of the 20th century into the 21st century evidenced a move away by management educators from didactic instructional pedagogy, the traditional 'outside in paradigm' (Smith 1993: 44), to an approach that builds managers from the inside out. According to Marquardt (2000) and Morrison, Rha and Helfman (2003) this paradigm is most appropriately supported by a management education model that provides for a leadership development pedagogy that incorporates both experiential learning and recognition of learning through reflective exercise. In this model the form and content of teaching are developed in parallel; where the real life scenarios ('form') parallel the leadership concepts and principles ('content') taught in the classroom (Morrison, Rha and Helfman 2003:12).

This view is supported and extended by Densten and Gray (2001) who write that work environments require leaders to engage, motivate and steer colleagues to act on new ideas and challenge conventional thinking, thereby effecting real organisational change. This necessitates the application of pedagogic models that allow students to learn through solving real problems, where self-knowledge acquired through feedback, external and internal reflection is evident as a consistent feature of the learning process. Further, Mintzberg (2004: 223) emphasises the need for a learning context that allows 'students to reflect on their experiences, uncover the assumptions brought to bear on their actions, reframe their assumptions on the basis of theory and practice and then test out new actions with their associated skills.'

The experiential learning context is of deep interest to the researcher. The researcher concurs with the view expressed by Sternberg and Zhang (2000, 2001) that this context provides for a multi-dimensional model of learning and development which is synonymous with the manner in which people discover, grow and develop. Central to this particular learning approach is the critical role played by experience in facilitating learning.

Career Advisory at the Wits Business School, and concern for learners on the MBA programme; more specifically, with self-awareness and development in light of experience and knowledge acquired, as it pertains to students' careers and personal lives. The researcher's aim was to not only describe the students' experiences in the Negotiation elective (the 'what'), but, also, to augment this with an understanding of the qualitative diversity of their experiences through an interpretive explication of the nature and meaning of these experiences (the 'how'), as per Smith (1999), Kvale (1996: 53), Kvale (2006) and Giorgi and Giorgi (2008).

Of particular concern within this phenomenographic study was the variance, or multiplicity in phenomenal conceptions of experiential learning; predicated upon the assumption that individuals experience objective situations in fundamentally diverse ways. This objective provided the rationale for the utilisation of phenomenography for the study, which is a methodology that derives directly from phenomenology. For this specific research study, the researcher utilised both descriptive and interpretive phenomenology as a framework for the description and explication of meaning presented by the phenomenon of experiential learning in the Negotiations elective in the MBA programme.

The remainder of this introduction is organised into a statement of the problem and purpose of the study, followed by a discussion of the delimitations of the research, the assumptions underpinning the study and the significance of the proposed study.

Chapter 2 constitutes the literature review and informed theory upon which the research question is based. Chapter 3 follows with a discussion of the research methodology and the research method utilised for this study, acknowledging, as per Caelli (2001) that the two are distinct from each other. According to Caelli (2001), methodology pertains to the philosophical framework underpinning the research and method to the technique, procedure and process of the research

and, more specifically, phenomenography is the research study. Chapter 3 includes a schematic methodology process outline. A discussion of the ethical issues arising out of a phenomenological study of this nature is discussed in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 constitutes the data report and eidetic reduction of the respondents's subjective lived experiences, contained in their narratives, or, the primary research. It derives from the specific requirements of phenomenological methodology and method, from which emerges a number of research themes, or initial research findings. This is followed by chapter 6 which encapsulates the in-depth cross analysis of the thematic convergence and variances, or divergence from themes, with comparisons to the literature review. The conclusion is contained in chapter 7, followed by references and appendices.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

What do students experience in the Negotiation Elective of the Wits Business School MBA programme and how do they experience the phenomenon of experiential learning within the Negotiation Elective?

1.4 Delimitations

The study undertaken extracted a purposive sample from MBA students who had completed a particular elective, namely, the Negotiations elective. It did not explore the lived experience of students completing other electives that make use of similar pedagogy.

The sample was limited to students from a single institution, namely the Graduate School of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits Business School). It did not attempt a comparison between the experiences of

with those of any other, except where students
their experiences abroad or where a comparison
emerged from the primary data obtained from students. The sample was not
derived from a single class; instead, the sample was selected out of five different
classes of Negotiation electives that were conducted during the year.

Students completing the elective component of the MBA programme had already
completed principle and core courses and had thus successfully completed the
majority of the MBA. The sample was therefore one of successful students.

1.5 Limitations

The research findings will not be generalisable given the purposive sample base,
as opposed to a random sample. Svensson (1997) claims that although
Phenomenography is not able to claim that the results produced represent a
universal truth, the results produced are none the less extremely useful in
eliciting an open and deep understanding of the multiplicity and variance in
apprehension, understanding and conception of lived experience.

1.6 Assumptions

The first assumption. The respondents were both prepared and able to
explain the phenomenon under study. It was assumed that they would be
forthright and honest in relating their experience as such and would not answer
according to perceived expectation.

The second assumption. The second assumption is that, due to manner in
which the programme was taught, the method of the MBA Negotiations elective
was experiential. The pedagogy was used selectively during the classes. Whilst
there was not direct experiential participation by each student in the class, at all

1.7 Importance of the Study

A critical evaluation of pedagogic interventions will have definite implications for educators who prepare MBA students for the leadership and learning challenges of the 21st century. Of equal significance are the implications of such a study for career management practitioners and career coaches who assist learners with their career strategy, career management and professional self-management.

The findings of the study may contribute further evidence for the application of experiential pedagogy in the MBA programme.

2.1 Overview

The literature review was conducted to highlight the critical body of literature on adult education and adult experiential learning, with a focus on business schools. It compares traditional business school pedagogy with experiential learning pedagogy, as used in the MBA Negotiations Elective at Wits Business School.

The review was effected by an examination and evaluation of the theories of adult education - an elucidation on traditional pedagogy and andragogy; followed by a review of the knowledge acquisition process through the individual dimensions of adult experiential learning. It subsequently undertakes a comparative assessment of the experiential learning models of Kolb (1984), Honey and Mumford (1992) and Revans (1982). The review concludes with a link back to the purpose of the study and the rationale for adopting phenomenography as the most appropriate methodology for this study. Below is a diagrammatic representation of the structure of this review and how it links to the purpose of the study.

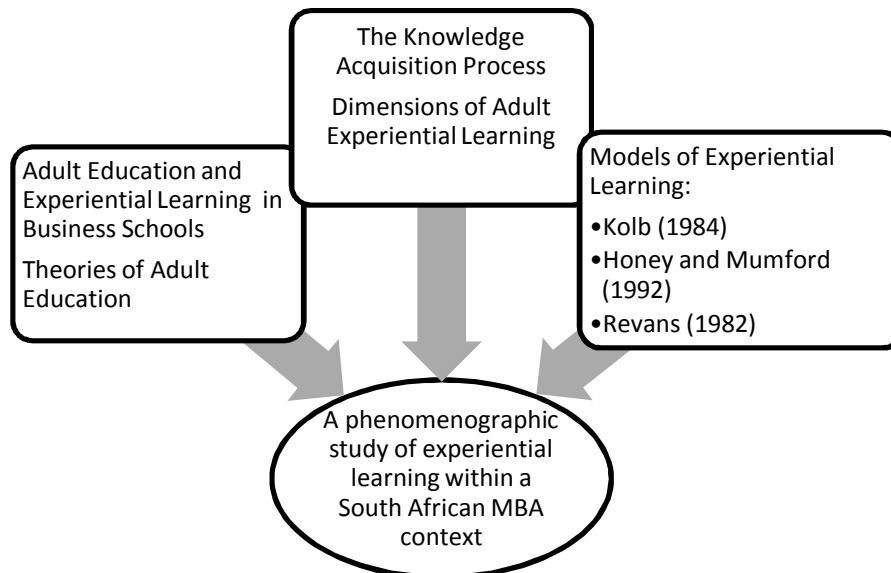


Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of literature review

Business Schools

Mintzberg (2004: 270) describes the academic setting in university or business school - with its combination of 'safety and seriousness' as ideal for the exploration of meaning and depth, where prevailing assumptions can be unravelled and challenged through a process of critical reflection. Mintzberg (2004) presents the classroom as the juncture between managers' natural experiences and the conceptual teaching undertaken by academics.

Franklin, Hodgkinson and Stewart (1998) suggest that business schools, as providers of management education, model themselves on the practices of open, dynamic learning organisations. They adopt Senge's (1990:3) definition of the learning organisation as one wherein 'people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together'.

Dewey (1933, 1951), Hicks (1996) and Patel (2003) prescribe a context for optimal learning within a learning organisation that necessitates heightened student awareness in collaboration with a responsive educational institution. According to Dewey (1933, 1951), Hicks (1996) and Patel (2003), whilst there exists a responsibility on each individual to learn, there exists an equal responsibility on the learning organisation and those who facilitate learning therein to provide the environment and resources for deep learning.

Support for the application of experiential learning practice in management education is provided by Dilworth (1996) and Brown and Posner (2001:279) who put forward the view that institutions of higher learning need to design and implement programmes that 'reach leaders at a personal and emotional level, triggering critical self-reflection and providing support for meaning including creating learning and leadership mind sets and for experimentation' thereby

g and solving problems of organisational and

In drawing from McNulty and Canty (1995) and Marsick (1988), Marquardt (2000: 235) states that the experiential learning model enables the individual to see and understand the concomitant change that is happening inside themselves so that they can do it again with ever greater facility and enhances the capacity to dig below the surface layer of perception and examine taken-for-granted assumptions and values thereby increasing effectiveness in solving complex problems. Furthermore, the shared responsibility and collaborative approach evident in the experiential learning model provides for an optimum learning environment with enhanced learning outcomes (Howard and Bray 1989 and Johnson and Johnson 1994).

Patel (2003) concurs with Brown and Posner (2001), Dilworth (1996) and Densten and Gray (2001) on the purpose of experiential learning. He equates the challenges faced by business schools with the ontological questions of what it means to be an individual in the world and how the individual relates to the world around him/her. This requires a collaborative, holistic and relational approach by both learner and teacher, where the teacher is deeply immersed in the experience of the learner, cognisant, always, of the transactional, transformational, independent and interdependent and dialectic nature of learning as postulated by Kolb (1984), Senge (1990) and Mezirow (1991). This approach is therefore described by Patel (2003) as contextual, transactional and relational.

Because experiential learning directly engages the learner in questioning, knowledge gathering and reflection it provides for 'constructive alternativism' a relativist approach that repudiates the concept of objective reality and absolute truth in favour of alternative ways of construing events (Patel 2003: 273). In so doing, experiential learning leads to the development of independent, proactive,

to take ownership of and manage their life-long

Revans (1982), Kolb (1984), Schon (1988), Sutton (1989), Mezirow (1991), Malinen (2000) Patel (2003) and Zuber-Skerrit (2002, 2005) all concur on the importance and effectiveness of experiential learning, where this incorporates action learning and reflection post-action. They posit that it is through experience and reflection thereon that adult learners become life learners who display a high level of self-awareness, self-management and personal mastery. For Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002) and George (2003), these latter traits are critical for optimal relationship management and purposeful organisational leadership.

Gill (2006) extends the perspective of Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002) and George (2003) and cites self-awareness as the most important outcome in management development programmes. For Gill, a correlation exists between levels of self-awareness and levels of reflective thinking as it pertains to strategic leadership (Gill 2006).

Hicks (1996) provides an equation of experiential learning, $P + Q + ER = L$ where P represents programmed or structured learning, Q represents the learning obtained through questioning and investigation or experimentation and ER represents individual experience, on which the individual has gone through a process of reflection and revision. This equation emphasises a combination of elements, or factors, in the equation of optimum learning.

The research reviewed thus highlights support for the notion of the interdependent and collaborative nature of learning in business schools, where both the learner and the facilitator share the responsibility (albeit in shifting balance) for learning (Howard and Bray 1989; Johnson and Johnson 1994; Hicks 1996 and Patel 2003); with an emphasis on experiential learning as a preferred pedagogy in business schools (Revans 1982; Kolb 1984; Schon 1988;

er-Skerrit 2002, 2005; Mezirow 1991; McNulty and
 North 1996; Marquardt 2000; Malinen 2000; Brown
 and Posner 2001 and Patel 2003).

2.3 Theories of Adult Education and Learning

Malinen (2000) suggests a careful examination of the theory-building attempts of a number of chief exponents in the area of adult learning and education, in order to derive a conceptual clarity and deeper understanding of this phenomenon.

Taking lead from Malinen (2000) the researcher reviews the adult education theories of Knowles (1975, 1984, 1989), Dewey (1933, 1938, 1951), Rogers (1969, 1989), Mezirow (1991) and Schon (1988). The review then moves more explicitly to theories of experiential learning, with a comparative review of the adult education theories of Revans (1982) and Kolb (1984), both of which are further expanded in section 2.3.

Underpinning the learning theories are definitions of the psychological and epistemological dimensions of perception, learning, knowing and knowledge. These definitions and dimensions appear to be inter-twined and inter-related, with the terms being used to replace one another in the theories.

Kolb (1984) refers to the first phase in the learning process as one of knowing through apprehension, a process that is directly apprehended, concrete, tangible and personally subjective; transformed by 'appreciation', 'intention' and 'extension' (Kolb 1984: 42 and 111-112). However, the researcher concurs with Hamlyn (1970), Young (1988), Mezirow (1991) Scruton (1996) and Malinen (2000) who describe perception as the first phase in the learning process, where perception incorporates sensation, imagination and understanding.

Knowles is the first learning theorist to profess that the concept of adult education is disparate from that of child education. He is therefore credited with being the father of adult education (Jarvis 1987). He emphasizes the distinct difference between the learning of children and adults, based upon his identification of a differing set of assumptions about adult learners from those on which child learners had been predicated. These include assumptions about self-concept, experience, readiness, orientation and motivation to learn (Knowles 1984).

In support for his assertion, Knowles rejects the use of the word pedagogy, or child education, to describe adult education and adopts the concept of androgogy for the process of adult learning; the term *ãndroò* or *ãmaleò* deriving from the Greek definition of *ãmanò* as per Collins (1986). For Knowles (1989), an adult and his/her experiences are inextricably linked; ignoring or devaluing this experience results in a devaluing or even rejection of the adult. Knowles's androgogy (Knowles 1989) is therefore differentiated from pedagogy by the following characteristics of adult learning:

- The learning process utilizes the experience of the learners;
- Experience is qualitatively cumulative
and
- This cumulative quality may result in various assumptions, presumptions, biases and defective mental models that lead to defensiveness and a reduced receptivity to learning.

the researcher reports that the term pedagogy is
nners and researchers to describe all forms of
education practice.

Knowles's learning theory is an epistemological approach rooted in humanism, pragmatism and existentialism; an approach that derives its impetus from the teachings of Dewey (1933, 1938, 1951), Maslow (1954) and Rogers (1969), with the latter's theory of self-directed learning (Rogers 1969) of primary importance. Self-directed learning focuses on facilitated learning in which the learner accepts ownership of the learning process; formulates a personalised set of objectives and learning strategy; initiates problem formulation, explores the resources necessary to solve the problem/s and then formulates of the process to be followed to solve the problem. Finally, but importantly, the learner accepts accountability for the consequences of his/her choices (Rogers 1969 and Knowles 1975).

Knowles's self-directed learning model (1975) is depicted below:

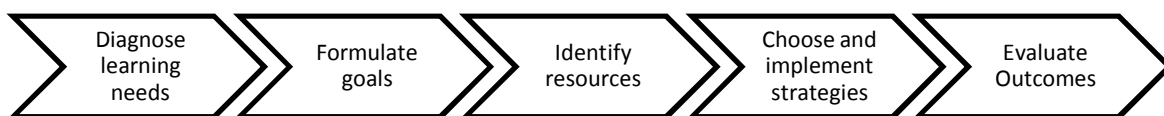


Figure 2: Self-directed learning model

[Knowles (1975), Merriam and Caffarella (1991) adapted by Drobis (2010)]

For Knowles (1989), self-directed learning is a lifelong linear process of goal setting, inquiry, active participation and evaluation that is both problem-centred and life centred. He postulates a number of outcomes for adult education that should be derived from self-directed learning, namely:

- ing, or heightened self-awareness of needs,
fectives, abilities, shortcomings and opportunities
for development;
- An appropriate outwardly focussed attitude of empathy and respect for others and embracing of a diversity of ideas, traditions, values, culture and experience;
 - An ability to recognise and respond to opportunities for both personal and social change in a positive manner;
 - An ability to understand the causal dynamics of behaviour and to respond to those causes appropriately, by creating solutions to solve problems;
 - Adults should be directed to acquire skills in order to realise their innate potential.

Therefore, the implicit objective and contextual dimensions of knowledge are emphasized by Knowles (1989: 18-19), whereby an individual's knowledge is expressed as the particular "skills, understandings, attitudes, values and interests" that are acquired within the milieu of its use.

Knowles's theory of learning elicits much criticism. Grace (1996), Merriam (1987), Podeschi and Pearson (1986) and Tennant (1986) accuse Knowles of merely providing a method of for the management of learning, rather than explaining the process thereof. Hartree (1984), Bright (1989), Fisher and Podeshchi (1989) and Malinen (2000) are in agreement that the most appropriate epistemological framework for Knowles's theory is that of Conventionalism, where formalized education, or teaching, provides the mechanism for the transmission of knowledge.

, Knowles's theory of adult learning makes a body of theory of adult education. The most significant contribution is his adoption of the term andragogy to distinguish the process of adult education from that teaching children, or pedagogy (Knowles 1984, 1989).

Another contribution is his emphasis on a set of proactive and purposeful learning outcomes, or skills, that derive from self-directed learning (Knowles 1975, 1984, 1989). Given the difference in the assumptions about adult learners versus those about child learners, the consequent outcomes of the learning process would also be different. By placing emphasis on social attitude, respect, empathy, maturity and self-awareness as necessary outcomes of self-directed learning, Knowles (1975, 1984, 1989) places responsibility on adult learners to use their learning to the benefit of their fellow beings and to the greater good of society.

2.3.2 Dewey's Developmental Theory of Learning

Continuity of experience, inquiry and reflection form the primary focus of Dewey's theory of knowing, or learning (Dewey 1933, 1938 and Kolb 1984). According to Dewey, experience is transformed into higher-order purposeful action through a complex intellectual process of observation, an assimilation of previous knowledge and judicious choice of action plan followed by an evaluation of the significant consequences emerging from the action plan (Dewey 1933, 1938).

For Dewey, the link between experience and education is not direct. Instead, Dewey proposes the difference between mis-educative experiences which could

...ning and those that are educative, resulting in
..., thereby encouraging the growth of future
experiences (Dewey 1933, 1938). Furthermore, according to Dewey (1938),
experiences that are pleasurable are not necessarily educative; whilst
conversely; experiences that are not pleasurable might well induce
responsiveness and growth.

Dewey (1933) prescribes four criteria necessary for the construction and
presentation of educative experiences. Firstly, projects should be worthwhile and
should generate interest in the learner (generative). Moreover, the projects
should present learners with a problem or set of problems that catalyse curiosity,
questioning and resourcefulness. Dewey (1933) introduces the dimension of
time into the learning context whereby projects should be conducted over a
period of time sufficiently lengthy in order to support the development-over-time
dimension.

Dewey further emphasizes the need for all of the above to occur contiguously
with the dimensions of problem proposal and inquiry and reflection and the
principles of continuity and interaction which underpin his learning theory (Dewey
1933, 1938):

- Inquiry requires the introduction of a problem which catalyses the learning
process (Dewey 1933). Responsibility for introducing the problem lies with
the facilitator, who, according to Dewey (1933: 40) should provide the
materials and the conditions by which organic curiosity will be directed into
investigations that have an aim and that produce results in the way of
increase of knowledge, and by which social inquisitiveness will be
converted into ability to find out things known to others, an ability to ask
questions of books as well as of persons.

dimension in Dewey’s theory of learning and refers to the process of reflection, including observation, which Dewey describes as reflective activities (Dewey 1933). Reflection represents the fulcrum point between the phenomenon that is experienced and how that experience is transformed into learning (Dewey 1933).

- The principal of interaction refers to the situational transactional nature of learning, with the learner and the environment as variables in the transactional equation (Dewey 1938 and Shumer 1993b).
- Continuity provides for the occurrence of all experiences along a continuum that Dewey refers to as the experiential continuum, where each experience is built upon the previous experience, necessitating the involvement of a facilitator to direct that experience towards positive growth and development (Dewey 1938).

The aspects of reflective thought described in Dewey’s model of learning (1933) are represented below:

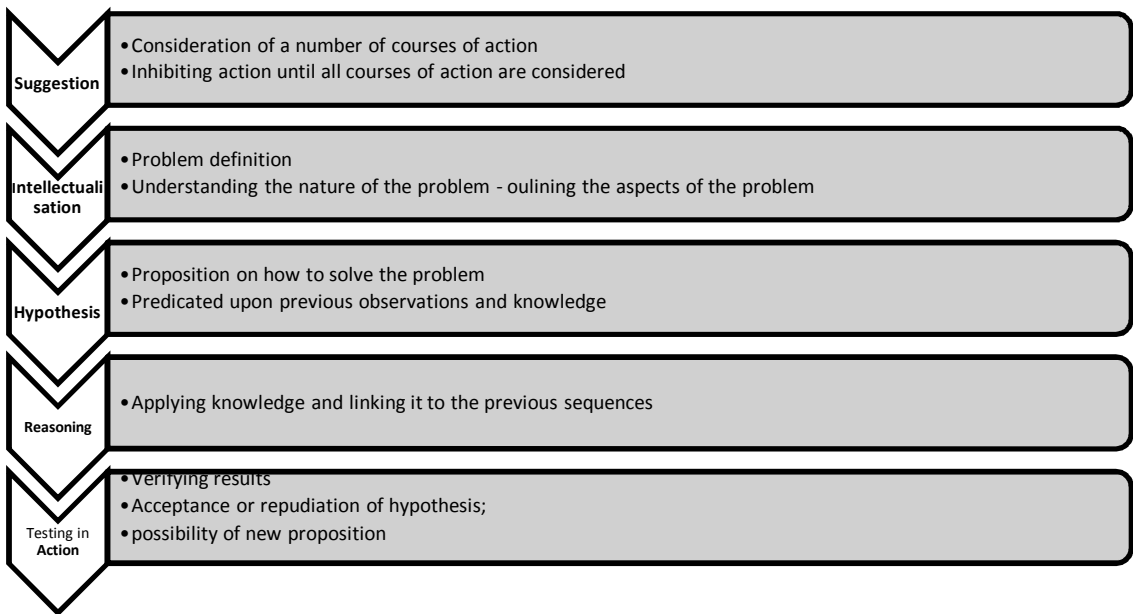


Figure 3: Aspects of reflective thought
[Described by Dewey (1933) adapted by Drobis (2010)]

ing and Facilitation

Rogers (1969) is credited with the creation of a set of criteria for the effective facilitation of learning, in the tradition of the humanistic school of clinical theorists. It is upon Rogers's theory of self-directed learning that Knowles (1989) developed his theory of self-directed learning and therefore the model of learning described by Knowles (1989) is almost identical to that of Rogers (1969). (See Figure 2 for Knowles's learning model). Rogers's theory of self-directed learning focuses on the creation of learners who are able to accept responsibility for the learning process and accountability for the consequences of their own life learning, the entire process of which is initiated through skilled facilitation.

If one were to draw a line connecting Dewey's (1933, 1938) theory of learning to that of Rogers (1969) and Knowles (1975, 1989) one is able to ascertain a number of congruent processes in the three theories of learning. However, the principle on which Rogers's theory is predicated digresses from that of Dewey and Knowles. Dewey (1933) places the responsibility for the selection and management of the learning experience entirely on the facilitator; whereas in Knowles's (1975, 1989) theory of learning responsibility is directed towards the learner.

Rogers, however, emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning, where learner and facilitator accept dual responsibility for learning. He places the responsibility for the learning process on the learner, via his theory of self-directed learning (Rogers 1969). His theory also prescribes a number of criteria essential for the facilitation of the learning process contained within the definition of a community of learners. The Community of Learners refers to the holistic community and communal learning space that constitutes the classroom, facilitator and students and the inter-relationship between them, as defined by Rogers (1969, 1989), Nouwen (1986) and Christensen (1991).

the experiential learning context and provides the experiential learning framework (Patel 2003).

According to Patel (2003) whilst learning in action empowers the learner to take ownership of and manage his/her life-long learning there is specific facilitator responsibility where the facilitator is compelled to provide the learner with the necessary resources to enable him/her to access the self, the manner in which knowledge and experience are interpreted or construed and, also, the manner with which this knowledge and experience contributes to the individual's personal development. During any learning situation the learner is engaging with both programmed and questioning knowledge, but, also, he/she is constantly engaged with learning about his or her self and thus in the process of revising or re-construing personal constructs (Patel 2003).

The role of the educator within an experiential learning setting thus requires careful assessment and critique to unlock the elements of a successful experiential intervention.

2.3.4 Mezirow's Theory of Transformative Learning

Knowing, according to Mezirow (1991: 42-44), occurs within personal frameworks - meaning perspectives - which provide a contextual structure for subjective (and sometimes inaccurate) assumptions, beliefs and personal views of the world. Building upon Kolb's suggestion of an integrative superior knowledge, the goal of which is "to make some new contribution to the data bank of social knowledge" (Kolb 1984: 225), Mezirow postulates a superior form of knowledge, or "Emancipatory Knowledge" (Mezirow 1991: 87), that derives from the critical self-reflection occurring at the juncture between meaning perspectives and new, or novel, situational predicaments or experiences.

Knowing and knowledge is the central theme in Mezirow's theory of learning, whereby knowledge exists only in the learner's ability to construct and reconstruct the meaning of an experience in his or her own terms (Mezirow 1991: 20). The researcher concurs with Kegan (2000) that instead of focussing on "what is known, transformational learning focuses instead on "how an individual comes to know. In his theory of learning, Mezirow (1991) emphasizes the active dimension of comprehension or "the how (Kegan 2000) in learning where an experience is rationalised through the application of language categories via critical reflection. He supports the dialectic, interpretative nature of the learning process, emphasizing the importance of meaning making and the ability of learning to induce change in the individual (Mezirow 1991).

Mezirow distinguishes between reflective learning and transformative learning, where reflective learning involves either elaborating or differentiating pre-existing meaning schemes to confirm or further extend their scope; this includes habitual responses or adaptations. Transformative learning is generally prompted by a second order experience, or disorienting dilemma (Mezirow 1991) that presents as a challenge or threat to an individual's personal framework and involves critique in light of reflection; rejection of previously held meaning schemes and perspectives and subsequent reorganization of meaning.

Thus, "transformative learning involves reflective assessment of premises, a process predicated upon still another logic, one of movement through cognitive structures by identifying and judging presuppositions" where one "construes a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future action" (Mezirow 1991: 5,12). Kegan (2000) supports Boyd (1988) Mezirow (1991) on the notion of comprehension as the active dimension of transformative learning via the process of self-verification of reasoning that learners undergo which occurs contiguously with the questioning of previously held assumptions and presuppositions about a phenomenon.

given the above, Mezirow's (1991) theory of transformative learning provides a framework for understanding an individual's response to second order experience in the experiential learning context, where experiential simulation and role play constitute the contrived second order experience or disorientating dilemma presented to the learner. Furthermore, it provides a framework for understanding how the learner actively uses comprehension to manage meaning making in light of the presenting dilemma, thereby providing a mechanism to overcome the potential for learning defensiveness.

Bearing a number of similar characteristics to Mezirow's (1991) theory of transformative learning, Kelly (1955, 1991a, 1991b) developed the concept of Personal Construct Theory which provides a framework for understanding how individuals organise, perceive, construe and interpret events. It also provides the framework for a learning approach where the learner is encouraged to examine his/her personal constructs (knowledge, social, institutional and personal beliefs) in light of new experience and knowledge in a manner that fosters critical learning in action and meaningful interpretations of the self in the world and, ultimately, a growth in emotional intelligence. Furthermore, Personal Construct Theory allows for an understanding of the manifestation of defensive constructs, or defensive mental models, in light of the presentation of invalidating evidence; referred to by Kelly as hostility (Kelly 1955, 1991a, 1991b).

2.3.5 Schon's Theory of Learning

Central to Schon's (1983, 1988) theory of learning is his explication of 'knowing in action' where 'knowing is *in* the action, tacit, spontaneously delivered without conscious deliberation' (Schon 1988: 28). According to Schon (1983, 1988), learning is characterized by reflection on our knowing in action in order to elicit an understanding of an outcome that differs from the expectations of any particular

is theory, techniques and technical skills are implicit and natural through dedicated and focused repetition. The researcher therefore infers from the above that in Schon's (1983, 1988) theory of learning, past experience provides the precedent for that which is new, in a process that is conscious, critical and of personal significance.

Similarly to Mezirow (1991), Schon (1988) adopts an interpretative constructionist approach to knowledge, which assumes the acquisition of factual truths through reason, thus "making explicit what one already knows how to do" in light of "perceptions, appreciations and beliefs that are rooted in worlds of our own making that we come to accept as reality" (Schon 1988).

2.3.6 Revans Theory of Action Learning

Revans prefers to represent knowledge and knowing as a function of action. Of importance to him is the consistent replication and practice, from which emerges the "distilled and concentrated knowledge we describe as successful theory" (Revans 1982: 493-494).

Building upon and re-organisation of experience through action learning is the primary tenet of Revans action learning theory (1982). For Revans (1982: 376), "learning is more likely to consist in a reorganization of what is already known rather than in the acquisition of fresh factual knowledge, although such fresh data may be needed to precipitate the reorganization" Action learning, therefore, emphasizes learning via experience whereby the process of learning assists the learner "to help him use more effectively what he already has, and to interpret the experiences of yesterday in light of tomorrow" (Revans 1982: 633).

Revans (1982) as a five stage process which is first defined in Aristotelian logic (384-322 BCE) and further described by Dewey (1933), Rogers (1969) and Knowles (1975). It also incorporates the sequential stages of observation or survey, hypothesis, experimentation, audit or analysis of results and finally, review, in order to affirm or repudiate the hypothesis, as depicted by figure 4.

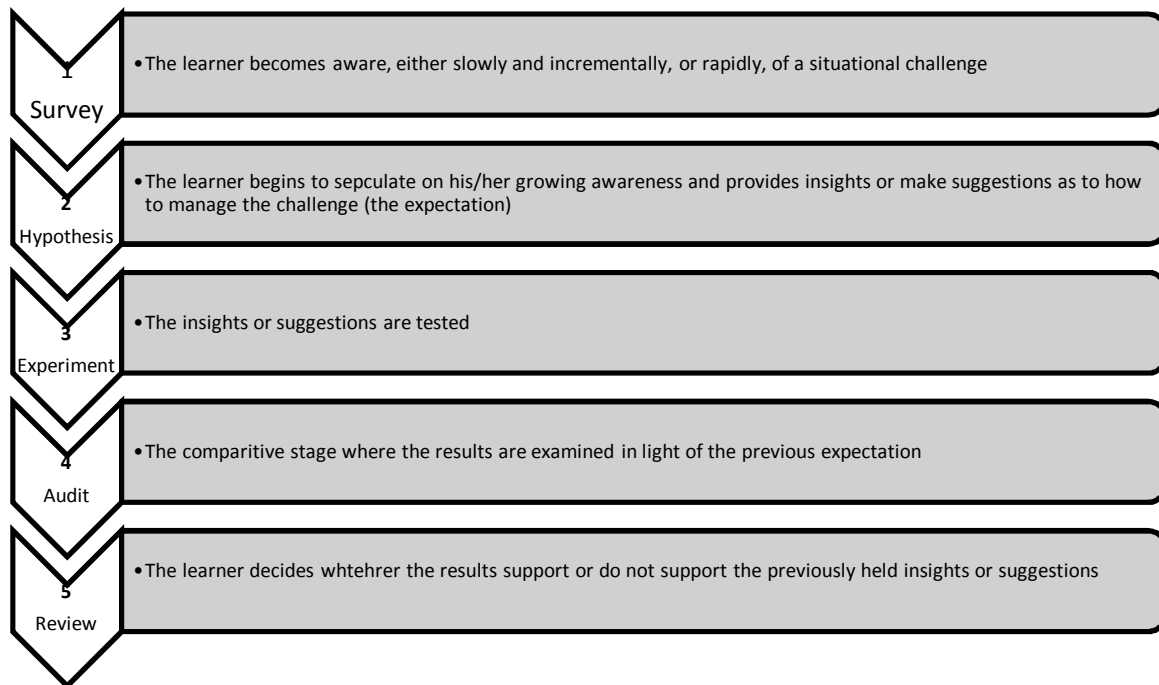


Figure 4: Revans' five stage learning process (Drobis, 2010)

Revans makes a distinction between programmed knowledge; which derives from instruction by expert technicians (didactic learning) and questioning insight; or the knowledge obtained from perceptive insightful action learning (Revans 1982, 1985 and Malinen 2000:31). In action learning the participant is presented with a problem, or set of problems, which he or she has to solve via an experiential learning process such as that described by Kolb (1984): action→observation and reflection→abstract conceptualisation→experimentation on acquired learning. Revans attributes the success of action learning practice to its ability to assist the individual to ñuse more effectively what he already has, and

2.3.7 Kolb's Learning Cycle

In alignment with later learning theorists such as Mezirow (1991), Kolb places significant emphasis on the active and conscious component in learning, namely comprehension. For Kolb (1984: 42), the simple perception of experience is not sufficient for learning; something must be done with it. His explication of comprehension is one of judgement of the relationship between cause and effect, a process of interpretation that is converted deliberately, purposely and extensionally by investigation and evaluation (Kolb 1984 and Malinen 2000).

Comprehension informs the selection of experience and results in maturational development being characterized by the acquisition of a higher-level structure of consciousness than the stage preceding it (Kolb 1984: 146). In transforming experience, through active experimentation and reflection, the learner creates knowledge, meaning and reality. For Kolb, this is the process of learning, a process that is not linear (Huber 1991), but rather cyclical and dialectic, as it involves a dialectic resolution of opposing adaptive modes, as per Lewin (1946). This process is depicted by the Kolb Learning Cycle in Figure 5 (overleaf).

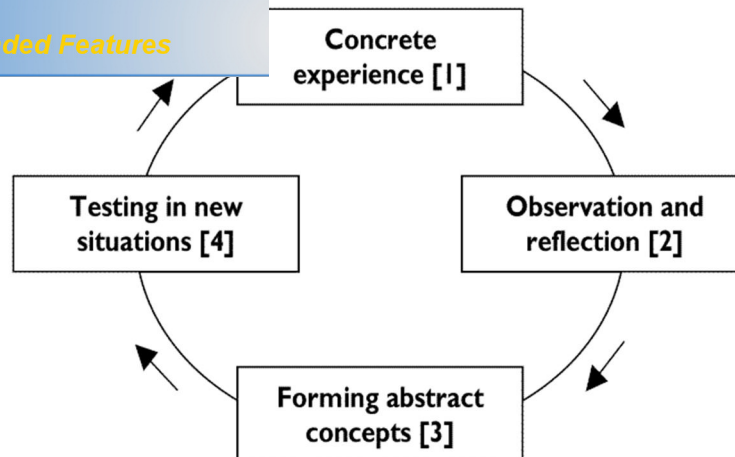


Figure 5: Kolb Experiential Learning Cycle
[Adapted from Lewin 1946 by Kolb 1984]

Kolb and Wolfe (1991) prescribe an optimal learning programme as one where the learner moves through each stage of the Kolb model and is able to utilise the abilities and learning implicit in that stage.

Kolb emphasizes the cyclical continuity of learning that is grounded in experience derived from and tested out in the experiences of the learner (Kolb 1984: 27), where a transactional relationship exists between learner and the environment. From this transactional relationship emerges both objective and subjective knowledge. Objective social knowledge is accumulated from previous socio-cultural experience and personal knowledge, which is subjective, emerges from the transaction between socio-cultural knowledge and the individual's objective experience (Kolb 1984 and Malinen 2000: 31). The aforementioned transactional process is a highly active one, described by Kolb (1984: 121) as the process whereby social knowledge must be continuously recreated in the knower's personal experience (through an iterative learning cycle).

Acquisition Process

In assessing the various adult learning theories, Malinen (2000) infers from Bohm and Peat (1989:67) that knowledge of reality does not lie in the individual subject, neither does it lie in the known object. She postulates that knowledge is created through the dynamic flow between the individual subject and the known object. She argues the need for the clarification of the knowledge acquisition process by which objective knowledge is translated into individual knowledge and knowing via the individual dimensions of adult learning (Malinen 2000).

The literature review therefore highlights key research that explicates the individual dimensions of adult learning, including the link between experience, learning and reflection; an exploration of motivation to learn and an identification of the link between learning and development.

2.4.1 Individual Dimensions of Adult Learning

2.4.1.1 Experience

The major learning theories highlight the role of experience in learning. Characteristic of their explications of experience are the properties of past, or lived experience. Malinen (2000: 61) adopts the term "first order experiences" to describe these past experiences, referring to them as the individual's "autobiographical history" that underpins the manner in which that individual apprehends and makes sense of his/her world.

1989) these first order experiences emanate from the individual's day to day life. They form a necessary part of the experiential learning equation, possessing a capacity to act as a precondition for learning, but also, in certain cases to impede learning. Dewey (1930, 1933) and van Manen (1990) stress the fundamental, primordial nature of first order experiences and highlight the issue of personal defensiveness in the exploration and identification of inadequacy of self.

2.4.1.2 Orientation to Learning and Perceived Barriers to Learning

An important question emerging from the above is the all-important dimension of individual learning – what orientates an individual to learn, or, how can an individual be motivated to learn?

Maslow (1954) provides a model of human motivation according to a hierarchy of needs, each of which needs to be satisfied in order for the individual to progress to the next level. There have been a number of adaptations to Maslow's original 5-stage hierarchy of needs, but in the original model, Maslow places biological and physiological needs at the primary level of the hierarchy, with self-actualisation, or the need for personal growth at the pinnacle of this hierarchy (Maslow 1954), as depicted in Figure 6.

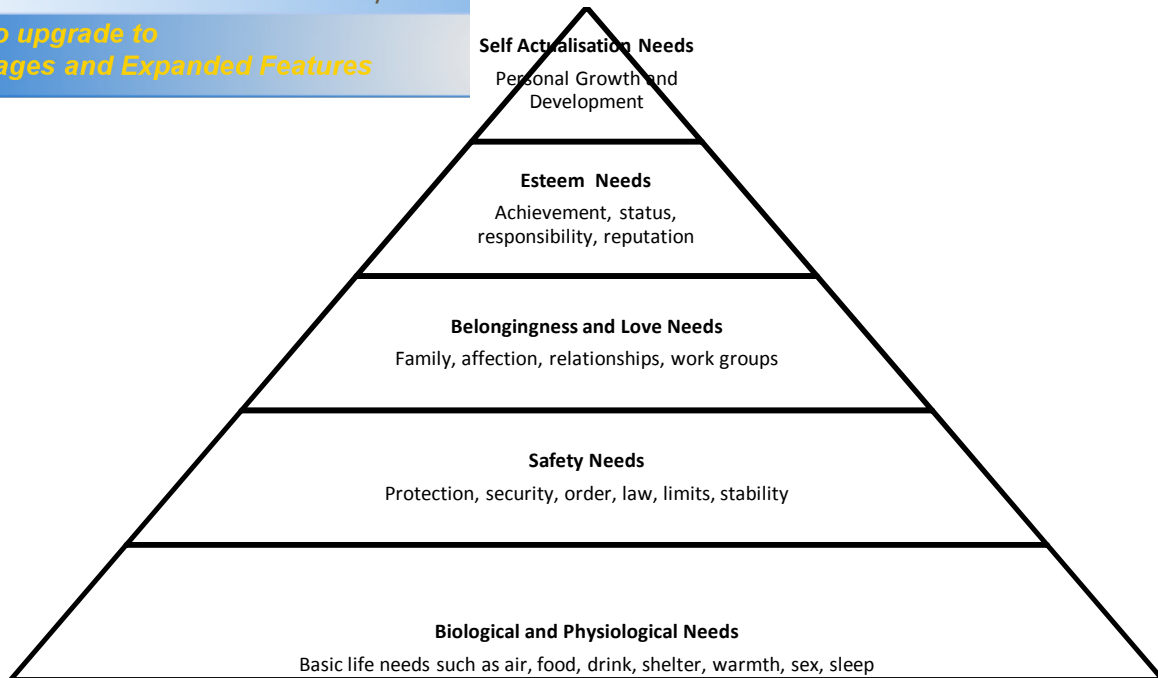


Figure 6: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954)

According to the Maslow's theory of needs (Maslow 1954) before an individual is able to progress to higher levels such as esteem and self-actualisation, which are associated with influence and development, it is necessary for that individual to satisfy lower level physical and emotional needs such as food, shelter, warmth, safety and security.

Maslow's greatest contribution to the body of theory on human motivation is his equating of self-actualisation to self-transcendence (Daniels 2001) where the self-actualised individual possesses a number of abilities including the ability to be problem-focussed, an open minded approach to life and a concern with self-development and the preparedness to undergo further cycles of growth and development in order to remain self-fulfilled (Maslow 1954). The researcher however, cautions against a rigid application of Maslow's theory of needs,

on are far more complex, requiring an approach
city.

Three of the experiential learning theorists under study, Revans (1982) Knowles (1989) and Mezirow (1991) expound the pre-programmability for learning that exists in human beings; that there exists an inner compulsion or need to learn and develop. Malinen (2000) cautions against this, citing critique by Griffin (1989), Jarvis (1987) and Wilson (1992) that pre-programmability results purely from an individual's need to remain in stasis, or equilibrium.

Malinen (2000) pronounces, instead, the transactional relationship between first and second order experiences; where commitment to learning arises directly out of that relationship and where this commitment results from the subjective value (Merriam and Clarke 1993) and personal significance that the individual attributes to that relationship (Brookfield 1988).

According to Malinen (2000) second order experience exists at the juncture of past experience and future learning and provides a critical link in the equation of learning described by the various theorists:

- Mezirow's (1991) disorienting dilemma that presents as a major challenge to an established perspective that renders the individual's previous frame of reference inadequate. The experience might be painful, problem posing and could result from a significant event such as death, divorce, employment transition or even from a discussion, a reading or cultural event. The individual is required to critically evaluate his/her frame of reference in light of the challenge and results in a redefining of the problem.

ected outcome which is incongruent with an Schonian knowing in action (Schon 1988) results in what Malinen (2000:62) describes as an "element of surprise". Kolb (1984) concurs with Schonian elements of surprise, but postulates further that it is in the transactional interplay between expectation and experience that learning occurs. Kolb (1984) echoes Mezirow's theory (1991) of the transformative nature of certain life events; be they prosaic or dramatic.

- Both Revans (1982) and Knowles (1990) refer to second order experience, whether real or simulated, in light of personal recognition of ignorance, inability or inadequacy where the individual recognizes gaps in his/her knowledge which impede progress from current to future state of being. This usually presents in the form of a problem of threatening nature, to which there exists the explicit need to find a solution.

Hanson (1972), Hamlyn (1978) and Elder (1980) expound the properties of second order experience:

- Firstly, the capacity of the second order experience to unlock the first order experience and create imbalance or in-equilibrium in an individual which challenges the protective defences of existing mental models. The individual becomes uncomfortable with his or herself, a discomfort that moves from being implicit to explicit.
- Secondly, the second order experience possesses the capacity to impact on the individual's holistic sense of being, where the explicit discomfort described above transcends to confusion, even unhappiness.

In situation described above, the individual is faced with the choice of clinging to his/her existing mental model or adapting the model through a reconstruction of

apprehends and makes sense of the world – that,
(Smith 1978 and Elder 1980).

Drawing from Smith (1987), Malinen (2000: 66) concludes that the personal significance that the individual attributes to any experiential relationship is dependent on receptivity, or the individual's ability to experience. Whilst every second order experience presents the learner with a set of learning possibilities, the actual learning is dependent on a force that is internally located within the learner, that being his/her potential to commit to the process – receptivity. Receptivity is affected by social, cultural and personal contexts, resulting in individual discrepancies in educative and mis-educative experiences. The ideal precondition for learning would consist of a situation wherein first order experiences, second order experience and receptivity are in optimal balance (Malinen 2000).

Lawrence (1989) cites the specific choice of problem as a primary success factor in learning, more specifically as this pertains to action learning. Achieving an optimal balance between experiences that are either too congruent or too incongruent to individual meaning schemes and meaning perspectives is essential for the facilitation of appropriate significance, learning and development (Merriam 1991). The researcher draws from Malinen (2000), Knowles (1984) and Lawrence (1989) and raises the question of whether second order experiences can be arranged or manipulated in order to elicit personal significance, hence the role of the educator or facilitator in effecting experiential learning.

Merriam (1991) equates learning and development with change, where experience acts as a catalyst for a process of meaning making from which derives the learning and development. Life is characterized by flux and this requires the individual to continuously learn and develop in order to adapt to variance between expectations and outcomes and changing responsibilities. Thus, meaning making, in both personal and professional life, is linked to learning and development (Restine 1997).

The active component of comprehension and cognition is emphasized and further extended by Restine (1997). Merely possessing experience is not a sufficient pre-condition for learning and development. Rather, it is through the process meaning making, wherein the individual makes iterative and interactive connections between experience, reflection and interpretation of experience that learning and development emerges.

Restine (1997) sites reflection as the most important androgogic methodology in learning and development. In articulating an action or experience in words via post action reflection the individual is able to tap into subconscious behavioural patterns, thereby eliciting an understanding of complex experiences of a world where ambiguity, uncertainty and unpredictability prevail. Reflection aids deep learning through the use of cognition to extrapolate meaning from experience, which then acts as a guide for future action. Caple and Martin (1994: 18) equate this with the analogy of reflection as the "motor" that drives the learning cycle; compelling learners to go through the comprehensive processes implicit in each stage of the Kolb learning model (1984).

importance of meaning making in light of an
that which the individual learns in the way of
knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and
dealing effectively with situations which follow. The process goes on as life and
learning continued (Dewey 1938: 46).

Kohlberg (1973), Argyris and Schon (1974, 1978 and 1981) and Gilligan (1982)
explore the link between development and the dialectic between thought and
actions, between theory in use and theory in action. Loevinger (1976) draws on
this thinking, emphasising the active component in learning and development.
For Loevinger, development derives from an active environmental exchange, in
which individuals construct meanings and aim for competence, particularly in
situations where the sets of assumptions and prevailing mental models of the
individual are challenged, again emphasizing the dialectic nature of this process
(Loevinger, 1976).

Kegan (1982) provides a constructivist proposal for adult development where the
adult learner seeks to make meaning out of the dynamics of stability, instability
and rebalance. Merriam and Caffarella (1991) refer to the impact of social roles
and socialization, expectations and beliefs, the symbolic nature of the
environment and cross cultural perspectives in development. They, too,
emphasise the interactive, sociologically constructionist nature of development,
where each experience is developmentally different, according to the socio-
cultural, environmental and personal significance or insignificance that the
individual constructs from that experience. Because meaning making is
qualitative and thus subjective, it may also be ambiguous, as Reissman (1993:
15) emphasizes: "Meaning is ambiguous because it arises out of a process of
interaction between people: self, teller, listener, recorder, analyst and
reader – our narratives and others – narratives are our worldly creations"

Boud et al (1985), Hart and Bredeson (1996) and Resnick (1987) cite opportunities to participate in cycles of deliberate professional learning as a necessary precondition for adult learning and development. These cycles continue to function over time until the individual has achieved (or discarded) all of his/her goals.

2.4.1.4 Mental Models and Theory of Learning

Winch & Ingram concur with Henderson (1993) and Korth (2000) in their support for Argyris and Schon's Theory of Action Science (1974, 1978). Argyris and Schon (1978) expound three levels of learning. These levels are single-loop learning associated with adaptive, incremental behaviour changes – equated with efficiency. The behaviour associated with double-loop learning is a questioning of assumptions and a challenging of previously held norms. It is evaluative and thus equated with effectiveness. Deutero learning is awareness of how the individual engages in single- and double-loop learning.

Fiol and Lyles (1985: 4), further, equate the causal paradigm of the responsive adaptations of individuals as described by single-loop learning as routine or 'low-level learning' and that of double-loop learning to 'high-level learning'. They emphasise the importance of changing mental models within the high-level learning paradigm.

	BEHAVIOUR
Single Loop (Low Level)	Adaptive, Incremental →efficiency
Double Loop (High level)	Questioning, challenging of norms →effectiveness
Deutero	Awareness of the type of learning

Table 1: Three levels of Learning
[Adapted from Argyris and Schon (1978) and Fiol and Lyles (1985)]

Characteristic of double loop-learning is the action of the individual; where the individual acts as an organisational agent in effecting change on that organisation. Argyris and Schon (1974, 1978) define this as true organisational learning. A perspective on the barriers to double-loop learning is provided by the authors who purport that this is caused by a lack of personal awareness that results in a 'disparity between intention and actions' which is further exacerbated by defensiveness and patterns of behaviour reinforcement. They further propose that if one can assist 'individuals to unfreeze and alter their theories of action' then the individuals 'acting as agents of the organisation, will be able to unfreeze the organisational learning system' (Argyris and Schon 1978:4).

Senge (1990: 8) provides an explanation for the above in light of the particular mental models prevailing in the individual - the often unconscious cognitive structures or 'deeply ingrained assumptions, generalisations or images that influence the way we view the world and take action'. Organisations and the individuals within the organisations fail to take up new opportunities and reject out of date, clearly ineffective management models and practices because such action conflicts with their strongly defended mental models. Knowles (1990) explains that the more experience an individual assimilates, the greater the

ould acquire certain mental habits, biases and use him to close his mind to new ideas, fresh perceptions and alternative ways of thinking (Knowles 1990: 59).

For Senge (1990), an organisation's learning is critically dependent on the individual learning that takes place within that particular organisation. One can create or facilitate a form of breakthrough learning if one is able to manage mental models by exposing them, questioning and evaluating the assumptions that underpin them and then improving them. Senge (1990) relates this breakthrough learning to a development of personal mastery, described as a purposeful growth of self, where there is a continuous clarification of presenting realities, a true sense of vision and an understanding of what is needed with respect to skills, knowledge and competence in order to be able to cope effectively with change and complexity in a management of mental models. He asserts that the most important learning emerges from direct experience, through taking action, observing the consequences of that action and then taking on different actions.

Concurring with Argyris and Schon (1978), Senge (1990) recommends the adoption of a process of reflection and inquiry to manage mental models, where reflection allows for a slowing down of thinking in order to facilitate the development of self-awareness. This process moves to an optimum level of reflection in action or the ability to reflect on one's thinking while acting.

Implicit in Argyris and Schon's Theory of Action Science (1978), Senge's (1990) management of mental models and academic research on experiential learning pedagogy (Revans 1982 and Mezirow 1991) is the concept of individual transformation that results from the experiential learning processes.

The experiential learning models of Kolb (1984) and Honey and Mumford (1982, 1983 and 1992) are reviewed and then contrasted against that of Revans (1982), whose experiential learning model digresses from the former two, placing singular emphasis on the importance of action learning as the most appropriate model for adult learning.

2.5.1 Kolb's Experiential Learning Model

Kolb's experiential learning cycle provides for a model of adult learning that supports first hand learning experience, as opposed to the more traditional modes of learning where learning is derived from a second-hand derivation of another's learning experience. In this model, effective future action is directed through a process described by Maturana and Varela (1987: 245) as one where the individual brings forth his/her world, with emphasis on the fact that the "world that everyone sees is not the world, but a world that we bring forth with others" (by doing in that world).

Winch and Ingram (2004) recommend the use of the Kolb Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb 1984) to explain the learning process, as represented previously in Figure 5. This learning cycle incorporates two dialectic modes of grasping experience, namely concrete experience and abstract conceptualisation (represented by 1 and 3 in Figure 5) and two dialectic modes of transforming experience, namely reflective observation and active experimentation (2 and 4 in Figure 5).

In any given situation, an individual chooses to adopt a particular mode of apprehending an experience: through the use of tangible, concrete reality,

abstract or conceptual, through experimentation ï participant observation and reflection. Lewis and Margerison (1979) refer to these dimensions as those of cognitive growth and learning, reflected in the framework of cognitive psychology.

2.5.1.1 Learning Styles and Experiential Learning

It is the individual's ingrained learning style that determines the preferred mode of choice, described by Kolb, Rubin and McKintyre (1971) as diverging, assimilating, converging or accommodating. The dominant learning modes evidenced by the four learning styles are described as:

- Divergers prefer to learn through concrete experience and reflective observation, where they are able to critically assess a given situation from a number of differing points of view. Divergers have been described as emotional, imaginative, literary or artistic. They enjoy working in groups, but prefer to receive personal feedback;
- Assimilators prefer abstract conceptualisation and reflective observation where they are required to synthesize a vast amount of information into a concise, logical format, preferably within analytical or theoretical models. Scientists and academics would be strongly representative of this style;
- Convergers are practical problem solvers, with a preference for solving technical, as opposed to personal problems. They display strong abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation styles, wherein they can make use of technology to assist them;
- The Accommodators evidence concrete experience and active experimentation as dominant learning styles. They enjoy learning from experience, where there is a focus on interpersonal relationships as a

al solutions. They are intuitive, oriented towards appropriate, rather than being directed by cautious judgement. They are by nature collaborative and enjoy working in problem solving teams. Adapted from Kolb (1984, 1999a and 1999b) and Tennant (1997).

In turn, these learning styles are influenced by a number of factors which include personality type, early educational specialisation, profession, current work function and role and the individual’s adaptive competence.

Jung’s Theory of Personality (1933, 1971) largely influenced the thinking on personality type, which is evident in the MBTI or Myers Briggs Type Indicator which was developed by Myers- Briggs (1962, 1975). The MBTI is an instrument that examines a respondent’s preferred manner of interacting with the environment and classifies people accordingly i how people relate to their external world; how they take in information; how they prefer to make decisions and their general approach to performing tasks.

An individual’s MBTI profile is made up of four letters that are chosen from the following pairs of opposite approaches to interacting with the surrounding environment:

Letter Type	Approach to Interaction with Environment
Extravert (E) vs. Introvert (I)	Direction of processes in an inward or outward manner
Sensing type (S) vs. Intuitive type (N)	Acquisition of information
Thinking type (T) vs. Feeling type (F)	Absorption of information
Judging type (J) vs. Perceiving type (P)	Decision making based on information acquired and absorbed

Table 2: MBTI and approach to environmental interaction

(1975) and Lewis and Margerison (1979)]

According to Randolph and Blackburn (1989), MBTI preference is strongly correlated to learning preference, which was previously elucidated by Kolb (1976) and Lewis and Margerison (1979), who discovered a number of correlations between the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory (Kolb, Rubin and McKintyre 1971) and the MBTI. Kolb (1976) found a strong link between learners who preferred learning from concrete experience and those who would use sensing as a mode of information acquisition and feeling as a preference for absorption and decision making; whereas those who preferred intuition and thinking, rather than feeling, would be characterised by the abstract conceptualiser. Active experimenters would prefer to direct their learning processes outward, or externally, whereas reflective observers would be more introverted and inclined to use intuition rather than sensing as a preferred manner of acquiring information on which to base decisions.

According to Merrill (2002), whilst not the primary component of instructional strategy, learning style is nevertheless an important consideration in the selection of instructional style and appropriate contextual learning parameters. Further, Riding (1997), Kay (1997), Sadler-Smith and Riding (1999), Robotham (1999), Felder and Spurlin (2000) and Bull (2004) advise experiential learning instructors to give learners insight into their own learning preferences and learning styles and highlight their potential strengths and weaknesses.

2.5.1.2 Critique of the Kolb Model

Boud et al (1983) have reservations about the Kolb model. Although they agree with its usefulness in arranging and scheduling learning activities, they critique its neglect of the importance of reflection in learning. Jarvis (1987) and Tennant (1997) question the empirical rigour of the model, on the basis of an initial research base that was very small and, further, that there has been very little

Tennant (1997) is concerned with the contextual referring to the contexts such as information assimilation and memorization where the Kolb model cannot be applied.

Both Anderson (1988) and Tennant (1997) are deeply critical of the model's cultural relevance, substantiating their criticism on what they describe as a Western model's inability to address the variance in both cognitive and communications styles amongst different cultures. According to Dewey (1925: 40), "experience is already overlaid and saturated with the products of the reflection of past generations and by-gone ages. It is filled with interpretations, classifications, due to sophisticated thought, which have become incorporated into what seems to be fresh naïve empirical material. It would take more wisdom than is possessed by the wisest historical scholar to track all of these absorbed borrowings to their original sources". The researcher concurs with Anderson (1988), Tennant (1997) and Dewey (1925) and further asserts that if learning is situated in an environmental context, to ignore the cultural and environmental specifics would have a direct effect on the applicability of the model.

Miettinen (2000) is concerned by the model's eclecticism and epistemological inadequacy; firstly because it does not provide an epistemological concept for the phenomenon of immediate personal experience that forms the fulcrum point of the entire model upon which reflection, abstraction and experimentation are based. Further, Miettinen is critical of the model's inability to integrate the various phases in the cycle (Miettinen 2000). He asserts that although Kolb provides for a dialectic tension between adaptive modes (Kolb, 1984), instead of resolving the dialectic through explicating on the intertwined interrelatedness of the dialectics and emphasising the determination of one dialectic through the other, he explains this complexity by merely incorporating these dialectics as separate phases within the model.

the Kolb model for its inability to grasp the more knowledge and learning. The essence of knowledge is not explored in particular depth; instead, it focuses more on the production of knowledge through grasping experience and transforming it (Kolb, 1984: 41). The model is therefore unable to address and explain issues such as non-response and non-learning.

However, the Kolb model of experiential learning is not without merit. Sugarman (1985) provides a rationale for the adoption of the Kolb model as a basis for career planning, workshops, skills training and development and structured or contrived group experiences whereby the inherent logic of the learning cycle provides a conceptual model for teaching and counselling. She asserts that imparting an understanding of the Kolb framework to students imbues them with a greater empathy for those who are different from them (who have different learning styles) and also provides them with a deeper insight into the learning process as a totality. It allows them to understand their own learning preferences, but also provides them with feedback on the areas to which they could apply more focus and thus improve their capacity to grow and learn. This demystifies learning and makes it more accessible to the learner. Sugarman (1985) further extends the appropriateness of the Kolb model to a counselling context, where the model provides the counsellor with a logical framework for designing suitable interventions, particularly where an element of coaching is involved.

2.5.2 Honey and Mumford's Experiential Learning Model

Honey and Mumford (1982, 1983, and 1992) also present a cyclical model of experiential learning that is based on particular learning styles, where the styles represent preferred modes of learning. According to Sugarman (1985), Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ), on which their learning model is based, is more concrete and has greater credibility and face validity because it is based on statements that pertain to human behaviour as opposed

Derived from and mirroring the Kolb model, the styles are defined and depicted through behaviour as:

- **Activist** - having an experience; thriving on the new and unknown, shying away from repetition and routine; characterised by learners who are outgoing, open minded, enthusiastic, typically not risk averse. They do not enjoy learning from reading or from a formalised lecture room, preferring to be thrown into new situations that require them to try out new behaviours;
- **Reflector** - reviewing the experience in a multi-perspective manner; characterised by those who are highly analytical, cautious, observant, appearing removed or distant at times, who prefer to acquire as much information as possible and then to reach a conclusion through the assimilation and analysis of a number of different perspectives. They prefer not to be rushed into a decision and might be uncomfortable in learning situations that have a tight time-line or deadline;
- **Theorist** - integration and deriving theories concluded from experience; characterised by those who are very logical, rational, systematic, who prefer to use a step by step or linear decision making process, where processes are clear, unambiguous. They are the model builders, model adaptors or model implementers. They prefer to remain unemotional, concerned with assimilation and integration of data, rather than with the personal components of a task. Theorists demonstrate discomfort with ambiguous unstructured environments, where they are not given the rational facts on which to base their logical, intellectual decisions.

the next stage in the cycle; concerned with experimentation and practice of new ideas or theories in a positive manner; characterised by learners who are keen to act in the here and now who are practical, hands-on types, not easily intimidated by new challenges. They enjoy working where there are sufficient opportunities for them to try out new ideas or theories in situations that they view as immediate and relevant and where the benefit of experimentation is quite clearly demonstrated.

Adapted from Honey and Mumford (1992)

Honey and Mumford (1983) emphasize that in order to learn from experience an individual is required to move through a process of experience, review and conclusion and subsequent action on the conclusion/s drawn and thus maintain that effective learning derives from moving through all stages in the learning cycle. However, they remain cognisant of the fact that it is not appropriate to become sequentially bound: due to the selection of preferred learning modes, people prefer to spend more time in certain stages of the cycle, sometimes, even, to the disregard and detriment of others. This is presented as a possible obstacle to learning.

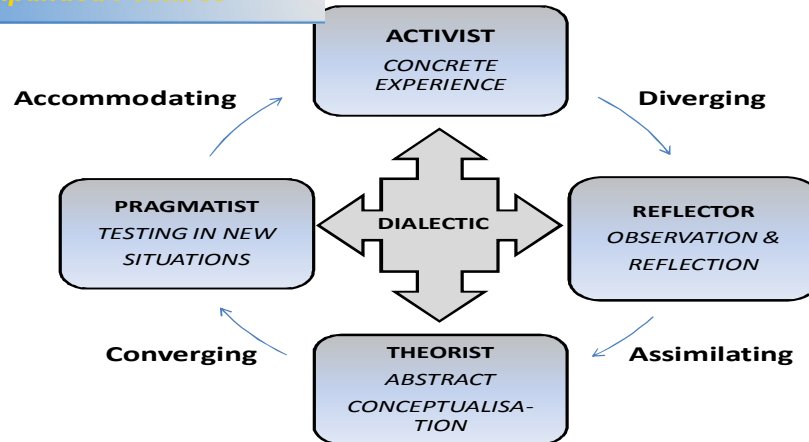


Figure 7: An integrated model of experiential learning [Incorporating Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984); Kolb, Rubin and McKintyre's Learning Styles Framework (1971) and the Honey and Mumford Model of Experiential Learning (1992). Adapted by Drobis (2010)]

2.5.2.1 Revans' Model of Action Learning

Revans's model of experiential learning extends the concept of experiential learning provided by Domask (2007:2) where experiential learning is described as "learning by doing". In his model of action learning, Revans includes experiential learning as a component of the action learning process, whereby learning is a function of action (Revans 1982), where the task environment (the environment where a problem is solved) is the classroom and the task (problem) the learning vehicle. Therefore, in any action learning context, an experiential learning model will be adopted to manage a problem that is surfaced by a learner within a small group of learners, or "set" (Smith and O'Neil 2003).

Further, Revans provides an equation to describe the relationship between variables in the equation (Revans 1982). The relational equation is represented as $L = P + Q$, where L is the learning that derives from the action learning

Learning gained from authorities on a subject and Q
 is from an individual's questioning of his or her
 direct experience (Revans 1982 and Smith & O'Neil 2003).

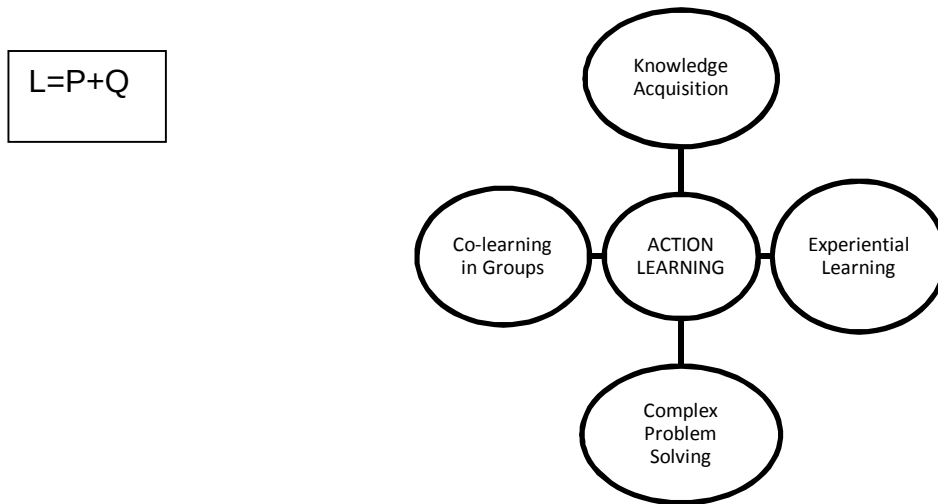


**Figure 8: The components of action learning
 [Revans 1982 and Smith and O'Neil 2003]**

Action learning incorporates a number of aspects:

- the presentation of real problems that relate to workplace problems experienced by the participants which are solved in real time;
- working together in small collaborative groups referred to as sets, who meet on an ongoing basis during the action learning project;
- the process is based on the learning model proposed by Revans that incorporates the progressive stages of:
 survey→hypothesis→experimentation→audit→review;
- in action learning, the learner builds upon his/her previous learning to use more effectively what he already has, and to reinterpret the experiences of yesterday in the light of tomorrow (Revans 1982: 633).

The value of action learning lies in its ability to encourage questioning and reflection on complex, ambiguous problems, where obvious solutions do not

ility for the choice of appropriate solutions and and is therefore aligned to Rogers (1969) and Knowles (1975) theories of self-directed learning. It is therefore a useful model of management education for the management of complexity that is faced by 21st century managers and leaders.

The researcher asserts that due to the lack of an appropriate work context for the generation of problems, Revans's action learning model would not be an appropriate experiential approach for MBA students in full time MBA programmes. However, it would certainly have value if applied in part time or executive MBA programmes, as these learners are situated in working environments that provide the impetus for the diagnosis of suitable problems for the action learning process. The researcher asserts that this could present as the optimal experiential learning application, supporting Mintzberg (2004: 262 - 264) on the value of 'experienced reflection'. Through experienced reflection, management students apply their learning in order to make their organisations more effective ('action impact'), but moreover they become teachers within their own organisations, as they coach, mentor and develop their subordinates ('teaching impact').

2.6 Conclusion

In an attempt to search for the essence of one of the central phenomena in adult education, namely adult experiential learning, the researcher undertook an extensive review of the literature pertaining to the phenomenon of adult experiential learning. She concurs with Boud (1990), Weil and McGill (1990b), Edwards (1994), Criticos (1996b) and Malinen (2000:15) in their view that the phenomenon of adult experiential learning is ambiguous, understood by some as a framework or paradigm of adult education; by others as a teaching technique.

one researcher with an extensive exposure to the of experiential learning and a set of appropriate standards for best practice in facilitating experiential learning, but was unable to provide a universally generalisable, all embracing theory of adult experiential learning.

Variance in both cognitive and communication styles; mode of preferred functioning according to learning styles and personality type; cultural diversity; the learning context; learning defensiveness and non-learning are not sufficiently addressed by theory. The major experiential learning theorists have been criticized by Boud, Cohen and Walker (1993), Nelson (1994) and Barnett (1996) for placing too much emphasis on the rational dimensions of experiential learning, to the detriment of the non-rational; resulting in a contradiction of the primary intent of experiential learning, namely that it should remain cognisant of and sensitive to the inner world of the learner.

Above all, the learning theories and models that were researched were unable to address the question of what it means to the learner when he or she participates in an experiential learning process and thus raises a significant challenge for the educators and tertiary institutions. Patel (2003) equates this challenge with the ontological questions of what it means to be an individual in the world and how the individual relates to the world around him/her. He describes experiential learning as phenomenological.

The above provided the rationale for undertaking a qualitative, instead of quantitative, study, which the vast literature review might have implied. In this case, phenomenography, which derives from phenomenology, was deemed to be the most appropriate methodology and method for researching the lived experience of the respondents, in order to explore and obtain a greater understanding of the phenomenon of experiential learning and the meaning that individuals ascribed to that phenomenon.

This research study examines the phenomenon of experiential learning within a specific MBA context. Its intention is to discover the meaning ascribed to the individual's lived experience within the experiential learning context of the MBA Negotiation Elective.

Research Question: What do students experience in the MBA Negotiation Elective and how do they experience the phenomenon of experiential learning within the Negotiation Elective of the Wits Business School MBA programme?

The single interview question derives from the above:

“Tell me about your experience in the Negotiation elective, with particular reference to your learning and development”.

3.1 Framework: From Phenomenology to Phenomenography

Deriving from the researcher's acknowledgement that the open ended research question and narrative descriptions that derived from that question would contain qualitatively different understandings, apprehensions, conceptions and perceptions of lived experience referred to by Marton (1981, 1992), Tesch (1990), Marton and Booth (1997), Järvinen (1999) and Trigwell (2000), the methodology proposed for this study was phenomenography, the philosophical principles of which derive from the phenomenological framework.

In a phenomenological study the researcher investigates the essence of lived experience in an order to elicit the multiple interpretations of reality that exist amongst individuals, thereby deriving an understanding of common experience (Racher, Robinson, Caelli and Romyn 2003). Through the study of lived experience descriptions the researcher is able to discover common experiential themes and enhance an *fraction sensitive understanding* (van Manen 1990: 124).

Phenomenography, however, focuses on investigating and capturing a limited number of qualitatively different understandings, apprehensions, conceptions and perceptions of lived experience (Marton 1981 and 1992, Tesch 1990, Marton and Booth 1997, Järvinen 1999 and Trigwell, 2000).

Bowden and Marton (1998:7) emphasise the importance of variance in learning: *“To discern an aspect is to differentiate among the various aspects and focus on the one most relevant to the situation. Without variation there is not discernment. We do not think in a conscious way about breathing until we get a virus or walk into a smoke filled room. Learning in terms of changes in or widening in our ways of seeing the world can be understood in terms of discernment, simultaneity and variation. Thanks to the variation, we experience and discern critical aspects*

we have to handle and, to the extent that these simultaneously, a pattern emerges. Thanks to having experienced a varying past we become capable of handling a varying future.

The philosophical principles that underpin Phenomenography are:

Firstly, that it provides the researcher with a second-order perspective, oriented towards an individual's interaction with the world and the qualitative conceptions that arise from this interaction (Marton and Booth 1997 and Trigwell 2000). It is thus both qualitative and interpretative, involving both the identification of differing conceptions of a phenomenon and the search for the underlying meanings and relationships between the conceptions (Entwhistle 1997).

The second principle that governs this framework is that the individual conceptions arise out of a transactional interaction between the individual and the environment, or external world, and are thus contextual and relational, or, non dualist (Svensson 1997 and Trigwell 2000).

Brentano (1874, translated in 1995) provides the third principle of phenomenography, namely, intentionality, or the manner in which mental acts are directed. Marton and Booth (1997) offer a rationale for this directedness, which is to be understood in light of the actual thought object and the quality of the conception process. This brings about a value based understanding of qualitative differences - ranging from partial or comprehensive conceptions of experience.

The fourth principle underpinning Phenomenography is the need to relate the individual conceptions of experience to the collective or common conceptions of a particular phenomenon, derived from traditional phenomenological method.

ssed in language, where language provides the
action thereto associated, the fifth principle of

Phenomenography provides for language as the necessary communication modality of Phenomenography (Ahonen 1994, Säljö 1994 and Isomäki 2002). Differing experiences are expressed through language. The researcher was thus able to access the experiences via this modality of expression, in light of the hierarchical categories of description which is called the outcome space of the phenomenon (Marton 1992).

Taking into account the principles of both Phenomenology and Phenomenography and the intertwined nature of the methodologies, the researcher undertook the following:

The proposed study utilised a phenomenological narrative approach informed by the traditional hermeneutic phenomenological approach, as described by van Manen (1990). However, given the pre-determined MBA context, the method and analysis was informed primarily by the American phenomenological approach, with its focus on contextual meaning, as opposed to the more traditional phenomenological approach that searches for universal meaning of lived experience (Caelli 2000, 2001). Findings were cross analysed and then contrasted to the literature.

An exploratory approach to the research methodology was deemed to be the most appropriate, given the research problem and the rationale for the research study: the meaning ascribed to the individual's experience of experiential learning within a given MBA context.

In his research of lived experience, van Manen (1990) states the aim of phenomenological methodology as the 'transformation of lived expression into a textual expression of its essence' (van Manen 1990: 36). Through the use of reflective diaries, journals or logs, the individual becomes 'animated by his or her

formed consciousness (van Manen 1990: 124).

the application of reflective practice, Allan (1998)

further asserts that the individual is thereby enabled to discover previously unseen relationships in themes - and inform future action.

Concurring with the above and further supported by Wagner (2002), who highlights the effectiveness of narrative research in establishing the interconnectedness of stories where the narrative informs the entire research process the data collection consisted of a series of intensive interviews wherein the co-researchers provided a narrative description of their experience, or personal storytelling, leading directly from a single, open ended question. The qualitative narratives formed the crux of the proposed research study and took precedence over research technique or method.

Data analysis was affected by means of transcription and written construction of narratives, immersion and reflection on the narratives and subsequent patterning to elicit both the convergence and the differences, or variances, in the way that individuals experience the phenomenon under study. The study incorporated dual data analyses of multiple participant interviews and from personal reflection undertaken by the researcher. As per Marton (1992) and Entwistle (1997) the outcome space corresponding to the varying understandings and conceptions of the phenomenon and the inter-relationships between them constituted the study results.

An iterative and cumulative process was anticipated with validation of findings effected through means of feedback provided by research subjects. The findings were then reported in a qualitative narrative, as per the phenomenological approach.

Steenевeldt (2004: 16) describes five processes outlined by Sanders (1982) and Priest (2002) that underpin the strategy of phenomenological research:

- I. Intentionality: the process whereby the mind consciously analyses the meaning of the phenomenon and the mode of experiencing the phenomenon.
- II. Epoché (bracketing): the process whereby the researcher suspends judgement, commonly held beliefs, pre-suppositions and assumptions, thereby maintaining an open mind to the experiences of the co-researcher. When undertaking a phenomenological study, Racher et al (2003) concur with Merleau-Ponty (2004) on the need for inquiry where the researcher is compelled to suspend any previously held assumptions arising from a system of beliefs, habit, experience, or from any body of knowledge or theory.
- III. Eidetic Reduction: process of generating information from the interview; this involves asking questions in order to explore all possible meanings of the data utilising intuition and reflection.
- IV. Description: this follows Eidetic Reduction if the phenomenon is described.
- V. Essence: the final process whereby the essence of the phenomenon is uncovered through reduction and description and is an iterative process.

The researcher adopted the first four processes of the above strategy for the dual data collection and analyses of multiple participant interviews and personal reflection and journaling undertaken by the researcher. The researcher adopted the mode of *epoché* in order to uphold a reliable and valid application of the phenomenological methodology.

d the evolving nature of phenomenological and consistent with the emerging design explicated

by Cresswell (2003).

In accordance with phenomemographic research principles, the researcher did not merely describe the phenomenon, but sought to understand the convergences and variances in meaning and the inter-relationships occurring hierarchically within the outcome space of the phenomenon under study. By so doing, the researcher diverged from conventional phenomenological method.

3.3 The Role of the Researcher

Phenomenological and phenomenographic research is fundamentally interpretative and, therefore, the researcher included a section (below) explicitly stating her assumptions, biases, values and specific interest in the research area. She further addressed the fundamental ethical issues pertaining to phenomenographic research in the following section (Section 4).

3.3.1 Background, Biases and Relationship with Co-Researchers

The researcher is currently employed as the Head of Career Advisory by the Wits Business School, University of the Witwatersrand. The sample was drawn from participants in the Master of Business Administration programme at the university.

A function of the researcher's position is to consult with students on their career strategy and career management. Through the personal insights gained during consultations, the researcher developed deep interest in the areas of self-management, including career management, and the personal transformation resulting from enhanced self-knowledge. A growing desire to study the manner

knowledge, as well as the need to understand
phenomenon of learning within a particular context,

directed the researcher's rationale for this study.

In preparation for the intended study, the researcher attended the MBA Negotiations elective, as participant observer. The Negotiations elective is taught over a 9-week period consisting of one lecture per week or as a four day intensive period, as per the personal preference of the lecturer, Dr Geoffry Heald (Heald 2007). The Negotiations elective is structured to include theory, taught in the format of leadership discussion which Domask (2007) describes as an experiential learning activity. Experiential learning is incorporated into the programme via a number of experiential games, as well as three simulated negotiations, facilitated by Dr Heald. All students are required to keep a daily learning journal, detailing both external and internal reflections, as per Varner & Peck (2003). Feedback is given to the students on a daily basis, although marks are awarded for the cumulative learning journal handed in at the final lecture; this forms 50% of the marks allocated for the course.

The intent of the researcher's participation was to observe the experiential learning and interact with students regarding any career issues arising out of their participation in and reflections on the course. The nature and purpose of attendance was made explicit to the students and permission for the researcher's participation was obtained at the outset of the course. The interactions with students emerging from this participation mirrored the conversations held during previous career consultations, wherein students had highlighted their growing self-insight and personal transformation. This informed the researcher of the possible link between pedagogy and personal learning and provided further impetus for the study.

The researcher was aware of this bias, but mitigated this through *epoché*, as per Sanders (1982) and Priest (2002). Subjectivity, therefore, was not a barrier to

the student's experience. Instead the researcher process of uncovering the essence of the phenomena through intentionality.

Hall and Callery (2001: 269) and Caelli (2001) provide support for van Manen (1990) on the transformative potential of phenomenological methodology, a result of the "symbolic interactionism" between researcher and co-researcher. Although non transformative in agenda, the phenomenological process gives rise to an increase in self-awareness and may thus induce change via increased self-awareness in both researcher and co-researcher.

The researcher made explicit the personal interaction between researcher and co-researcher and the effect that a power imbalance between the researcher and co-researcher might have on results, where institutional and professional advisory power is vested in the researcher. From the outset, the researcher established an equitable relationship in order to maintain the validity of the findings. In order to circumvent power imbalance, research subjects were chosen from a sample of students that has already completed the MBA programme. Confidentiality and research integrity were upheld throughout the process.

The researcher also made explicit the effect of ongoing interaction with a research subject, where ensuing and cumulative interaction could result in the researcher projecting feelings, beliefs or assumptions onto the research subject and vice versa. As per Hall and Callery (2001), the quality of findings could be influenced by this interaction because data produced emerges from an interactive, rather than individual, creation of meaning. In mitigation of this bias, the researcher incorporated reflexivity (Hall and Callery, 2001) into the data collection and analyses, thereby maintaining critical sensitivity to the researcher's potential effect on the research process.

The research sample was a purposive sample of eight co-researchers, or research subjects, drawn from the MBA Negotiation elective course at Wits Business School, University of the Witwatersrand. The subjects were chosen where credibility already existed between researcher and co-researcher. In order to limit the ethical issue of either institutional or personal relationship power bias, the sample was chosen from students who had already completed their MBA and thus did not feel any sense of obligation to participate in the study.

An original sample of four respondents was recommended to be sufficient by the research supervisor, however the researcher increased this sample to eight, in order to counter against interviews that delivered insufficient data; whilst being aware that the by its very nature, the phenomenon of insufficiency of information provided by the interviewee would still generate a number of insights for the researcher.

Participation was pre-empted by a formal covering letter (on the University letterhead) that addressed the co-researchers, introduced the researcher and provided a brief outline of the intended research study, including the aims thereof and the research process. Once participation was confirmed, further contact was maintained via telephonic or email correspondence.

Participants were ensured of confidentiality throughout the entire process. Given the personal nature of the interview process and the need to maintain confidentiality of the respondents, the respondents were referred to by the first initial (and in the case of duplication, first and second) of their forenames (Ni, R, N G, K, T, D, E).

The researcher allowed the co-researchers to select an appropriate venue for the interview site, where confidentiality and silence could be maintained; in order to

and detract from the focus and commitment of both and also to assure that the researchers felt comfortable in their interviewing environment.

3.5 Data Collection Protocol

The researcher obtained permission from the co-researchers to tape the interview, as primary method of data collection. In addition, the researcher took notes throughout the interview. This served as a contingency measure in case of equipment failure, but also served to note behavioural observations, specific emphases and insights presenting during the interview.

Phenomenology, and consequently, phenomenography, is the study of the respondents' experience pre-reflectively (Giorgi 1985, van Manen 1990 and Caelli, 2001). Because the researcher did not want to intrude upon the participants' pre-reflective world or clutter the process with too many questions she decided to utilize a single open ended interview question for this study (Heald 2007). The researcher was supportive, but exercised discipline in remaining silent throughout the interviews, allowing the respondents to manage the complexities inherent in answering a single open-ended question. However, in order to maintain the momentum of the narrative, the researcher maintained an open mind during the interview and applied necessary judgement in keeping the narrative focused on the research problem and the research question. At times this necessitated posing an additional question in order to clarify a respondent's words.

The voice recordings were transcribed into a narrative, which was presented to the respondents by electronic mail for confirmation and comment.

The researcher then produced a narrative description of the experiences, or personal storytelling, leading directly from the single, open ended question.

the subject's personal narrative deriving from a
The interview was recorded verbatim and then

transcribed, post interview, by the researcher. Following that, a process of validation was conducted. The transcription was sent to the co-researcher for verification in order to ensure that it accurately reflected the experience as described in the narrative.

To augment the process, the researcher kept notes in which issues not captured in the transcript (non-verbal cues, voice, tone, tension, emphasis and nuances) as well as an interpretation of and reflection on the events were detailed.

The researcher also obtained details of each student's research dissertation; title and the methodology (qualitative or quantitative) applied in the research study in order to shed light on the research findings. This was only obtained at the conclusion of all transcription and initial data analysis in order to mitigate against subjectivity which might have impacted on the interview, transcription and initial analytical process. Where reference has been made to the respondent's research dissertation, this has been referred to in general terms only, in order to protect the participants' anonymity.

3.5.1 Sequencing of Interviews

The interview cycle moves through the stages of interview, analysis, and thematic display, written account and culminates in the co-researcher validation. In order to apply the lessons from the prior cycle to the next interview cycle, the interviews were carried out in sequence rather than parallel, as per Steeneveldt (2004).

Because sequencing of interviews is dependent on availability of co-researchers, the researcher had to closely manage the process in order to ensure the continued participation of co-researchers and to prevent delays in data collection

negatively impacted the study. This proved difficult as participants were no longer on campus and the interview schedule had to be organised contiguously with busy work schedules of both the researcher and respondents.

3.6 The Interview Question

The interview process was driven by a single open ended question, that being:

“Tell me about your experience in the Negotiation elective, with particular reference to your learning and development”.

3.7 Data Analysis

At each stage of the process significant statements emerging from the transcribed data were analysed in order to generate meaning units from which a description of the essence of the experience was developed, as per Creswell (2003). In so doing, a number of themes emerged, described by van Manen as an *“element, motif, formula or device”* which occurs frequently in the narrative text (van Manen 1990: 78-79). According to van Manen (1990: 87-88), the theme captures the form of the phenomenon which the researcher is trying to understand and therefore represents *“the experience of focus, of meaning, of point”*

Each stage during the transcription, reduction and description process was directed by the narrative properties described by Wagner (2002: 423) namely, the sequential order of events, voice, agency and intentionality, managing departures from the canonical and factual indifference, as these properties aid in eliciting the meaning ascribed to subjective experience. Dedicated attentiveness to the entire narrative was required throughout the process, accompanied by extensive

researcher, as she tried to capture the essence of
ice.

Interpretation of results was done through process of induction. Given the pre-determined MBA context, the analysis was informed primarily by the American phenomenological approach, with its focus on contextual meaning, as opposed to the more traditional phenomenological approach that searches for universal meaning of lived experience (Caelli 2000).

The research findings, in their presentation as themes, were then cross analysed and compared to the literature. Due to the open ended nature of phenomenological research, the initial literature review was not always sufficient to address the findings that emerged from the eidetic reductions of the primary data. The researcher therefore conducted additional secondary research in order to understand, explain or make meaning of the findings.

3.8 Validation of Findings

The researcher adopted the methods recommended by Priest (2002) and Hall & Callery (2001) that increase validity in a phenomenological study. The methods that were adopted were as follows:

The researcher made explicit her background, beliefs, assumptions, subjective judgements and interests in the study.

A mode of continuous reflexivity was adopted during the stages of data collection and analysis, coupled with a debriefing process whereby analysis and findings were presented to the research supervisor for peer evaluation. The researcher sought the additional advice and evaluation of a specialist in phenomenological research.

ion was through the verification and feedback
researchers during the interview, transcription and
description stages of the research study. In order to increase the reliability of the
data and the research procedure, the researcher kept a journal in which issues
not captured in the transcript (non-verbal cues, voice, tone, tension, emphasis
and nuances) as well as concerns, challenges or reflections on the events were
noted; the intent of which was to augment the verbatim transcription of interviews
undertaken.

A diagrammatic representation of the phenomeographic research process is
provided in section 3. 10; figure 9 (overleaf).

Phenomenographic Methodology Process Outline

NOTES	STAGE NUMBER	STAGE	ACTIVITY	PROCESS
	1	Literature Review		
	2	Problem Definition Research questions		
	3	Interview Question	-Outline of themes -Primary question	
	4	Sampling	-Choose purposeful sample	
Process is repeated two times in a sequential manner from interview to interview. Study could be delayed if mistiming occurs.	5	Interview		Reflection Intentionality, Epoché
	6	Analysis		Reflection Eidetic Reduction
	7	Thematic Displays, discovery of variances		Reflection Eidetic Reduction
	8	First Written Account		Reflection Description
Feedback consists of findings from Co-Researchers data only.	9	Co-Researcher Validation of written account		Reflection Eidetic Reduction
	10	Integration of themes and variance across interviews		
	11	Individual & multiple variances contrasted to common conceptions of experience		Eidetic Reduction
	12	Uncover multiple conceptions or meanings of Phenomenon through Eidetic Reduction		Multiple Conceptions
	13	Literature Review	-Contrast findings with literature	
	14	Qualitative Narrative		

Figure 9: Phenomenographic research process (adapted from Steeneveldt 2005)

Issues

One of the major ethical challenges confronting phenomenological research is the possible impact that the research process might have in facilitating or pre-empting a significant life change in the research subject (Caelli 2001). The researcher acknowledged from the outset the potential for change in both researcher and co-researcher that might not have been recognised at the outset of the study. Concurring with Caelli (2001) on the non-transformative agenda of phenomenological research, the researcher nevertheless acknowledged that change could result from enhanced self-awareness deriving from the research process, but that this change would then present as an informed decision by the participant. The researcher adopted Caelli's (2001) recommendation that the issue of transformation be addressed at the outset of the study.

The nature of work undertaken by the researcher involves extensive interaction with individuals on the issue of personal and career transformation. She consults to and provides support to them regarding important life choices and therefore believed that she was qualified to recognise and deal with the emotions accompanying such a choice, as well as being able to determine when the need for the intervention of a professional clinician would be required. The research study was supervised by a psychologist and in addition, the researcher works very closely with a highly supportive network of colleagues who teach and consult in self-management and career management and to whom she defers to for expert advice in situations where this is required. She was therefore confident of this support throughout the research process.

Hall and Callery (2001: 269) raise another ethical issue impinging on qualitative research. Arising out of the cyclical interview process is a 'symbolic interactionism' where meaning is influenced by cumulative verbal and non-verbal interactions between researcher and co-researcher. Interactionism has particular relevance in power relationships where a polarity of power balance exists. To

, reflexivity and an on-going critique on the
ch process was adopted.

The ethical issue of possible power imbalance between researcher and co-researcher extended to the researcher's decision to draw a purposive sample from the students who completed the MBA Negotiations course at the Wits Business School, where the researcher is currently employed. To redress any possible power imbalance the research sample was drawn from students who had already completed the MBA and would therefore not feel compelled by institutional obligations to participate in the study.

It was acknowledged, however, that these students would maintain contact with the university where they might retain relationships with faculty members. It was therefore incumbent upon the researcher to uphold the confidentiality and integrity of the entire process. The identity of the co-researchers was kept in strictest confidence by the researcher, a confidence that was upheld throughout the supervision process. Moreover, none of the research respondents were aware of the identities of any of the other respondents.

e Transcripts

The researcher utilised phenomenographic methodology for this particular research study, the aim of which was to provide the respondents' qualitatively different understandings, apprehensions, conceptions and perceptions of the experience, as per Marton (1981, 1992), Tesch (1990) Marton and Booth (1997), Järvinen (1999) and Trigwell (2000). Through all of the above, the researcher intended to provide a rich reflection of the experience of the phenomenon of experiential learning within the specific context.

In this section, the respondents' narratives were analysed through a process of eidetic reduction, the outcome of which was to the present the individuals' description of their experience within the Negotiations elective of the MBA programme and through that to present their experience of their presenting reality (Sanders 1982 and Priest 2002). Through the study of these lived experience descriptions the researcher's intention was to discover common experiential themes and enhance an 'action sensitive understanding' (van Manen 1990: 124). Via these themes, the researcher was able to understand and make sense of the respondents' experiences of the phenomenon of experiential learning. Moreover, she was able to capture the qualitatively diverse apprehensions, conceptions and perceptions of the individuals' experiences of the phenomenon of experiential learning.

In this section, the research was conducted at two levels as per Giorgi (1985: 60); the first level (Level I) being, 'the original data, comprised of naïve descriptions obtained through open-ended questions and dialogue' and the second level; the description of the structures of the experience based on reflective analysis and interpretation of the research participant's account or story' (Giorgi 1985: 151).

...s or motifs) emerged from the above process, second order experience; simulation; reflection; moments of truth; feedback; learning and development; the role of the facilitator and a community of learners.

Orientation to learning deals with learning receptiveness or defensiveness and contains some of the elements, both positive and negative, which orientate students or participants in the particular research context to learn.

Second order experience refers to an experience, either positive or negative, which results in a disorientation, in-equilibrium or challenge to an established frame of reference or perspective. The experience could be painful or joyful; arising out of a significant life event such as death, divorce, employment transition, home move, birth or it could present quite innocuously, such as reading a particular piece of literature, a cultural event or a conversation (Mezirow, 1991).

In light of the particular learning context, the *simulations* undertaken in the Negotiations elective represent contrived second order experiences designed and implemented by the programme facilitator. These simulations were made up of active listening role plays and negotiation simulations that derived from case studies utilised by the facilitator, Dr Heald.

Reflection and the Learning Journal deals with the reflective processes that formed the necessary learning component of the Negotiations elective. Reflection occurred on an on-going basis; during leadership discussion, immediately post role play or simulation and then, via the compulsory reflective journaling process that each student had to undertake on a daily basis. Once the course was completed, participants undertook further experimentation with the learning concepts and continued to internalise and reflect on their observations in the time leading up to the interview. Also, as per van Manen (1990), the

continued that reflective process as the narratives looking back on the experience in order to bring it to light). Because it constituted the elective's written assignment and therefore, was usually given separate emphasis as a separate entity, as such the reflective learning journal was described within the broader theme of reflection, but also as a separate sub theme.

Moments of truth were the particular ñahaò moments that emerged during the Negotiations elective. These ñahaò moments often derived from the simulations and post simulation reflective process. They represent the point of turnaround of assumption, presumption, attitude or behaviour and as such, might be pinpointed as the commencement of change.

Feedback refers to the on-going process of student-student and student-facilitator feedback that occurred both in the public and private domain. Within the public domain, the facilitator provided feedback on classroom input, role plays and simulations and also on the journaling undertaken on the programme. Similarly, students provided one another with feedback on the engagements and also on the personal anecdotes and classroom inputs that they cited as learning examples during the programme. One of the major case study simulations was filmed and the students were offered that feedback as objective feedback, in combination with class and facilitator input. Further, the facilitator provided students with private feedback in personal one-on-one meetings and in their learning journal assignments.

Learning and Development is a broad theme that includes different types of learning - single-loop, double-loop and deuterio learning; change, personal mastery and development of personal effectiveness. Single loop learning, by definition, is adaptive, incremental learning (Argyris and Schon, 1974, 1978); double loop learning is a higher level of learning in which previously held assumptions or presumptions are challenged; where the individual acts as an

g a new set of norms ' mental model ' to guide (Fiol and Lyles 1974, 1978 and Senge 2000). This learning is strongly associated with the development of personal effectiveness and personal mastery - a deep and tacit understanding of how individuals impact one another and the environment - and is also associated with organisational learning (Fiol and Lyles 1985 and Senge 2000). Deutero learning is evident in individuals who are aware of when and how they engage in single or double-loop learning (Argyris 1978).

The *Role of the Facilitator* refers to the role of the lecturer, Dr Heald and the impact that his role had on the learning and change that derived from the programme.

The *Community of Learners* refers to the holistic community and communal learning space that constitutes the classroom, facilitator and students and the inter-relationship between them, as defined by Nouwen (1986), Rogers (1969, 1989) and Christensen (1991).

The sequential presentation of the themes, as they appear in the respondents' narratives, was deemed to be of value in the eidetic reduction of the transcripts; where sequencing could be attributed to the prominence or importance given to a particular theme by a respondent. Therefore, the themes were described as they appeared in the respondents' narratives and were not presented according to a regulated or specific sequential format.

The themes are presented as they appear in the narrative descriptions of the eight respondents, NI, R, N, G, T, K, D and E.

5.1.1 Background

Ni received an undergraduate degree in information technology, an environment in which he had worked for a number of years. Prior to undertaking the MBA, Ni completed a certificate programme in management at the Wits Business School and at the time of the interview had just changed his employment from information technology to strategic business development analytics. Ni presented as friendly, polite and respectful, mildly mannered and somewhat to the introverted side. The interview was conducted at the site of his new employer, within a large, fairly open plan work arrangement.

5.1.2 Reflection

Ni came from a very strong technical base, where his experience was focussed on his interaction with the computer screen. He had been content for a long time, partly because he did not expect too much from this work. However, he had become increasingly more aware of the fact that in his day to day interactions with people he had become increasingly reserved; something that he did not fully understand at the time. He wanted to become involved in more work that offered a higher level of client interaction, but had been unsuccessful in his attempts. Ni: "I found that I was often overlooked for promotions, overlooked for positions that I had applied for and I couldn't understand why. Not having experience of it, not having understanding of the business environment puts you on the back foot in essence. And I never understood what the fundamentals were, but I always expected everything to come to me."

Until his participation in the Negotiations elective, he had not interrogated this, however: "Some of the key learning that came out of the Negotiations elective

as that there was some sort of logic behind the
ss, the way we present ourselves, the way we
communicate with others is all taken into consideration. From the first
negotiation lesson he was able to tap into some fundamental mistakes that he
had been making during the last ten/eleven years of working: "I was immediately
able to recognise a lot of mistakes I had been making in the first day and I
decided at that point, that I needed to change in myself in order to progress.
Recognising where you went wrong was an immediate change."

Ni refers cites the critical learning emerging from writing up his daily learning
journal "I really enjoyed that" "I think that was one of the most critical aspects for
me because when you have to sit down and critically evaluate yourself, it gets
really important and its where the fundamental learning comes about. It allows
you to reflect, to introspect and to ask what have you done that could change "I
how could you change yourself."

5.1.3 Orientation to Learning

A growing self-awareness of his inadequacies, particularly his inability to
articulate his thoughts successfully within the working arena, had led Ni on a
journey, first to complete a certificate programme in Management and then to
apply for the MBA. He was hoping to get a better self-understanding about
where he was going wrong and how he could improve on his performance. Ni
relates that he was "looking for that moment when I could reflect on myself, take
what I learnt and put it together; because I wanted to change. This was
something that I was personally ready for"

Ni was looking for change, wanted change in his life. At the time of undertaking the course, he and his wife were planning the birth of their first child and he related with great excitement, that he and his wife were expecting their first baby, later on in the year. He felt that he was personally ready for the elective.

5.1.5 Simulation

Ni admitted to the fact that he was initially terrified of the case simulations, partly because he did not know what to expect. Moreover, he felt that he did not have the ability to perform well – or rather, he believed that he did not possess this ability. He found, to his surprise, that in the selection of teams for the simulations he was always chosen first: “I could not understand why, because, to me, I was probably the worst negotiator or presenter that there was in my class. You look at everyone else as being so good at presenting or discussing or negotiating; so that’s why the confusion had come about.”

However, reflecting on the success of the simulations, thereafter, he came to the realisation that he possessed the ability, but had neither understood nor appreciated it: “But, having gone through the process instils that confidence in making yourself much more aware of what your abilities actually are. That, to me, was key. Also, the simulation process gives you the confidence in terms of having experience, albeit in a closed environment. What the key fundamentals and subsequent learnings of the negotiation process are and putting that into practice in that closed environment brings out the confidence in you and makes you understand the process a lot more, which I think was a brilliant feature of it.”

Prior to undertaking the elective, Ni had no knowledge of the vast body of knowledge underpinning the area of Negotiations “I did not know that the science behind negotiations existed in the first place.” For Ni, the way that the course was

Business was key to his learning the process that we showed me to go through some of those processes and critically evaluate myself more than anything else. The fundamental structure of the programme which focussed firstly on self-understanding and then the understanding of the surrounding environment incorporating the negotiation counterparts enabled him to develop a better understanding of himself and become more comfortable about presenting his argument: it's about understanding what you are doing, what the core reason is.

5.1.6 The Role of the Facilitator

Ni felt that the facilitator, Dr Heald, had brought out his self-confidence, by making him aware of what his abilities were and how he could advantage himself through a skilful deployment of these abilities. He relates how, after having an in-depth discussion with the Dr Heald and reflecting on some of the particularly valid and perceptive comments that he had made, he returned in the afternoon and was deeply aware of the fact that he could feel myself change and its one of the reasons why I felt this course to be of benefit to me.

5.1.7 Feedback

Ni was very surprised by the feedback received from both the facilitator and his negotiating counterparts. He attributes this to the fact that he had largely underestimated his abilities and had come to a point in his life where he was very reserved: I was the one who would shy away from confrontations or discussions rather than take it in, take it back and get back to my work and get it done. Seeing himself on video, seeing actual evidence of a successful performer, receiving positive, constructive feedback from the facilitator and his colleagues was a lot more than I expected. It definitely helped me develop the confidence that I needed in the business environment.

Ni experienced what he describes as a light switch moment—something that was for him an astonishing eye opener: “I could see myself grow from the first day of coming there, sitting and not talking at all, to a point where I wanted to talk a lot, to give my ideas. And even beyond that, going into the business environment, I took a lot of that skill and you can see a shocking difference in terms of people’s attitudes towards you, knowing now that you always had the ability, but now you can bring that across.”

5.1.9 Learning and Development

Undertaking the negotiation elective provided Ni an opportunity to undertake a number of processes and critically evaluate himself. Realising who he was and what he was capable of empowered him to apply his new learning and imbued him with a new confidence in meetings and general presentations. “What we’ve been through in the process, understanding it and internalising it and just knowing that there is that confidence in terms of what you’ve been through, to be able to do it a lot better. Actually, this week, I was involved in a discussion. I brought out a lot of those clues that we had learnt in the process, going through who the people were around that table, trying to understand who they were and what they were about and what they were trying to get out of it and what we were there for, and it made the process a lot easier. I could feel that I was a lot more comfortable about taking control of that meeting, putting it out there, whereas, prior to the Negotiations elective I would never have done that.”

5.2.1 Background

R is a mature student whose education was formalised in her early forties, with an MBA, having previously completed a higher diploma in management, during her late thirties. At the time of the interview, she was working as a business consultant, but was seeking something an alternate career opportunity that she would find more fulfilling. R chose to be interviewed at the Business School.

5.2.2 Orientation to learning

R was initially apprehensive about undertaking an experiential learning elective and from the outset, was concerned about the level of difficulty, which was further exacerbated on learning that she would have to complete a learning journal. Soon after the introduction, her level of receptiveness grew as she reflected on the statement by the facilitator that "our lives are a methodology of negotiation because we start negotiating as soon as we start to speak, day we start walking and are able to ask for a bottle"

R found herself captivated by the transferability of the learning context into the context of everyday life, fascinated by the reflection that negotiation formed a part of one's life, one's everyday existence: "we negotiate every single day whether it is about asking someone to make you a cup of coffee or buying lunch; it's a question of what is it that I'm going to have, that I'm going to put on."

5.2.3 Simulation

R relates the devastating experience of learning through failure during a case simulation, where she had completed underestimated her negotiation

context, thinking that because it was a simulation, I was not taking it too seriously. I think that I did not take it too seriously because the MBA guys were always fooling around and I thought that I was negotiating with the jokers and that they were going to treat me as they had always done. This was not going to be about winning, but rather about a mutual even playing field, like let's get this over and done with and was I ever mistaken! When these guys came on that front they turned guns blazing – they were ready to take us out and that they certainly did. That's when I realised that negotiation at any point is not about considering the friendship, it's about considering that I am on this side of the line (demonstrates this) and you are there and we are going to do battle to the end. Ja, in a playful simulation it became very clear to me that when it comes to this, even if it is a class simulation or whatever, you battle to the end and make sure that you achieve the desired outcome. Don't ever expect that you are going to get a freebie!

It (the simulation) became so real.

5.2.4 Reflection and the Learning Journal

R reflects on her participation in a failed group negotiation and how difficult it was for her to lose. She reflects upon the reasons for the group's loss: "In the group there was one guy who was so pig headed and he felt that only one person should be driving the negotiation and we (the team) thought 'Okay, if you feel so strongly about it that there should not be too much engagement from everyone, then fine, we'll put it to you, you will field it'. And it all just bombed in our faces. I mean, the comeback was vicious. That was such a rude awakening for me. I was like 'AAAHH, I wish that I could do this over again'."

R was very angry with herself, shocked that she had allowed that to happen to her. It had been so out of character as she was "usually the kind of person who

I gave my power to someone else in the group
 mbastic, who wanted to dominate. But, losing
 was a totally different story. It was infuriating, because we should never have
 lost.

R was at first resistant to journaling the reflections of her experiences: "I thought that this could be quite difficult" but began to enjoy this as it took her into a "storytelling dimension" where "I realised that for me it brought together so many things that I had learnt throughout the MBA. The more she delved into it, the more exciting it became for her and she felt that from the negotiations that she had participated in throughout her life, she could collate an entire story, once more emphasising the story-telling dimension. She felt encouraged to conduct further research and to complete her Masters research on the various negotiation cases in her life: "It was like really going back and relying on things that have happened" "it was like writing my own biography. I could relate to every case that was used in class."

5.2.5 Second Order Experience

A reoccurring theme was the role of second order experience, from a personal dimension as well as the introduction of second order experiences during the programme. R had emerged from a painful work situation wherein she was impelled to resign from a position, well aware of the fact that she had done nothing wrong. R was strongly aware of her rightness in that particular situation, but was deeply cognisant of the scorched earth left behind from a protracted labour dispute. R relates "Bringing up the Schwabe case, I thought Wow, I've been Schwabed! It became very real for me and it made realize, Charisse, that in our lifetimes, we will get Schwabed and we should not take it personally. Because, at that time in my life I was really suffering because I was being Schwabed and Schwabe was such a nice man. Although I felt victorious, in a way; in another, I asked myself why I was no longer in that role. So, umm, it was

with when we did that case – why you can't be
 though you know that you have gone through all of
 the procedures and had really given these guys stick; you would not be able to
 stay because you are an ultimate threat. Before Schwabe (the Schwabe case) I
 thought, hell no, someone like me should be respected because (respondent
 laughs heartily) – but the world does not work like that. We all don't have integrity
 and principles and work around it

Working through the case had provided R with a very necessary closure on that
 matter, as it had shed light on the learning derived from such an experience, but
 moreover, the respondent came to realise that despite what had transpired, she
 still had so much to offer and “that part of the year, that semester, became a
 really enjoyable part for me. Before that I was miserable, I promise you. I did not
 know why I was doing the MBA, I don't know – But doing the negotiations elective
 gave me a reason – it validated why I was doing the MBA.”

R – I've learnt to be discerning also because sometimes you tell the wrong people
 about an experience that you have had because you want to explain to them the
 pitfall that they are about to walk into and they take it the wrong way.”

5.2.6 Single and Double Loop Learning

Two very embarrassing failures during the team simulations, led R to a deep
 introspection and reflection upon the reasons for the failure. After analysing the
 reasons for her losses, as well as that of her group, during the various
 negotiation simulations, R's single loop learning becomes apparent – from there
 on, I made sure that when I was sitting on the other side of a negotiation that I
 had all my bases covered. So, if you said A, I said Z, and I absolutely took you
 apart on why you said what you did. This was key learning for me – the fact that
 negotiation is not about dividing up between the team, who will do this and who
 will do that; it is about knowing everything, having the attack and knowing how to
 do it with subtlety, without being too aggressive –

ed since completing the elective, a time during
 et her guard down ñYou know, sometimes I used
 to say that it was not worth it and I would brush it offò however, the issue of
 consequence is now always at the forefront of her mind ñI come back to that day
 when I had that simulation in class and we left it to someone else and were so
 badly beaten.ò

Post Negotiations elective, R's reflections evidence a move from single loop
 learning to a double loop learning phase: ñI've started to say ñhow can I change
 the situation around? It's given me that alertness that, you know what, when I
 see that the bottom is falling out, I have to think on my feet, even if I have to
 postpone it for a while. It's like a court case ñ let me ask for an adjournment. I
 don't leave a part of a situation in someone's hands because I think that they
 might have the answer. No, I say this is the assessment of it, these are the risk
 areas and try and do a total evaluation of all the ways that this could affect me
 and what questions I need to ask to get to the bottom of it. I know that I could still
 run into trouble, but I now know that this will come, because you are almost
 straining your mind ñ you stretch your mind. Like a piece of elastic.ò

5.2.7 Feedback

For R, the facilitator's feedback post-simulation exercise was most useful in
 enabling her to discern between effective and ineffective communication. Her
 previous pattern had been to slip into a mode of vulnerable victimhood, to whine
 when she could not get her own way. She reflects upon the tendency of women
 who fail themselves in negotiation situations by resorting to feminine whines
 ñeyelid batting, asserting one's femininity, whining, because you're hoping that
 the student doesn't get too rough with youò Feedback from the facilitator made
 her realise how inappropriate it had been to project herself as overly vulnerable
 and to make use of tactics that denigrated her negotiation credibility: ñWith Geoff
 leading us, I realised that there was no way, that there was no time to act

to stand your ground, whether those people are they are a stronger force; you stand your ground, because you believe that what you believe in what you are passionate about. If you stand your ground, it will bring you the results that you desired

In the case of R, feedback and affirmation from the facilitator led to a heightened level of self-belief and self-validation. For a long time, R had been in a rut; she had been struggling to secure employment and was feeling despondent: 'I had had it with South Africa. I couldn't leave this country soon enough. I don't know where their ideas are about people that have skills when it comes to employment. You look at people who are in positions and you think how the hell is it possible that someone like myself who can communicate and who is skilled and is educated, is struggling in an environment that is supposing having a skills shortage. You go for interviews where people don't even know the meaning of what you do and these are the people that interview you'

R points to a specific incident the feedback from which had a particularly profound effect on her self-belief. It relates to the compilation of the first day's reflective learning journal which she had initially written merely to get the task over and done with. In her journal, R wrote about her first negotiation experience, when, as a teenage part time assistant in a retail store, she had successfully leveraged her employer to assist her in tackling a situation where she and her ailing mother were about to lose their home to unscrupulous money lenders. To her awe, Dr Heald came into class the next day and asked R if he could share her journal with the class. 'I thought to myself, Oh my G-d, I actually did something successful and the affirmation of the values and that feedback - that feedback about that which was valued in me, but that I had not valued, because the world had been discounting me; and here someone had come and said 'listen to what this person did' It made me realise that if I could do it then with the little resources that I had, then what could I do now? I could probably move

The respondent laughs continuously throughout

The victorious story behind R's journal spread amongst the business school and R became something of a university celebrity. "Everyone was coming up to me and asking 'Are you R? And they came to me with this sense of purpose, like even if it wasn't for me that I had to regain that confidence and that value, it was that I was giving other people a tremendous amount of hope because in the doldrums of adversity, people were just amazed. They could not believe that it was possible but they realised that if I had lived through it, then obviously it was! I had always thought that I did these things to survive and never thought about how significant it was. I never thought that it could mean anything to anybody. And that recognition from Geoff - I mean, he could have told it to a friend, but this came from a really experienced person that saw and recognized that something really incredible happened in my life."

The validation resulted in R feeling a renewed sense of hope. R also felt empowered to explore alternative career paths: "When you get into this type of rut (relating to her lack of success in securing employment), I think that your focus becomes so narrow, but in negotiations, you know what, I can look at the world differently and maybe this is the work that I should be pursuing. Maybe I should become a negotiator."

I looked at simple little books, for example "Hope for the Flowers" and to be honest, it's just simple little books (*sic*) - 5 or 6 things on a page, like a book for a grade 3 student, but pitched at an adult level and I thought to myself that if this book can sell, then if I put my mind to writing up these cases then maybe there will be a case study booklet for negotiations. Then I could make money. These were the things that went through my mind. You know, it does not even have to manifest, or happen, but just that hope. Do you know what? All is not lost - this could be your niche."

For the above experience had impacted on R's
 over R negated this. For R, the feedback impacted
 on her affirmation and empowerment. Developing a sense of her individual
 value; but also, how she could manage herself more effectively, where her
 shortcomings existed, but also, where she excelled, made the learning
 experience worthwhile: "For the first time, I was the best in the class (laughs
 heartily). I always said that I'm in the shadows. I don't like to be Me! Me! Me!
 Me! Me! because I feel that I am confident enough not to let everyone know who
 I am and see me. I haven't got that type of insecurities that I feel that I've got to
 be noticed but, Charisse, this was really amazing now, with my thesis I think
 that I'm only one of three people in the class who is now finished and I am
 graduating. I'm one of those people that was regarded as a, she probably will
 never finish, she probably won't ever get her thesis done and now, I am so done
 and those people are not."

5.2.8 A Community of Learners

R found that observing others in the experiential context, reflecting on feedback
 received from the facilitator and internalising her class colleagues' particular
 strengths and weaknesses was helpful in developing a framework for her own
 negotiation effectiveness. R relates her observations of a display of particularly
 poor conduct: "When the whole process came undone he absolutely freaked out
 I mean he was callous. If this was a real situation then we would have been
 dead, because now he started off negotiating by being very defensive and
 attacking people. And, he did not let it rest there. He came back the next day
 and (respondent laughed heartily) I had to say to him "you just don't get it. You
 are wrong. You did not handle the situation correctly and you cannot come back
 and attack Geoff because he annihilated us with his feedback. We were totally
 hopeless in the situation and deserved the feedback that we got." He just
 wouldn't back down in the situation and I couldn't believe that he had gone

and yet his method of communication was way

5.2.9 Learning and Development

R moved from being the 'silent type' who never participated in class interaction, because, with so many assertive people in the class, she had felt unsure of her ability to challenge the status quo. Through her participation in the experiential learning elective, R realised that in entering a domain in which one belonged; in playing to her strengths and passions, she could find her niche. Moreover, the realisation that she could not be everywhere simultaneously, but rather, should focus on where she fitted in and what she wanted was of significant value to her.

R took the course very personally and proceeded to apply it to all domains in her life: 'I negotiate everything, everywhere and with everyone!'. Whenever she feels inclined to complacency, she now finds that the mere reflection on her previous failure jolts her into dealing with the issue at hand, immediately and responsibly. Her previous inclination to brush off a potential failure as being 'not really worth it' had been transformed into an alertness to 'think on my feet' not to let it go 'no, not me' and to tackle the issue head on, if necessary to step over perceived barriers: 'I was more confident about the details and I realised that nothing would happen to me if I did overstep this person because they are not doing what they were supposed to. Previously, it would have been 'better not step on the person's toes' but, we live in a very competitive world and if you are not getting out of somebody what you need then you are going to have to overstep it. It's not about being disrespectful. It's about getting what you need out of a situation so that you can go forward.'

R's self-mastery had considerably uplifted: 'I learnt so much about how I could manage my expectations and life better. It was, you know, when I walk away from this, if I have steam for the next six months, then that is good enough. But

... because I have had the opportunity to do this
... else has. You know what, when the bottom falls
out, they will have to come to individuals like us, so that is how I felt I had
hope.

5.3 Respondent N

5.3.1 Background

N, a successful young entrepreneur of 35, was working in investment and private equity, having formerly worked in consulting and banking. N's interview was conducted at his offices, in a very large, formal and somewhat imposing boardroom.

5.3.2 Reflection and the Learning Journal

N describes himself as a very private person who was at first most uncomfortable with the atmosphere of feedback and personal reflection and revelation. He describes his public discomfort and then, his reflection on the truths reflected upon and admitted to in private. N: "On the first day, I thought 'what's wrong with this guy? I felt like I was at a shrink's office! Sharing uncomfortable things about myself - no go zones - wife, brother - things I'm not comfortable with talking about.' But, I had deregistered from Finance because I felt that I had already learnt so much in that sphere. I was looking for a deeper experience. It's made me more rounded.

Although we joked about it, remarks that are not complimentary. But, when I was alone I was forced to challenge myself, to be true to myself.

It turned out great.

behaviour and his manner of communication had
hip: "I reflected on my wife's conversation about
the time that I spent at work; what she actually meant was that she needed me to
spend quality time with her when I returned home. When you get an
understanding of the real message you reach an understanding that makes the
other person feel considered."

"If we are honest with ourselves, a lot of problems that we have with other people
are actually not about fundamental differences about issues but usually about
misunderstandings or perceptions that the other person wants to impose their will
on you. Sometimes, that comes from being not open to understanding their point
of view because, once you do, you might have a disagreement, but if you go
away and think about it in a calmer mode; had you spoken about this in a manner
that did not seem to play down the feelings of the other or how the other seemed
to see the situation you could have actually gotten to the point that was the
source of disagreement."

N's learning experiences enabled him to appreciate that people are different; that
people communicate differently and also made him aware of how he
communicated.

For N, the learning journal provided a structured mental framework. "The
learning journal forces you to think about what you are learning. You think about
your life and how you can apply your learning to that. Active learning was critical
to try and understand the other people. Negotiation is a game where you need
to understand the rules of the game and the rules change constantly. This
(journal) gives you a mental framework where the differing levels are tapped into.
I became aware and it forced me to think back to when I communicated or
collaborated with others, to reflect on the appropriateness of my attitude."

erience

N reflects on second order experience congruent with the elective that heightened his self-awareness and acted as a catalyst for change: "I think back to situations that are applicable. At the time that I was doing the Negotiations elective, there was a change of management at work. The previous guy I worked for had hired me, he was well known to me, there was an historical background and a bond – I had certain expectations. But my expectations were not being met and this made me angry – that I was not getting the opportunities. But I did not try to find out the reasons behind the actions. I called a meeting and said that I was very unhappy about the prevailing situation. During the meeting, my bosses told me that they had thought that I was on my way out in order to follow my previous boss with whom I had enjoyed such a positive relationship and that is why they had placed me onto peripheral, not critical projects that mitigated their risks if I left.

The conversation had moved from "they hate me" to "we hear you"

It was emotionally very tough – it really saps your energy level. How you experience work affects everything else. When I look back, I realise how negative I had become, where you can't even see an opportunity even if it is obvious. You go out of your way to look for the negative."

5.3.4 A Community of Learners

N describes himself as a highly competitive person, always setting out to "play hard" and to win, but realises that in personal relationships, winning cannot be the only important issue. Rather, for N: "you need to appreciate where the other is coming from in order to reach an accommodative result. It is not a zero sum game – It's not about win lose but win win. How you get to the number is important – the process. I realised that whenever I started engaging to achieve something I was very fixated about my position. I wanted to achieve X and if I could not achieve it, I had lost. But going through the programme, I realised that

fluence you if you have to factor that into your
 that you might modify your position. Conversations
 are not necessarily adversarial if you try to listen and understand.

5.3.5 Role of the Facilitator

N felt that the facilitator had a direct impact on the class throughout their negotiation learning: The facilitator had sensitised them through the exercises that were completed and through this medium the class began to develop a different notion of what winning was. Previously, they had viewed winning as a 'winner takes all scenario' but through the progression of various class simulations, N could see that previously held class assumption change: 'You could see even how people contributed in class over the years. There is always one person who wants their view to be the dominant one or accepted view and again, in that course, they held back, because it made them think first before they spoke.'

5.3.6 Double and triple-loop learning

N displays the transition from single and double-loop learning to triple-loop learning: 'I always knew that you had to prepare for an interview, get the sort of answers to the questions that they were likely to ask you, but it was more data. For example if someone asks you what your strong points are, you just have to mention five things. I never thought at the level of 'what is this guy looking for? What would be a deal breaker for him? What would be the deal breaker for me? How would I manage myself in the situation to arrive at these answers?'

On the basis of that you might modify your position. I reflected back to situations that are applicable. Think back now in my new experiences. After the negotiation course I became aware of myself negotiating and doing it. I try to understand the deeper thing/the deeper meanings.'

N is a deeply private person, who used to battle with social functions. However, he was always deeply aware of how important it was in both his work and his personal life. He commented that he had been able to see a marked difference in his personal effectiveness; tackling things with which he was previously uncomfortable and overcoming them in order to achieve the heightened effectiveness. For N, active listening had been a particularly useful experiential technique in effecting this effectiveness: "I think that the active listening thing always come back"

"I've made an effort to get better at it. You stop agonizing about what you are going to say. Genuine interest is so important. To build a rapport, because, then, you are no longer strangers. It's about that person you don't know that's the challenge – about getting to understand them. I found that an easy way of doing it because I am not a very social person is to quote the person "you were saying earlier that – would you please talk to that – I just need to understand – It allows people to give you information in a very non-threatening environment. You can't believe how much you can learn from people. They need not be people in high positions, or sophisticated, but when they share their stories with you, you learn so much. You get rid of the idea of lesser or superior mortals. Differences or distinctions don't make one better. This has allowed me to interact with so many people and learn from them."

5.4 Respondent G

5.4.1 Background

G is a highly experience management consultant who at the time of the interview was working in business strategy for one of the world's leading professional services organisations. The interview was conducted at his place of work, in his

and around which there was quite a high level of

5.4.2 Orientation to learning

G chose to take the course because he was involved in extensive client negotiations, in terms of agreement on mandate, scope and in the actual discussion of client needs. Because management consultants charge substantial fees, he was deeply aware of a critical need to equip himself with the necessary negotiation skills to handle the subtlety of their situations and scenarios. He felt that he could improve on the way that he articulated various reflections and viewpoints and needed to be able to present his viewpoint in a way that is clear and compelling in order to achieve what you are setting out to do.

G had observed certain students for whom having to go through the simulations was an excruciating experience. Certainly it does happen in that kind of situation and there were people who were very nervous. There are people who stammer when they have to get up and make a presentation in front of other people, especially considering that the whole class was behind and watching and evaluating how you negotiate. G expressed the opinion that, to a large extent, people who enjoyed speaking in public would show a higher level of receptiveness to the programme and would enjoy the simulations as they would not easily become nervous or cowered.

5.4.3 Simulation

What G had enjoyed most about the course was the practical case studies of various big deals and contracts that had been negotiated between different parties, particularly multi-party negotiations, which he had felt equipped him with the techniques to deal with the challenges in various negotiations. It was

ed and what did not work going through the valuable is that when going into a deal there are certain hidden factors that you don't necessarily see that influence the outcome of the negotiation. When people are negotiating they tend to focus on what's being said as opposed to what is not being said and the underlying currents that could influence the ability of the other party in to coming to a consensus. That was my biggest takeout.

G commented on the congruence between case study simulations and the various strategies that he had been contemplating for a number of his own negotiations. It had been useful to him that: 'you have your party on your side and their party on that side and you have to get by and use what you learnt on the course to reach some sort of agreement and that is what I found most useful about the course – the ability to get involved and interact in a negotiation and emerge with an outcome.'

In terms of the actual simulations, G commented that 'it's a game, a game and you know it's a game because it's not a real life situation.' However, he thoroughly enjoyed the simulation, which he, in a somewhat contradictory manner, referred to as 'the actual negotiation.' G attributed his enjoyment to his particular work style preference where interaction with people formed the crux of his daily work – 'part of a very natural flow.' He had gone through extensive in-house case studies and role plays which were assessed to determine whether an employee would receive a promotion.

5.4.4 Feedback

Filming of the simulations and post filming feedback, where the candidates received objective feedback on how they were presenting, what they were doing right, or wrong, was particularly useful to G: 'the way you use your hands, your facial expressions, that kind of thing. When you are viewing the video afterwards

could have done that differently. Was that me, or when you get to a certain age, you tend to have certain traits and things in your personality and the way that you do things that you cannot easily change, which at times tend to be very adversarial and it tends to rub people up the way. Saying that, you might well have a lot of value to add from a professional or technical competence perspective, but you have to know how to work with people and how your behaviour impacts on others. For some people you can look at yourself and see how you come across and it can be quite satisfying. Dr G felt that having worked in a professional environment in which they were often filmed during presentations and also from extensive public speaking experience, he felt no anxiety or personal discomfort going into the filmed simulation which had contributed to it being a beneficial learning situation.

Dr Heald would come in and say 'Well, this is what you could have done differently, what you could have achieved, what worked and what did not work in the kind of things you were or were not considering. When you said this or did this, these were the implications for you; this is how it worked to your advantage or this is what you did that worked to the other's advantage.' G found that this provided a very practical dimension to the course, allowing participants to take out what they needed and apply it to their real life situations.

He did comment, though, that this learning application might not have applied to everyone. He felt that it could also have been worthless for other individuals who did not come from an environment where they interacted and negotiated on a regular basis: 'If you come from an operational type environment, I'm not quite sure whether you would have been able to get a lot out of it. You need to have the kind of environment where you can take out those practical learnings and then go and apply them to your day to day activities. In that case, it becomes useful knowledge, but if you can't apply it quite quickly then you very easily forget about some of the techniques.'

Learning Journal

G did not enjoy the fact that he had to hand in his journal, expressing that it had put pressure on him to write a lot of stuff, but acknowledged its usefulness in keeping track of all of the key learning throughout the course. He commented that he would continue to re-visit the journal, to explore some of the things that he had written which were highly applicable to some of the things that he was going through at that particular time: "If you have something written down then it is far easier to keep track of your learning and also be able to come back to it in the future should you be required to utilize the stuff that you have learnt."

The Negotiations elective was the second course in which students were required to keep a learning journal and in both courses, G felt that it contributed to a deeper learning: "Keeping that learning journal, distilling those key learning and making sure that you can come back to it in essence, at the end of the day, that is the key take out from the course."

He acknowledges the variance between the perception and learning of participants in the programme: "Each person takes out different things. It is amazing – absolutely amazing – what people record as key learning from a course – all from different perspectives. So, if you wanted to go through someone's learning journal to see what the course is about, you would be very surprised as you would come up with so many different documents depending on the significance and what it is that you would want to apply in your daily life, because people come from so many different environments."

G noted with some concern that some students did not write their journals as per the instructions given by the lecturer, which was to write them daily, after class. Instead, they had written them up sometimes three or four days after the events. For G, that was a wasted learning opportunity: "By then you could have forgotten some of the key messages. Worse even, you could actually get the wrong

it, especially if you are dealing with complicated

5.4.6 Learning and Development

Over the course G had reflected and internalised a number of key learnings that had then become part of his subconscious. What he had found was that those key learnings would strike a chord with him in certain circumstances wherein he would find himself applying the learning “quite naturally”. What generally happens is that you are sitting at a meeting and you are discussing a certain subject or about to strike a deal and just sitting at the table and you find that you are able to read certain messages and key into certain signs that are quite critical to the other party and then you are able to draw from the course. And it’s like “Ok, this is what Geoff Heald was talking about”. It is a challenge to internalise everything. But, there are certain messages and certain tactics that strike a chord in you and you apply them, based on the different circumstances that you come across. So, if you are in a situation where your negotiating counterpart is quite difficult then you want to try and understand why they are having such an objection and you start to try and look at the bigger picture; the next step and the rules of the game.

G felt that continuous application of the learning in different situations was very important “it’s all about practice” so that students could become more skilled at understanding which principles were most appropriate in any given situation. Not all situations provided the opportunity to apply all of one’s learning however, the learning provided by the Negotiations elective was a very good foundation, as he had derived some real tools and techniques which he could apply.

G commented humorously at the outset of the interview “That Geoff – he was an interesting guy” and he went on to expand his experience of the facilitator, Dr Heald: “He knows his subject, has lots of experience; has obviously read and constructed the cases really well and his lessons are very practical.” What had impressed G particularly was that the facilitator was very passionate and “when you see him standing there in front of the class you can see that he is giving his whole. I remember that when he was closing there were some remarks that he made – a quotation from a famous book (Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man) and that really resonated with me. He ended by telling us “to go forth into your wonderful future” which was such a positive note on which to end.

5.5 Respondent T

5.5.1 Background

A career publisher, T, in his middle thirties, presents a tall and rather imposing presence. During his time in the MBA, the researcher recalls that he was quiet and independent, even aloof; however, during the interview, which took place at his bright, airy and somewhat utilitarian offices, T was very warm, friendly, engaged and forthcoming. Shortly before the interview, he had been promoted to a senior strategic business executive role within online publishing.

5.5.2 Single and Double Loop Learning

Prior to having undertaken the Negotiations elective, T had not given much thought to negotiation in any particular context: He had always associated negotiations with board room tables, joint ventures and contractual issues, but had never given any thought to the extent to which negotiations play a part in

assumption changed within the first fifteen minutes. I suddenly confronted with things about which he had not expected to think about during the course: I found that I had been contextualising the content to spaces to which I did not expect the course to go.

He cites the concepts of reciprocity as an example. In terms of the former, he had thought of reciprocity in terms of personal relationships - returning of phone calls and present giving rituals or ceremonials - but found that the concept was transferable into the business context. Upon completion of his MBA, instead of accepting a tempting offer, he returned to the company who sponsored his studies and instead, used the techniques that he had learned during the Negotiations course to leverage a move into a strategic business area that interested him.

5.5.3 Learning and Development

T comments: It's interesting how small words and hints and subtexts of e-mail all played a part (in securing the position to which he aspired), although it was not always a conscious application of what I had learned in this particular course; but I have no doubt that those experiences and that learning played a part in helping me to get where I wanted to be. Further, T found that the learning was not a once off phenomenon. Instead, he had continued to experience, daily, in all aspects of his professional career in mergers and acquisitions and further, his realisation has grown that negotiations commence from the word go. It's not about sitting down to talk about the deal terms or the contract; it's about how you approach somebody the very first time that you speak to them. If you're interested in a company, or if you're interested in an alliance or a licensing agreement, the power dynamic is set very early on, I suppose depending on who needs the deal more than the other.

course, T commented that he is now doing a lot to meetings, thinking about what he would like to achieve from the meeting. He has also begun to think more about his counterparts in the negotiation, trying to introspect upon what they might be wanting to achieve from the negotiation and how he could align objectives in order to reach consensus.

The importance of personal brand in a negotiation is critical for T: "Everyone realises that their user base has an assumption of a particular type of brand value and therefore do not want someone who is a lesser player, who hasn't paid their school fees" or done enough for another party to derive any benefit from their years of work. T refers to his predecessor, a person who made a lot of promises about what he could deliver. Although he had worked very hard (and competently) to develop the sort of climate for delivery; everything had been done behind the scenes and was not patently evident to the business. He had not done enough to manage the business's expectations of him and as a consequence, his personal brand had become irrevocably damaged.

T expresses how important it is for him to manage the expectations created by his predecessor. Business expects him to deliver on the predecessor's remit and he is deeply cognisant of managing his own brand as he renegotiates the expectations. Prior to having done the course he had not given consideration to the fact that this was all a part of negotiation.

5.5.4 Simulation

T cites the effectiveness of a number of experiential engagements: "It was a very good way of putting the concepts that we had learned the previous day into a tangible example. When you deal with these rarefied concepts, it is often very difficult to recall the nub of what is being taught, the essence of that context, but if you have a specific example, it is a very good way of triggering that broader

to the issue of personal brand and cites the character in the film, *The Negotiator*, which the students view and then participate in a post viewing critique: "The one thing that it comes down to is the very first concept that we were taught, that it is essential to define and manage the way that you are perceived. Even if it's the first few words in a phone call leading up to a six month negotiation, those few words are of great importance. What stuck with me was the first guy that comes on (in the film), the first negotiator. He was very nervous and chain smoking and the Samuel L Jackson character made absolute mincemeat out of him. And that was necessary – it wasn't personal – it was just about establishing his own credentials, his own mastery of the situation. Also, he made it perfectly clear that he knew and understood everything that was going on in the room. That behaviour automatically made everyone feel that they had to take this guy very seriously. Your expertise, I suppose, is so important."

An experiential technique made use of during the elective is an Active Listening exercise, of which T felt, he should be making more use of. The interview sparked a mental note that he had made at the time to use active listening extensively and on reflection, he realised that he had not. T commented on his tendency to dwell within his own thoughts whilst others were speaking, to an extent where he did not listen when people were speaking. He had not come upon active listening prior to his undertaking of the MBA elective and felt that it was a really useful exercise. T was therefore pleased to have had the discussion which re-ignited his interest in that particular experiential mode.

During a particular negotiation, involving a theatrical agent and his client, T performed particularly well, securing a beneficial outcome for his client. His feeling on his achievement was somewhat contradictory: "I got a good settlement – good money and a five year contract, but was not so happy, when it turned out that my settlement was only the median of the class!" In addition, I felt guilty; felt that I had been a bit disingenuous – that in a few years my chickens

Despite the fact that the simulation was precisely
 ing of guilt did not leave him, as he thought of
 situations where his achievement had been at the detriment of his counterpart.

T observed that people became very emotional, even though the simulation
 situations were contrived: "It became very real when you are dealing with issues
 of pride, integrity and these are things that people take very seriously indeed. He
 reflects on another simulated game where "The group had reached an
 agreement and the one guy broke the agreement and his counterparts were
 personally offended by this. It resulted in them not speaking for the rest of the
 course. They saw it as a personal betrayal. If you give your word and then break
 it – even if it is in the context of a game – it is akin to cheating. It is something
 very serious and one cannot turn around and say that "it's only a game" because
 one has broken the rules of that game." T provides a deeper explanation of his
 reflection wherein the above could be projected to a situation in which one might
 assume that one's negotiation skills do not matter too much, only to find out later
 that they matter a great deal. "Certain actions that you might think are trivial, that
 you just dismiss, might not seem very trivial to the other parties involved."

5.5.5 Role of the Facilitator

T had also undertaken a Negotiation Elective at another business school, namely
 HEC, in France and asked if it would be in order for him to compare the Wits
 Business School course with that of HEC. The interviewer agreed.

"There was the whole thing about the synthetic, integrative and distributive
 approach which I found quite interesting, where the whole "getting to yes" thing is
 more of an integrative approach. What I found interesting was that Geoff's
 approach (the facilitator) was much more of an integrative approach to
 negotiations, whereas the guy from HEC was much more distributive in his

sive, although both are successful negotiators in

The facilitator's use of anecdotal experience was something that T found most interesting. He felt that it was a useful manner to get concepts "to stick". If you can tell an anecdote that will help a concept to stick in someone's mind then that would be very powerful. For this reason, T endorsed the case method as a powerful learning tool. However, this would be dependent on how well the case was written, how well it was taught and on what aspects of the case the lecturer focused. T does not dismiss the learning power of imagery: "In one case that I remember particularly well, the one thing that sparked the whole memory was a particular picture that that I was able to create in my mind which brought the case together. Although I think that I have always felt that I tend to think more in words than in pictures, I realise that a picture is often more powerful."

5.5.6 Feedback

T's group was filmed during the simulation of the "Foggy" case. T remember being filmed and remembers watching and debriefing the filmed case thereafter, but did not remember the actual negotiation that was simulated. He recalls his feelings on viewing his performance: "Looking at myself on the video, I felt that I was quite hesitant; I wasn't very sure of myself. I was waffling a little bit, not necessarily getting to the point, too many pauses in my presentation. I did not feel that it had gone off too well at all." T was therefore pleasantly surprised at the feedback received from both Geoff and the rest of the class who felt that he had done really well, had a very empathic approach that immediately put his counterparts at ease. He then reminded himself that he had in fact prepared well, laid out his position very clearly. His team task was to summarise his team's contribution, which he had done very well. On reflection of the feedback, T, realised that he had been too hard on himself: "I was being too judgemental on my style and I kind of underrated myself and realising that made me feel quite

feeling pretty bad about myself to feeling pretty

5.5.7 Reflection and the Learning Journal

T reflected at length on a particular incident wherein he had failed. It pertained to an exhaustive communication with an irate customer: I was the publisher of a financial magazine and one of my areas of responsibility was subscriber management. I was dealing with a particular subscriber on the phone – a very angry subscriber – who had escalated the matter to the extent where he was speaking to me and not the call centre. I just remember the first thing that came out of his mouth when I said that I was the publisher of the magazine. He said “all you guys are useless” My immediate reaction was to just get rid of this guy, to have his call over and done with. I did not like him and while I certainly did not put the phone down on him, I did not leave him feeling any better about the service that was being offered to him at the time. He said that he did not care about our excuses for the poor service that he had been receiving. It was our business; we were selling him a service and we had to sort it out. On reflection, to a large extent he was right. What I should have done, was to take an entirely different stance, an active listening stance, apologise and ask him to explain what had happened that had so angered him. I should have let him speak and speak and speak, as long as he needed to.

T reflected that this was a particular negotiation which he had handled particularly badly. On participating in the Active Listening exercise, that particular incident had come to mind. T felt that this was indicative of a lot of situations; however this was a particularly extreme example.

Another case study that induced much introspection and reflection was the Schwabe case (a case about career ambush). I remember quite well how this guy had been set up in a very methodical way and basically in the course of a

ectors of the company had been broken down, very interesting study, not only in terms of how to defend yourself from an attack such as this, but also how to prevent such an attack. Something that I thought a lot about through this course was the need to ensure that you have created the right impression and the right alliances. This was something that before the course I would have seen as being a bit petty. The whole notion of networking to me seemed a bit sordid. I've now realised it is noté really (laughs)é it is necessary.ò

The value of networking had become re-stated when T realised that it was not a disingenuous tactic, but rather about having a cordial relationship that could be used to one's own gain as some point, provided that both parties were aware of the rules of engagement. T's shift in mental model extended to a perspective on networking where òo hold yourself aloof and above that sort of interaction or engagement, is actually quite arrogant and could get you into trouble.ò

For T, the journaling evoked high levels of emotive reflection which are related to as ña vivid memoryò ñ I do remember that first entry, for me, was the most interesting. The first day because I think that the course sparked a lot of very emotive reflection; the way that I put it here was painful introspection, that shone a light on a lot of the unconscious aspects of my behaviour and my experience that I think I had been quite happy to keep un-illuminated. But it was very useful to look at that stuff and try and understand why I had behaved in a particular way where I hadn't behaved all that well. The one thing that came to mind was the very poor ñ and that is what I wrote about in this diary ñ was the very poor. I bore some responsibility for the way that it actually turned out.ò

5.5.8 Moments of Truth

Ti: ñIt turned out to be a very bad experience, and not an experience that I'd really thought about. It was one that I had dismissed as òh, the guy is a bit of an

...tive and let me just go and move on. But, this
...y ówell, maybe he was (an arsehole) but maybe
that wasn't the whole picture. There was much more to it and regardless of the
circumstances, I could have done a far better job than I did. So that really
interested me. I met the guy again. I had never got on well with the guy
subsequent to that presentation. But I met with the guy again a few weeks ago in
a completely different session and the meeting actually went really really well. I
would say that going in knowing what had gone wrong in that first session was
very useful and I approached it with a completely different mind-set.

5.6 Respondent K

5.6.1 Background

K trained as a midwife and after many years of working within one of South
Africa's largest hospitals, she joined her present company, which is the leading
provider of innovative healthcare management solutions to approximately 3
million South Africans. K currently heads up Research and Development for their
rewards programme. In her early forties, K constantly juggled the roles of MBA
student, professional executive and mother to two pre-school children. K was
interviewed in her office, a semi-enclosed glass hub.

5.6.2 A Community of Learners

Due to an oversubscription on the elective, an extra Negotiation class was
presented. K's group of negotiation elective participants was an unusually small
group of 12 participants who had been encouraged to sign up for the class, partly
due to the positive feedback that other participants had given about the course.
Their general level of receptiveness going into the class was high and this was
given further impetus by the fact that the small group had a particularly good mix

nts, for the most, had been through two years of another well and were mutually trustful and respectful. All of the above contributed to an increase in the levels of class participation and collegial interaction, with everyone giving their bit on the course to make it successful.

K reflects on the success of her negotiation counterparts during one of the negotiation simulations: "On the other side was J and even though she admitted to me that we were quite scary, she was brave enough to come back and question our position and why we were discussing it the way we were and rather pushing back at us all the time which I thought was really good."

K further reflects on the characteristics that make up a successful negotiator: "The other person who impressed me was A, the lawyer. He was very calm, did not raise his voice; had the facts at his fingertips. He was there to negotiate, was not drawn into the aggression or the politics or the blaming. He was there so that we could find a solution and he kept on reminding us of that. He was very calm, not confrontational at all; not arrogant at all; just very nice to speak to."

K was most impressed with her colleagues on the course. Observing them on video enabled her to see some of the things that they did really well: "It's like that: it is said that you learn from other people on the course and certainly, with this course, it was true. I learnt from them and I learnt from the lecturer."

During this Negotiation elective, the class were joined in one particular session, by a group of visiting MBA students from Georgetown University. During that session, three protagonists of the South African Constitutional negotiations joined in a focussed conversation led by the Geoff, who facilitated the session. K felt this to be particularly enjoyable, because firstly, they shared their personal experiences of that difficult time with the group, but she also found it deeply moving to experience the learning of, and through, the Georgetown students. "It

st of the real negotiations did not take place in the second channel. This allows the other to change position without losing face. What was so remarkable was the positive relationship between the negotiators of that time and the necessity for negotiators to have and show mutual respect for one another.

Observation of this respect sparked a reflection on a previously mistrustful business relationship: it reminds me of a negotiation that I did at work with a third party supplier. At the start, we were kind of forced into the negotiation. I did not like the company and the people and I think that they felt the same way about me. I had kept away from them and avoided the possibility of ever using them. They were mistrustful of me and I am not entirely sure, but I think that they did not like me. They felt that I was the main barrier to them getting work at the company where I was employed. It was decided by the powers that be that we would go into business with them and I had to negotiate the terms of that agreement. We were forced into the negotiation and, surprise, surprise; we actually ended up developing a liking for each other. And they and I began to trust one another and we developed a lot of respect for one another with continues to this day – two years later – such, that if there is any issue between our companies, it always comes back to me to sort it out, even if it is outside my direct area. The trust was created incrementally and then cemented over time.

The one negotiator, Theuns Eloff, commented that miracles happen to those who work hard and that reminded me that preparation, organisation and proper thinking could lead to great things in a negotiation.

5.6.3 Simulation

K found the simulations to be most worthwhile, from both the interaction between participants and the facilitator and amongst the participants on the programme.

roné

for me was that we were both (negotiating partners) given briefs of what we were negotiating and in the end; if we achieved our brief I think that it would have been a successful negotiation. A learning for me was that although there was huge competition about who could negotiate the best rate for her (the character in the negotiation), the fact that everyone could come out happy, feeling as if they had won and had achieved something really great was indicative of the fact that the different parties were not necessarily competing on the same playing fields – they might well have been looking for completely different things.

There were so many different interests and positions, that what it required was not to just achieve what you thought was best when you set out, but rather, to look in as much detail into the entire situation around the negotiation.ò

5.6.4 Second Order Experience

K had just returned from an overseas business trip to China when she embarked on the programme: “Geoff also stressed the importance of personal relationships and he related the example of Guanchi which is the Chinese term for a network of relationships. This was very interesting for us because quite a lot of us had just been to China and it was really interesting to hear about that being spoken about as a negotiating concept. That really increased our interest in learning more. He also challenged us to have a look at where we were going in our lives and what our next step was – referred to ‘*The Alchemist*’ which was a book that I had thoroughly enjoyed but not given enough deep thought to until he challenged us in this way – pushed us out of our comfort zone.ò

Contiguous with the negotiation programme was the resale of K’s home. Having been taught the negotiation scenario BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) K found her learning very useful in her personal negotiations: “I think

really useful to me because, although I'm really
 of a poker face. I was prepared to walk away
 from the sale because I knew what my BATNA was. But, I think that I also
 recognised when there was a fair offer on the table without being too greedy,
 which is also a temptation.

5.6.5 Reflection and the Learning Journal

Previous to completing the Negotiation elective, K had been unsuccessful in
 selling her home. She offers some reflections on why she had been
 unsuccessful: 'I was offered more (than what was offered to her in the resale
 referred to earlier on) but I declined it, because I thought that maybe I could have
 gotten more and I've accepted less now than I would have then. I turned down
 the previous offer because of greed; because the agent had promised that he
 would get me twice that offer.'

Reflection on her performance in the simulations revealed some serious
 misgivings which pertained to her level of preparation for negotiation, both in the
 context of the Negotiation elective and in her personal life and career. This had
 resulted in a couple of setbacks: 'Often, when working at a corporate, I would run
 into meetings without adequately preparing, thinking that I could wing it. The
 truth is that if we would come up against people who are well prepared then they
 would win hands down.' K laughed at her previous disingenuous approach: 'We
 are all so busy running around with our own stuff, that we fly around, so
 busy and then we fly into a meeting, into our seat and think that we can start
 the meeting or whatever it is and generally I people in general I and myself in
 particular are not well prepared. Too busy but it's the stuff that can really up
 seat you the more haste less speed sort of thing. Or, it often means that you get much less than you could have.'

ulation where her lack of preparation resulted in
ons much earlier on that what was necessary: "I
did not prepare well and because I did not know all of the details I accepted too
quickly when I could so easily have pushed for more, for longer."

For K, it was most interesting to understand the relationship between power and
negotiation which emerged during the simulations: "I really enjoyed the fact that
mediocrity imbued with institutional power trumps a brilliant negotiator every time.
You need to learn to recognise where the true power lies in a negotiation and
then you can use the judo tactics to your advantage."

It also proved useful to her to learn the concession maxim: "It was interesting for
me that sometimes in a negotiation people are tough and forceful but you can get
much further if you allow your opponent or negotiating partner to save face in
some way by allowing them to get some concessions and in that way they don't
feel as if they have lost all their ground."

K demonstrates her increasing self-awareness, as she reflects on previous
behavioural inappropriateness: "I think that I jumped into an authority role and I
think that I was a little too blaming and judgemental with them – not letting them
get away with it and not moving on. I think that I wanted them to feel some pain
first. Clearly it was the wrong thing to do."

5.6.6 Feedback

"Then, there was a thing that I was dreading – dreaded! The video! The fact that
they videoed us and that we got to see the video." Clearly, for K, the video taping
of a particular case simulation was something about which she had been deeply
concerned, particularly because the day after taping, the video would be played
back to the class; feedback would be given by the facilitator, but also, each
member of the class would receive feedback from their class colleagues.

was surprised at the outcome of the sessions and further, the video and feedback session was a particularly useful learning experience. She found the facilitator to be honest about our negotiating styles – what we did correctly and what needed improving upon – but he was gentle and affirming, too. In any case, it was quite evident when you saw yourself on the video feedback and he pointed it out to you. It was not something that you could deny or hide from. As soon as you watch it, for a start, you can see where the issues are, however, when he points it out it becomes that much clearer, because it is very objective feedback. It is there, right in front of you on a massive screen!

K also felt that it had been most valuable to her to see herself in a way that reflected what you actually look like to the world. When I first saw myself on screen I thought ‘cringe! Jeesh – I’ve got to get highlights!’ It’s a tough one and people would tend to avoid it if possible, but I think that the MBA should give us more opportunities to video ourselves and view that and get feedback, objective feedback, where you can see what you are doing, how you interact, where you get heated and how things were actually working. It would be useful, also, to get some real play versus role play, taking the real issues from work and explaining them to some of your negotiating partners, and then you might be able to get some more valuable feedback from that as well.

5.6.7 Learning and Development

K had just emerged from the sale of a property: I found all of these things have been really useful for me because I’ve just been negotiating the sale of a property. Although I’m really quite keen to sell, I’ve had a bit of a poker face. I was prepared to walk away because I knew what my BATNA was. But I think that I also recognized when there was a fair offer on the table without being too greedy, which is always the temptation. I do think that this course has helped me to successfully negotiate that sale and I am not sure that I would have been as

offered more last year, but I declined it, because I've gotten more. And now I've accepted less now than I would have then (laughs). And I turned it down because of greed because the agent said that he would get twice that offer.

5.7 Respondent E

5.7.1 Background

A young management consultant, E completed the MBA on the back of the foundation business management diploma, where he had excelled as both class president and as academic student. Born in Zimbabwe, educated in the United States of America, E had chosen to make South Africa his home and had just secured a full time position at a leading transformation consultancy at the time of his interview. Confident, warm and particularly articulate, E was interviewed in a meeting room at the offices of his current employer.

5.7.2 Orientation to Learning

E had selected the Negotiations elective, because of its reputation as an excellent MBA course: Naturally, I was drawn to the Negotiations elective because I had heard so many positive things about it. It's a very useful course and it has a lot of relevance to you as an individual and you can apply some of the skills that you learn in both your professional and personal life. He had gone in with eyes wide open receptive to the thought that it should be fun; this should be a good experience.

The personality and teaching approach of the facilitator, Dr Heald, contributed significantly to the learning process in the elective, according to E: “Geoff himself is a very interesting professor and going through the process of certain techniques” and just the learning, wow! I recall very early on that I used to look at a negotiation as a debate where there is a very clear winner and a clear loser. I guess it was greatly informed by my experience in America whereby you look at a negotiation and there is always a winner and a loser. And it was weird to have him say “No, no, no” you are not opponents. You should rather say “my counterparts from the other side” That little subtle shift can change the dynamics of an entire negotiation.”

E commented on Dr Heald’s composure during a particularly poor class dynamic, wherein certain North American exchange students had polarised the class with their antagonistic comments. “I’m sure that Geoff must have been quite upset at certain stages with some of the comments that were made. But he remained very calm, kind of saying, “ok, ok, that’s fine” I hear where you’re coming from. I have been to the US and have interacted with negotiation professors from the US, but you also need to be aware of a different perspective and not hold on too steadfast to one style of negotiation”

5.7.4 Simulation

E’s class participated in a number of experiential simulations, the first of which was a game designed to determine the individual’s negotiating style.

“During the elective we played a game and at the end of that game the number of points that you obtained was going to reveal the type of negotiator that you were. And I think that for me it came out that I go in with a very level headed mind-set of saying, “listen, let this negotiation be a win win” When it came to the

ing my group and encouraging them to all play would all get equal points. They were all in agreement òyeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeahòand for the first three or four rounds everyone did the same thing. And at the end of the day, thatòs not the position that most people go into ò they go in and say òI want to win as much as I canòand so by the fifth round, everything just went crazy. E laughed resolutely: “You know, people looked after self and I remember being so upset. I was so upset by my team members and actually looked on it as a betrayal.ò However, after completing the exercise, E re-visited the instructions for the exercise, where it had been made clear that each participant had to look after his/her interests. He had completely missed the point. In his flawed thinking that the group needed to work to together, he had totally committed to doing what was best for the group, when he should have been looking after himself.

The largest simulation consisted of a multi-party negotiation on the Privatisation of the Port of Maputo. The simulation was divided into three phases, namely stalemate, the solution and the stakeholder relationships (the inter-agency governmental party) with two parties negotiating each phase. E wanted to be in the last team, the governmental party as he believed that they would hold the most power in the negotiation: òIf Iòm in government, I could shout at you, condemn you and thereòs very little that you can do about it. Having a father who was in politics and who was a former governor, I remember going to some of those meetings and thereòs just no power in the other guy, so itòs much better to be at this side of the table rather than the other.ò He felt that he was an obvious choice and was thus surprised that he was placed into the first team which had to negotiate the stalemate.

His group had decided that their counterparts, who were very intelligent òformidableò logical and focussed, would choose a particular person as their lead negotiator. To them, the choice was obvious, that it would be Cameron, a particularly intelligent, strong student who had consistently achieved at the top of

catch the other group off guard they should not
 instead opting for another student who was highly
 literate and articulate, but measured, softer in approach. He had found to his
 surprise that although their counterparts had been taken by surprise and had to
 amend their entire strategy, the situation did not spiral into something
 acrimonious or vicious. Instead the teams were extremely cordial to each other.

E found this somewhat peculiar, that it did not reflect the reality of a real
 negotiation between two very different counterparts: "I said, ok, we're having a
 mock negotiation, but at the end of the day, if this was a real negotiation, where
 you are having a substantial negotiation about something that has huge financial
 implications, between a company and a country, I don't think that it would be like
 this. You've got cultural differences, with Mozambicans with Portuguese
 influences and then you have a group of Englishmen. They (the Mozambicans)
 do things differently - it's not about, hey, we just sign on the paper. From a
 culture perspective, the Mozambicans would find the English offensive and would
 not trust them. There would be a lot of anger, animosity and that type of stuff.
 We, we're very similar, our cultures are similar; like you're doing an MBA and
 therefore there's a lot of common ground between us." Although E describes the
 simulation as a very good learning exercise, he felt that it was not quite "the real
 thing."

5.7.5 Double loop learning

A particularly significant learning was taken out of the simulation by E. In the
 deconstruction of the case, wherein E had expressed his concern about the
 element of "realness" given the acrimony surrounding the stalemate between the
 two opposing country counterparts, Dr Heald, in response explained to the group
 that E's point was valid, that there had been extreme acrimony between the
 negotiating parties and that the way that they had moved the negotiation forward
 was to change the teams, getting rid of the lead negotiators in each team. E had

g so wrong, you could do something quite radical
 move things forward. It takes a lot of guts and a
 lot of commitment to try and reach a solution.ò

5.7.6 Reflection and the Learning Journal

Reflecting on the realisation that his team members had stayed true to the essence of the negotiation game, whereas he had missed the ñittle partòï the essence of the game, initiated substantial introspection within E. He reflected that he was the kind of person who had always looked at the settlement that was satisfactory to both, or all, parties, but that in life that was not always the case. A behaviour pattern had emerged that mirrored so many of his previous experiences where he had been ñdupedò because he had been ñso quick to lay my cards on the table and act in good faith, whereas the fact of the matter is that people will not always reciprocate. People will always try and get what they want out of a deal.ò

E addressed a specific incident from his past, which he had written up in his learning journal, namely the purchase of his first car, as an example of this losing pattern. ñI remember that I went up to the salesman and said, look, this is the car that I want to buy. I told him how much money I had in hand and what my budget was and this salesman must have thought ñOh my goodness Christmas must have come early this year!ô And it cost me a lot of money; within two weeks I had to take the car in because there was so much wrong with it. Any you try to go back and say ñyou sold me a dudô but guess what, it's too lateé the guy just said ñyou bought the car, you signed for it and now it's yours. You never sought greater clarity, so now, that's a life lesson for you.ö E remembers being profoundly bitter, but mitigated the behaviour of both the salesman and himself with the reasoning that because the incident had happened in America, a capitalist society where people had been given the licence to look out for themselves, it was in order for him to have been duped.

E had just secured a full time position as a he reflected extensively on the negotiations surrounding this position. Mirroring other past experiences, E, realised that he had not leveraged sufficient from his negotiation and had taken the reflection on this experience into his learning journal: "You talk about anchoring your position and how, when you do into a negotiation you have to have a goal. Your single sentence test. And when I went in there it was about I just want to get something and literally sold myself short. And in response, they give you their lowest; not the fairest shake. When they said: "this is what we are prepared to give you" I just said ok, that's fine, did not even try to enter into a negotiation. It made me reflect that I had conceded much too early. And I remember saying to myself "I'm sure I'm not the first person who has done this. I am sure that there are a whole lot of people out there who have done the same, who do not actively negotiate and it comes down to not knowing your worth in the market."

5.7.7 Moments of Truth

E's moment of truth emerged when he found out a little later on that the employer had been prepared to pay him much more than the amount settled upon. They had merely begun their negotiation at a lower level and the negotiation ended early because E had accepted that first and lowest offer. E realised how critical it was to know the value in oneself, "even if it might seem to be a bit unrealistic to others" and undertook to conduct a self-audit to understand his value prior to negotiating another job offer, using the principles of stakeholder analysis and negotiation scenarios: "Examine the best case scenario and the worst case scenario and my BATNA; something that I had never done before. Before it was always "ok" Everything had been decided on "ok" based on the flawed premise that the counterpart was dealing in good faith and therefore, the contract was a fair one. But it's not the case. If they are an entrepreneur and they are trying to make as much as they can and if it involves hiring people then they are not going

Thank you might deserve. Instead they will pay you
happy with that, as in my case, they could!

E reflected on one of the principles that he had acquired from the course which often came as a surprise to the class, namely that in negotiations where negotiations appear to favour one person more than the other, both parties come out of the negotiation feeling good about the outcome, with the weaker party as committed to the outcome as the favoured party. This had been true in E's case where he had been offered a salary double the amount of what he had been earning before the MBA and so he had considered this to be acceptable, but on reflection realised that he had accepted a salary far below his market worth as an MBA graduate. It was only on speaking to others within the industry that he had realised the extent to which he had been short changed, or rather, short changed himself: "I am being shafted here." The realisation of his personal compromise had led to some work demotivation, but, since doing the course, he had realised that he had to accept responsibility for the outcome and instead of not working as hard, to instead stay true to himself and keep up his work standards.

E reflected further about the principles of liking and commitment which derive from Cialdini's Sources of Influence (Cialdini 1984) and which had resonated with him. Because he had always considered himself to be a people's person, who placed a lot of emphasis on developing harmonious relationships; it was very interesting for E to learn that liking was considered to be the least effective source of influence as it creates a superficial commitment. The link between likeability and effectiveness was extremely tenuous and often, "even as much as we might not like certain types of people, they are often the most effective."

As a student of History, E had always drawn on the examples of great leaders of the past, who had been authoritative, but had also got on so well with their colleagues and subordinates and were therefore able to arouse commitment, because of the relationships that they had built with people. Dr Heald had

beyond that simplistic thinking about liking, but
 s that worked in conjunction with liking to arouse
 support.

For E, commitment and consistency had a strongly logical dimension: "I've always thought that if you have all your ducks in a row and your logic is flawless, then you can argue a point and will always be able to convince people, in anything that you do. But, if you try to be like a 'smarty-pants' then people will oppose you, just because of that. They might think that you're onto something, but just because you are putting in a condescending manner, or if you're just trying to show your intellectual superiority then they will try and cut you down to size. E points out the importance of linking logic in commitment and consistency to flexibility of approach: "When you meet with senior people who want stuff, who want logic, who want to see your train of thought, then they might appreciate an intellectual approach, but if you're dealing with someone much lower down and you come out and try and impress them with your supposed intellect, then you will not get very far." On reflection E realised how often he had been guilty of these errors "I've been guilty of this and I've been guilty of that. You see a lot of your past mistakes."

E recalled Dr Heald's advice at the outset of the course to focus on elements in each lecture that had resonated within them and for E, the principles that had resonated more than others were Cialdini's Sources of Influence, interests and positions and the importance of anchoring one's position within a negotiation, negotiating styles and scenarios. He had found it a very useful learning exercise to sit down at the end of the day and note down the key learning from each day that really stood out. Whilst he was cognisant of the fact that they had to "put stuff down because it was for marks, but still there are certain things that stick with you as you move forward, for example, from here on now, I know for a fact that I will never go into a negotiation and lay all my cards on the table. Never. Ever. Dot!"

During the first day's session, Dr Heald had chosen E as his counterpart in an Active Listening exercise. Dr Heald adopted the role of a foreign journalist and E, the role of foreign observer on Thabo Mbeki's policy of quiet diplomacy towards Zimbabwe. During the exercise, Dr Heald had used deliberate provocation to try and unsettle E. E commented that Dr Heald's impression of him prior to that engagement was that he was quiet, unassuming, perhaps not a formidable debating or negotiating counterpart. However, E had excelled in both junior and senior debating at school and university and was therefore able to hold his ground and keep his composure even though Dr Heald was deliberately trying to rile him. As part of his strategy, Dr Heald called E 'an apologist for a fascist state' which had the class literally gasping in shock.

Instead of responding with equal vehemence and emotion, E had brought his previous debating experience into the class, during which they learnt that the person who becomes emotional loses the debate 'they have got you.' He had called for calm, and to move away from the personal, placing emphasis instead on the matter at hand which was quiet diplomacy. He had received extremely positive feedback from the class, further endorsed by the lecturer who had commented: 'I thought that you would be so shocked because I kept throwing grenades at you and that you would go out on a tangent, but you kept your composure.'

It was from that particular incident, where E did not lose his cool, that he became framed as 'a very impressive young man.' E felt that this positive framing extended to the feedback he received after the filmed simulation of the Privatisation of the Port of Maputo case: 'Well, I think by then, Geoff had really made his mind up concerning me and had decided that E is a very impressive man. Full stop.'

...has been his harshest critic and had focussed on many vocal fillers between sentences during the simulation, instead of being comfortable with the silence. "Silence is a really powerful tool when you are talking and I remember criticising myself. And Geoff was looking at me with this really peculiar expression of "Ok, criticise yourself if you really want to!" He commented that I had been focussing too much on tiny issues instead of affirming all of the areas in which I had done so well, such as posture and body language and tone which were all perfect; but there I was, nit picking, which I think comes from my toastmasters training."

E had found the feedback useful and that it had reinforced, once again, that he was his own harshest critic and would always be and that he should not criticise himself too much, just for the sake of criticism. Instead, he should celebrate his success and give himself credit for that which had been done well. Focus on the positive instead of only the negative.

5.7.9 A Community of Learners

Amongst the students on that particular negotiation elective, was a number of international students who were participating in an exchange programme between their school and the WBS. They included students from Chicago Booth, Cornell's Johnson School of Management, Fuqua at Duke, HEC, UNC at Chapel Hill's Kenan Flagler School of Business and the University of Indiana's Kelley Business School. E related a particularly interesting dynamic that emerged in the class: "We had a lot of American students in the class who came from Ivy League schools and it was natural that they would have a different take on things. They believed that they were coming from superior institutions and that they had been exposed to much more and that they had been taught by their professors who were world leaders and so they kept on throwing in comments such as "I don't agree with this, or that" and "this is what we've been taught and what not" And it was a case of us saying to them, look, you've come from

experience and learn something new and you are
 the experience that you have had all along in your
 schools in the US.

E remembers one particular student who fought against everything in the class:
 It's funny, you always remember the people who are way off! She had
 completely dismissed the dimension of learning from one another which was the
 African approach. E relates how one of the students from the part time class
 went to speak to her as he had found her behaviour deeply polarising for the
 entire class. He told her that she was so hostile, never listened to anything or
 anyone, always thought she knew best. When people give you constructive
 criticism you take it in such a bad light And I took my hat off to him for
 confronting her as no-one was sure of how she would react to being approached
 and given that feedback. But he was trying to tell her that we were all in the class
 to learn from one another and not to try and have a competition to prove who was
 more intellectually superior to the other.

E, in expounding upon the class dynamic between the Northern American
 students and the class commented upon the inability amongst the American
 students in the class to make a mental shift and embrace a new learning.
 Instead of observing and listening before commenting, many of them just shot
 from the hip, saying that the lecturer's approach was wrong. The lecturer had
 made a comparison between the negotiation styles of North American and
 African negotiators which the American students had dismissed as utter
 nonsense. Only one student concurred with the lecturer, saying that his
 characterisation of the North American negotiation style was spot on i a win-
 lose rather than a win-win approach. E refers to his love of sports, particularly
 those in the US which are characterised by professional agents who typically
 negotiate contracts for their clients, where it's never about win-win. It's all about
 how I can get as much money as possible; it's never about what's best for a

ould be the after effects of getting a deal that is so
.ò

E drew on his experience living in the US as further evidence of this apparent fixed mental model: 'In the US you meet many people who are outgoing, who always want to get their point across, to get in the last word, no matter what. Even when there is no truth to what you are saying, they won't even listen; instead they will just fire away and say 'no, no, no, no, I'm right.' E attributed this to certain cultural differences between continents and was interested in this dynamic which had not surfaced during any of the other courses that he had undertaken on the MBA where, 'We all came from similar backgrounds and whilst we certainly did not agree on everything, it was never acrimonious or polarising.'

E commented on the facilitator's emphasis on the awareness of a number of different perspectives and the danger of holding on too tightly to one particular perspective, only one style of negotiating; the danger of having a fixed defensive mental model: 'We should not only talk about African or North American negotiating styles but the negotiating styles from different parts of the world. You need to be aware of this. You can't go in and say that my approach is spot on - this is how it is done and this is how I will always do it.'

E reflected again on his experiences as a student in the US: 'I remember my Finance professor telling me that you've got to do whatever you need to do to put the Mercedes in the garage at Christmas. It's all about winning. It's not about counterparts, where you should be sitting down and talking and expressing what it is that you are needing to derive from the negotiation.'

The narrative then extended to an exploration of life experiences and the importance of decisions made by multinational companies such as Coca Cola; who send their managers to Africa to receive training that is globally relevant and applicable and thereby doing create a dynamic shift in mental models. 'It's that

and that these corporate have recognised that you in America. Go and get new experiences. Learn. Force yourself to change. Because if you get entrenched in your ways and go for years and years like that, then it becomes much harder to change later on in life. But when you're still relatively young, have finished your MBA and are under thirty then you can go to a foreign country for two years and learn and come back with a new perspective.

5.7.10 Learning and Development

For E, the major learning taken from the programme was that he would never go into a negotiation without first doing research and consulting with experts if necessary. He would not naively enter into a negotiation and openly state his entire negotiation case. Instead, 'I shall keep stuff to myself and will use the negotiation period to do precisely that - to negotiate. I will use the time and not rush to make decisions because if you do that you sell yourself short.' Having understood the principle that a once off negotiation always favoured the more experienced negotiator was a key learning for E: 'You're coming in and you have no experience and so you say 'yes' and that's how it works. They know exactly what is going to happen, but you don't - I cite my car example. They get what they can and you lose out and are left mumbling - angry, hurt.'

A fixed mental model was an extremely detrimental state of mind. During the course, it became evident to the students that by defining yourself and etching that in stone, you can handicap yourself. It was necessary to be flexible and receptive to learning, because learning should never be a finite experience. Instead, on approaching every new situation, E commented on how essential it was to ask oneself 'the way that I know myself and based on the situation that I am facing, is this really the right approach.'

isolation of the importance of consulting others for consulting with colleagues during the negotiation simulations he had amended his way of working: 'I think of the negotiations that I had previously been involved in. I never consulted anyone. I never did. It's funny, even in the simulations, when you get to a stalemate, you stop, go for a breather, discuss, contact your colleagues to discuss what you have on the table. What do you think we should do? But I never did that. I went in solely by myself and I said this is what I am going to do. Just realising that it is ok to consult. It's ok to say that you don't know, instead of putting forward a macho attitude of 'I can'; I can't when you are faced with a problem that you are battling to solve. No sense in busting your head against a wall and end up with a situation where you are questioned on your deliverables but have not been able to deliver on the outcomes, because of your reluctance to consult, to bring in another perspective, new information which could have a significant impact on the outcome of what it is that you are facing.'

5.8 Respondent D

5.8.1 Background

An experienced marketing manager within the FMCG sector, D described herself as an intelligent, focussed career person, often impatient, tough minded and forthright. D was interviewed, after hours, at the Wits Business School, in the office of the researcher.

5.8.2 Orientation to Learning

D did not enjoy the experience in the Negotiation elective, finding it 'quite dry and academic'. She attributed this to a number of factors which included a very low energy level, because the elective was the last that she completed over a two

During the course a tension had emerged between work to go to university and work does not really understand; so they keep piling on the work and you are literally sitting in the class for eight hours, then going home and typing up your one-pager and then sitting down to do three hours of office work thereafter. So, your energy is quite low.

D's choice of the elective was based on her selecting a subject that was related neither to marketing nor to finance. Although her marks for finance had not been bad at all, she would have had to do literally double the amount of work in order to achieve a B symbol and so she chose the Negotiations elective from a fairly narrow choice of courses that sounded interesting and which included a fairly strong component of self-awareness i Executive Coaching, Personal Mastery, Negotiations

D commented that she had a very short concentration span and often disengaged even at work. She used a laptop computer to combat boredom and allow herself to manage her disengagement. She was aware that her partial engagement was annoying, or irritating, to others, however, in instances where she had been unable to use the laptop, she would disengage completely. She found that using the laptop in that manner allowed her to multi-task and thereby doing, remain engaged, even partially. During class, she would type up everything that she noted as relevant during the class and then translate that into a learning journal.

The class dynamic was noted as another contributing factor to D's learning defensiveness (elective classes are constituted of students from a number of the full time and part time MBA classes). She found the class to be Dead boring; so uninteresting; nobody was animated i there was not even an attention seeker. Everyone was so quiet and boring and that was part of the problem as there was no vibe between us. Poor Geoff, he must have hated teaching our class. There

...nsible person, no loud mouth i no dynamic
 ...enge me. That was such a battle for me as I
 could not see myself engaging with them as they did not energise me. They
 were the worst class that I had ever been in, particularly at that late stage when I
 was so tired and de-energised and de-aspirated and needed to feed off some
 energy. It was not that I did not like or respect the people for who they were. It's
 just that they were so boring. There was far too high a ratio of introverts to
 extroverts which really tipped the balance against us.

5.8.3 Role of the Facilitator

The respect that D held for the facilitator, Dr Heald, had gone a long way to her
 'sticking it out' 'Geoff is a clever guy, not da-la-land' clever and someone of
 credible authority and if I had to choose somebody to negotiate for me on a big
 project, then Geoff would be the guy. He's got a very approachable, flexible
 manner and people were able to interact well with him. So, part of the course
 was respecting Geoff and seeing him as an authority figure, giving the content
 that he gave us i and boy, was it a lot of content! (laughs).

Learning and Development

What so surprised D, was that despite her learning defensiveness and
 disengagement, the course had impacted so much on the way that she went
 about her work: 'During the course, I did not rate it highly, but afterwards, a lot of
 people were feeding back to me that they had noticed how much my negotiation
 style had changed i and for the better.' She attributed this change to a
 combination of the learning journal and class interaction style where 'one had to
 go through rounds of negotiations which had a huge impact on me.'

Another factor was the take home examination i an individual assignment ,
 wherein she had to interview an expert negotiator, reflect and comment on how

...ve success and what she could learn from their
ward to their stakeholder engagement, rules of
engagement, negotiating style, strategy and how they went about building a
winning case. I found myself afterwards, trying to identify the stakeholders and
even now I do that, asking myself 'Who are the stakeholders, what is the
commitment to the process?'

She referred back to a particular example from work where, due to her increased
level of awareness and understanding of the principles of negotiation, her attitude
had undergone a change: 'Even something stupid at work - my boss, who could
not manage his way out of a paper bag - he's a clever guy, but as a leader and
someone who has to apply practical skills, he has zero ability which leads to a lot
of frustration, not just from my part, but from other colleagues who report to him.
But, negotiations gave me a chance to say 'you know what, the company has
made a commitment; they have hired the person and they have to back hi up
because they are now committed to that process. All that you are going to do by
not helping him is to make the entire division look bad' and so, D felt that the
negotiations elective had impacted significantly on the way that she interacted
with her boss; assisting him to improve his time management skills and to
project himself as a leader.

Her perspective had altered in terms of her understanding of how people commit
to processes and in thereby doing would be reluctant to admit to mistakes. She
felt that this change in her perspective had started filtering through more and
more since completing the course and therefore, unlike some of the classes
where she had derived a lot of value through the work undertaken in syndicate
assignments during the course, the value of this particular course was derived,
afterwards, where 'you decide what you wish to take on from the course and how
you will go about applying it.'

Learning and development was also dependent on how you can apply it in different situations; for example, if you had a desk job with few opportunities to negotiate and you're not driving projects, then it would probably be very difficult to incorporate the learning into your work.

5.8.4 Simulation

D had been most interested in observing the different ways that each student approached the negotiation simulations, particularly with regards to their choice of negotiation teams, the styles of the different negotiators and the different negotiation approaches. She was able to learn from the success (or failure) of the particular negotiation trances: "There were various stakeholders and various rounds of negotiations and it was interesting to me how different stakeholder groups were so chaotic and others quite structured. There were some in which only one person was appointed to speak and other groups where each person was given space to come forward. And, with some groups, Geoff almost had to force some to come forward as part of their evaluation was based on the necessity for each person to come forward and speak."

In their particular group, there had been quite a significant amount of pre-planning, information gathering and then scenario planning as part of their strategy. Because she had such a strong personality it was decided that she would speak last – a deliberate strategy, although, mid-way through the negotiation, the facilitator thought that she had chosen to disappear and had queried her non-engagement. However, her group found that their approach had been particularly helpful given the rapidly changing scenarios. They had tried to mimic the way that the negotiation would actually happen in business where each person would be expected to make a contribution to the negotiation process and the subsequent decisions. Their process had been commended during the

Learning had been both affirmed and validated as

5.8.5 Reflection and the Learning Journal

D was chosen by the facilitator to be lead negotiator for her team, which had been mandated, as a powerful inter-governmental grouping, to *hire and fire as they chose*. Because she was aware of the fact that she could come across as quite hard and unapproachable, as a technique to compensate for her personality, D deliberately chose two people from the class grouping who possessed a stronger sense of ceremony, with one having quite a touchy-feely way about her. Each group was given a time limit of seven minutes to put their case across to their negotiation counterparts.

The negotiation went back and forth; back and forth between the parties and by five and a half minutes, D started to take a very hard line, basically forcing the issues at hand. The parties came to a very quick settlement. On reflection, D was concerned because she had been so hard in the final round of the negotiation. She went on to reflect on that in her learning journal – the fact that she had reverted to a part of her personality type that she had tried hard to manage out of the negotiation. She realised that it had occurred because of the situation, particularly, the stressful time constraints but was nevertheless deeply disappointed by her performance: I remember saying to myself afterwards: I can't believe that I did that!

For D, the learning journals were an important part of the reflection and learning process, as much as they were a pain to manage. Their value emanated from the reflection on what it is from the course that one would take forward into the future. In D's case, she completed a daily learning journal, but her final amalgamated journal submission was completely different. She had discarded much of her previous journals, opting instead to read through the notes that she

de, jotting down key content that resonated with
 into an order and wrote a life story about those

key points.

5.8.6 Feedback

D had addressed her reversion to my aggressive, hard self in her learning journal. Geoff (the professor and facilitator) in feedback to her, had said that she had been too hard on herself and that her actions were as a result of the fact that people had been going back and forth without reaching consensus, thereby forcing her hand in pushing for a decision. However, D felt strongly that she could have been far more approachable and therefore was not happy with her performance at all. She had received negative feedback from one of her class colleagues: "One of the guys sitting opposite to me reacted very negatively to me and I was aware of that. He said that I had been rolling my eyes which I actually had not. However, in terms of negotiations you have to be less transparent than I am which is probably why I have been no good at it."

D also commented on the objective nature of video feedback: "Because it was such an interactive process and because there were numerous rounds of negotiations, in camera, then you got to see yourself afterwards and you could see how you came across to other people, in stark, glaring colour. I think that because of that you really got to reflect on who you were and how you approached situations and for me it was a big thing to learn that if my back was cornered, I would revert to type. I had hoped that I had evolved slightly more than that, which I hadn't. Because the programme was interactive and that over the four days she had interacted extensively with her class colleagues and had built up a relationship with them, she was more willing to internalise the feedback.

D had also received negative feedback from her lecturer after the first day's learning journal submission. "Geoff commented that my learning diary was very



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And I'd rather get feedback like that it's honest

Triangulation of Findings

In this chapter the experiences of the sample group are cross analysed and comparisons are made to the literature review. The researcher is cautious about applying any generalisation derived from the group to the general population. Instead, generalisations are made about the sample group whilst remaining focussed on the individual narrative. In keeping with phenomenographic research, this study is concerned equally with the similarities and the variances in the experiences of the sample group.

6.1 Graphical Representation of Findings

DISPLAYED THEME	RESEARCH RESPONDENT							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Ni	R	N	G	T	K	E	D
Orientation to Learning								
Second Order Experience								
Simulation								
Reflection + Learning Journal								
Moments of Truth								
Feedback								
Learning & Development								
Single loop, Double loop + Deutero Learning								
Role of the Facilitator								
A Community of Learners								

Table 3: Graphical representation of results

6.2.1 Orientation to Learning

In general the research sample showed a high level of receptiveness to learning, with N, D and R being the particular exceptions.

Ni had hoped to develop his ability to articulate his thoughts in a more cohesive, impactful manner and improve on his general work performance and opportunities for promotion. He was therefore looking for that moment when I could reflect on myself, take what I learnt and put it together; because I wanted to change. This was something that I was personally ready for.

Similarly G enrolled for the course because he was deeply aware of the need for negotiation skills in his professional career as a management consultant. He was seeking an improvement in his ability to articulate and present his viewpoint in order to come across as more compelling. E had selected the course because of its reputation as an excellent MBA programme, but demonstrates a high level of receptiveness to what he assumed at the outset would be a useful application in both his personal and professional life: it should be fun; this should be a good experience.

The above provides support for Malinen (2000), Smith (1987) and Mezirow (1991) who opine that a direct causal relationship exists between the level of significance that a learner attributes to any experience and the learning that they will derive from that experience.

Although N's orientation to learning was positive at the outset, he developed a distinct defensiveness during the early part of the programme as he became uncomfortable with the deeply reflective nature of the discourse, expressed in the statement: "On the first day, I thought 'What's wrong with this guy? I felt I was at a shrink's office.'" Kolb, Rubin and McIntyre's (1971) Learning Styles Framework

9b) could provide some insight into N's reaction: as an 'assimilator-converger' and 'abstract conceptualiser' whose learning preference is for practical technical problem solving, where intuition and thinking are the preferred mode of problem solving; as opposed to personal problem solving that requires a strong feeling mode. N's choice of research dissertation corroborates the above. He undertook a study that examined Black Economic Empowerment transactions which required the application of various analytical models to elucidate results.

However, N did not shy away entirely. He had chosen the elective because he wanted a 'deeper experience' and his learning emerged in the private domain where he could reflect more privately on the day's experiences. The Honey & Mumford model of experiential learning, which recognises and therefore incorporates human behaviour into a Learning Styles Questionnaire (Honey and Mumford, 1982, 1983 and 1992), provides another insight into N's earlier defensive stance in the public domain, versus the change in the private domain.

As an analytical, cautious and observant 'reflector-theorist' according to the learning modes that characterise Honey and Mumford's experiential learning model (Honey and Mumford 1982, 1983 and 1992), N would naturally prefer processes that are clear, unambiguous unemotional and structured; concerned with the assimilation and integration of data, rather than the personal components of any task. The Negotiations elective presents students with situations that are often ambiguous and, at first, unstructured and hence N's discomfort. However, in the comfort and privacy of his own home, N could create the structure for his thoughts and action; internalise his class experience and reflect on his learning.

D's lack of receptiveness towards the programme had little to do with her academic or professional confidence. Instead, her defensiveness was as a combined result of learning fatigue at the end of her MBA; a class dynamic that

no vibe between usé no dynamic to energise or particular tension between professional and academic priorities: ñYou try to juggle work, taking off work to go to óarsity and work does not really understand; so they keep piling on the work and you are literally sitting in the class for eight hours, then going home and typing up your one pager and then sitting down to do three hours of office work thereafter. So, your energy is quite low.ò

The relationship between MBTI preference and learning preference, as per Myers-Briggs (1975), Lewis and Margerison (1979) and Kolb (1984) provide insights into D's behaviour: given her highly extroverted personality, D naturally gains her energy from interaction with others and where this was non existent, she became de-aspirated and demotivated. Further, D's expedience in her choice of elective subjects (she chose from a fairly narrow band of subjects that remained after her exclusion of all modules that were marketing or finance related; instead of choosing those that would have a particular learning significance) might also have influenced her level of receptiveness. The above corroborates the assertions by Smith (1987) Mezirow (1991) and Malinen (2000) that significance is a necessary precondition to learning.

Kolb would describe D as an ñAccommodatorò (Kolb 1984) with a natural inclination towards concrete experience and active experimentation, where collaboration with others in an intuitive manner is the dominant mode of learning. The Honey & Mumford model (1982, 1983 and 1992) provides for an accurate insightful classification of D as an outgoing, open minded ñPragmatist-Activistò one who thrives on the new and the unknown - situations free of repetition and routine, wherein she would be able to try out new behaviours. This might describe why, although defensive in her orientation to learning, D embraced the opportunity for experiential simulation with enthusiasm.

the Negotiations elective, concerned that the to be "difficult". She did not expound upon what

she meant by "difficult" but the researcher opines that this might have been due to the reputation of the course as being one that involved extensive qualitative analysis and application, introspection and reflection. This might have been daunting to R, given her lack of undergraduate qualifications. R might have felt more at risk in a highly academic context, having mentioned in her narrative that she was a student whom everyone thought would never make it through the MBA, thereby corroborating Rogers's (1969, 1989) emphasis on self-protection and the need for discernment regarding the safety of the community of learners in which a student could experience trust and safety.

It appears that once her initial apprehensions were overcome, R moved into the "Pragmatist" mode of learning explicated by Honey and Mumford (1982, 1982 and 1992). She became very excited about the possibility of experimenting with new ideas or theories, however preferring to behave instinctually, as opposed to being directed by cautious judgement. R's behaviour is typical of "Accommodators" (Kolb 1984, 1999a and 1999b); whose orientation is towards concrete experience and active experimentation learning mode, where the focus is on collaborative interpersonal relationships, as opposed to a technical solutions orientation.

The researcher explored R's change in her orientation to learning viz a viz the positive lecturer feedback that R had obtained from her first journal submission. R repudiated the inference that her heightened receptiveness might have been due to the praise received, saying that her receptiveness increased as a result of personal affirmation and a feeling of empowerment. However, the researcher asserts that this feeling of empowerment could well have arisen from the lecturer's feedback, thus raising questions about the role of subjectivity in experiential learning. This subjectivity is expressed in Patel's characterisation of the pedagogic approach in experiential learning as phenomenological practice.

ounded upon by van Manen (1990), Caelli (2001) who highlight the potential for phenomenological research to induce transformation via interactionism and the power imbalance that exists between a respected authority figure and a subordinate, namely researcher and respondent.

The researcher asserts that, similarly to the relationship between researcher and respondent in phenomenological research, within experiential learning there exists a transformative potential (van Manen 1990 and Caelli 2001) arising out of the 'symbolic interactionism' (Hall and Callery 2001: 269) between the facilitator and participants in the Negotiation elective. Phenomenological research also takes cognisance of the power imbalance that exists between researcher and co-researcher, a function of interactionism, as per Hall and Callery (2001).

The researcher asserts that similarly, a power imbalance exists between facilitator and participant, based on the institutional power of that facilitator, particularly if he/she is regarded as a credible authority in their field of expertise. Because meaning making is a subjective experience (Reissman 1993), influenced by interaction between facilitator and learner and between co-learners, it is important to acknowledge that this could impact on the beliefs and assumptions of the participants (Hall and Callery 2001). Therefore R's increase in receptivity to learning might well have been induced by the significance that she attached to the feedback from a person of authority, namely the facilitator.

D's narrative pertaining to her orientation to learning versus her actual learning might also provide support for the researcher's latter assertion. Despite her negative orientation to the elective, she still participated actively in the experiential exercises and worked consistently on her homework assignment. D attributes the decision to 'stick it out' to her opinion of Dr Heald as 'a clever guy' someone of credible authority. So, part of the course was respecting Geoff and seeing him as an authority figure, giving the content that he gave us.

the convergence and variance in the theme of learning. Further, this causal relationship is strongly influenced by learning styles and preferred learning mode, which are impacted by personality and behaviour. In analysing the theme pertaining to the role of the facilitator in experiential learning (section 6.2.8), it became evident that the facilitator's thinking, learning and behavioural modes also impact on the learning context. Consequently, the preferred learning styles or modes of learning, as well as personality and behaviour of both facilitator and participants in any experiential learning situation need to be considered.

Riding (1997), Kay (1997), Robotham (1999) Sadler-Smith and Riding (1999), Felder and Spurlin (2000) and Bull (2004) advise experiential learning instructors to give learners insight into their own learning preferences and learning styles and highlight their potential strengths and weaknesses. The researcher asserts that this would have proved invaluable to D, who whilst being naturally self aware of her strengths and weaknesses, did not have a specific framework of understanding for improved self-awareness and personal mastery. The researcher further asserts that in order to create an optimal experiential learning engagement, accompanied by higher levels of introspection and reflection, participants should first undergo a learning style and work style assessment; thereby ensuring a higher level of awareness and consequent responsiveness in the learning process.

6.2.2 Second Order Experience

Second order experience and the reflection on the significance of that experience presenting at the juncture between past experience and future learning is a persistent theme in the narratives of Ni, R, N, K and E.

Mezirow 1991) that challenged the established birth of his first child, an event about which both he and his wife were most excited. According to Finnbogadottir, Crang, Svalenius and Persson (2003) it is quite common for expectant fathers to experience a surge in feelings of responsibility; a heightened desire to become a better person- to seek knowledge and become more effective, more successful, particularly in the financial arena. The significance of this second order experience would have required Ni to critically evaluate his frame of reference in light of the challenge and recognise the gaps in his knowledge and skills that were impeding his progress to his idealised state of being (Mezirow 1991, Revans 1985 and Knowles1990) thereby providing support for Kolb's explication of the transformational nature of certain life events (Kolb 1984).

For K, too, the second order experience was a positive event - an international business trip to China. Geoff stressed the importance of personal relationships and he related the example of 'Guanchi' which is the Chinese term for a network of relationships. We had just been to China and it was really interesting to hear about that being spoken of as a negotiation concept. That really increased our interest in learning more.

Contiguous to the above, was the sale of K's home. The significance of the learning experience obtained in the Negotiations elective was enhanced by the application of negotiation scenarios into the simulations, particularly BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement). K developed a heightened awareness of the point at which she would be prepared to exit the negotiation, balanced against a perspective of what constituted a fair offer versus the danger of greed. This provides further evidence of the causal relationship between experiential significance and learning as per Smith (1987), Mezirow (1991) and Malinen (2000).

could also be a negative event (Mezirow 1991),
 nal. For both R and N, the second order
 experience pertained to difficult employment transitions. R had been pressed to
 resign from a position, even though she had not been at fault. Deeply aware of
 her "frightness" but not wanting to enter into a protracted labour dispute, R
 identified strongly with one of the cases in the Negotiations case, "The Sorry
 Case of Mr Schwabe" which pertains to a painful career ambush.

The capacity of second order experience to impact on the individual's holistic
 sense of being (Hanson 1972, Hamlyn 1978 and Elder 1980) is reflected in R's
 words: "I was miserable, I promise you. I did not know why I was doing the
 MBA." Working through the Schwabe case and reflecting on the learning derived
 from that experience gave R much needed closure on the event and allowed her
 to reposition her value in light of what she still had to offer ("so much"). R was
 able to surface and challenge the assumptions that she held regarding her
 personal worth and adapt her previous mental model, as per the deep learning,
 or breakthrough learning, explicated by Argyris and Schon (1978) and Senge
 (1990). On internalising the second order experience, reflecting on that,
 challenging and then reconstructing her personal framework, R was able to make
 sense of the world and work around the fact that although "someone like me
 should be respected" the world does not work like that. We all don't have
 integrity and principles.

From that time onwards, R positivity surged and the MBA semester became
 "really enjoyable for me. Doing the Negotiations elective gave me a reason" it
 validated why I was doing the MBA." R's experience and response to the
 Schwabe case provides support for Dewey's (1951) assertion that certain
 experiences may act as learning impediments; as expressed in R's initial learning
 defensiveness; whereas the appropriate application, followed by introspection
 and reflection on second order experience within the learning milieu, can act as a
 catalyst for learning.

son (1972), Hamlyn (1978), and Elder (1980) on experience. A change of management at work that occurred concurrently with the Negotiations elective challenged N's previously held mental model and created an unsettling break in his defensive protection of that model. Providing support for the assertions that it is through reflection and critical evaluation of a particular frame of reference and challenging of mental models (Argyris and Schon 1978) and (Senge 1990); a redefinition of a problem (Mezirow 1991) and transactional interplay between expectation and experience that learning occurs (Kolb 1984); N realised that a redefinition of his expectations, and a rigorous challenging of the negative manner in which he had framed his new bosses resulted in his moving from 'they hate me' to 'we hear you'. He was able to acknowledge how a negative attitude had led to his inability to identify the opportunities that a management change brought to the company.

For E, the second order experience described in his narrative was one of mixed emotion – positive at securing a full time work opportunity and then, negative when he reflected on the less-than-optimal package that he had negotiated (or rather, failed to negotiate) for himself: 'When I went in there I sold myself short.' Reflecting upon the manner in which this experience mirrored so many others in his life, E was forced to challenge his mental model (Mezirow 1991 and Senge 1990), critically evaluate the manner in which he had been responding to situations and recognise the steps that he would need to take to redefine an optimal outcome, as per Revans (1985). For E: 'When you go into a negotiation you have to have a goal. Your single sentence test.'

In support of the major experiential learning theorists, the research findings affirm the transformational potential of second order experience in experiential learning. Further, the findings provide support for Dewey (1951) on the importance of educative experiences which act as learning catalysts such as those applied in the Negotiations elective.

The simulations constitute the contrived second order experiences that are applied in the experiential learning milieu in order to optimise educative potential.

Ni approached the simulations with a sense of trepidation. His trepidation derived from not knowing what to expect in the simulation compounded by a lack of self belief in his ability to perform: 'I was probably the worst negotiator or presenter that was in my class.' R completely underestimated the negotiation simulation, resulting in the devastating failure of her team's negotiation case: 'there was a simulation we did, where we were divided into groups and had to negotiate and I got caught with my pants down!'

G, on the other hand, was most comfortable with the simulations, which he attributes to the nature of his professional role. As a senior management consultant, engagements with clients form the daily focus of his work. Further, he had previously undergone extensive in-house training, which made use of experiential learning techniques, particularly simulations, and he was therefore sensitised to the experiential learning mode.

R's underestimation of the negotiation simulation arose out of a flawed assumption that it was just a 'playful simulation' and that no-one in the class would take it too seriously: 'I think that I did not take it too seriously because the MBA guys were always fooling around and I thought that I was negotiating with the jokers and that they were going to treat me as they had always done and was I ever mistaken!'

Evidenced in R's reframing of assumptions is the transactional interplay between expectation and experience presented by the experiential learning exercise (Kolb 1984) and a recognition by the individual of ignorance, inability or inadequacy – gaps in knowledge or skill – which are impeding progress to an ideal state of being (Revans 1985 and Knowles 1990).

Regarding whether the simulation was 'real' or not
 ents. . For R: 'In a playful simulation it became
 very clear to me that when it comes to this, even if it is a class simulation or
 whatever, you battle to the end and make sure that you achieve the desired
 outcome. It became so real. G had commented: 'It's a game, a game and you
 know it's a game because it's not a real life situation, however, he contradictorily
 referred to the simulation as 'the actual simulation'. T referred to the simulations
 as 'contrived' but that it became very real when you are dealing with issues of
 pride and integrity. These are things that people take very seriously indeed. He
 cited another example of a negotiation game where a particular student had
 broken ranks with the group, resulting in that group not communicating with the
 student for an entire day because they felt so betrayed. 'Even if it is in the context
 of a game, it is akin to cheating. It is something very serious and one cannot turn
 around and say that it's only a game because one has broken the rules of that
 game.'

E reflected in his narrative: 'Ok, we're having a mock negotiation, a view which
 he remained committed to; although he could not dispute the learning value of
 the exercise, commenting that it was a very good learning experience even
 though it was not quite 'the real thing'. All of the other respondents endorsed the
 learning value of the negotiation simulation.

The researcher however purports that, despite the respondents' reservations
 about whether the simulations were real or not, the narratives provide evidence
 that, in the simulations, all of the respondents demonstrated behaviours that were
 aligned to their previously held assumptions and conceptions about people and
 situations. On reflection post simulation the respondents were able to identify the
 flaws in their thinking and behaviour that emerged during the simulations,
 providing proof that these simulations had elicited real behaviour. Furthermore,
 the researcher acknowledges that whilst the simulations are contrived, during the
 process of enacting their roles in the simulations, the participants lost their self-

mersed in the activity in a such a manner as to and the behaviours emerging as true to the behaviours that would normally be evidenced by respondents in similar situations.

The researcher further asserts that the manner in which the students surfaced their confusion about whether the simulations were real, or not, endorses the subtle power inherent in contrived second order experience. It also provides researchers with an understanding of how the process of breakthrough learning is induced by experiential learning activities such as case study simulations, as per Marquardt (2000) and Mintzberg (2004). Marquardt refers to the ability of experiential learning to "see and understand the concomitant change that is happening inside themselves" and "enhances the capacity to dig below the surface layer of perception and examine taken-for-granted assumptions and values" (Marquardt 2000:235), whilst Mintzberg (2004: 223) credits the experiential learning milieu with the ability to "allow students to reflect on their experiences, uncover the assumptions brought to bear on their actions, reframe their assumptions on the basis of theory and practice and then test out new actions with their associated skills."

Ni and G were most pleased with their performance in the simulations. Given his previous reservations, Ni was particularly surprised at his accomplished performance in the simulation and was able to acknowledge that he did possess ability; but had neither understood nor appreciated it: "Having gone through the process instils that confidence in making yourself much more aware of what your abilities actually are. What the key fundamentals and subsequent learning of the negotiation process are and putting that into practice in that closed environment brings out the confidence in you and makes you understand the process a lot more."

...e what worked and what did not work going
...le is that when going into a deal there are certain hidden factors that you don't necessarily see the at influence the outcome of the negotiation. The congruence between case study simulation and various strategies that G had been planning to implement, endorse Knowles (1984), Lawrence (1989), Merriam (1991) and Malinen (2000) in their questioning of whether and how second order experience can be used and balanced in order to elicit personal significance, learning and development.

For T, the value of the simulations was in their ability to transfer rarefied concepts into a tangible example that generated a broader understanding. The use of the active listening engagement challenged T to reflect once again on a pattern of self-limiting behaviour that he had exhibited, that being the tendency to drift off and not listen when people were speaking. This endorses the capacity of second order experience in the process of unlocking previously defensive mental models as purported by Hanson (1972), Hamlyn (1978) and Elder (1980). Furthermore the above supports Argyris and Schon (1978), Senge (1990) and Restine (1997) on the value of the ability to reflect on thinking both during and post learning in action.

T's feelings of guilt arising out of a negotiation settlement where he had secured a beneficial outcome for his client, to the detriment of the negotiation counterpart: 'I felt guilty; felt that I had been a bit disingenuous' demonstrates the ability of experiential learning to facilitate the development of self-awareness supports Argyris and Schon (1978), Senge (1990), Marquardt (2000) and Mintzberg (2004) on the importance of utilising experience and consequent reflection as a tool to surface and challenge previously held assumptions, thereby resulting in the construction of a more appropriate behavioural framework.

For D and K, the value of the simulation derived from the interaction between the community of learners as defined by Rogers (1989) and between the facilitator

D was most interested in observing others and the success or failure of particular negotiation teams: "It was interesting to me how different stakeholder groups were chaotic and others quite structured." D, as team leader, had chosen a particular strategy a particular strategy that proved to be successful; an affirmation of their expectation of the outcome (Kolb 1984). However, as mentioned elsewhere, D had been most disappointed at her reversion to a harsh and uncompromising approach, thereby endorsing the value of the simulation or applied second order experience; where the second order experience presents as a problem of threatening nature which requires an appropriate solution (Revans 1985 and Knowles 1990) in the development of self-awareness and personal mastery (Senge 1990).

K was surprised at the competitiveness that developed within the class negotiation, but was even more surprised at the fact that everyone appeared to be happy with the outcome of the negotiation. The latter she attributed to the difference in values and expectations of the players within the negotiation "their mental models: "There were so many interests and positions, that what it required was not to just achieve what you thought was best when you set out, but rather, to look in as much detail into the entire situation around that negotiation." K was also fascinated by the relationship between power and negotiations that emerged during the simulations "I really enjoyed the fact that mediocrity imbued with institutional power trumps a brilliant negotiator every time. You need to learn where true power lies in a negotiation and then you can use the judo tactics to your advantage."

From T, D and K's observations and comments, the researcher is able to infer the value of the simulation in breakthrough learning and the development of personal mastery, where the assumptions, biases and presuppositions that underpin various mental models are questioned and evaluated (Knowles, 1990 and Senge 1990).

simulation catalysed breakthrough learning for E who with an assumption about the negotiating team's cohesiveness, harmony and interest. The outcome for E was one of deep disappointment on witnessing his group's pursuance of self-interest: 'I remember being so upset. I was so upset by my team members and looked on it as a betrayal.' However, on revisiting the remit, E had to clarify his presenting reality and interrogate the gaps in this understanding of what was needed with regard to his skills, competence or knowledge in order to cope with change and complexity.

The value of experiential learning pedagogy in catalysing deep learning becomes evident in the manner that E takes action within the simulation and then reflects on the consequence of that action in his narrative. In E's case, he realises that his assumptions were based on his incorrect understanding of the case's remit and therefore, as a consequence of this error, his actions were inappropriate in achieving a successful outcome. In so doing, E endorses the explanation given by Argyris and Schon (1978) and Senge (1990) on the process by which breakthrough or transformational deep learning is created via reflection and challenging of previously held assumptions. Further, in E's re-organisation and re-interpretation of experience; breakthrough learning and growth in self-awareness and personal mastery; management of mental models and individual transformation arising from the experiential simulation, the researcher finds support for the value of applied second order experience as expounded by Argyris and Schon (1978), Revans (1982, 1985), Kolb (1984), Senge (1990), Knowles (1990) and Mezirow (1991).

6.2.4 Reflection and the Learning Journal

The eight co-researchers all engaged in the active dimension of experiential learning, namely reflection; elaborating on and differentiating previous meaning schemes in order to either build upon or affirm them as per Mezirow (1991). Within their narratives Ni, R, N, G, T, K, E and D reflected on their previous

periences, the successes and shortcomings of the Negotiation programme.

Ni had been continuously overlooked for work promotions, but had not been able to understand why he had not been considered. He had realised that he was continuously on feedback but prior to undertaking the course did not have a sense of the fundamental skills in business that he was lacking. As per Caple and Martin (1994) and Restine (1997), through post experiential reflection and journaling during the Negotiation programme, Ni had been forced to interrogate his deficiencies. He reflected on the underlying logic behind transactions; trying to place himself in those negotiations to objectify his performance and recognised a number of mistakes that he had been making, which immediately spurred him on to change. 'When you have to sit down and critically evaluate yourself, it gets really important. It allows you to reflect, to introspect and to ask what have you done that could change it how you could change yourself.'

R, N and G displayed an initial resistance to the reflective component of the course whilst the other respondents displayed a keen reflexivity. The researcher suggests that this might be attributable to differences in personality; where R, N and G are introverted and K, E and D extroverted. Although T is also an introvert, he is a highly intellectual person with extensive media experience therefore he would display a greater ease with remote and painful introspection that could present in social or qualitative engagement. Honey and Mumford's model (1982, 1983 and 1992) would ascribe the preferred learning mode of strongly assimilative Reflector/Theorist to T. T, K, E and D reflected on their experiences in detailed, expressive and expansive language, drawing on specific examples to illustrate their reflections.

R described feelings of insecurity about personal revelation and had displayed a certain resistance to the reflection component of the elective – fearing that it would be quite difficult. In the notion of self-protection and the need for

ty of the community of learners, as defined by finds an answer to R's initial reticence. Going into the Negotiations elective, she felt unsafe in a class of students whom she assumed to be highly intelligent and competent, particularly in comparison with her. In her narrative she refers to herself as the person whom everyone assumed would never get through the MBA and she was therefore anxious about surfacing possible inadequacies relating to her academic ability or performance in class.

However R found the reflective component to be ultimately satisfying as it had drawn together so many things that she had learnt on the MBA. She expressed the desire to conduct further research into the various 'negotiation cases' of her own life: 'It was like writing my own biography. I could relate to every case that was used in class

Similarly to R, N, a deeply private person, was at first extremely uncomfortable with the reflective component of the course. He felt as if he was in a psychologist's consulting rooms, revealing information about areas in his life that had always been 'no go zones'. He discovered, however, in his private moments of reflection, that there were truths that he needed to face and admit to, to challenge these, to challenge himself and ultimately 'to be true to himself.' Concurring with Rogers (1969), as cited in Kirschenbaum and Henderson (1989: 303), he admits the need to 'state my own uncertainties, to try to clarify my puzzlements, and thus to get closer to the meaning that my experience actually seems to have.' The learning journal had provided him with a structured mental framework for his reflection, into which 'different levels of experience could be tapped into.'

Whilst G did not mind writing the journal, he resented having to hand it in for marks, as he was then required to 'write a whole lot of stuff.' Nevertheless, he found it useful to reflect at the end of each day about the issues that he was

how he could apply his classroom learning to those who could find greater meaning from his work and thereby doing so become more effective. He endorses Mintzberg's (2004) view that the classroom represents the juncture between the manager's natural experiences and the conceptual teaching undertaken.

G acknowledged the variance between the perceptions and learning of the participants in the programme: 'Each person takes out different things. It is amazing – absolutely amazing – what people record as key learning from a course – all from different perspectives. If you wanted to go through someone's learning journal you would come up with so many different documents depending on the significance.' In saying this, G endorses Reissman's (1993) view that the meaning that individuals derive from experiential learning is subjective, by virtue of the qualitative nature of the researched phenomenon.

T's reflection on a specific example of previous patterns of behaviour, during which he acknowledges the inappropriateness of his tone and demeanour during a particular altercation, supports the assertions by Senge (1990) and Mezirow (1991) that the most important learning derives from direct experience, through taking action, observing the consequences and reconstructing one's interpretation of experience in order to guide one's future action. T: 'On reflection, what I should have done was to take an entirely different stance, an active listening stance, apologise and ask him to explain what had happened that had so angered him. I should have let him speak and speak as long as he needed to.'

T's narrative provides support for Restine (1997) on the value of the active dimensions of comprehension and cognition in learning, namely reflection, interpretation and meaning making. For Restine (1997), reflection on experience is the most important andragogic tool, as it presents the cognitive process of interpretation and meaning making from which learning and development

Further, it provides the researcher with insight research problem, namely how do students experience the phenomenon of experiential learning within the Negotiation Elective? This how therefore refers to the process of knowledge acquisition in the experiential learning milieu.

K, similarly to T, reflected on previous failures, more specifically related to the negotiations surrounding the sale of her home. Through reflection she was able to conclude that this was due to an unrealistic expectation of the market value of her home which led to an inappropriate greed. This had been fed by an avaricious estate agent, who had inflated the value of K's home in order to secure the sales mandate. K also reflected on previously inappropriate behaviour in the context of her employment: 'I think that I jumped into an authority role and I was a little too blaming and judgmental with them - not letting them get away with it and not moving on. I think that I wanted them to feel some pain first. Clearly, it was the wrong thing to do.'

For E, reflection on various life experiences induced by the painful betrayal of his team members during the negotiation game highlighted his previous inability to pick up on the nuanced or hidden 'little parts'. As with T and K, he reflected on the repetitive pattern of his 'duping' - citing the examples of his first car purchase, as well his securing of a full time position after completing his MBA. E further extended his reflection on this pattern of behaviour to his unwavering commitment to the weakest principle of influence - liking (Cialdini 1984) - and how his natural warmth and desire to maintain harmonious relationships resulted in him being an easy target for manipulation.

D, being aware of her tendency to come across as 'hard and unapproachable' had deliberately chosen a negotiating team whose soft skills were quite pronounced. However, timing constraints resulted in her reverting to a pattern of behaviour that she had thought was under control. She reflected about her utter

ence. Although displaying a greater awareness of
 her own negative behaviour pattern that the
 negotiation simulation had been able to wrest.

T, K and E and D's re-construction of meaningful interpretation and growth in self-awareness and emotional maturity corroborates Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (1955, 1991a & 1991b), which proposes that people organise their experiences through the development of personal constructs or opposing dimensions of meaning, from which people anticipate and predict patterns of behaviour and world events. This Construct theory provides for a reconstruction of alternative possibilities for experience, where existing constructs have proved to be illogical, distorted, un-useful or unsatisfying. Their growth of self-awareness and emotional maturity provides support for the ability of experiential learning to catalyse change through reflection on action and reassertion of new mental models, as per Argyris and Schon (1978) Senge (1990) and Restine (1997).

The questioning and subsequent re-positioning of T's ingrained assumptions about networking which he had previously dismissed as a disingenuous activity supports the researcher's comment about his shift in mental model, as per Argyris and Schon (1978) and Senge (1990).

Journaling was an emotive and often "painful" introspective process for T, echoing the deep and private introspection of N, who had previously avoided, or evaded, an objective presentation of his reality, preferring to keep it "un-illuminated."

The above highlights the power of the critical reflective component of "surfacing and criticizing tacit understanding" (Schon 1983: 61), as a necessary function of the developing person (Brookfield 1987). Its ability to engage and empower participants in managing their life longer learning in approach of "constructive

is further evidenced. The personal experiences demonstrated by the respondents concurs with Revans (1982), Kolb (1984) Schon (1987) Sutton (1989) and Zuber-Skerrit (2002, 2005) on the link between the incorporation of a reflective component into experiential learning and the growth of self-awareness, self-management and personal mastery.

6.2.5 Moments of Truth

Ni described a flight switch moment on day one of the four day elective as he immediately confronted his inadequacies: "I could see myself grow from the first day of coming there; sitting and not talking at all, to a point where I wanted to talk a lot, to give my ideas." This could be attributed to a high level of receptiveness to learning based on the significance the Ni had attached to the learning that he expected from the Negotiation elective (Brookfield 1988) and (Mezirow 1991). Moreover, supporting Malinen (2000), Ni's internal locus of control which had been affected by his particular personal circumstances, enhanced his commitment to the learning process.

R's moment of truth emerged from learning through deeply difficult failure and her determination to never repeat that failure. Her group had given over control to the emotional immaturity of a particular team member and "it all just bombed in our faces. The comeback was vicious. That was a rude awakening for me. I was likeé .AAAAAAH; I wish that I could do that over again!" What was so unforgivable for R was that she had behaved so out of her usual tenacious character because she had failingly presumed that the simulation was a game that no-one would take too seriously and in so doing gave away her power. Losing the negotiation in such a painful way forced R to confront and challenge her inadequacy. In this instance experiential learning provided R with a holistic framework in which she could examine her personal constructs in light of new

promote effective learning in action (Kelly 1955,

N's moment of truth was a deeply private experience. N was deeply uncomfortable with the 'revelatory' atmosphere in the classroom: 'On the first day, I thought "What's wrong with this guy?" I felt like I was in a shrink's office! Sharing uncomfortable things with myself in no go zones in wife, brother in things I'm not comfortable talking about.' However, in internal reflection facilitated by reflective journaling, as per the recommendations of Varner and Peck (2003), he was forced to challenge himself and be true to himself about remarks that were not complimentary.

The emotive reflection accompanying reflective journaling elucidated a painful moment of truth for T in a vivid memory that 'shone a light on a lot of the unconscious aspects of my behaviour and my experience that I think that I had been quite happy to keep un-illuminated.' T grappled with the reasons why he had behaved so inappropriately during a particular altercation. Through a process described by Maturana and Varela (1987: 245) as one 'where the individual brings forth his/her world, with emphasis on the fact that the world that everyone sees is not the world, but a world that we bring forth with others,' T discovered that the world that he saw was not necessarily the world, but rather the world that he brought forth when interacting with others and by so doing, he was able to take responsibility for his actions: 'This caused me to look at it and say maybe that wasn't the whole picture. There was much more to it and regardless of the circumstances, I could have done a far better job than I did.' I met with the guy again a few weeks ago in and the meeting actually went really well.

This process endorses Kolb's view on the continuity of transactional learning, whereby that learning is 'grounded in experience' (Kolb 1984: 27) and provides further support for Argyris and Schon (1978) and Senge's (1990) recommendation of the use of reflection for the management of mental models.

reconstruction of his presenting reality and the extension of relational meaning endorses the constructivist nature of experiential learning where that learning is contextually viable, linguistically generated and socially negotiated, as postulated by Kelly (1955/1991a, 1955/1991b) and Chiari and Nuzzo (1996b). Kelly (1955/1991a, 1955/1991b) and Chiari and Nuzzo (1996b) would therefore support the researcher's assertion that T's correction of previously erroneous thinking that was illogical or distorted represents the constructivist approach that they describe as "limited realism" (Chiari and Nuzzo: 1996b).

Similarly to T, K's reflection on her performance in the simulations revealed some serious misgivings about her level of preparation for negotiations that resulted in failures in both her personal life and professional career. A career mother, often caught between the conflicting priorities of him and work, she was always "running around with her own stuff" and had often gone into meetings thinking that she could "wing it" resulting in negative outcomes for her team, at the very least, making greater concessions than would have derived from a prepared negotiation. The moment of truth was reflected in the words: "More haste less speed, or it often means that you get much less than you could have."

A revelation of the actual figure that his employer had been prepared to pay provided a rather painful moment of truth for E, who had merely accepted their first offer without auditing his value as an employee with an MBA. On reflection he endeavoured to never recommit that error; instead promising to undertake a self-audit before negotiating another job offer: "Examine the best case scenario and the worst case scenario and my BATNA; something that I had never done before." He also reflected extensively on the personal truth discovered during the negotiation simulations that in negotiations where negotiations appear to favour one party above another, both parties emerge content with the outcome, with the weaker party equally committed to the outcome as the stronger party.

...for him, as although he had accepted a much
 ...ve, it was still double that which he had been
 earning prior to the MBA. The realisation that he had been 'shafted' had led to
 de-aspiration and demotivation towards his work, but post Negotiation elective,
 he realised the necessity to take responsibility for his actions and use his learning
 to leverage the next move in his career echoing the process that T had gone
 through, as per Maturana and Varela (2003) and Kelly (1955, 1991a and 1991b).

6.2.6 Feedback

All of the respondents found that feedback contributed to their learning from the
 experiential simulations. N, in keeping with his deeply private, introverted
 personality, was distinctly uncomfortable with atmosphere of revelation and
 feedback in the negotiations class: 'I felt like I was at a shrink's office sharing
 uncomfortable things about myself.' Initially, K, too, was apprehensive about the
 prospect of feedback, particularly the lecture and class feedback after the filming
 of the negotiations simulation: 'Then, there was a thing that I was dreading I
 dreaded! The Video. The fact that they videoed us and that we all got to see the
 video.' Although the other respondents did not overtly express apprehension
 about receiving feedback, most were expecting to receive negative comments
 about their performance. N's expectations derived from an underestimation of
 his own value: 'I was probably the worst negotiator or presenter in my class the
 one who would shy away from confrontations or discussions.'

Both T and E are deeply self-critical and focussed on elements of their
 performance about which they were unhappy. T: 'Looking at myself on the
 video, I felt that I was quite hesitant, I wasn't very sure of myself. I was
 waffling too many pauses in my presentation.' E was self-deprecating; deeply
 critical of his use of vocal fillers, instead of 'being comfortable with the silence'
 this, despite having performed particularly well in a previous simulation (active
 listening). R, having completely underestimated the simulation was expecting 'to

who had been deeply disappointed by her

G appeared to be completely comfortable with the prospect of receiving feedback, attributable to his experiences at his employer where he had undergone extensive experiential training. For G, the feedback would provide a beneficial learning experience, a practical dimension which he could apply to real life situation. G derived benefit from both the video playback and the facilitator feedback: 'Viewing the video afterwards you can see yourself and say 'I could have done that differently. You have to know how to work with people and how your behaviour impacts on others. You can look at yourself and see how you come across,' and 'Dr Heald would come in and say 'Well, this is what you could have done differently, what you could have achieved, what worked and what did not work; the kind of things you were not considering. This is how it worked to your advantage or this is what you did that worked to the others advantage.'

R had also found the feedback most useful in distinguishing between appropriate versus inappropriate behaviour: 'Eyelid batting, asserting one's femininity, whining, because you're hoping that the student doesn't get too rough with you. Feedback allowed her to reflect on her use of feminine wiles and the projection of self as overly vulnerable and how this had denigrated her negotiation credibility; 'With Geoff leading us, I realised that there was no way; that there was no time to act vulnerable.'

However, G expressed reservation on the applicability of the feedback, which he felt were dependant on the time dimension 'if you can't apply it quite quickly then you very easily forget about some of the techniques,' and the type of work function undertaken by the participants: 'you need to have the kind of environment where you can take out those practical learnings and apply them to your day to day activities.' D concurs with G on this issue of variance; however, she did not doubt the value of feedback in reconstruing her self perception, which

the simulation. One of her class colleagues had expressed her aggression during the simulation, however, Dr Heald ameliorated this feedback in her journal commenting that she had been too hard on herself and that the particular situation which had arisen in the simulation had called for her to force her hand. He did, though, provide D with very direct feedback on her first journal submission (Geoff commented that my learning journal was very superficial), an approach which D appreciated: I rather get feedback like that i honest, objective feedback. D's comfort with the lecturer's directness might well derive from her own forthright demeanour and the fact that she came into the programme with a heightened level of self-awareness that pertained to her competence, personality and behaviour.

In agreement with G and K: it was not something that you could deny or hide from. As soon as you watch it, you can see where the issues are, because it is very objective feedback. It is there, right in front of you, on a massive screen, D concurs with the value of objectivity provided by the video feedback: you got to see yourself afterwards and you could see how you came across to other people in stark, glaring colour. K surfaced the ability of objective feedback to catalyse self-awareness: When I first saw myself on screen I thought cringe! I've got to get highlights. ! It's a tough one and people would tend to avoid it if possible, but the MBA should give us more opportunities to video ourselves and view that and get feedback. Perhaps N would have been one of those MBA students who might have avoided situations of feedback i remarks that are not complimentary; however, in his private moments of reflection, he acknowledges the inescapability of objective truth and the value of surfacing those truths and challenging himself to be true to myself.

For Ni, feedback provided a particularly satisfying experience. On viewing his performance, he was able to see that he was a highly competent, successful performer. This objective feedback, supported by positive feedback obtained both the lecturer and the class definitely helped me develop the confidence that I

ment.ò T, K, E and D extend the value of the
their self-esteem in a situation that could become
personally destructive. For K, this assisted in bringing to light the objectivity of the
video feedback: "He was honest about our negotiating styles – what we did
correctly and what needed improving upon – but he was gentle and affirming,
too. In any case it was quite evident when you saw yourself on video and he
pointed it out to you.ò

This was particularly true for T and E, whose performance in a particular
simulation had impressed everyone – except themselves! Feedback had forced
them to revisit their own self-perception. For T, the acceptance of the fact that he
had prepared well, laid out his negotiation case competently and summated very
well and that "I was being too judgemental on my style and I kind of underrated
myself,ò enabled him to reaffirm his own value and to move from "feeling pretty
bad about myself to feeling pretty good in a short space of time.ò Similarly, in E's
case, feedback enabled him to reflect on his detrimental self-criticism: "Geoff was
looking at me with this peculiar expression of "Ok, criticize yourself if you really
want to!ò He commented that I had been focussing too much on tiny issues
instead of affirming all of the areas in which I had done so well – but there I was,
nit picking.ò The lecturer had encouraged him to focus on the positive and give
himself credit for his accomplishments, something that E found useful.

An interesting dynamic emerged from the feedback theme, that being framing, or
the manner in which a person is perceived by facilitator, co-learners and self,
evidenced particularly in the cases of E and R. E had performed particularly well
in an active listening simulation during which the lecturer had deliberately done
everything possible to provoke and unsettle him – to the extent that the class had
"gasped in shockò Instead, E had held his ground, kept his composure and
articulated his clear and logical rebuttal without any emotion. This response
generated a deep respect from his co-learners and also the lecturer who called E
"a very impressive young man.ò

led to this positive framing: "Geoff had really made
had decided that E is a very impressive man.

Full stop. The researcher asserts that in the experiential learning milieu, there exists the potential for cognitive bias - the Halo Effect, described by Thorndike (1920) and Kelly's implicit personality theory (Kelly 1955, 1992) - as evidenced by the lecturer's subsequent approach to E. In this case, it was most beneficial to E, as he had always been so uncompromising on himself.

R, displays a particularly interesting reaction to framing - initially highly positive, but generating into a negative spiral of self-delusion. R's first journal submission pertained to her first negotiation experience wherein, as a teenager, she had successfully leveraged the assistance of an employer in a life threatening situation. Dr Heald requested to share R's excellent journal with the class, something that filled the previously insecure R with awe and gave her an incredible surge in esteem and confidence, a sense of purpose and meaning and hope: "I thought to myself, Oh my God, I actually did something successful and the affirmation of the values and that feedback - that feedback about that which was valued in me, but that I had not valued, because the world had been discounting me; and here someone had come and said 'listen to what this person did.'"

R became an MBA celebrity: "everyone was coming up to me and asking 'are you R?' And they came to me with this sense of purpose. People were just amazed. They could not believe that it was possible, but they realised that if I had lived through it, then obviously it was. I had never thought about how significant it was. I never thought that it could mean anything to anybody. The feedback was all the more significant to R, because it had come from a really experienced person. It encouraged R to revisit her innate potential: "For the first time I was the best in the class. And inspired her to complete her thesis and at the time of the interview, she was one of only three people in a class of more than fifty who had completed all of the requirements for the MBA: "One of

as 'ha, she probably will never finish' and now, I
 e not.

R other statements reflect, however, the reverse side of such positive feedback i
 R became overconfident and began to presume levels of competence way
 beyond the lecturer's intimation that had been based on one excellent
 submission: 'I was a star. Maybe I should become a negotiator' If I put my mind
 to writing up these cases then maybe there will be a case study booklet for
 negotiations. I could make money. What could I do now? I could probably move
 mountains?

R's experiences therefore present both the positive and negative transformative
 potential (van Manen 1990 and Caelli 2001) arising out of 'symbolic
 interactionism' (Hall and Callery 2001: 269) between the facilitator and
 participants in the Negotiation elective.

Finally, K also put forwards the case for more action learning (Revans 1982) in
 the MBA: 'it would be useful also to get some real play versus role play, taking
 the real issues from work' then you might be able to get some more valuable
 feedback from that, as well.

6.2.7 Learning and Development

Providing support for the researcher's rationale in undertaking this study, all
 respondents indicated an improvement in their learning and development, with
 respect to change in behaviour, personal mastery and personal development.

For Ni and R; having discovered a context for reflection and surfacing of
 previously underestimated performance was most empowering. In terms of Ni's
 receptiveness in general, receiving objective positive feedback was a catalyst for
 new learning. Although R felt that there was no correlation between her

The researcher asserts differently. In both Ni and R evidence and re-instated esteem encouraged them to apply their learning to new situations, including meetings, presentations and negotiations - to experiment (‘I negotiate everything, everywhere and with everyone’ - R); endorsing Loevinger’s (1976) assertion that development emerges from active environmental exchange: ‘Just knowing that there is that confidence in terms of what you’ve been through, to be able to do it a lot better’ (Ni) and ‘Previously, it would have been I better not step on this person’s toes but..It’s not about being disrespectful. It’s about getting what you need out of a situation so that you can go forward’ (R).

Ni and R evidence a classical movement through a cyclical experiential learning model as per Kolb (1984) and Honey and Mumford (1982, 1983, 1992), the dialectical dimensions of which are first explicated by Lewin (1946). This movement can be expressed by the following: concrete experience → observation and reflection → abstract conceptualisation → experimentation. More importantly, the experiential learning engagements heightened both R and Ni’s self awareness and their ability to influence and impact others - therefore , the researcher asserts that they demonstrated personal mastery as per Senge (1990), Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002) George (2003) and Gill (2006).

The examples of Ni and R provide further support for Dewey’s experiential continuum (Dewey 1938). Ni: ‘This week I was involved in a discussion. I brought out a lot of those clues that we had learnt in the process - trying to understand who they were and what they were about and what they were trying to get out of it and what we were there for and it made the process a lot easier. I was a lot more comfortable about taking control of that meeting, putting it out there, whereas, prior to the Negotiations elective, I would never have done that,’ and R: ‘I was more confident about the details - I learnt so much about how I could manage my expectations and life better - there is also hope for the future - when the bottom falls out, they will have to come to individuals like us.’

evidenced by Ni and R differs. Ni's learning is behaviour or response to behaviour), related to his efficiency - or single loop; whereas R's learning displays many of the characteristics of high-level learning (Fiol and Lyles 1985) or double-loop learning (Argyris and Schon 1978) which is questioning, challenging and evaluative and therefore associated with effectiveness and results in an entire change in the framework that underpins one's actions or assumptions.

N's learning constitutes double loop and deutero learning. Double loop learning is displayed in the manner with which he tackles his previously held mental model with respect to networking and managing his relationships with colleagues, superiors and even his wife (Argyris and Schon 1978 and Senge 1990). Through the adoption of active listening, with its methodology of reflection in action, N was able to manage, challenge and overcome communication difficulties in his marriage, as well as his social anxiety: 'I think that active listening always comes back. You stop agonizing about what you are going to say. Genuine interest is so important. It's about that person's about getting to understand them. A lot of the problems that we have with other people are actually not about fundamental differences about issues but usually about misunderstandings or perceptions'.

From N's narrative, the researcher infers that his social awkwardness might have derived from a superior mien, an attitude that N challenges and overcomes through the use of active listening: 'You get rid of the idea of lesser or superior mortals. Differences or distinctions don't make one better.' The dialectic nature of experiential learning and development is given support by N's challenging of his assumptions and prevailing mental model, (Kohlberg 1973, Argyris and Schon 1974, 1978, 1981 and Gilligan 1982); whilst the constructivist definition of adult learning (Kegan 1982 and Merriam and Caffarella 1991) emerges from N's search for meaning out of the dynamics of his instability, according to the

environmental and personal significance that he

The successful sale of her home is emblematic of K's learning and development. Previous to undertaking the Negotiation elective K had turned down a really good offer on her home, because she was operating under the flawed assumption that its market worth was much higher than what was realistically attainable. The elective surfaced these flawed assumption and challenged K's own personal greed; instead empowering her with the ability to recognize a fair deal when it was presented to her, therefore "I do think that this course has helped me to successfully negotiate that sale and I am not sure that I would have been as effective had I not done it." Challenging assumptions and redirecting her actions to respond effectively to a situation indicate K's double loop learning.

Analysis of N's narrative reveals a movement from double-loop to deutero learning (Argyris and Schon 1978 and Fiol and Lyles 1985) which is displayed in his ability to place himself into the negotiation and try to understand what type of learning he should apply: "Previously, I never thought at the level of "what is this guy looking for? What would be the deal breaker for him? What would be the deal breaker for me? How would I manage myself in the situation to arrive at these answers? On the basis of that you might modify your position" I became aware of myself negotiating. I try to understand the deeper thing/ the deeper meaning." Furthermore, N brings to light the notion by Restine (1997) that it is through an iterative and interactive connection between experience, reflection and interpretation of experience that learning and development emerges.

T's learning and development embraces all three types of learning – single-loop, double-loop and deutero learning. Single loop learning is evidenced in a adaptation in his preparation for meetings; whereas, in his learned approach to negotiations, T utilises introspection and challenges his own assumptions and mental models, now compelling him to focus on his counterparts and the manner

alignment, supporting the researcher's assertion
 cess of double loop learning (Argyris and Schon
 1978).

The Negotiation elective had compelled him to reassess the assumptions that he had held about personal brand value and as a result, the programme compelled him to re-design and proactively manage his personal brand, in order to better manage the expectations of his managers. His presumption about the context of negotiation had 'changed within the first fifteen minutes' whereby he 'found that I had been contextualising the content to spaces to which I did not expect the course to go' to issues of reciprocity and job search.

Undertaking the Negotiations elective had enabled a significant step in T's development; promotion into his present role: 'I have no doubt that those experiences and that learning played a part in helping me get where I wanted to be' small words and hints and subtexts of e-mail all played a part. Indicative of deutero learning, T displays mastery in his awareness and congruent choice of learning response in contexts of uncertainty, unpredictability, ambiguity and complexity, as per Restine (1997): 'the approach' interest in alliance' power dynamics' aligning of objectives' à

One of E's greatest take outs from the Negotiation elective was that when things are going wrong, merely responding to a situation in an incrementally adaptive manner was incorrect. Instead a double-loop learning approach was necessary: 'you could do something quite radical and change the (negotiating) teams to try and move things forward' (Argyris and Schon 1978). An understanding of the fact that once-off negotiations always favoured the more experienced negotiator challenged E's previous approach to negotiating. Previously, he had been naïve, but despite that naiveté and inexperience, he had not sought expert assistance.

dismissal of this approach in favour of a highly
 as time at hand to uncover all of the facts, the
 prevailing assumptions surrounding the case in order to place himself in a more
 advantageous position: "It's OK to say you don't know. No sense in busting your
 head against a wall and end up with a situation where you are questioned on
 your deliverables but have not been able to deliver on the outcomes, because of
 your reluctance to consult, to bring in another perspective, new information which
 could have a significant impact on the outcome of what it is that you are facing."
 The necessity for double loop and deuterio learning, in combination with skills of
 generalisation, selection and interpretation, as per Cell (1984) was critical for E's
 future success where he needed to approach each new situation as unique, to
 analyse the scenario and to select the appropriate approach.

In an otherwise fairly bland and general single-loop description of his learning
 and development, G endorses the assertions of both Cell (1984) and Restine
 (1997) that "there are certain messages and certain tactics that strike a chord in
 you and you apply them, based on the different circumstances that you come
 across." The researcher asserts that in G's case, his narrative revealed no
 distinctive change. Any change that he alluded to was merely an increased
 awareness and heightened adaptiveness. This may be attributed to G's positive
 orientation to learning, his confident presentation and the fact that he had already
 undergone a number of similar initiatives at work and therefore, had already
 made improvements on his personal presentations and negotiations.

Although G remained aware of the need to constantly benchmark his
 performance, there was not the same significant disparity between his
 aspirational self and his presenting self, as existed in the case of Ni where he
 was deeply aware of his need for change. Both G and D argue the necessity of
 environmental applicability as a precondition for learning and development: "It's

refer it back into your work – how you can apply
up research on each of the respondents could be
useful in assessing the changes evident after a year of experimentation with the
learning derived from the Negotiations elective.

D's learning was particularly interesting for the researcher. D had displayed a
high level of learning defensiveness from the outset of the programme, but had
found that she had learnt – and changed; despite herself: "During the course, I
did not rate it highly, but afterwards a lot of people were feeding back to me that
they had noticed how much my negotiation style had changed – and for the
better." D would concur with Restine (1997) on the importance of the reflective
component in experiential learning, whereby through the use of cognition,
reflection provided her with a meaning making mechanism that enhanced her
understanding of stakeholder engagement, which guided her future action: "I
found myself afterwards, trying to identify the stakeholders and even now I do
that, asking myself "who are the stakeholders; what is the commitment to the
process?"

Through her heightened awareness of stakeholder relationships and the issue of
commitment, D was able to change her attitude to her boss. Instead of being
obstructive, she had developed into an enabler, assisting her boss to improve his
time management skills and to project himself as a leader. This change in her
perspective had filtered through more and more since completing the course,
highlighting the iterative cyclical nature of adult learning and development (Boud
et al 1985, Resnick 1987, Hart and Bredeson 1996 and Restine 1997).

In experiential learning, the educator takes on a role that would be viewed as facilitatory (Di Conti 2005: 177). Instead of performing the role of sole educator and motivator, the facilitator's tasks evolves into a sharing or partnering between students and educator, where the facilitator assists students with the modalities that they apply to make sense of their experiential educational experience.

The facilitator of the Negotiations elective, Dr Heald, impacted the programme in a number of ways. For Ni, the affirming feedback that he received heightened his awareness of his abilities and how best to deploy them, supporting the proposal by Domask (2007) that the most impactful component of experiential learning is that of engaging and empowering participants. For Ni, the learning and consequent increase in self-awareness and confidence derived not only from the public domain of the experiential engagement; but also from his reflections on the valid and perceptive comments made by the lecturer in the private domain.

Ni's reaction to the facilitator supports the assertion that debriefing by a skilled facilitator, combined with reflection, can assist the students in replacing their sense of apathy and powerlessness with an empowering sense that they are able to make a difference, to act as agents of change (Senge 1990, Wals and de Jong 1997, Hempel 2002 and Maniates 2002). From that discussion onwards, Ni says that he "could actually feel myself change." In this intersection, the facilitator fulfilled Rogers's objective for education, that being, the "facilitation of learning" the way in which we might develop the learner, the way in which we can learn to live as individuals in process (Rogers 1969 as cited in Kirschenbaum and Henderson 1989: 305).

G, T K, E and D found that the feedback given to them by the facilitator throughout the programme and particularly after the simulations, was extremely

dimension that made rarefied concepts that much more accessible. T, E and D the facilitator had been useful in re-framing their overly self-critical pattern of behaviour. Debriefing by the skilled facilitator, in combination with reflection replaced their previous defensiveness with a sense of empowerment, catalysing them to act as agents of change in their own lives and careers (Senge 1990, Wals and de Jong 1997, Hempel 2002, and Maniates 2002).

The role of the facilitator in the transformation of the learner, their ability to free curiosity; to permit individuals to go charging off in new directions dictated by their own interests; to unleash the sense of inquiry; to open everything to questioning and exploration (Rogers 1969 as cited in Kirschenbaum and Henderson 1989: 304) is evident in R's transformation during the programme. At the outset, she was insecure, self-doubting, de-aspirated and demotivated and generally, quite depressed. R was experiencing serious misgivings about the MBA, her career, her professional skills and academic abilities: "Before that, I was miserable, I promise you. I did not know why I was doing the MBA. I had had it with South Africa. I couldn't leave this country soon enough. You think how the hell is it possible that someone like myself who can communicate and who is skilled and educated, is struggling."

Despite a couple of spectacular team failures in the negotiation simulations, R transformed into feeling excited, empowered and competent: "But, doing the Negotiations elective gave me a reason. It validated why I was doing the MBA." Her transformation derived from the affirming recognition that she had received from an expert: "That recognition from Geoff. This came from a really experienced person that saw and recognized something really incredible happened in my life." She began to feel that she was capable of anything: "I could probably move mountains and I was a star."

support for experiential learning as a change and creativity emerges, as per Rogers (1969) as cited in Kirschenbaum and Henderson (1989). Further, it corroborates Rogers's contention, which is further supported by Christensen (1991), that the personal relationship between facilitator and learner correlates directly to the facilitation of significant learning; with attitudinal quality being the variable in that equation. In the case of both R and Ni, the lecturer, Dr Heald, fulfils the attitudinal qualities of prizing, acceptance, trust and empathic understanding and defining him as a "catalyser" in terms of his ability to create a "freeing climate" that stimulates self-initiated learning and growth (Rogers 1969 as cited in Kirschenbaum and Henderson 1989: 321).

N, T and E's narratives provide further support for the transformative potential held by the facilitator and speak to the importance of the facilitator in challenging the students'self-limiting assumptions, presumptions and mental models (Rogers 1969, Kirschenbaum and Henderson 1989 and Senge 1990). Due to his adoption of an integrative negotiating stance (win-win) rather than a distributive one (win-lose or "winner takes all"), as per Lewicki, Saunders and Minton (2001), the facilitator had sensitised the group to new ways of viewing the negotiation process via the various negotiation simulations. E's narrative refers: "I recall very early on that I used to look at a negotiation as a debate where there is a very clear winner and a clear loser. And it was weird to have him say "No, no, no" you are not opponents. You should rather say my counterparts from the other side" That little subtle shift can change the dynamics of an entire negotiation" T extended this to a comparison between the lecturer, Dr Heald and his Negotiations lecturer at HEC, Paris. The professor at HEC had been distributive in his approach and by T's description "much more aggressive" which perhaps explained the negotiating style of the group at HEC, which was much more aggressive than that of the South African class.

The lecturer also constituted a significant variable in the equation, in general, and to receiving feedback. For G: "That Geoff is he was an interesting guy. He knows his subject, has lots of experience; has obviously read and constructed the cases really well and his lessons are very practical." For R and D, Dr Heald's experience and proven expertise was important, but for different reasons. For D, it counteracted her learning defensiveness; whereas for R, it created enormous significance for her feedback and transformative learning.

G, T and E commented on the lecturer's personality, energy, passion and personal involvement in the programme (G: "when you see him standing there in front of the class you can see that he is giving his whole") thereby giving credence to the significance of the attitudinal variable in the experiential learning equation expounded by Rogers (1969) and Christensen (1991). T alludes to the lecturer's use of personal anecdotes ("if you can tell an anecdote that will help a concept to stick in someone's mind then that would be very powerful" I remember particularly well, the one thing that sparked the whole memory was a particular picture that I was able to create in my mind") as well as the learning impact of the lecturer's attitudinal quality of a willingness to be real and reveal his own vulnerability, to share with the students in their experiences (Di Conti 2005, Christensen 1991 and Kirschenbaum and Henderson 1989).

The context of the Negotiations Elective was the University of the Witwatersrand, Wits Business School. Domask (2007) states that the most impactful component in experiential learning is that of engaging and empowering students. Because experiential learning engages the student directly in and with the phenomenon to be studied, it has a direct impact on classroom engagement and involvement and consequently, performance. The facilitator's role becomes highly significant in this context. All too often, through their increased engagement and involvement, students can become overwhelmed by the complexity of the situations with which they are faced.

tor, combined with reflection, can assist the sense of apathy and powerlessness with an empowering sense that they are able to make a difference, to act as agents of change (Senge 1990, Wals and de Jong 1997, Hempel 2002 and Maniates 2002). As a consequence of the skilled facilitation, the classroom becomes, as per Mintzberg (2004: 270) a 'safe and serious place' the ideal juncture between natural experience and conceptual teaching in which students are empowered to explore meaning and depth through the unravelling and challenging of their previously held assumptions.

Ni, N, T, K, E and D described their lived experience of the phenomenon of experiential learning within the context of the MBA Negotiation elective at Wits Business School. They cite examples where they reflected on previous behaviours or performance, reconstructed their learning frameworks and then applied or 'experimented' with their learning and as a consequence, made their organisations more effective.

In the case of Ni, this evidenced in the presentation of turnaround strategies in order to secure more projects for his department. For N, it is evidenced in enhanced communication and shared purpose between himself and his colleagues. T's reconstruction of his personal brand and management of his brand behaviours in order to reconstruct the expectations on his department's strategy implementation provides another example; while in K's case, the realignment of a soured business relationship and as team leader, the realignment of her department towards that project presents as another significant shift in behaviour, reconstruction of personal frameworks and successful experimentation with new more appropriate behaviours. In E's case, acceptance of responsibility for his own negotiating naïveté, reconstruction of his presenting reality and recommitment to delivering work of the highest standard and lastly, in D's case, the change in her own boss's effectiveness through her upward

Examples of the constructivist nature of experiential

The above are concrete examples of the way that the university, in its capacity as management education provider and learning organisation, extended learning and development into an organisational context through the process of 'experienced reflection' (Mintzberg 2004). From this, the researcher infers the importance of the relationship between the university, as educator and learning organisation, and the development of external organisations into learning organisations; and the consequent necessity of the facilitator to provide a responsive environment for the ontological questions posed by 21st Century students (Patel 2003).

6.2.9 A Community of Learners

An appreciation of the concept of 'the other' emerged as one of the significant differences between the South African experiential learning context and those from other contexts; perhaps as a function of the facilitator; perhaps as a function of the impact of social roles and socialisation and the impact of cross cultural perspectives within the learning milieu (Merriam and Caffarella 1991). In the South African MBA classroom the concept of winning was modified to consider the inclusion of collaborative and co-operative negotiating styles (Gharajedaghi 1999), encouraged by the facilitator.

His realisation that it was very important to allow others to influence one's perceptions, instead of viewing them in a negative oppositional manner, 'to appreciate where the other is coming from in order to reach an accommodative result. It's not a zero sum game - it's not about win-lose but win-win,' resulted in a significant breakthrough in his professional and personal relationships. Previously, his manner of communicating had been adversarial: 'whenever I started engaging to achieve something, I was very fixated about my position' but

conversations are not necessarily adversarial if
 dé I reflected on my wife's conversationé what
 she actually meanté you reach an understanding that makes the other person
 feel considered.ò The shared learning space had enabled N to appreciate the
 differences in others, to value differences in communicating styles, to affirm their
 expectations, beliefs and feelings, in a manner that Rogers characterises as one
 of the best, yet difficult, ways to learn (Rogers 1969 as cited in Kirschenbaum
 and Henderson 1989).

The class grouping in K's particular Negotiation elective enhanced both individual
 and shared learning. K's positive orientation to learning in the elective derived
 initially from the positive relationship that she shared with a small group of twelve
 who were well known to one another after having spent the better part of two and
 a half years together in the MBA class. A high level of mutual trust and respect
 existed between the group, resulting in higher levels of group participation and
 support for one another with respect to feedback ĩ an ideal learning space, as
 defined by Nouwen (1986: 85) as space where both řstudents and teacher can
 enter into a fearless communication with each other and allow their respective life
 experiences to be their primary and most valuable source of growth and
 maturation.ò

K's positive experience was further enhanced by the extension of the learning
 community to include a group of MBA students from Georgetown University who
 participated in a session of shared learning between a number of protagonists
 from the constitutional negotiations conducted during South Africa's transition to
 a peaceful democracy, namely Professor Charles Villa Vicencio, Professor
 Theuns Eloff and Dr Roelf Meyer. The session, facilitated by Dr Heald, was
 entitled řLearning Amongst Enemiesò and was based on the unique set of
 negotiation dynamics that predicated South Africa's transition (Heald 2007). K
 found it deeply moving to participate in this shared experience with the

through observing the learning of the international
experience.

The greatest learning for K was the concept of *the other* that emerged from the session and that *what* was so remarkable was the positive relationship between the negotiators of that time and the necessity for negotiators to have and show mutual respect for one another. Heald (2007) quotes Professor Villa Vicencio (Heald 2007: 208): *“Learning amongst enemies means understanding what other people feared and other people experienced, the profoundness of which precipitated K’s reflection on a previously mistrustful business relationship: “I did not like the company and the people. They were mistrustful of me and I am not entirely sure, but I think that they did not like me. They felt that I was the main barrier to them getting work at my company. The powers that be decided that we would go into business with them. We were forced into the negotiation and, surprise, surprise; we actually ended up developing a liking for each other. We began to trust one another and developed a lot of respect for one another which continues to this day. The trust was created incrementally and then cemented over time.”*

K’s experience replicates the breakthrough learning that derived from the management of mental models that occurred during the constitutional negotiations, where trust was also created incrementally and cemented over time, until the present day; and provides further evidence of the value of reflection in experiential learning pedagogy, where prevailing assumptions can be unravelled, challenged and meaning extrapolated from experience; thereby acting as a guide for future action (Senge 1990, Restine 1997 and Mintzberg 2004).

Heald (2007) rejects Waldmeir’s (1997) view that the South African transition was a miracle and through a parallel reflection on Professor Eloff’s contribution in the shared learning space, K was also able to re-frame her notion of miracles as

hard work, preparation, organisation and proper that particular learning space, the facilitator was able to offer the participants a process framework for managing the complexity, ambiguity and changeability that perplex the 21st century (Kirschenbaum and Henderson, 1989) and presented an exemplar of management education proposed by Marquardt (2000) Brown and Posner (2001) and Morrison, Rha and Helfman (2003).

Observing her colleagues performance allowed K to learn through seeing what others did well: "You learn from other people on the course. I learnt from them and I learnt from the lecturer." Similarly, R was able to learn from observing others, although her learning derived from the observation of inappropriate behaviour: "When the whole process came undone he absolutely freaked out i I mean, he was callous. If this was a real situation we would have been dead, because now he started off negotiating by being very defensive and attacking people." Congruent with her bravery as a young negotiator, R challenged the particular student on his behaviour, indicating her growth in self confidence and esteem that occurred during the programme.

With respect to the group dynamic, D's experience presented quite the opposite from K or R. She felt de-aspirated by a group of "boring, uninteresting, unanimated introverts" from whom she could not derive any energy. Instead of challenging that dynamic, D disengaged. Through comparison of K and D's narrative, the researcher is able to assert that it is not only the attitudinal quality of the facilitator that impacts on the orientation to learning (Kirschenbaum and Henderson 1989); but also the attitudinal quality of the entire community of learners that impacts the phenomenon of experiential learning. Further, the researcher asserts that there exists the opportunity for the facilitator to arrange groups in such as way as to enhance educative experiences and control for those that might become mis-educative.

Learning space presented an interesting dynamic. In international exchange students from the world's top rated business schools. The South African contingent was receptive to the group, expecting to share a different perspective on matters. However, E had been surprised that a number of the students believed that they were coming from superior institutions and that they had been exposed to much more and that they had been taught by professors who were world leaders. Adhering defensively to their mental models, they dismissed the dimension of learning from one another, which was the African approach, instead shooting straight from the hip competitively refuting or repudiating everything that was said by the lecturer.

This communal inequilibrium could be attributed to variance in social roles and socialisation; the nature of highly competitive versus collaborative environments (it's never about win-win. It's all about how I can get as much as possible; it's never about what's best for a team); as well as the culture variance between the American and African students (Merriam and Caffarella 1991), supported by E's reflection that the polarising dynamic had occurred for the first time during his MBA because of the introduction of the American students, whereas previously, whilst we certainly did not agree on everything, it was never acrimonious or polarising.

The researcher asserts that another possibility for the polarising dynamic was the exacerbating tension that arose from the North American students feeling threatened by the exposure of their defensive mental model (Hanson 1972, Hanson 1972 and Elder 1980); the possibility that their own second order experience of studying in South Africa had caused them to recognise gaps in their knowledge which impeded their progress in another global context (Revans 1982 and Knowles 1990). In the case of this specific group of American students, there was a generalised refusal to make the mental shift whereas the South Africans, in general, had become accustomed to continuous cycles of

which rendered them more receptive to learning
 (I am because you are).

E supports both Rogers (1989) and Christensen (1991) in their citing of the importance of facilitator's attitudinal quality in the establishment and maintenance of an enabling community of learners. In an environment that had become increasingly polarised, even hostile, the lecturer did not react defensively, despite the fact that his insights into the comparative styles of North American and South African negotiating styles were dismissed as "utter nonsense" by a particularly hostile student. Instead, the lecturer remained calm and open; thereby encouraging a trusting learning space where the students could use their "primary experiences as a source of growth and maturation" in order to moderate competitive attitudes and to allow for an embracing of enriching differences that emerged from their differing cultures, as per the recommendations of Nouwen (1986: 85) and Christensen (1991).

Dr Heald introduced a case simulation designed to sensitise participants to complex multi-party negotiations; challenging their previously held assumptions and perceptions on negotiating and transacting in Africa and by so doing, create breakthrough learning (Argyris & Schon 1978; Knowles 1990 and Senge 1990). Through this simulation he was able to sensitise the group to multi-cultural negotiations through which he was able to advocate an inclusive awareness of "not only about African or North American styles, but negotiating styles from different parts of the world."

E extended his reflection on this event to include breakthrough learning within the contextual learning space in South Africa where a number of multinational companies have chosen to send their managers to Africa to receive training, specifically because, through the experiences that they undergo in South Africa, the employees undergo a major shift in their mental models. The personal mastery, growth of self and reconstruing of presenting reality offered by a

Developing economy provides an platform for global
 proposed by Brown and Posner (2001): "It's that
 learning that one would get and these corporate have recognised that you would
 not get by simply staying in America. Go and get new experiences. Learn.
 Force yourself to change. Because if you get entrenched in your ways and go for
 years and years like that, then it becomes much harder to change later on in life.
 But when you're still relatively young, have finished your MBA and are under
 thirty then you can go to a foreign country for two years and learn and come back
 with a new perspective."

In this reflection, E supports Knowles (1990) on the correlation between years of
 experience and the entrenchment of defensive modes of thinking and need for
 companies to encourage double loop learning and consequent organisational
 learning by introducing second order experiences that cause individuals to
 expose, question and evaluate their deeply ingrained assumptions,
 generalisations or images that influence the way that they view the world and
 take action (Senge 1990:8).

Further, identified through the analysis of E's discourse is the corroboration of the
 ability of experiential learning to challenge personal frameworks, or meaning
 perspectives (Mezirow 1991); to catalyse transformation, breakthrough learning
 and a restating of mental models because of the transactional nature of the
 learning space (Hanson 1972, Hamlyn 1978, Schon 1988, Elder 1980, Kolb 1984
 and Senge 1990).

6.3 Experiential Learning and Phenomenology?

Given that Phenomenology is concerned with study of lived experience in a order
 to elicit the multiple interpretations that derive from the individuals experience of
 a phenomenon (van Manen 1990) and experiential learning directly engages the
 participant with the phenomenon of their lived experience; and that further, for the

phenomenological study, the research phenomenon
question emerges whether experiential learning
is phenomenological practice?

Corroborating assertions made by Howard and Bray (1989), Johnson and Johnson (1994), Hicks (1996), Dilworth (1996), Brown and Posner (2001), Densten and Gray (2001) and Mintzberg (2004), Patel (2003) urges the university and the experiential learning facilitator, as change agent of leadership and development in that learning organisation; to adopt a collaborative, holistic, relational approach that acknowledges the transactional, transformational, independent and interdependent dialectic nature of learning described by Kolb (1984), Senge (1990) and Mezirow (1990) that characterises learning organisations from which an optimal experiential learning experiences derive.

In the Negotiations elective, the students's understandings, apprehensions, assumptions, perceptions, evaluations and re-evaluations were given life and meaning, such that they were able to develop a second-order perspective resulting from their qualitative interpretative interaction with the phenomenon (Marton and Booth 1997, Entwistle 1997 and Trigwell 2000). Further, this second order perspective derived from the transactional interaction between the individuals in the elective and the environment of their learning experiences, as per Svensson (1997) and Trigwell (2000), through their engagement in active listening, case study simulations and leadership discussion groups.

Through the leadership discussion and feedback processes, individual conceptions of the students's experiences were related to common conceptions of the phenomenon (Prosser and Trigwell 1998); with a particular example of this being the divergence between the conceptions of some of the North American students from that of the common conceptions of South African students and the consequential classroom debate and discussion. As per van Manen (1990) Ahonen (1994); Säljö (1994) and Isomäki (2002) language is the communication

The researcher captured the essence of the expression of the respondents' narratives and

similarly, the experiential learning course requirement for the Negotiations elective was the textual transformation of the lived experience into a reflective learning journal through which all of the individuals' different lived experiences became animated.

Based on a triangulation of the thematic reductions of the phenomenon of experiential learning in the Negotiations Elective and all of the above, the researcher asserts that in the optimal manner in which the MBA Negotiations elective was presented, facilitated and examined, the experiential learning became phenomenological practice. She was able to identify similarities between the experiential learning experiences of the respondents and the process of phenomenological research which became evident during the data collection process.

In terms of the richness and substantive quality of the data collected, participants who had a positive orientation towards a qualitative, as opposed to quantitative, approach provided the researcher with expansive, richly textured narratives (R, T, K, E and D), contrasted with the short, fairly contained narratives of Ni and N. In N's case, however, the data obtained was substantive; indicating that the Negotiation elective's learning structure conflicted with his preferred learning mode, whereas, during the interview, he was more comfortable, given that it was a private one-on-one discussion in an environment pre-determined and structured by himself.

Although he presented with a positive orientation to the Negotiations elective, G presented the researcher with an unusual contradiction. Whilst qualitatively oriented (corroborated by the nature of his work and his choice of qualitative research methodology for his research dissertation), he remained strongly self-contained, even guarded. The researcher asserts that this might have been due

was interviewed i at his office, during which time, tions, which could well have distracted him, or made him more self-conscious, causing him to revert to an introverted sensor type, as opposed to his natural preference for intuitive thinking.

A number of the participants felt compelled to provide a positive evaluation of the Negotiations elective and the facilitator, even though the researcher stated specifically that she was not seeking an evaluation. Because the participants were emotionally attached to the facilitator, expressing both a positive appreciation of his person and the course, the researcher asserts that they might well have tried to protect his reputation.

Only one student admitted to the fact that, despite her respect for his academic credentials, she did not enjoy the Negotiations elective. One other student, N, communicated a deep disquiet about the extent of personal feedback and revelation in the Negotiation programme, revealed by his reference to the negative, colloquial, framing of psychologists and psychiatrists: "I felt that I was in a shrink's office". The researcher therefore professes that liking might have impacted the research in terms of the findings derived with respect to the role of the facilitator. This potential for bias would need to be mitigated in any future research undertaking of this nature.

Further, the researcher asserts that participants appeared to be protective towards her, not wanting to make her feel in any way uncomfortable about a subject towards which she was positively oriented. Despite having mitigated the potential effects of an ongoing interaction with her research subjects, particularly pertaining to the power dynamics arising from her position at the Wits Business School, by selecting respondents who had already finished the course and also; by explaining the purpose of the research, the researcher remains unsure of the students need to "give her the good news."

respondents to select the interview venue was not stated might well have impacted on the quality of interview in the case of G, who was interrupted a number of times during the interview. Because passers-by could see him in his office, they automatically assumed that they could consult with him, which appeared to affect the flow of his narrative, constraining it. Conversely, the choice to be interviewed in his office might well have been deliberate: this could have been an attempt by G to ring fence his participation, whilst still maintaining his professional and academic courtesy.

In the case of N, the selection of a large, imposing boardroom might well have been an attempt to redress the possible power imbalance between respondent and researcher, to provide a structure with which he was comfortable, in contrast to his discomfort in the complex, ambiguous environment of the Negotiations class. Had D been interviewed in an entirely neutral venue, the potential for a deeper exploration of the relationship between student and facilitator might have emerged. D did not enjoy the class, but qualified her lack of enjoyment with praise for the facilitator. This might have been caused by her feelings of loyalty towards the business school, given that she was interviewed in the office of the researcher.

In conducting phenomenological research of this nature, all of the aforementioned issues should be taken into account. The researcher recommends that in order to mitigate these; a second round of interviews should be conducted during which the above reservations could be surfaced.

In order to understand the qualitatively diverse experiences of MBA students in an experiential learning context, the researcher conducted a phenomenographic research study utilising a purposive sample of eight respondents from the Negotiation elective at Wits University's Graduate School of Business Administration, Wits Business School. The research aim was to provide insights, knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of experiential learning pedagogy that would be of relevance to the on-going discussion regarding the most appropriate instructional pedagogy for MBA students within the complex and often ambiguous working world of the 21st Century.

The researcher hopes that through the process of interviews, transcription, eidetic reduction and cross analysis, the respondents were able to gain a greater insight into and understanding of their experience within the Negotiations elective. Moreover, the researcher hopes that the findings of this research study will provide universities with a greater understanding of the way in which participants experience experiential learning and how they, as learning organisations, can provide optimally structured and facilitated learning environments for students, that enhance introspection, reflection, the development of self-awareness, personal mastery and effectiveness; thereby preparing students more adequately for a changing working milieu.

In addition, the researcher hopes that she was able to clearly demonstrate both qualitative convergence and divergence, or variance, in the thematic displays, as per the requirements of phenomenographic research.

The open ended interview process allowed respondents to concentrate on the areas that were of importance, or of specific relevance, to them, as most respondents steered the conversation towards the issues of most pertinence to them. As interesting to the researcher, was the omission of information, where a

ess an issue provided the researcher with a new
 to reflect and meditate. In these cases, the
 respondents spoke through their silence.

For the most, the respondents were able to reflect at length on their experience in the Negotiation elective. Because attendance of the course was by their own choice (the course is an elective and therefore outside of the compulsory core curriculum), they were, for the most positively oriented to the class at the outset. Ni, G, K and E had all selected the course on the basis of its reputational success; moreover because they had all identified the need to improve their personal and career negotiation skills. In the case of N, D and R, orientation to learning switched to a defensive mode during the first lecture. N, an intensely private individual, commenced with a positive orientation, but found the intensely personal, reflective nature of the experiential milieu invasive; whilst R became increasingly defensive when faced with the highly academic nature of reflective learning journal submissions, as well as participation in the simulations. D's learning defensiveness arose as a result of her own expedience, coupled to the class dynamic of her particular group, which she found to be de-energising and de-aspirational.

7.1 Orientation to Learning and the Construction of Optimal Learning Engagements

From the triangulation of primary research with secondary research data, it was discovered that a causal relationship exists between the level of significance attributed to any experience and the actual learning derived. Moreover, learning style, or mode of learning, and human behaviour impacts further on the learner's ability to embrace the type of learning modalities presented in an experiential learning engagement. Personal risk, self-exposure and self-protection are additional criteria that influence orientation to learning, particularly in a group situation. The individual's discernment regarding the safety of the community of

stance in the experimental mode of any learning
tor's thinking, learning and behavioural modes
emerged as significant in either positive or defensive orientations to learning.

The researcher therefore asserts that in the construction of an optimal experiential learning engagement all of the above should be taken into consideration. Ideally, participants should undergo thinking, learning and work-style pre-assessments in order to imbue them a higher level of self-awareness going into the programme; thereby mitigating the possibility of the development of learning defensiveness. These pre-assessments should be made available to the facilitator and co-facilitators, and clearly understood, in order to pre-empt their responsiveness to the participants and also, to provide a greater understanding of how the mutual interactionism between facilitator and participants could affect their orientation to learning.

7.2 Second Order Experience, Simulations and the Transformative Potential of Experiential Learning

Linked to the theme of orientation to learning, is the theme of second order experience, which has a significant ability to impact on an individual's equilibrium, rendering them either responsive or highly defensive to experiential learning. The role of experiential learning pedagogy in challenging defensive mental models by exposing them via simulation and/or reflection and then creating the structures through which participants can critically re-evaluate and re-define outcomes emerged as significant to a number of respondents in the research study. Through careful analysis of the findings of the study, the researcher is able to conclude that experiential learning can, and does, have a transformative potential and, as per Dewey (1951), the researcher asserts the responsibility incumbent upon the facilitator to select second order experiences that catalyse deeper learning.

y, the researcher ascertained that the second the facilitator impacted the participants in diverse ways. These second order experiences consisted of experiential games, role plays and simulations, which are all included under the broader theme of "simulation". Despite the fact that many students were positively oriented to the experiential engagements, most expressed some reservation, ranging from a humorously expressed personal self-vaunty (K) through to absolute trepidation in the case of Ni, who seriously doubted his ability to perform at all the levels required on commencement of the programme. There was also a degree of confusion amongst participants as to what could be defined as "real" or "not real" in the simulation, although all commented favourably on the learning value of the simulations. The ability of the contrived second order experience to catalyse self-awareness was described as "enlightening" whilst their ability to transfer "refined" concepts into tangible realities enhanced a broader understanding of academic concepts.

The researcher concludes that despite their misgivings about reality, when immersed in the negotiation simulation, the students' behaviour provided an accurate reflection of the behaviour that would be mirrored by reality. She further concludes that through their ability to think during learning in action, as postulated by Argyris and Schon (1978), Hanson (1972), Hamlyn (1978), Elder (1980) and Senge (1990), the students were able to challenge previously held defensive mental models and develop a much higher level of self-awareness and personal mastery. Experiential learning pedagogy therefore provides an optimal context for breakthrough learning and personal transformation.

7.3 Reflection and Change

If one were to regard the simulations as the "Activist" or concrete experience dimension within Kolb (1984) and Honey and Mumford's (1992) experiential learning models, often, but not exclusively, referred to as stage one of the

naturally occurring stage would be the Reflective or
revision of the cycle. This second stage provides
the mechanism for catalysing mere experience into learning; through
reflections derived from observation of others, co-participant and-facilitator
feedback and formal reflection on performance via the experiential learning
journal. This was explored through the themes of reflection and feedback which
align with the cyclical model of experiential learning.

The research findings revealed that comfort with the reflective mode of the
learning cycle correlated strongly to the particular learning and work style
preference of individuals, influenced strongly by the personalities of the
participants in the Negotiation elective. It was found that students with a
tendency to extraversion reflected on their experiences in a highly expressive
and expansive language, whereas those who were introverted displayed some
resistance to reflexivity. T, an introvert, was the exception to this assertion;
however his introversion was mitigated by a highly intellectual, social and
qualitative approach that had been honed by years of working within media and
publishing.

The researcher discovered that a strong link existed between the need for self-
protection – risk aversion – and the levels of resistance to reflection within a
community of learners. She therefore concludes that the optimal experiential
engagement requires a sincere and committed learning covenant adhered to by
both participants and facilitator. At the very least, at the outset of any experiential
learning engagement, the facilitator should take participants through the
experiential learning models, making them aware of the different dimensions and
stages therein contained and how different personalities and learning modes
could be affected during the cyclical process. This enhanced self-understanding
could lessen the reflective defensiveness of introverted personalities and ensure
that extraverted personalities do not crowd out introverted individuals.

T, K, E and D's narratives and the subsequent research, the researcher obtained extensive corroboration for the ability of experiential learning to catalyse change through reflection on action and the development of effective mental models, or alternative personal constructs, as per Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (1955, 1991a and 1991b). T, K, E and D were able to effectively reconstruct their prevailing mental models in such a way as to derive meaningful interpretation, growth of self awareness and emotional maturity.

7.4 Bias and Framing

The research study was able to shed light on some of the possible shortcomings of the experiential learning milieu, particularly highlighted in the analysis of R and E's narratives. The potential for bias, or framing, whether positive or negative, can occur early on in the process and this can impact on the learning engagement in either a positive or negative manner, or in the case of R – both.

The Halo Effect (Thorndike 1920 and Kelly 1955, 1991a and 1991b) impacted E in a beneficial manner. In the case of R, the facilitator's positive framing had a beneficial effect at the outset, as it affirmed her ability and esteem and validated her right to be in the MBA programme. However, unmanaged, the effect spiralled into a delusion as R assumed levels of competence and expertise way beyond the complimentary feedback offered to her by the facilitator on the second day.

The researcher asserts that it is critical for any facilitator to manage their own objectivity, to bracket their subjectivity, in much the same manner as would be required of the researcher in a phenomenological study. Moreover, it is essential that any experiential learning facilitator remains acutely aware of the transformative potential of the interactions between facilitator and participants, particularly the possible effect of feedback. The role of a participant observer or co-facilitator in the experiential learning context would be most useful in

...ly with particular relevance to the provision of
 could provide a continuously objective counter-
 balance to manage the facilitator's personality, behaviour, thinking and learning
 style and mental models, through the provision of feedback on both facilitator and
 participants and the dynamic inter-relationship between them.

7.5 Role of the Facilitator in Creating a Community of Learners

Despite the above highlighted issue of the potential for bias in the experiential learning milieu, the research study was able to reveal that the respondents acknowledged that they had been enabled by a professional, highly experienced academic whose credibility, knowledge and ability to deal with the complexity and ambiguity of the emergent classroom and personal dynamics had impacted the programme in a diverse and positive manner. This ranged from the change in D's defensiveness to learning; the growth in Ni and R's personal confidence which derived from the facilitator's affirmation of their personal worth and self-esteem; to the manner in which facilitator feedback acted as a change catalyst in the lives and careers of T, K, G, D and E, thereby enabling them to challenge previously held erroneous assumptions, presumptions or conceptions and to reframe overly critical patterns of behaviour, replacing them with appropriate modes of behaviour and self-management.

Through the analysis of the examples cited by the respondents, the researcher is able to conclude that the facilitation by Dr Heald was directly aligned to the findings of Senge (1990) Wals and de Jong (1997), Hempel (2002) and Maniates (2002) that pertain to the challenging and reframing of mental models and further; that the facilitation was congruent with the expostulations of Christensen (1991) and Rogers (1989) on the causal relationship of the facilitators attitudinal quality in the experiential learning equation.

the facilitator's role as a transformative figure in Heald's narrative. Heald's narrative shows how Heald stretched his or her sense of enquiry, to invite experimentation and promote a sense of empowerment and self-validation is conclusive evidence of the role of the lecturer as a catalyser who created a climate of self-initiated learning and growth, as per Rogers (1989). In the context of this research study, the facilitator was able to respond to Domask's primary criteria for impactful experiential learning, that being to engage and empower students (Domask 2007).

Further, the analysis of E's narrative provides conclusive evidence of an experienced, self-assured facilitator who was able to manage his own subjectivity and insecurity during a hostile attack by some foreign students on the programme. Instead of being baited by insulting comments, Dr Heald chose, instead, to allow the experiential learning process to unseat the students, challenge and reframe their erroneous mental models. In this way the students could learn through their bringing forth their own experience into the world, as per Maturana and Varela (1987).

Dr Heald presented a human face throughout the elective, displaying a personal involvement and often cited his own anecdotal experiences (and failures). However, this portrayal of self was skilfully counterbalanced by the facilitator's proven experience and expertise which ensured that his credibility was never eclipsed by emotionality. This presentation of self as vulnerable and human allowed for the creation of a sharing space within the community of learners, as per Rogers (1969, 1989) and Christensen (1991) and impacted on the orientation of students in the Negotiations elective in a positive manner. Through his skilled facilitation, Dr Heald was able to evolve the university classroom into a "safe and serious space" (Mintzberg 2004:270) appropriate for the surfacing of ontological questions and thereby extends the responsibility of the university, as a responsive learning organisation, to propel the organisational readiness of its students.

shared learning space, in which participants were fearlessly, but, at the same time, to embrace the concept of "the other" and to acculturate to new ideas enabled the participants to appreciate the differences in others and to affirm these different beliefs, expectations and feelings. This contributed to a sense of community in a community of learners, as per Rogers (1969, 1989), wherein mental models could safely be challenged and revised. This affirms the assertions by both Rogers (1969, 1989) and Christensen (1991) on the relationship between the facilitator's attitudinal quality and an enabling learning community and provides the guidelines for the construction of the optimally enabling learning contexts.

The researcher concludes that a joint responsibility exists between the university as learning organisation and the facilitator as change agent within that organisation to create and maintain an optimally functioning community of learners within the experiential learning context and that the findings of this study provide guiding points for the facilitation of this learning space.

7.6 Learning and Development

An optimally constructed experiential learning engagement should ideally encompass all of the dimension and stages represented in the cyclical models of learning proposed by Kolb (1984) or Honey and Mumford (1992), although not all participants would move sequentially through the cycle. Ni and R evidenced a classical movement through all of the stages, from first to fourth; however, the characteristics of their learning differed. Ni's learning was largely adaptive or single-loop learning, whereas, in R's learning, the researcher was able to identify high-level learning (Fiol and Lyles 1985), or double-loop learning, as per Argyris and Schon (1978).

single-loop, N displayed an interesting movement into deuterio learning. This was achieved via reflection on (and post) action - the how as per Smith and Dillon (1999), Kvale (1996, 2006), and Giorgi and Giorgi (2008). Through the analysis and subsequent comparison of T's learning and development with secondary research on adult learning, the researcher was able to identify learning at all levels - single-loop, double-loop and deuterio learning; thereby representing perhaps the deepest and most complete cycle of learning emerging from the experiential learning milieu.

7.7 The Time Dimension in Learning and Development

In analysing the findings obtained from G and D's narrative descriptions, the researcher was able to provide an additional caution for the design, implementation and subsequent qualitative analysis of an optimal experiential learning engagement; that being applicability. Both G and D had reservations about the applicability of the Negotiations elective and more particularly, the time frame of that applicability; the inference being that experiential learning was dependent on the opportunities for experimentation and moreover, that it has a 'date of expiry'. Both G and D were part time students; applicability did not present as an issue for full time students in the Negotiations elective. The researcher, however, contests that assertion as both G and D were interviewed some months after completing the elective and both were able to express their experiences with clarity. Furthermore, in the case of D, the narrative was rich and expansive. Both expressed a distinctive improvement in their performance at work and general negotiation effectiveness in the months following the elective, although D's citation was specific and G's more general.

The researcher supposes that their assertions derived from the fact that they were able to immediately apply the learning into their working environments on completion of the elective (because they were part time students who worked full time) and erroneously assumed that the full time students were lacking in

ing. However, the research study indicates that me was in fact a convergent theme amongst all respondents; where months after completing the Negotiations elective, all respondents were all able to site many examples of the applicability of their learning to their current professional or personal circumstances. Moreover, their narratives described reflections on both personal and professional situations, that could be placed on a continuum of past, present and future experiences viz a viz the Negotiations elective.

It can be concluded, however, that the issue of applicability remains relevant, with the suggestion that the most effective experiential learning engagement occurs where there are opportunities to experiment with distilled learning, as represented by stage four of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (1984). Certainly, action learning, as proposed by Revans (1982) presents the ideal opportunity to experiment in the workplace.

7.8 Phenomenology and Experiential Learning

Lastly, through a comparison between the characteristics of phenomenology, the methodological process and the findings of the research study, the researcher was able to conclude that experiential learning is phenomenological practice. The research process and findings revealed that because experiential learning is phenomenological, it is subject to the similar orientations, defensiveness, advantages and disadvantaging biases that define phenomenological methodology.

7.9 Conclusion

Whilst all of the respondents indicated positive changes in their self-awareness, personal mastery, learning and development, the researcher acknowledges that

...e, is almost impossible to measure, as there are
measures for this change (Gosen and Washbush
2004, Wingfield and Black 2005 and Lowenthal and Sosland 2007).

This does not render the change invalid, as the research was able to capture interesting insights into the qualitatively diverse nature of the respondents' learning which provides conclusive evidence that experiential learning pedagogy provides a sound approach for the management of change, complexity and ambiguity and development of personal mastery. It is therefore able to answer to the increasing requirement for change responsiveness and heightened self and environmental awareness that challenge 21st Century management and leadership students.

7.10 Suggestion for Further Research

The researcher suggests that it would be useful to assess the learning and development-over-time dimension in a future research study; where data is collected immediately post the Negotiations elective, at a period three to six months thereafter and then again, after a year. This would provide a more in-depth qualitative assessment of the experiential learning engagement.

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9.1 Annexure 1

Covering Letter for Interview Process

Dear Respondent

I am a Master of Management student at the University of the Witwatersrand. You present as a leading candidate as a co-researcher in a phenomenographic study that will investigate the effects of experiential learning pedagogy within a specific MBA context, namely the Negotiation Elective.

The research process will consist of a series of interviews, the purpose of which is to understand your experience and valued insights that will be compared to those of other respondents. The ultimate aim of the research is to distil from the lived experience of a number of respondents the common themes and variance from common conceptions emerging from the phenomenon of experiential learning pedagogy applied within the Negotiation elective.

By signing the attached sheet you make yourself available for such an interview at a time and place that suits your schedule.

Your identity will remain unknown to all others during the entire stage of the study and the information disclosed during our discussion will be analysed by me in the strictest of confidence.

I attach my contact details should you wish to clarify any details.

Yours sincerely

Charisse Drobis
Master of Management Student
Wits Business School
082 806 0921
011 717 3542 (w)

A promotional banner for PDF Complete. On the left, there is a small image of a person holding an umbrella in the rain. To the right of this image is the PDF Complete logo, which consists of a blue icon of three stacked papers and the text 'PDF Complete' in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The background of the banner is a solid blue color. On the right side of the banner, there is white text that reads: 'Your complimentary use period has ended. Thank you for using PDF Complete.' Below this text, there is a yellow button with the text 'Click Here to upgrade to Unlimited Pages and Expanded Features' in a bold, sans-serif font.

Yours sincerely

Conrad Viedge
Senior Lecturer, Wits Business School
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
University of the Witwatersrand

[illegible]

I confirm that I é é é é é é é é é é é é .will make myself available for an interview with Charisse Drobis, a student at Wits Business School, as co-researcher examining my experiences regarding action and reflective learning practice. I am aware that the information disclosed during this interview will be treated confidentially and that Charisse will extract only thematic structures for the purpose of her research dissertation.

I am further aware that Charisse undertakes to provide feedback regarding her analysis and will require my assistance in verifying the accuracy of such analysis.

Signed (é é é é é é é é é é ..)

to be recited verbatim prior to each

Thank you for your preparedness to participate in this study.

I would like to firstly outline, once again, the purpose of this study which is to explore the phenomenon of experiential learning within a specific MBA context. Its intention is to discover the meaning ascribed to the individual's lived experience within the experiential learning context of the MBA Negotiation Elective.

Through a series of parallel interviews and analyses thereof, it is intended to elicit the common themes and variance from common conceptions of the experiential learning context of the Negotiation elective.

It is hoped that through your participation the study will derive a full and comprehensive body of information on which to base its discoveries.

This interview, the transcription and analysis thereof will be dealt with in strictest confidence, constantly maintaining your integrity, as respondent, and the integrity of the entire research process. Your identity will be kept completely confidential.

You have already provided the WBS with an evaluation of the Negotiations elective and therefore I need to re-enforce the fact that I am not seeking another course evaluation. It is the intention of this research study that your lived experience, whether negative, positive, indifferent (or at various phases, all of these) is described as fully and as openly as possible.

Phenomenological and Phenomenographic method requires that, as researcher, I should not impose in any way on the methodological process. You are



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e, to request me to clarify anything of which you

In line with the above I shall not pose a number of research questions to you, but, instead, shall lead this process from one single open ended question, namely:

“Tell me about your experience in the Negotiation elective, with particular reference to your learning and development?”