

https://dspace.org/

The Role of Supervisors in a South African Team-based

Deysel, Jacob Johannes

2011-04-04
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/9329

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

The Role of Supervisors in a South African Team-based Productivity Improvement Initiative

Jacob Johannes Deysel

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

November 2005

Abstract

The importance of teamwork in facilitating workplace change and increasing productivity is widely recognised. While the benefits of teamwork are often over-promoted, the difficulties of implementation are likewise often underestimated. The supervisor is a key driver and enabler of the development of learning within an organisation; however, the importance of the role of the supervisor in teamwork implementation has tended, in the past, to be overlooked, so that only limited research has so far been undertaken in this regard. This study aims to identify both barriers encountered by, and presented by, supervisors to the successful implementation of teamwork and to promote a better understanding of the role of supervisors in teamwork implementation.

The research methodology applied in this study, which forms part of the interpretive paradigm of the social sciences, employs the case study methodology. The qualitative case study investigated the implementation of a workplace organisation initiative consisting of teamwork at Consolidated Minerals Limited (CML), a large South African mining operation. The researcher utilised participative observation, semi-structured interviews and documentary investigation to construct a rich database in order to provide a holistic view of the barriers to teamwork implementation both as encountered by, and presented by, supervisors.

Three key themes, consisting of institutional culture, the motives of senior management and the changing role of the supervisor, emerged during the analysis of the research findings. Institutional culture was seen to impact significantly on teamwork, since such culture plays a key role in establishing the foundation on which teamwork initiatives are rolled out. The institutional culture was further recognised as impacting on the preparation of the organisation for the successful adoption of a teamwork culture, as well as influencing the ability of the organisation to learn from its mistakes. The reason for the implementation of

teamwork by senior management emerged as a second theme for the study. The underlying motivation behind its implementation needs to be clearly communicated to, and understood by, both management and employees and must result in benefits for both parties. The research indicates that, where the reason for the implementation of teamwork is questionable, its implementation will continuously encounter resistance from the workforce. The changing role of the supervisor is a third issue that had a significant impact on the ability of supervisors to adapt their managerial style to teamwork requirements.

By considering these underlying themes during the implementation process, the research should assist companies to focus their attention on the importance of institutional culture, as well as allowing management to rethink why they want to implement teamwork. Companies should also be encouraged to take another look at job descriptions, compensation schemes, career pathing and the performance evaluation of supervisors. In so doing, management should more easily be able to stimulate active involvement from a key player, the supervisor, in the teamwork implementation process.

Declaration

I, Jacob Johannes Deysel declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

_____

Jacob Johannes Deysel

30 November 2005

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my gratitude towards:

- The Lord, for giving me the strength and determination
- My wife, Katarien Deysel, for her undivided love, support and patience throughout my MBA studies
- My supervisor, Dr. David Dickinson, for his guidance and direction throughout the research process
- My parents, for their love and support

Your support carried me through this research

Table of Contents

List of tables x
List of appendices xi
Glossary of terms xii

1. INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY 1
1.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY 2
1.3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM 2
1.4 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS 2
1.5 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY 3
1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY 3
1.7 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 3

2. LITERATURE REVIEW 5

2.1 INTRODUCTION 5
2.2 THE CASE FOR ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE 5
2.2.1 The global trend in workplace organisation 5
2.2.2 The labour situation in South Africa 6
2.3 WORKPLACE ORGANISATION OPTIONS 7
2.3.1 Business process redesign (BPR) 8
2.3.2 Total quality management (TQM) 8
2.3.3 Product innovation 9
2.3.4 Teamwork as the common element present in contemporary workplace organisation 9
2.4 TEAMWORK IN THE WORKPLACE 10
2.4.1 Defining teamwork 10
2.4.2 The objectives of teamwork 11
2.4.2.1 Customer satisfaction as an objective of teamwork 11
2.4.2.2 Total quality management as an objective of teamwork 12
2.4.2.3 Overcoming departmental barriers as an objective of teamwork 12
2.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPERVISORS IN TEAMWORK IMPLEMENTATION 13
2.5.1 Introduction 13
2.5.2 The implementation process 13
2.5.3 The role of the supervisor in the implementation of teamwork 15
2.5.3.1 Defining the role of the supervisor 16
2.5.3.2 The traditional role of the supervisor 16
2.5.3.3 The traditional method of selecting supervisors 17
2.5.3.4 The changing role of the supervisor 17
2.5.3.5 The supervisor's role as teamwork facilitator 18
2.6 BARRIERS IMPACTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEAMWORK 20
2.6.1 Senior management commitment and intention 22
2.6.1.1 The lack of commitment towards teamwork experienced at senior management level 22
2.6.1.2 Implementing teamwork for the wrong reasons 23

2.6.2 The lack of shared team vision, goals and objectives *24*
2.6.3 Inappropriate timing in teamwork implementation *24*
2.6.4 The lack of team empowerment and participation in the workplace *25*
2.6.5 The lack of adequate preconditioning (in terms of the training, communication and facilitation) *27*
2.6.5.1 Training 27
2.6.5.2 Communication and facilitation 28
2.6.6 Institutional barriers *28*
2.6.6.1 Corporate histories and cultures that are unsupportive of teamwork initiatives 28
2.6.6.2 Corporate structures and policies that are unsupportive of teamwork initiatives 29
2.6.7 Inadequate performance measures and reward systems *30*
2.6.8 Inadequate team development *31*
2.6.9 Poor industrial relations climate *32*
2.6.9.1 Lack of trust in teamwork implementation 32
2.6.9.2 Historical power and political struggle 32
2.6.9.3 Lack of union participation and involvement in the design of teams 33
2.6.10 Barriers presented by supervisors to the implementation of teamwork *34*
2.6.10.1 Mismatched skills of supervisors 34
2.6.10.2 The lack of appropriate training and development policies following the implementation of teamwork 36
2.6.10.3 Resistance offered by supervisors to change 36
2.6.10.4 The fear of supervisors that they might make mistakes 37
2.6.10.5 Perceptions of increased workloads for supervisors 37
2.6.11 Conclusion *38*

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS 39

3.1 BARRIERS THAT SUPERVISORS ENCOUNTER DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEAMWORK INITIATIVES 39
3.2 BARRIERS THAT SUPERVISORS PRESENT DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEAMWORK INITIATIVES 39

4. THE CASE STUDY 40

4.1 COMPANY BACKGROUND 40
4.2 CHANGE MANAGEMENT HISTORY 41
4.2.1 The business imperative *41*
4.2.1.1 Organisational structure 41
4.2.1.2 The evolution of appropriate business systems 44
4.2.1.3 The teamwork initiative 44
4.3 THE CONSOLIDATED MINERALS LIMITED TEAMWORK INITIATIVE 45
4.4 CONSOLIDATED MINERALS LIMITED SUPERVISORS 46
4.4.1 Pre-process reengineering at CML *47*
4.4.2 Post-process reengineering at CML *47*
4.4.3 The demographics of current shift supervisors *47*
4.4.4 The impact of business changes on the supervisory function *47*

5. METHODOLOGY 50

5.1 THE RESEARCH METHOD USED IN THIS STUDY 50
5.1.1 An overview of the qualitative research methodology employed 50
5.1.2 An overview of the case study research methodology employed 52
5.2 DATA COLLECTION FOR THE STUDY 53
5.2.1 Assembling relevant documentation 54
5.2.2 The use of participative observation 56
5.2.3 The use of interviews 59
5.2.3.1 Sampling methodology 60
5.3 DATA ANALYSIS 63
5.4 THE VALIDITY OF THE STUDY 64
5.4.1 Construct validity 64
5.4.2 External validity 65
5.4.3 Internal validity 66
5.4.4 Reliability 66

6. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS 68

6.1 INTRODUCTION 68
6.2 THE INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE 69
6.2.1 Introduction 69
6.2.2 Culture of mistrust 69
6.2.2.1 Introduction 69
6.2.2.2 The lack of empowerment and the inability to participate fully in the process 72
6.2.2.3 Lack of senior management commitment to the process 76
6.2.2.4 The reluctance to recognise institutional barriers 80
6.2.2.5 Poor industrial relations 82
6.2.2.6 Conclusion: Culture of mistrust 83
6.2.3 Culture of early adoption and initiative overload 84
6.2.3.1 Introduction 84
6.2.3.2 Lack of pre-conditioning 85
6.2.3.3 Inappropriate measures and rewards 88
6.2.3.4 Inappropriate training and development of supervisors 92
6.2.3.5 Conclusion: Culture of early adoption and initiative overload 94
6.2.4 Culture of zero tolerance 95
6.2.4.1 Supervisors fear of making mistakes 95
6.2.5 Conclusion: The institutional culture 96
6.3 SENIOR MANAGEMENT'S MOTIVE BEHIND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEAMWORK 97
6.3.1 Introduction 97
6.3.2 The lack of transparency regarding the need for teamwork 98
6.3.3 Managements intention questionable 99
6.3.4 Conclusion: Senior management's motive behind the implementation of teamwork 101
6.4 THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR 102
6.4.1 Introduction 102

6.4.2 The perception of teamwork as a threat 102
6.4.3 Reluctance to change management style 103
6.4.4 Conclusion: The changing role of the supervisor 106
6.5 SUMMARY 106
6.5.1 Barriers supervisors encountered to the implementation of teamwork .. 106
6.5.1.1 The institutional culture 106
6.5.1.2 Senior management's motive behind the implementation of teamwork 108
6.5.2 Barriers presented by supervisors 109
6.5.2.1 The changing role of the supervisor 109
7. CONCLUSION 110
7.1 INTRODUCTION 110
7.2 BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY SUPERVISORS 111
7.2.1 The instructional culture 111
7.2.2 Senior management's motive behind the implementation of teamwork . 112
7.3 BARRIERS PRESENTED BY SUPERVISORS 113
7.3.1 The changing role of the supervisor 113
7.4 CONCLUSION 114
7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS 114
Reference list 116

List of tables

Table 1: The rationalisation of the CML structure 43

Table 2: The list of documentation types consulted for the current study 55

Table 3: Participative observation situations in the study 58

Table 4: List of participants in the research study 61

Table 5: The comparison between production versus service departments KPI's 91

List of appendices

Appendix A: Interview schedule and list of probe questions……..137

Appendix B: Presentation of research matrix and coding process…….141

Appendix C: Flow chart of key themes and barriers……..142

Glossary of terms

Team – For the purpose of this research paper, a team is a group of employees that forms a sub-grouping within the workforce as a whole. The employees in the group (should) work together in order to complement one another's functions. The group has defined objectives, targets and processes and is created with the objective of producing superior results to those that might otherwise have been achieved by other structures of workforce organisation.

Teamwork – Teamwork consists of initiatives aimed at creating teams in order to facilitate the implementation of workplace organisation initiatives focused on process reengineering, quality improvements and product innovation.

Supervisor – A supervisor operates at the most junior level of management, with responsibility for a section or team of employees who, in turn, have no employees reporting to them.

1. Introduction

1.1 The context of the study

The leadership of empowered teams is increasingly seen as a critical component of the never-ending quest for competitiveness. The concomitant shift in management thinking has received extensive attention from researchers such as Huszczo (1996) and Castka, Bamber, Sharp & Belohoubek (2001). Teamwork is seen as the major management tool facilitating the transformation of an organisation from a traditional bureaucratic structure to a 'lean and mean machine'. In addition to the emphasis on teamwork currently found in management literature, the importance of teamwork for employee relations is also extensively explored in industrial relations and human resources literature (Storey, 1992 and McCabe & Black, 1997). Most recent studies indicate that teamwork and team-based organisations are likely to proliferate in future as a result of such strategic initiatives as business process redesign, total quality management and product innovation (Drew & Coulson-Thomas, 1997).

However, high expectations of teamwork may lead to disappointment and the need to re-evaluate teamwork critically. Church (1998) adds, in support of this view, that, although the importance of teams has come to be recognised, few studies yet exist that substantiate claims made regarding their significance in the workplace.

Management, human resources and industrial relations literature all advise on how various enabling factors, and barriers to the smooth operation of these factors, impact at both management and shop-floor level. These studies serve to address the transition of management, unions and shop-floor employees to the successful adoption and implementation of teamwork. However, limited attention has yet been paid to team-related roles, and barriers to the functioning of these roles, existing at lower management and especially frontline supervisory level.

Clifford & Sohal (1998:82) support this view and stress that “special attention needs to be paid to the supervisors and middle management as resistance is often experienced most from these groups of people”.

1.2 The purpose of the study

The importance of teamwork for facilitating workplace change and increasing productivity is widely recognised. One aspect of teamwork implementation that has been neglected in research undertaken so far is the role that supervisors play in teamwork facilitation (Eden, 1990; George & Bettenhausen, 1990; Bennis & Powell, 2000; Bozionelos & Lusher, 2002). The current study therefore aims to identify barriers that supervisors both face and present to the successful implementation of teamwork.

1.3 The research problem

The study investigates the role of the supervisor in the implementation of teamwork as a workplace organisation initiative.

1.4 The research questions

The following sub-questions are associated with this research:

Sub-question one: Which barriers do supervisors *encounter* when implementing teamwork initiatives?
Sub-question two: Which barriers do supervisors *present* when implementing teamwork initiatives?

1.5 Delimitation of the study

The current study will focus on exploring the implementation of a workplace organisation initiative consisting of teamwork enacted at Consolidated Minerals Limited throughout 2005. Specific emphasis will be placed on the identification of the barriers encountered and presented by key role-players involved in the process.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The research will be limited to the implementation process followed within Consolidated Minerals Limited and, as such, findings will be applicable only to Consolidated Minerals Limited. Accordingly, the literature review explicitly highlights the fact that the method of implementation followed in one organisation cannot simply be transferred to another. However, the research should serve to identify key barriers to enablement of the process and also define the possible future role of the supervisor in the teamwork implementation process.

Though the study aims to identify both barriers to and factors instrumental to the success of the process, the factors themselves, as well as the dependencies between them, will not be identified.

1.7 The significance of the study

By identifying the barriers to the successful implementation of teamwork, as well as noting the role of the supervisor in the implementation process, management stands to benefit from the findings of this study, as it will then be able to direct resources towards more clearly identified barriers.

Further, management will more easily be able to establish which human resources and management development structures are most appropriate for accommodating the changing role of the frontline supervisor. Doing so will help frontline supervisors to recognise and strive to fulfil future roles and expectations more fully.

Identification of barriers, as well as of the role played by frontline supervisors, will be of particular interest to academics, practitioners and facilitators intent on maximising human productivity in the workplace.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In order to be able to survive in an increasingly competitive environment, companies are faced with, the need continuously to search for ways in which to increase their flexibility and to improve the quality of their products and services, while at the same time reducing their costs. The following section of the literature review, which deals with workplace organisation options available to companies, specifically emphasises teamwork as a common element underpinning the interventions under review. Particular emphasis is placed on the objectives of teamwork, as well as on the implementation process itself. One aspect of implementation that has so far been neglected in the related literature is the role of the supervisor. This aspect is explored in more detail, with specific reference to the barriers to implementation both encountered and presented by supervisors.

2.2 The case for organisational change

2.2.1 The global trend in workplace organisation

Studies of management, human resources and industrial relation literature reveal a strong interest in workplace organisation. As early as 1967, research confirmed that most organisations were forced to confront the daunting prospect of the need to cope with ever-quickening revolutionary changes in the workplace (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Castka, Bamber, Sharp & Belohoubek (2001:123) agree that “today’s organisations have to face a turbulent environment where change seems to be the only constant”. The rapid advance of information and process technology, as well as ever-increasing product innovation, is steadily heightening the competitiveness and complexity of the organisational arena.

Castka, Bamber, Sharp & Belohoubek (2001) argue that, in order to remain competitive, organisations need to develop competencies that increase their flexibility and ability to respond effectively to changes, that enable them to improve the quality of their products and services, and that enable them to reduce their costs and to make effective use of the intellectual capital that they have available. Irani & Sharp (1997) add, in support of the previous argument, that if organisations are to succeed, they need effectively to integrate the knowledge, skills and experience of all available human resources. Clifford & Sohal (1998) question whether traditional organisational structures are, indeed, able to add value in this way. They believe that the most effective means of achieving the required competencies is for organisations to develop into flatter, leaner and more responsive structures. Such development should be aimed at ensuring greater flexibility and the enhancement of innovative capacity.

2.2.2 The labour situation in South Africa

South Africa, similarly to Japan, started industrialising in the late nineteenth century. However, in contrast to the positive growth rate of per capita income in Japan, the South African per capita income has shown a negative growth rate (Horwitz, 1991). While Japan, the so-called ‘winning nation’, achieved success by emphasising an improvement in education and productivity levels, South Africa, due to the migrant labour system prevalent during the apartheid era, felt that it lacked the need to improve in such spheres, as it had access to an unending supply of cheap unskilled labour.

Finnemore (1999) argues that the channelling of black labour into unskilled and semi-skilled positions resulted from discriminatory labour practices existing in South Africa from the earliest colonial times. Such practices led to the existence of a large, uneducated workforce characterised by low productivity resulting from minimal focus on the provision of adequate education and training opportunities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1998:19) reported that “apartheid

raised the cost of doing business, eroded South Africa's skill base and undermined long-term productivity and growth". The negative impact of apartheid was particularly noticeable in the mining industry, which was historically associated with the practice of 'autocratic unitarism'.

The abolishment of apartheid and the deregulation of the South African economy have led to an increase in the level of competition in the workplace. Labour, traditionally one of South Africa's cheapest commodities, is rapidly becoming more expensive (Venter, 1994). Today, the need for lower cost structures and an improved level of productivity are critical to South African organisations becoming globally competitive. Accordingly, increasingly more organisations are adopting a world-class manufacturing (WCM) philosophy of flatter, non-hierarchical structures in order to facilitate the adoption of a strategy based on recognition of the need for increased employee empowerment and accountability. South African organisations have embarked on a constant quest for ways in which to improve their competitive position, involving the identification of various workplace organisation strategies for enhancing their standing in this respect.

2.3 Workplace organisation options

Katzenbach and Smith (1993) argue that organisations today are faced with a challenge consisting of several different phases, requiring them to address issues of innovation, quality improvement and customer service. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) have identified three different workplace organisation strategies according to which companies can successfully position themselves in this ever-changing environment, namely business process redesign (BPR), total quality management (TQM) and product innovation.

2.3.1 Business process redesign (BPR)

Hamel & Prahalad (1994) define business process redesign as the reengineering of business systems and processes, as well as the fundamental reinvention of the way in which the related systems and processes interact. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) promote business process redesign as a workplace option aimed at: improving the development of core competencies; fostering organisational learning and developing such characteristics as responsiveness and flexibility. Hammer & Champy (1993) advocate teamwork as the primary management tool for use in business process redesign. They argue that teamwork breaks down departmental barriers and facilitates the establishment of a spirit of cross-functional cooperation, which is core to the effective redesigning of businesses. Tomasko (1978), Guimaraes (1997) and Lau & Anderson (1998) support this view, arguing that teams serve as the building-blocks for business redesign. Corbery, Meuller & Smith (1991) concur with this viewpoint, adding that empirical evidence suggests that teamwork is of critical importance, especially in an environment characterised by uncertainty and unpredictability.

2.3.2 Total quality management (TQM)

Professor John Oakland, an authority on total quality management, defines TQM as “a philosophy, a way of thinking and working, that is concerned with meeting the needs and expectations of customers” (Pycraft, Singh, Phihlela, Slack, Chambers, Harland, Harrison & Johnston, 2001:736). Muhlemann, Oakland & Lockyer (1992) link the practice of total quality management to teamwork, emphasising that, in order for an organisation to be effective, every activity, every person and every department in the organisation must work effectively in unison.

2.3.3 Product innovation

Castka, Bamber, Sharp & Belohoubek (2001) conclude that the radical change in information and process technology demands the acceleration of product innovation and cycle times. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) agree with their conclusions, adding that the need for a timeous response from organisations is of increasing importance today. Pycraft *et al.* (2001) identify two strategies that organisations can use: breakthrough improvement and continuous improvement. Breakthrough improvement relies on radical improvements in a series of steps, whereas continuous improvement involves smaller, but more continuous, on-going improvements. Patterson (1993) supports the use of teams to accelerate innovation, primarily because teamwork increases efficiency, productivity and the delivery of outputs. The sharing of the individually held knowledge of all team members involved is critical for inspiring creativity and innovation (Manz & Sims, 1987 and Parry, Transheld, Smith , Foster & Wilson, 1998).

2.3.4 Teamwork as the common element present in contemporary workplace organisation

Instead of teamwork serving as an alternative to the abovementioned workplace organisation options, it rather forms the basis for facilitating the implementation of the processes involved in workplace transformation. Barney (1999), Boxall & Steeneveld (1999) and Mueller & Kamoche (2000) find that, by utilising the "collective knowledge and skills" of employees, the organisation can develop intangible assets, which are unique and difficult for competitors to copy.

The emphasis on teamwork is not only present in management literature, but its linkage to employee relations has also been extensively investigated in industrial relations and human resources literature (Storey, 1992 and McCabe & Black, 1997). Huszczo & Hoffman (1999:4), in their study of barriers as seen from a management and union perspective, support this view and conclude, "Forming of

teams is a natural way to involve workers in an organisation". Most recent studies indicate that teamwork and team-based organisations are likely to increase in number in future, especially as a result of the implementation of specific change strategies (Drew & Coulson-Thomas, 1997). Teamwork and the specific objectives of teamwork will be expanded on in the following section.

2.4 Teamwork in the workplace

2.4.1 Defining teamwork

Cooperation is essential to teamwork. Francis & Young (1979:83) define a team as "an energetic group of people who are committed to achieve common objectives, who work well together and enjoy doing so, and who produce high-quality results". Adair (1986:23) argues that a team is "a group in which the individuals share a common aim and in which the jobs and skills of each member fit in with those of the others". Johnson & Johnson (1991:59) suggest that a team is "a set of interpersonal relationships structured to achieve established goals". Katzenbach & Smith (1993:27) define a team as "a small group of people with complimentary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable". Kur (1996:33) describes a team as a "purposeful, open, socio-technical system in a state of tension between change and stability".

One should acknowledge that the definitions of teams that we have so far discussed describe the 'ideal team' and that, in practice, teams are mostly formed in line with organisational structures, with less emphasis on the complementary skills of the individual team members concerned. For the purpose of this research study, a team may be defined as a group of front-line employees, operating in an environment conducive to participation, who seek to translate the purpose of the organisation into meaningful practices that enable them to identify and exploit any opportunity for improvement. The following

subsections will consider the objectives of teamwork in more detail in terms of the operational definition.

2.4.2 The objectives of teamwork

Extensive research has already been undertaken into the value and application of teamwork in various industries, resulting in the discovery of enlightening insights into team initiatives and the appropriateness of a team approach for workplace organisation. Guzzo (1996:55) argues that the role of workplace teams has changed over time. In the 1960s, workplace teams were used to train and impart experience essential to effective management. During the 1970s workplace teams became the “antidote to worker alienation”. Workplace teams of the 1980s were seen as the solution to quality and productivity problems, permitting foreign (especially Japanese) firms to outperform local companies. For the last decade or so workplace teams have become instrumental in transforming companies into leaner and more flexible entities by means of a process known as business process reengineering (Hammer & Champy, 1993).

Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) argue that the objectives most apparently served by a teamwork initiative are delivery of customer satisfaction, the achievement of total quality and the overcoming of departmental barriers. Huszczo & Hoffman (1999) support this view, adding that varying motives exist for using cooperative teamwork as the primary way of organising the workplace. These motives will be discussed separately.

2.4.2.1 Customer satisfaction as an objective of teamwork

Denyer (1992), Hand (1992) and Bergman & Klefsjo (1994) regard meeting customer needs as the main focus of any quality intervention in the implementation of total quality management. “The goal of teamwork is to improve performance by involving every employee in meeting customer needs” (Lynch &

Werner, 1994:35). Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) find that research on teamwork is directed towards changing the organisational focus from operations and products to customers. Studies undertaken by Quick (1992), Paulsen (1994), Clifford & Sohal (1998) and Colenso (2000) have likewise concluded that the effective use of teamwork has been shown to bring about improvement in levels of customer satisfaction.

2.4.2.2 Total quality management as an objective of teamwork

The use of teamwork to improve the quality performance of organisations is advocated in several different management research papers, including a number of those on human resource management (Geust, 1987; Macy & Izumi, 1993 and Applebaum & Batt, 1994); Kaizen philosophy (Imai, 1986); quality circles (Foster, 2000) and total quality management (Bamber, Sharp & Hides, 1999). Korukonda (1988) and Oakland (1989) concur, stating that teamwork is an essential ingredient in the implementation of a quality management system.

2.4.2.3 Overcoming departmental barriers as an objective of teamwork

Quick (1992) suggests that the free flow of information upwards, downwards and sidewards that teamwork facilitates within an organisation is key to establishing interdepartmental cooperation. Hammer & Champy (1993) advocate teamwork for breaking down departmental barriers in order to facilitate the development of cross-functional cooperation. Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995), in their study of knowledge management and learning organisational principles add, in support of these studies, that individuals form the basic elements of knowledge-based interactions. They agree that individual learning is irrelevant, unless knowledge gained in this way is diffused through the organisation by means of facilitative teamwork.

Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) agree with the previous argument, adding that the breaking down of boundaries and the establishment of communication and collaboration are a few of the key benefits to be gained from teamwork. Corbery, Mueller & Smith (1991), in addition to Irani & Sharp (1997), suggest that, for companies to succeed in today's turbulent work environment, the knowledge, skills, experience and perspective of a wide range of people must be integrated.

2.5 The importance of supervisors in teamwork implementation

2.5.1 Introduction

The strategies recommended for teamwork implementation are wide-ranging in nature and usually include the need for 'bundling' of various initiatives during the process. However, one aspect that has so far been neglected is the changing role of the supervisor in his or her capacity as teamwork facilitator. The following subsections address this aspect in greater detail.

2.5.2 The implementation process

Nutt (1986) defines implementation as "a procedure directed by a manager to install planned change in an organisation". Holt, Self, Thal & Lo (2003) suggest that research conducted over the last sixty years has concluded that organisations pass through several different phases as leaders attempt to bring about organisational change. Lewin (1947), Judson (1991), Burke & Litwin (1992) and Kotter (1995) prescribe different strategies and models for facilitating organisational change. However, the general consensus is that the strategies used by leaders to encourage the adoption and implementation of change impact on the degree of success attained. Kotter's model, which builds on that proposed by Judson (1991), emphasises the need to create a vision of the desired end-

state that can be achieved by means of empowering employees through reformulating policies, structures and procedures.

Wellins (1992) and Clifford & Sohal (1998) have adapted these models to the implementation of teamwork. Wellins (1992) suggests that the transition to self-directed work teams can be classified into six steps: (1) gaining knowledge;
(2) conducting a readiness survey; (3) communicating organisational vision and values; (4) redesigning the workplace; (5) implementation; and (6) evaluation. Clifford & Sohal (1998) simplify the more detailed breakdown outlined by Wellins into four stages: (1) the communication of intention; (2) the implementation strategy design; (3) the evolution to a team approach; and (4) the continuous improvement stage.

Castka, Bamber, Sharp & Belohoubek (2001) suggest an implementation plan that focuses on the need to approach teamwork as a multidimensional construct, which requires parallel development of the individual, the team and the organisation. They refer to the strategy as the 'bundling' of initiatives during the implementation of change. Katzenbach & Smith (1993), Senge *et al.* (1994), Conti & Kleiner (1997) and Church (1998) place the strategy in organisational context, explaining that job descriptions, compensation schemes, career pathing and performance evaluation all need to be packaged together during the implementation.

Clifford & Sohal (1998) conclude that more than 50 percent of the companies that participated in their study have had to adapt their organisational policies and structures since embarking on teamwork. Gutteridge, Leibowitz and Shore (1993), Bozionelos (1996), Arnold (1997) and Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) argue that the linkage of teamwork to issues of morale, commitment and loyalty is so important that organisations need to incorporate it into their management framework. They argue that the inclusion of team development in human resource systems stands to become even more effective as increasing career

advancement opportunities result in much higher levels of motivation. “So, simply adopting a total quality management system has an insignificant or negative effect on productivity unless the proportion of workers involved in regular decision-making in a plant is also high. In other words; it is not so much what you say you do, but how you do it that matters” (Thompson, 2001:7). Hovemeyer (1993), Brauchle & Wright (1993) and Tannenbaum *et al.* (1996) concur with Thompson's views on the importance of involving workers in decision-making on a regular basis, stressing the importance of following a systematic approach in the implementation and maintenance of teamwork.

The role of the supervisor during the implementation process of teamwork is often overlooked. As such, the supervisor plays a critical role in the implementation process, significantly contributing to either the difficulty or ease with which teamwork is implemented. The limited research that has so far been undertaken in this regard and the pressing importance of the role of the supervisor in the implementation of a teamwork approach have led to the need to consider this issue in more detail.

2.5.3 The role of the supervisor in the implementation of teamwork

In order to gain a full understanding of the role that the supervisor plays in the implementation process, we need to define the supervisory function and understand where the role of supervisors originated and how the traditional role of the supervisor is currently evolving.

2.5.3.1 Defining the role of the supervisor

Evan (1996:26) defines the supervisor as “traditionally being the most junior member of management and is seen as the link between the workforce and senior management”. MacNeil (2001) states that the supervisor is the line manager who is responsible for a section or team of employees who, in turn, do not have any employees reporting to them. MacNeil (2004) explains that a supervisor can be considered to be a manager, as the supervisor is directly accountable for obtaining results through other employees.

2.5.3.2 The traditional role of the supervisor

MacNeil (2001) notes that the role of the supervisor is seen as traditionally involving a complex balancing of the demands of the workforce with the requirements of senior management. Supervisor conventionally, though responsible for ensuring that the performance of workers is in line with set company goals, lack the authority to participate in, or to contribute to, the decision-making process. Bruniquel (1991) explains that, though supervisors tend to play a key role in the management of organisations, often lack adequate support from management. In support of this explanation, McHugh, O’Brain & Ramondt (1999) add that the low status of the traditional supervisor largely derives from ‘top-down’ communication and insufficient rationale for change of systems, policies and practices. MacNeil (2004) stresses the difficulties that supervisors experience, especially in the form of political inequalities and anomalies with middle managers regarding their respective powers and responsibilities. MacNeil also notes that limitations on the supervisor’s power and authority also tend to heighten the levels of tension experienced by those concerned.

2.5.3.3 The traditional method of selecting supervisors

Bruniquel (1991) claims that supervisors are often appointed for the incorrect reasons, that the role of supervisors is often poorly defined and that, as a result, they often lack leadership and interpersonal skills. MacNeil (2004) supports this view, concluding that supervisors have traditionally been recruited and selected on grounds of their technical expertise, as well as their experience, with little emphasis on their management competencies.

Venter (1994) finds that certain job grades, including that of the supervisor, were exclusively reserved for white employees in South Africa. He explains that, in this national context, a “definite culture was allowed to evolve where the white worker tended to be the manager, foreman or artisan/operator”. The current diversity present among supervisors holds implications not only for the traditional supervisor selection process, but also for future development and workplace organisation initiatives. Horwitz (1991) agrees that, in South Africa, the development of group cohesiveness and the encouragement of participation in the running of operations have mostly been directed at white management.

2.5.3.4 The changing role of the supervisor

Though studies have recorded changes in the role of the supervisor due to the implementation of workplace organisation initiatives, a thorough investigation of this changing role has still yet to be undertaken (Eden, 1990; George & Bettenhausen, 1990; Bennis & Powell, 2000; Bozionelos & Lusher, 2002. Applebaum, Lavigne-Schmidt, Peytchev & Shapiro (1999) have found that the supervisor’s role has especially changed in organisations that have undergone structural changes through downsizing that has included the creation of flatter structures, processes and teamwork. Lowe (1993) and Rose, Marshall, Newby & Vogler (1987) support this view, and add that the introduction of business

process reengineering has increased the supervisor's accountability for meeting increasingly demanding performance objectives and measures.

MacNeil (2004) concludes that this more demanding environment results in supervisors becoming the centre point, not only of the interface between senior management and the team, but also of team management and facilitation. McHugh, O'Brian & Ramondt (1999) support this view, adding that the role of interfacing could represent a valuable, though generally overlooked, learning resource for organisational change. MacNeil (2003) explains that supervisors can be key to organisational learning, as they are responsible for encouraging the collective sharing of knowledge within their teams.

Bunning (2000:99) explains that the supervisor's role is "critical, challenging and often unappreciated". The challenges of this role are steadily increasing and, in future, supervisors will be expected to manage their business units productively and continuously to be on the lookout for how their teams can achieve quality improvement (Bunning, 2000). MacNeil (2001) argues that supervisors will be expected to operate in an increasingly uncertain environment, while still maintaining and improving on their performance levels. MacNeil (2004) places this whole situation in context, adding that the complexity and size of the supervisor's role are ever growing as a result of the increasing amount of competition that organisations face both in their internal and external environments.

2.5.3.5 The supervisor's role as teamwork facilitator

The implementation of teamwork requires a completely new outlook on the roles and responsibilities of frontline supervisors. Teams will take over the pragmatic day-to-day skills currently expected of managers and supervisors in order to perform their managerial functions. Supervisors, as we know them, need to undergo a complete metamorphosis from being traditional 'frontline supervisors'

to becoming new-coined ‘team leaders’. The implementation of teamwork requires revision of what is expected of supervisors and their functions, as well as of the power relationship. Williams (1995:34) explains that supervisors will now be called upon to “guide the work group in its development and empowerment”. The supervisor needs to mobilise the individual team members' contribution to the achievement of set objectives (Nurmi, 1996). Bennis & Powell (2000) and Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) explain that the leader of a team, the supervisor, is the member that is predominantly responsible for the motivation and cohesiveness of the other members. Zucchi & Edwards (2000) argue that, in order for supervisors to meet these challenges, they should start functioning as facilitators instead of only as leaders responsible only for the firm direction of their teams.

Gardner (1990) and Stewart & Manz (1995) conclude that the involvement of supervisors in teamwork will require them to facilitate the mutual striving of all team members towards the attainment of shared goals and visions. Ellinger & Bostrom (1999) similarly explore the importance of the supervisor as a facilitator of the development of shared knowledge. They conclude that the supervisor is the key driver and enabler of the development of learning within an organisation. MacNeil (2001) adds that the supervisor plays a facilitating role in the teamwork implementation process, stressing the significant contribution that the supervisor can make towards the development of core competencies and skills in his or her organisation by means of helping to establish an environment in which teams can partake of shared knowledge and learning. MacNeil (2004) concludes that supervisors as facilitators of teamwork can provide the missing ‘communication link’ that activates individuals to share the knowledge that they have acquired in the workplace.

2.6 Barriers impacting on the implementation of teamwork

The implementation of teamwork has received substantial attention from the academic community and, although the studies that have been done so far promote use of teamwork, support of teamwork still needs to become wholehearted (Procter & Ackroyd, 1998). Church (1998) supports this view, adding that, although the importance of teams has already been recognised, few studies yet exist which substantiate the claims made by researchers.

Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) note that the implementation of teamwork may be considered to have failed when organisations cite losses in customer focus and increased rigidity in decision-making processes. Nurmi (1996:9) finds that the “poor application of teamwork corrodes individual response and decision rights”, adding that the improper implementation of teamwork can lead to teamwork being used as a "camouflage of autocratic management" that slows down the capacity to make decisions. Such weakening of capacitation occurs most markedly when individuals are not allowed to take decisions outside formal team meetings. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) conclude that simply expressing commitment to teamwork and adopting the conventional project management implementation process is insufficient for teamwork implementation.

According to Church (1998:50), the “most common reason for substandard group performance is that managers make serious mistakes in designing, supporting and leading teams”. Brauchle & Wright (1993), Hovemeyer (1993) and Tannenbaum, Salas & Cannon-Bowers (1996) agree with this view. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) caution management not to restructure along team-based lines without first considering the nature of their firm, their corporate culture, their stated objectives and any possible barriers to the implementation of teamwork. Lawrence & Lorsch (1967) furthermore state that teamwork lessons learned by one organisation cannot simply be transplanted to another

organisation. While the benefits of teamwork are often over-promoted, the difficulties of implementation are likewise often underestimated (Dumaine, 1994). The study by Adebanjo & Kehoe (2001) of 166 UK-based companies supports these findings and concludes that 60% of all companies that have implemented teamwork, as part of their process of developing total quality management, have struggled to develop and implement teamwork.

Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997:165) argue that the recognition of barriers is but the first step – executives need carefully to assess what tools are available and how best to direct the use of "scarce resources and precious time". They add that organisations will, in future, need to learn increasingly more about how to implement and practise teamwork, as well as how effectively best to lever this initiative in order to gain a sustainable competitive advantage. Guimaraes (1997) supports this view, adding that most companies that embark on teamwork initiatives fail primarily as a result of inadequate assessment of organisational barriers to the implementation of advanced manufacturing technologies.

Barriers to the successful implementation of team initiatives exist in all organisations. Management, human resources and industrial relations sources offer guidance regarding the relevance and importance of various barriers and enabling factors. These studies address the transition of management, unions and shop-floor employees to a stage where they can benefit from the successful implementation of teamwork. The frontline supervisory level is of prime importance at this stage, since little research exists so far on the different roles involved in teamwork and on any possible barriers to the implementation of teamwork present at this level.

Barriers encountered or presented by supervisors that have so far been identified range from issues of lack of managerial commitment to those relating to the industrial relations context in which the organizational changes occur. In addition to the lack of managerial commitment, barriers *encountered* by supervisors

include inadequate team preparation and alignment, lack of support from existing systems and non-supportive organisational climates and cultures. Barriers *presented* by supervisors include the lack of appropriate skills and training, as well as personal negative perceptions of possible increased workloads, added to by the fear of making mistakes. These barriers will be considered in more detail in the following subsections.

2.6.1 Senior management commitment and intention

2.6.1.1 The lack of commitment towards teamwork experienced at senior management level

The lack of managerial support and commitment to the implementation of teamwork has been shown as one of the fundamental reasons leading to its failure. Though the lack of managerial commitment can take a variety of forms, mostly it appears in the form of management devoting too little time and effort to meeting the ongoing demands of the implementation process. Lack of commitment is especially apparent on the front line when management does not commit sufficient resources, including time, information and materials, to allow for successful implementation or when management refuses to sacrifice its control over the employees concerned. Manz & Sims (1995), as well as Church (1998), stress the importance of adequate support of the implementation process and conclude that if management does not make resources available to teams, they will lose both their technical and motivational capacity to excel.

Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997:164) expand on this view, adding that: “Simply espousing a commitment to teamwork and appointing a project champion is not enough”. Church (1998) and Huszczo & Hoffman (1999) argue that management often uses teamwork to make employees realise that ‘we are all in this together’ and that they are ‘one big family’. They add that if this is management’s message, then, at best, it aims to tap employee loyalty and, at its worst, it leads

to a spirit of ‘paternalism and exploitation’. The managing director should be the primary driver of the teamwork approach. If this is not the case, the implementation of teamwork as a management strategy will inevitably fail (Clifford & Sohal, 1998). Nurmi (1996) agrees that, if management is not committed to teamwork, the initiative will merely serve to ‘camouflage’ autocratic control.

Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) find that managerial commitment is the key to success, since it effectively shapes the organisational impact of culture, work structure and policies that need to be aligned with the teamwork initiative for it to be successful. Caruth, Middlebrook & Folger (1995:5) concur with this finding, adding that “in order for leaders to overcome resistance to change the organisational leader must first: create the proper attitude, and flood the organisation with communication about the change. Then the leader must set a good example, solicit opinions from employees and, last, reward acceptance”

2.6.1.2 Implementing teamwork for the wrong reasons

Apart from any possible lack of commitment and support, the managerial intention or motivation to implement teamwork needs to be clearly understood and communicated. Church (1998:44) finds that “There is no doubt that teams occasionally get implemented as a misplaced curative for organizational ills”. Cole (1984) stresses that, for teamwork initiatives to have any chance of success, any new contracts governing teamwork must guarantee that no employee will lose his or her job due to being incorporated into a team. Supervisors may be particularly impacted by the implementation, since, where fully autonomous teams come into being, the traditional function of the supervisor inevitably becomes redundant.

Holt *et al.* (2003) maintain that if management successfully identifies the appropriate strategy and implementation process in terms of which it can send

appropriate messages about the impending change, the implementation will be successful and leaders will reap the intended benefits. Armenakis *et al.* (1999) emphasise the content, rather than the process, of communication, adding that leaders should communicate positive implications of the required change.

2.6.2 The lack of shared team vision, goals and objectives

Kets & De Vries (1999) concur with the findings of Adair (1986), Senge (1990) and Scholtes *et al.* (1996) that teams must have a clearly defined purpose and goals that are aligned with those of the organisation. Lack of clearly defined purpose, goals and direction of teams can be detrimental to the implementation process. This barrier is directly linked to that of lack of managerial commitment, which may result in a poor sense of direction, mismatched needs, confused goals and unresolved roles (Robbins & Finley, 1996; and Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). Senge (1990) emphasises the need for a shared vision regarding team learning, which holds significant implications regarding issues of continuous improvement and innovation. Teamwork can only be successful if a team has clearly defined parameters within which to operate, as well as clearly delineated expectations of the organisation concerned. Lack of clear communication of managerial expectations forms a major barrier to teamwork facilitation, according to Mink, Owen & Mink (1993).

2.6.3 Inappropriate timing in teamwork implementation

Corporate restructuring and downsizing in recent years has primarily been directed at reducing the cost of organisational bureaucracies. Two schools of thought exist in the literature regarding the appropriate timing of teamwork implementation. On the one hand, teamwork is seen as an integral part of business redesign. Tomasko (1978), Guimaraes (1997) and Lau & Anderson (1998) support this view, arguing that teams are the building blocks in the process of business redesign. On the other hand, some studies suggest that

downsizing is such a sensitive issue that executives do not dare to risk teamwork as a viable alternative. For example, Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) suggest that the incorrect timing of a teamwork initiative may be detrimental to its success. They add that union retaliation and a bad press may place so much emphasis on the negative implications of the restructuring process that the implementation of teamwork might fail.

2.6.4 The lack of team empowerment and participation in the workplace

Austin (1993) defines the empowerment of employees as a new management skill involving the relinquishing of power and authority and marking a move toward democracy within the work environment. Issues of empowerment are closely linked to those of management commitment. The implementation of teamwork can be derailed if management remains in tight control of decision-making (Colenso, 2000). Huszczo & Hoffman (1999) and Lawler, Ledford & Mohrman (1997) stress that ideas need to evolve into opportunities for workers to have a greater say in actual decision-making, as well as for them to become more involved in finding and providing solutions for pressing organisational problems.

Ray (1994) and Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) indicate that the primary difficulty confronting managers as they increasingly seek to empower employees is lack of trust. Managers may feel threatened by the possible loss of status, control and power resulting from the process. Huszczo & Hoffman (1999) support this view, adding that management may have come not to trust the workforce and particularly to distrust unions if past relationships have been poor. Apart from any reluctance to surrender control, management may be reluctant to delegate responsibility, as a result of the perceived lack of training and managerial competency of supervisors or team leaders. Darling (1996) argues that employees and supervisors perceive worker control to be a myth. Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) conclude that 50% of all team leaders claim that their managers

restrict their freedom to make decisions, which implies a lack of confidence that undermines team leader morale and also distracts managers from other important tasks. McHugh *et al.* (1999) support this finding, adding that when the organisational environment supports managerial retention of power, supervisors may find it difficult to change their management style from traditional directive to facilitative.

Weick (1979) suggests that supervisors are frequently excluded from strategic decision-making processes. He adds that supervisors want to be included in this 'strategic-conversation' in order to gain insight into their organisations' overall direction. Wooldridge & Floyd (1990) state that the involvement of supervisors in such processes serves to improve their strategic decision-making capacity, helps to create consensus and strengthens commitment to the implementation of teamwork. They recommend supervisory participation as a means of imbuing the supervisors concerned with an awareness of organisational realities, as well as with a heightened understanding of the need for human resources to be actively involved in the implementation of appropriate strategies.

Management needs more clearly to be able to envisage the potential impetus of management by volunteers (Smith & Greeb, 1993). Huszczo & Hoffman (1999) explain that, although management tends already to have learned how to achieve compliance, it still lacks the ability to gain the commitment of employees. Management needs to replace the more traditional 'carrot or stick' approach with 'soft skills' in order to secure the effective building and nurturing of relationships. Smith & Greeb (1993) add that this change in approach, however, does not mean that traditional management skills are obsolete, but that they need to be adapted to a more team-based approach. Sims & Manz (1996) and Clifford & Sohal (1998) refer to the change in the role of management as consisting of a move from a 'cop to coach' approach.

2.6.5 The lack of adequate preconditioning (in terms of the training, communication and facilitation)

The implementation of management by teams has a far greater chance of success if the teams are adequately prepared and invested in by the organisations concerned. Being sufficiently prepared involves aspects of training, communication and facilitation.

2.6.5.1 Training

Adebanjo & Kehoe (2001) find one of the reasons for weak teamwork development being the absence of technical support, which they regard as consisting of training, facilitation and skills transfer. They add that team members need to understand that, when working in teams, they will be solving problems and seeking improvements that affect not only their own positions and roles, but also the overall success of their organisations. Employees need to be educated about why it is necessary for them to form teams, as well as about the tools and techniques required for successful teamwork.

Clifford & Sohal (1998) add that successful companies usually increase training spending by approximately 50% during the implementation stage, in order to fill critical skill gaps that might otherwise make implementation difficult. Their view is supported by related studies conducted by Oakland (1993); Katzenbach & Smith (1993); Feurer, Chaharbaghi & Wargin (1996); Johnson (1996) and Church (1998).

Training and personal development skills are advocated for the enablers of teamwork by the following researchers: Katzenbach & Smith (1993); Robbins and Finley (1996); Scholtes *et al.* (1996); and Bozionelos & Lusher (2002).

Such skills consist of:

- interpersonal and joint skills, including conflict management, dynamics of teamwork, decision-making and communication skills;
- analytical and statistical skills, including problem-solving, improvement techniques and quality control skills;
- improvement techniques, including creativity approach and systems thinking techniques; and
- technical skills relating to a particular organisation and role.

2.6.5.2 Communication and facilitation

Wellins (1992) proposes that the transition to management by teams be broken down into six steps: (1) gaining knowledge; (2) conducting a readiness survey; (3) communicating an organisational vision and appropriate values; (4) redesigning the workplace; (5) implementation; and (6) evaluation. Clifford & Sohal (1998) break down the transition into only four stages: (1) the communication of intention; (2) the implementation strategy design; (3) the evolution to a team approach; and (4) the continuous improvement stage. Irrespective of the number of stages recognised as being involved, both studies concurred that communication, training and facilitation are essential during each stage of the transition.

2.6.6 Institutional barriers

2.6.6.1 Corporate histories and cultures that are unsupportive of teamwork initiatives

A supportive workplace environment is crucial for the successful implementation of management by teams, as such an environment fosters the exchange of knowledge among team members (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Nonaka &

Takeuchi, 1995). Corporate history, business domain and company culture are all factors that uniquely shape specific organisations. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) identify that, even within a single firm, different divisions and departments have different modes of work that are uniquely shaped by their own history and culture. They add that the importance of these factors are often not sufficiently emphasised during the implementation phase. Procter & Ackroyd (1998:247) caution against blindly transplanting what they call ‘Japanization’, since doing so assumes that the pattern of change in organisations is known. This practice prevents the understanding of distinct qualities that have developed in different industries. The authors stress the need to recognise the difficulties that organisations face in adopting Japanese practices due to their varying ability to adapt to such practices, as well as to cope with the differences in social and economic infrastructures supporting these activities.

The study by Da Cruz & Kay (1995) finds that 64% of all organisations where teamwork has failed identified the lack of cultural focus during implementation as one of the primary barriers to its successful introduction. In support of their findings, Oakland (1989) and Adebanjo & Kehoe (2001) state that physiological issues play an important role in the design of organisational cultures. They find that corporate culture is one of the organisational factors that most influences how successful a team-based approach is.

2.6.6.2 Corporate structures and policies that are unsupportive of teamwork initiatives

The six steps of teamwork implementation identified by Wellins (1992) address not only the assessment of organisational culture with regards to the suitability of teamwork for the organisation, but also indicate the organisational need to redesign processes to create a fertile ground for the successful implementation of teamwork.

The teamwork approach does not automatically result in more flexible organisations – the implementation phase needs to consider what support will be required from new systems and technology and, even more importantly, from the work structure and flow design (Tomasko, 1978). The traditional top-down approach needs to be replaced by one where employees are seen as leaders of major change and innovation. Katzenbach & Smith (1993), Senge *et al.* (1994), Conti & Kleiner (1997), Church (1998) and Clifford & Sohal (1998) support this view and add that the failure to address organisational structure leads to an inward focus, resulting in "suggestions that stem from the shop floor only travel[ling] up one layer of management prior to being lost in a congested system of bureaucratic red tape".

2.6.7 Inadequate performance measures and reward systems

As appropriate measures of performance serve to trigger improvements, one reason for the failure to implement workplace organisational initiatives successfully is the absence of such measures (Deming, 1986). Studies by Howe, Gaeddert & Howe (1993), Ishikawa (1985), Oakland (1993), Zairi (1994) and Bamber *et al.* (1999) support the need for such measures. Many organisations move towards a team-based philosophy without changing their means of measurement. Church (1998) criticises oversight regarding the level at which performance is measured, and stresses that the best indicator of the success of teams in organisations should be the organisational level of analysis.

Abebanjo & Kehoe (2001) add that, apart from appropriate measures, the recognition and rewarding of team achievements serve both as an acknowledgement of the contribution made by outstanding teams, as well as a source of motivation for other teams. They find that a mistake that is commonly made during implementation is that recognition is only granted to team solutions that meet benchmark standards. In support of this view, Church (1998) expresses the need for all team members to receive recognition and monetary

gains for outstanding team performance – in this way, extraordinary success can be achieved, even if the solutions offered are of marginal value, or not even feasible.

2.6.8 Inadequate team development

Team development focuses specifically on the skills, ability and commitment of individual constituents of the team. According to Dumaine (1994:90), the most common reason for teamwork to fail is the fact that organisations “rush out and form the wrong kind of team for the job”. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) rated inadequate team selection and development as the second most important factor leading to the failure of teamwork, since individual constituents of each team directly influence the ability of the team to build synergy within the team. Sweeney & Allen (1984); Katzenbach & Smith (1993); Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross & Smith (1994); Church (1998) and Sharp, Hides, Bamber & Castka (2000) support this view, adding that high-performance teams are characterised by high levels of enthusiasm, motivation and commitment, directly resulting in properly developed teams in which different members compliment one another.

Katzenbach & Smith (1993) and Robbins & Finley (1996) furthermore argue that teamwork fails as a result of personality conflicts amongst individuals and critical skills gaps experienced within the team. Belbin (1993) provides the counter argument that teams cannot be successfully implemented without some understanding of ‘team role theory’. More important than the soundness of the functional skills of team members is the need for teams to have the correct balance of team roles.

2.6.9 Poor industrial relations climate

2.6.9.1 Lack of trust in teamwork implementation

Although reasons exist why unions may support teamwork initiatives, many reasons also exist as to why union leaders may resist the implementation of such initiatives. As early as the 1970s, when worker participation in decision-making first gained attention, union leaders were recorded as stating that they felt that they could not trust members of management sufficiently to share their work-related ideas and thoughts with them (Huszczo & Hoffman, 1999). Having experienced years of hostile treatment from the other side of the bargaining table, many union leaders still question management's motives, especially regarding joint decision-making, as the power to make decisions was traditionally reserved only for management. Marshall (1987) points out that unions may be suspicious of managerial motives, as teamwork initiatives have frequently in the past been used to defeat unions. Unions also may become marginalised as management attempts to work directly with workers. Black & Ackers (1994:64) argue that unions tend to resist these initiatives essentially because while 'lean organizations' promise a future in which all will benefit, the reality is that these techniques often lead to 'work intensification'.

2.6.9.2 Historical power and political struggle

Keenoy (1990) asks why trade unionism should be seen as being inconsistent with human resource management (HRM) theory, if the aim of the theory is to meet the interests of all. Furthermore, he queries why trade unionism should be inconsistent with business process reengineering (BPR), if the process aims to make work 'more satisfying' (Hammer & Champy, 1993b). McCabe & Black (1997) conclude that, even though these processes support an implicit unitarist ideology, most of these concepts pay little attention to issues of power, politics, conflict and competing interest groups. The UK study by Cully, O'Reilly, Millward,

Forth, Woodland, Dix & Bryson (1998) indicates that managers in less than one-third of unionised workplaces had consulted unions over the introduction of significant changes. The absence of union contribution towards the implementation of teamwork can serve as an area of possible conflict (Darlington, 1994; McKinlay & Taylor, 1996 and Pollert, 1996). Storey (1992) argues that HRM may serve to marginalise trade unions, and concludes that, in order to inculcate a more positive attitude among employees to the implementation of teamwork, organisations need to acknowledge the importance of conducting dialogue with trade unions.

The study by McCabe & Black (1997) provides much-needed insight into the evolution of industrial relations, with particular emphasis on the responses of shop stewards to the implementation of teamwork and their roles in the development thereof. They conclude that, by including consideration of union input into the implementation of teamwork, a greater sense of cooperation towards the initiative can be established.

2.6.9.3 Lack of union participation and involvement in the design of teams

Berggren (1993:171) argues against merely assuming that unions will oppose teamwork, finding that unions are mostly concerned with the particular way in which teams are ‘operationalized’. The process of selecting teams is often seen as an important enabling factor that needs careful attention during implementation. Sisson (1993) and Kochan & Osterman (1994) agree with Berggren’s findings, adding that new work practices are more likely to be adopted by unionised, rather than non-unionised, workplaces.

Babson (1995:9) asks “who is responsible for each team”. Other issues requiring consideration are the selection of team leaders, training, job rotation, the level of support, and other problems that have been bothering workers for years, which are all recognised as “low hanging fruit” (Huszczo & Hoffman, 1999). Overlooking

these issues during the implementation of teamwork will inevitably lead to failure. Shaiken, Lopez & Mankita (1997) have identified a number of situations in which unions have served as key enablers of teamwork. However, positive outcomes resulting from where unions have been able to negotiate significant benefits for employees have also been recorded (Brown, Reich & Stern, 1993; Bacon & Storey, 1996; and Edwards & Wright, 1993).

2.6.10 Barriers presented by supervisors to the implementation of teamwork

Clifford & Sohal (1998:80) argue that supervisors themselves, as a result of pre-existing selection processes, responsibilities, authorities and perceived competencies, present certain barriers to the implementation of teamwork. They stress that “special attention needs to be paid to the supervisors and middle management as resistance is often experienced most from these groups of people”. The following subsections of this paper expand on the reason why supervisors themselves can sometimes form barriers to the implementation of teamwork initiatives.

2.6.10.1 Mismatched skills of supervisors

Kamoche (1996) explains that the ability for organisations to build up strategic assets depends on their ability to “recruit and retain the best people from the external labour market”. Bunning (2000) identifies four ways of effectively developing supervisors, for which a rigorous selection process is a prerequisite. He adds that organisations need to adapt their selection processes accordingly if they wish to secure the right supervisors for the posts that they have available. He explains that traditional processes focus on supervisors’ technical expertise, as well as on their experience, and adds that their role descriptions should be rewritten to ensure that supervisors possess reasonable technical skills and very high levels of people skills. MacNeil (2004) supports this view, explaining that, in

the context of supervisor recruitment and selection, organisations need to start focusing on the managerial competencies of the supervisor.

Sheenan & Kearns (1996) conclude that supervisors need to develop planning, training, facilitating and team-building skills in order to lead, coach, support and align teams with the rest of the organisation. Beech & Crane (1999) recommend a combination of soft process skills, including communication, and task-based skills. Eden (1990), George & Bettenhausen (1990) and Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) reinforce the importance of quality training and development of team leaders. Bozionelos & Lusher (2001), as regards the quality of training of team leaders in the UK telecommunications technology sector, note that line managers and team leaders have contrasting views regarding the skills required for successful team leadership. They found that managers generally tended to feel that leaders lacked *managerial* skills, whereas team leaders felt that they mainly lacked *technical* skills. The two researchers concluded that, no matter the view, the desired performance would not be obtained if the team leaders concerned lacked the necessary skills. In the absence of such skills, the team leaders concerned were unable to lead teams efficiently and team leaders tended to perceive this lack of competency as a stumbling block to their career advancement, which in turn might result in a sense of low morale and inadequate commitment.

Scarnati (1999) concludes that technical expertise is a prerequisite for gaining acceptance and respect from followers in the workplace. Mink, Owen & Mink (1993) support Scarnati's conclusion, adding that underdeveloped skills are a major factor obstructing teamwork facilitation on the part of the supervisor. MacNeil (2004) concludes that, given the increasing complexity of the supervisor's role today, organisations require a much more "demanding skill set" from those filling this role, which might, in turn, result in a mismatch between what is required of supervisors and their current capabilities.

2.6.10.2 The lack of appropriate training and development policies following the implementation of teamwork

Mumford (1997), Harrison (1997) and Mabey & Salaman (1999) suggest that the current inability of some supervisors to facilitate teamwork effectively will continue if organisations do not adapt their existing training and development of potential supervisors to current demands. Ellinger & Bostrom (1999) concur with these findings, adding that, in order for supervisors to master the change from supervision to facilitation, management development programmes need to target both their interpersonal and learning skills.

Gutteridge, Leibowitz & Shore (1993), Bozionelos (1996) and Arnold (1997) argue that companies that use teamwork as a method of operation need to develop, implement and maintain the necessary structures for the development of competent team leaders. Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) support their findings, stressing the need for these structures to be integrated into the current management and human resource processes. By doing so, organisations will be able to move away from the traditional “sink or swim” model of employee development and prepare a pool of team leaders who are confident and sufficiently motivated to perform their tasks to the best of their ability. De Jong & Versloot (1999) and de Jong, Leenders & Thijssen (1999) concur, warning that the inadequate development of supervisors can provide a potential barrier if senior management remains uncommitted to long-term investment in satisfying the needs of their supervisors through appropriate human resource development practices.

2.6.10.3 Resistance offered by supervisors to change

Arkensas, Ulrich, Jick & Kerr (1995), Stewart & Manz (1995) and Balkema & Molleman (1999) suggest that supervisors may resist extending their facilitational skills, fearing the removal of vertical boundaries from between other team

members and themselves. The removal of such boundaries may, in itself, be perceived to threaten their current status and, ultimately, their career advancement possibilities. Ellinger, Watkins & Barnas (1999) support this view, adding that supervisors might find it increasingly uncomfortable to make the switch from the conventional supervisory role to that of facilitator. Morgan (1986) and Kirk & Broussine (2000) also conclude that supervisors may find it difficult to take on a truly facilitative role in light of their traditionally forming part of the power structure in the organisations for which they work. Unless they are able to come to terms with changes in the balance of power, the supervisors' personal goals may take priority over their teams' learning goals.

2.6.10.4 The fear of supervisors that they might make mistakes

McGill, Slocum & Lei (1992) state that, in a teamwork environment, mistakes should be seen as opportunities for both learning and change. MacNeil (2001) finds that traditional supervisors may respond defensively to being seen to make mistakes, due to the negative consequences and impacts that they have experienced from being seen to do so in the past. Management plays an important role in establishing an environment where supervisors can admit to their own mistakes, without having to fear the negative consequences associated with such admissions in the past.

2.6.10.5 Perceptions of increased workloads for supervisors

Mink, Owen & Mink (1993) identify one of the main obstacles preventing supervisors from promoting teamwork is their perception of teamwork as an additional workload that they will need to add to an already busy schedule. Teamwork does, indeed, require the input of additional effort and time from supervisors, especially during its initial implementation. However, as the principle of teamwork becomes more firmly established, the workload tends to shrink and even become less than before.

2.6.11 Conclusion

The perceived barriers that have already been identified exist in all organisations to a greater or lesser degree and significantly impact on the success of teamwork implementation. Management commitment not only to the process, but also to making sufficient resources timeously available to supervisors, is of critical importance to such success. Having resources, in the form of time, information and materials, readily available enables supervisors more effectively to facilitate the work done by their teams, as well as to overcome any barriers presented by the supervisors themselves. A lack of management commitment to the implementation process gives rise to other barriers, including a lack of shared vision and objectives and the inability to empower employees. Such barriers make it extremely difficult for supervisors to facilitate teamwork effectively, since they not only inhibit team members from participate in teamwork, but also prevent supervisors from replacing a directive management style with a participative one. Lack of training is one of the leading inhibitors of teamwork, as it not only effects employees' understanding of the teamwork process, but also may result in a skills gap that translates into a lack of trust in supervisors. In conclusion, the frontline supervisor plays a key role in teamwork implementation and a better understanding of the barriers pertaining to this level will not only facilitate improve teamwork implementation, but also assist supervisors to be able to appreciate and fulfil future roles and expectations more fully.

3. Research Questions

The supervisor clearly plays a critical role in the implementation process and can significantly contribute to the degree of difficulty or ease with which teamwork is implemented. As a result of the limited number of studies that have been done in this regard, the author of this paper intends to investigate the role of the supervisor in the implementation of teamwork as a workplace organisation initiative.

3.1 Barriers that supervisors encounter during the implementation of teamwork initiatives

We need to consider what barriers frontline supervisors tend to encounter during the implementation of teamwork initiative.

3.2 Barriers that supervisors present during the implementation of teamwork initiatives

We also need to consider what barriers frontline supervisors present during the implementation of a teamwork initiative.

As a result of the critical role played by supervisors in the implementation of teamwork, the writer of this paper intends to explore what factors specific to the role of the supervisor can assist in the successful implementation of teamwork.

4. The Case Study

4.1 Company background

The company studied for the purpose of this research was referred to as Consolidated Minerals Limited (CML). CML is a leading producer of heavy mineral products, including rutile and ilminite. CML has an annual production rate of approximately 0.5 million tons of heavy mineral products, of which 80% is exported, which represents approximately 10% of the world market share.

CML currently employs 2 000 employees, of whom 1 100 are semi-skilled, 400 skilled and 500 staff employees. Apart from CML's permanent workforce, the company also utilises approximately 1 600 contractors, sourced through local labour brokers.

The workforce is affiliated to two recognised unions:

- the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM); and
- the United Association of South Africa (UASA).

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), affiliated to COSATU, represents hourly rated semi-skilled employees. Their recognition agreement, signed on 13 August 1992, covers wage negotiations and conditions of service, on an across-the-board basis.

The United Association of South Africa (UASA), which gained official recognition on 22 February 2002, represents monthly-paid staff employees. The major difference between the recognition agreement with UASA and those with NUM is that the former excludes wage negotiations. Staff employees participate in a performance management system, in terms of which their individual increases are determined.

4.2 Change management history

4.2.1 The business imperative

The increasingly competitive environment of the mining industry necessitated the need to refocus CML's competitive position in the market. Although the fluctuating exchange rate has placed increasing pressure on financial margins, global market growth has also opened up new market opportunities. To embrace these challenges, CML embarked on a series of change management initiatives. The implementation was, from the outset, to take place in a number of phases.

Initiatives were developed to address the following critical focus areas in turn:

- the organisational structure, consisting of the creation of a 'new CML' ;
- the information system that support the structure and newly devised workflow; and
- teamwork, involving the creation of the right environment in which all employees can realise their full potential.

The main objectives were to improve the development of core competencies, organisational learning and positive work-related characteristics, such as responsiveness and flexibility. In brief, CML set out on a "quest for world-class competitiveness".

4.2.1.1 Organisational structure

In 2001 the company embarked on a process reengineering program (PRP), in terms of which the business systems and processes, as well as the way in which these systems and processes were to interact, were reformulated.

The changes required by the process reengineering program to ensure the delivery of value were of four main types:

- structural changes
- work practice changes
- maintenance and mobile equipment changes
- cultural changes

The intention was to rationalise all levels of work through multi-skilling and a reduction in the number of different grade positions within the company. Traditionally, the structure had come to consist of approximately eight different levels of work, which the process reengineering program rationalised into five levels. Although management identified 200 redundant grade positions, only 130 retrenchment packages formed part of the restructuring, as the remainder were either absorbed into other grade positions or rationalised in terms of role accountability. Table 1 illustrates the impact of the rationalisation process on the existing structure.

Table 1: The rationalisation of the CML structure

		Pre-PRP 'Old CML'		Post-PRP 'New CML'
Level of skill	Grade distribution	Job title	Grade distribution	Job title
Unskilled:	Grade 2	Cleaners		
Semi-skilled:	Grade 3	Operations assistants	Grade 3	Operations assistants and trainee service personnel
	Grade 4	Engineering assistants, plant operators and drivers	–	
	Grade 5	Handymen and heavy mobile equipment drivers and senior plant operators	–	
	Grade 6	Senior metallurgical assistants	Grade 6	Plant operators, drivers and service personnel
	Grade 7		–	
	Grade 8		Grade 8	Senior service personnel
	Grade 9		–	
Skilled:	Grade 10		Grade 10	Plant operators and key service personnel
	Grade 11			Artisans
	Grade 12	Artisans	Grade 12	Process controllers
	Grade 13	Charge hands, foremen and shift electricians	Grade 13	
Staff:	Grade 14	Supervisors and administration officers	E-band	Supervisors
	Grade 15	Senior Supervisors Assistants	D-band	Specialists
	Grade 16	Superintendents	C-band	
	Grade 17	Senior superintendents	B-band A-band	Superintendents
	Grade 18	Managers	Executive	
	Grade 19	General managers		
	Grade 20	Managing director		

Source: CML process reengineering program structure

4.2.1.2 The evolution of appropriate business systems

In the process of creating “the new CML”, one of the major enablers of the benefits outlined in the process reengineering program was stated as being the implementation of an information system (SAP). The information system was needed to provide information on: the current status of the implementation in order to allow for corrective management actions to be undertaken; the enforcement of disciplinary processes entrenching the new business processes; and evolving roles and responsibilities. The systems needed to be robust enough to be implemented in short enough a space of time to allow for timely realisation of the accrued business benefits.

Once SAP was identified as the information system that would fully support ‘new CML’ requirements, implementation began in 2002. Strong emphasis was placed on the human resources management aspect of the system. This phase of implementation was successfully completed by the end of 2003, though training in full utilisation of the system is currently still continuing.

4.2.1.3 The teamwork initiative

The implementation of teamwork should transform the front line of an organisation into a productive, participative environment, in which employees are imbued with a purposeful appreciation of their role in their place of work. The use of teamwork should serve as a means of translating the key purposes and values of an organisation into meaningful practices that can be implemented throughout the organisation concerned. The implementation of teamwork should be line-driven and provide leaders and their teams with skills to facilitate their benchmarking themselves against recognised world-best practices, thereby enabling the organisations for which they work to identify and exploit any available opportunities for improvement.

4.3 The Consolidated Minerals Limited teamwork initiative

The implementation of teamwork was seen as the obvious next step for CML to undertake. Following the restructuring and implementation of the business information system, employees could now be incorporated into an environment conducive to their meeting their full potential. CML's management considered the use of teamwork to be suitable for improving the quality of its products and services, of reducing costs and of improving workplace relationships and morale through the strengthening of employee empowerment and participation.

The company officially embarked on its teamwork initiative on 20 January 2005. The initiative involved the creation of 'self-sustained-businesses' at all levels in the organisation, with the outputs of each team being aligned with the company's objectives. The already existing supervisors assumed the role of team leaders, with their subordinates becoming team members of each new 'self-sustained-business'. The initiative intended to allow employees to take ownership of their own business by means of their newfound ability to make decisions collectively and to monitor their own outputs.

The implementation of teamwork started with a series of road shows to the various departments and sections, during which the following key success factors were identified:

- the need for whole-hearted employee support and management commitment
- the training and facilitation to take place during rollout
- the assurance of ongoing encouragement and support from management
- the promise of ongoing monitoring and support from the facilitators concerned

Training commenced in February 2005, and was anticipated as lasting until the end of August 2005. The training involved familiarising employees with available tools, establishing ‘self-sustained-businesses’, and aligning goals. Each employee up to supervisory level was to undergo a two-day training session, with the rollout to those on the shop floor being conducted by line management, assisted by in-house facilitators. The company anticipated having all the mini-businesses established and fully functional by the end of 2005.

4.4 Consolidated Minerals Limited supervisors

CML employs a continuous production operation, consisting of three teams operating according to three eight-hour shifts. The teams usually consist of fewer than ten employees, comprising a front-line supervisor (or 'shift supervisor', in CML’s terminology), operators and assistants. A day crew, consisting of both specialists as well as maintenance crews, conducts the day-to-day management and maintenance of the operation.

Supervisors are the most junior members of management, acting as links between senior management and the shop-floor employees. This case study will only focus on the role of shift supervisors who are responsible for production teams. In terms of this process, these supervisors will assume the role of team leaders, whereas supervisors from service departments will mostly act as team members of teams existing higher up in the organisational structure.

4.4.1 Pre-process reengineering at CML

Prior to the reorganisation of CML, three levels of front-line supervisors formed part of the CML structure, with the foremen being seen as comprising the first level of supervision. Traditionally, the majority of foremen and supervisors were African, while all senior supervisors were White. Within this structure, the superintendent had most of the authority, with the supervisors possessed very little authority at all. Shift supervisors were mainly selected on the basis of their technical experience – in other words, on their “ability to get the job done”. Role descriptions were very vague and were characterised by a general lack of requirement of ‘softer’ people management skills.

4.4.2 Post-process reengineering at CML

After the restructuring, the management structure was reduced from eight levels to five levels, with experienced employees being absorbed into newly established service roles. All supervisory role descriptions were revised and new selection criteria were developed. However, despite the reduction in the number of levels and the increased focus on the selection processes involved, the authority of the shift supervisor to date has remained limited, with superintendents still retaining the majority of control in the workplace.

4.4.3 The demographics of current shift supervisors

The mining area currently has 15 shift supervisors, of which the current incumbents on average are 41 years old. Sixty per cent are African, 30% are White and 10% are Indian, while the average length of service is 14 years.

4.4.4 The impact of business changes on the supervisory function

The rationalisation, especially of the supervisory levels of work, resulted in the previously existing supervisor, senior supervisor and assistant superintendent roles being merged into a single new ‘shift supervisor’ level. Hence, incumbents of these positions were automatically accepted into the shift supervisory positions. However, some incumbents of this role did not fully comply with the minimal criteria set for fulfilment of this role – especially in terms of human resources management skills. The result has been that, to date, management still regards shift supervisors as lacking the capacity to fill such a role. As a result of the merging of existing organisational levels, as well as of the formulation of newly defined minimal criteria for positions above that of shift supervisor, routes of promotion for supervisors also appear to have narrowed. The supervisors' morale and motivation for self-improvement and development have, accordingly, also decreased.

Under the ‘New CML’, the majority of supervisors, who were, previously, members of The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), became part of CML staff, represented by the United Association of South Africa (UASA). Accordingly, supervisors may still be very much aware of the most important issues of contention at shop-floor level, which not only impacts on the level of trust displayed in management, but which also directly serves to undermine the relationship between supervisor and shop-floor employee. Supervisors, therefore, seem not fully to fit into this new role either as part of management, or as part of the shop floor.

Changes in company transport arrangements from that of a company-provided transport system to that of sponsoring employees to utilise public transport is an, as yet, unresolved issue on the agenda of organised labour. Supervisors were particularly impacted by this change, since, previously, each supervisor had had his or her own company vehicle, which he or she had had at own disposal. This change in policy impacted not only on the flexibility of the supervisor, with

regards to working hours and availability for training, but also seriously impacted on the previously perceived status and authority of the supervisory role.

During the scoping exercise for the implementation of SAP, one of the key opportunities identified was the empowerment of line personnel to manage their own human resources. Although the system added tremendous value in the sense of streamlining human resource transactions and making information more readily available, more responsibility was, in fact, shifted to the supervisor. Supervisors immediately saw this increase in their responsibilities as an increase of their workload, leading to their tending to feel negative towards any new business initiative that the company undertook. Apart from these issues, the complexity of the system placed a further burden on the supervisory level.

The role of the supervisor has been identified as being key to the successful implementation of teamwork at CML, and training and facilitation is directed especially at enabling supervisors to live up to this challenge. Underlying the change, however, is that supervisors tend to perceive any new initiative as adding to their workload, while adding little value to their work. Perceptions of the lack of capability of current incumbents, as well as still existing mistrust and a history of unresolved grievances might prevent supervisors from effectively embracing the challenges facing them.

The contribution made by this current case study of teamwork initiative will hopefully serve to substantiate or lead to the dismissal of tentative or perceived difficulties faced by the supervisors in the ‘New CML’.

5. Methodology

5.1 The research method used in this study

The research methodology applied in this study can be seen as forming part of the interpretive paradigm of the social sciences, since it involves understanding the world ‘as is’, as well as the investigation of an emergent social process. This qualitative case study investigates the implementation of a workplace organisation initiative consisting of teamwork at Consolidated Minerals Limited (CML). The aim of the research was to present the findings as the researcher, a key actor within the organisation, perceived them to occur (McCabe & Black, 1997). Mintzberg (1979) refers to this approach as ‘emergent’, as it is concerned with the introduction of new methods of organisation into the workplace.

5.1.1 An overview of the qualitative research methodology employed

Qualitative research consists of written descriptions, as opposed to quantitative research, which consists of numbers. According to Miles & Huberman (1984:15), qualitative research is a source of “well-grounded, rich description and explanation of processes occurring in local context”. Mouton & Marais (1994) define qualitative research as being less strictly formalised than is quantitative research, while the scope of the research might be relatively undefined and more philosophical in nature. They explain that, in qualitative research, the phenomenon being studied should ‘speak for itself’ in such a way that the researcher is able to record it. Processes available for the collection of data in qualitative research include making observations, interviewing and analysing documentation.

Miles & Huberman (1984) support the use of written descriptions rather than of statistics to communicate research findings. They claim that words have proven far more convincing to readers in the past than have numbers, especially when

the words have been organised into cogent and coherent descriptions of a particular situation or story. “Words, especially when they are organised into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to the reader – another researcher, a policy-maker, a practitioner – than pages of numbers” (Miles & Huberman, 1984:15).

Qualitative research, however, is not without its drawbacks. Miles & Huberman (1994) argue that words and symbols can have different meanings for different people and that the possibility of researcher bias is always present. Watson (1994:79) concludes that findings cannot be seen as ‘objective’, since “we cannot see anything without a cultural and human mediation”, adding that “researchers select, interpret, colour, emphasise…and…shape their findings”. Miles & Huberman (1994) suggest that one way of overcoming these reliability issues is to select and apply an appropriate and tested method of analysis.

Miles & Huberman (1984) suggest a data analysis process that consists of three primary synchronised activities: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is the selection, simplification, abstraction and transformation of raw data that appear in written-up, filed notes. Miles & Huberman further explain that data reduction is frequently initiated even before data collection formally begins, when the researcher decides on which framework and form of case study to use, which research questions to ask and which data collection methods to apply.

Miles & Huberman (1984) also define data display as the original assembly of compressed data that allows the researcher to draw specific conclusions and to recommend certain actions. Narrative text is the most frequently used method of data display. However, they caution against poorly structured display, as such a display can result in the researcher drawing incorrect conclusions. In conclusion, Miles and Huberman state that the use of matrices in the rich description of narrative text is one way of ordering and displaying such data as quotes,

abstracts, explanations and judgements so that they become accessible and easy to understand.

Miles & Huberman (1984) also explain that conclusion drawing, the final step of data analysis, is the process of extracting and verifying meaning from the data assembled. The authors describe the concept of 'verification' as concerning the emergence or induction of meaning from the analysed data, as well as the testing of its validity. Miles & Huberman (1984) identify the following methods of conclusion drawing that are available to researchers: the contents analysis of the frequency of specific responses; the noting of emergent patterns; and the clustering, as well as identifying, of relationships between variables.

The use of coding to facilitate all three forms of drawing conclusions is widely supported throughout the subject-related literature (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Jones, 1985 and Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Miles & Huberman (1984) explain that coding is the process of assigning abbreviations or symbols to groups of words. Making use of this method facilitates data extraction, organisation and analysis. They also recommend the development of codes before data collection starts. However, Jones (1985:49) cautions against this approach, since the prior development of codes can obstruct the emergence of themes from the raw data and result in its being prematurely labelled. "I try to develop my conceptual categories from the crucial base of the categories and concepts of the research participants…In doing this I am also inevitably making connections, as carefully and as explicitly as I can, with the concepts and theories I have about the area of investigation, in ways which can confirm, elaborate, modify or reject them."

5.1.2 An overview of the case study research methodology employed

Perry (2001:305) defines a case study as a qualitative method of investigation using observations, interviews and other multiple sources of data of a "contemporary, dynamic phenomenon". Yin (1989) gives a more technical

definition, defining a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates ‘contemporary phenomena’ within their real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomena and context are unclear and are phenomena in which more than one source of information or data is used. Pettigrew (1985) concludes that the case study is a means of gaining greater insight into the more dynamic and complex processes of change in real time, something unobtainable by means of survey-based research. Schendel (1992) concludes that case studies assist researchers in identifying interrelationships between actions taken, processes used, and outcomes achieved.

According to the definitions already discussed, the case studies research method is especially appropriate when dealing with complex, relatively unknown processes in the social sciences. Perry (2001) adds that the case study consists of ‘exploratory’ and ‘theory building’ research that aims both to include and explain ideas from both inside and outside the case. Stake (1995:3) identifies situations suitable to a case study approach as requiring “a need for general understanding (a feeling) that we may get an insight into the question by studying a particular case”. According to Yin (1989:14), the “need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomenon”.

Perry (2001) comments on the importance of prior theory to case research methodology. Perry (2001) and Yin (1994) argue that, in the situation of a case study, the aim of a literature review is to establish open research issues that can serve as headings for data analysis and concluding chapters of the dissertation, whereas, in the case of a more deductive approach, a literature review acts as a means of developing hypotheses or propositions.

5.2 Data collection for the study

Strauss (1987:3) argues that two forms of data are available, those generated by the researcher, and those that already exist. “While some materials (data) may

be generated by the researcher – as through interviews, field observations, or videotapes – a great deal of it already exists, either in the public domain or in private hands, and can be used by an informed researcher provided that he or she can locate and gain access to the material".

The researcher utilised participative observation, semi-structured interviews and documentation as means of data collection. Denzin (1978) supports the triangulation approach, since it allows for cross-fertilisation of the various methods used. Mouton & Marais (1994) conclude that the introduction of multiple sources of data collection increases the reliability of observations, since their complementarities may be employed to correct their respective shortcomings. Miles & Huberman (1984) and Perry (2001) also support the use of triangulation as a means of enhancing research credibility.

5.2.1 Assembling relevant documentation

Strauss (1987) concludes that a diverse set of materials is available to the researcher in a qualitative research domain, including records of various types, memos, official and personal letters, transcripts of meetings, letters and newspaper reports. Documentation was extensively used and formed a rich source of data that supplemented the data acquired through interviews and observations. Details of documentation consulted for the current study can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: The list of documentation types consulted for the current study

Documentation type	Categories	Detail
Memos	Investigation into best practices	Records of visits to other companies
Strategic project plans	The CML communication plan	The actual communication plan write-up and explanations
		The lines of communication document
	Communication media	Communications with leaders, unions and shop-floor employees
		The company brief
Minutes	Minutes of the steering committee	
	Minutes of the roll-out meeting	
Electronic media	The CML Intranet	Specific CML webpage articles
Records and reports	Role descriptions	Supervisory role and selection process descriptions
	Training materials for supervisors	Background on training and development programmes
Questionnaires	Barriers and enabling factors	Feedback from supervisors during roll- out training
Diary	Research diary	Transcriptions of informal conversations Transcriptions of formal conversations Observations Records of roll-out meetings Records of training sessions

Documentation specifically served as the source of information regarding the industrial relations climate at CML. The views of shop-floor employees regarding teamwork, as expressed in the documentation, often was not available from other sources of data collection. Documentation further served a dual purpose in the research, since it not only formed a basic source of information, but also facilitated probing during interviews. Documentation was chronologically accessed and analysed each week.

5.2.2 The use of participative observation

Vinten (1994:30) defines participative observation as “a means of collecting evidence…it requires skill, knowledge and understanding. In its dominant social science meaning a researcher seeks to become a member of a group, organisation or event under study”. Vinten explains that participative observation originated in the field of ethnographic research, during the undertaking of which researchers lived amongst remote tribal cultures. The author suggests that organisations can also be seen as tribes, due to their unique histories, customs and cultures, and, from that perspective, are open to participative observation as a means of gathering data on them.

The use of participative observation allows researchers to gain access to more information and knowledge about organisations than would otherwise be possible simply by looking at them from outside (Vinten, 1994). Lacey (1976) supports this view, adding that, as more channels of communication are open to researchers engaged in participative observation, they are then able to be much more selective and discriminating in the information that they obtain. Bell (1987:29) identifies that participative observation as the only possible method allowing “access to certain types of workplace behaviour, particularly those organisations that are otherwise sealed off from the outer world”.

Junkers (1960) identifies a continuum between participation and observation. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe (1991:5) simplify Junker's version of the continuum, identifying four major research roles: the “researcher as employee”; the “researcher as explicit role”; “interrupted involvement” and “observation alone”. The authors explain that the “researcher as employee” role requires total immersion in the research, which may be undertaken either overtly or covertly.

Participative observation does have its disadvantages and requires both specific skills and knowledge of the activity, as noted by Nisbet (1977:15): “observation,

however, is not a ‘natural’ gift but a highly skilled activity for which an extensive knowledge and understanding is required, and also a capacity for original thinking and the ability to spot significant events. It is certainly not an easy option”. The researcher, being aware of the problems involved with participative observation, benefited extensively from the guidance and assistance provided by his academic supervisor. Bell (1987) supports use of this method, stressing the importance of careful planning and supervision in order to overcome the difficulties associated with this type of research.

Vinten (1994) argues that the one drawback of participative observation is the fact that the observer is unable to follow rigorous research procedures. The author explains that this is as a result of the fact that the researcher must be selective in what he or she records, adding that the criteria for selection of what he or she deems to be relevant material may not always be obvious to a third party. This difficulty can, however, be overcome by observers obtaining as many representative samples as possible. The researcher aimed to overcome this drawback by identifying situations in which use of participative observation would be most suitable. Table 3 identifies situations where the use of participative observation was found suitable for the research at hand and identifies the level of participation and/or observation involved.

Table 3: Participative observation situations in the study

Situation	Audience	CP	PaO	OaP	CO	Schedule
Initial motivation	MD and GMs		Yes	Yes		
Initial discussion with facilitators	Supervisors and GMs		Yes	Yes		
Roll-out communication	Leaders, BEC and shop floor			Yes		
Meetings	Steering committee meetings		Yes	Yes		Weekly
	Ad hoc meetings		Yes	Yes		
Training	Managers		Yes	Yes		2 sessions
	Supervisors		Yes		Yes	2 sessions
Facilitation	Supervisors		Yes	Yes		2 sessions
	Mine personnel	Yes		Yes		2 sessions
Key:						
CP – Complete participation						
PaO – Participation as observer						
OaP – Observation as participant						
CP – Complete observation						

Source: Adapted from Junkers (1960)

A total of 30 observations were conducted during the research, which stretched over six months in all. These observations, of which only some included observations specifically related to teamwork, ranged in length from as short as 15 minutes to as long as 8 hours. The researcher found the observations to be extremely valuable, since they allowed insight into additional underlying themes and issues regarding the company's background, culture and modi operandi.

Though initially recording all his observations in writing, as research progressed, the researcher was able to narrow his observations down and to focus specifically on the following three types of interactions: interactions between

supervisors and facilitators; between senior management and facilitators; and between supervisors and superintendents.

Another objection to the presence of the observer is that it may change the behaviour or action of the party observed, while some groups may fabricate behaviours or actions specifically for the benefit of the researcher concerned (Vinten, 1994). Although the researcher was aware of this difficulty, the fact that he was both an observer and an employee helped to minimise its effect. Additionally, the researcher made use of other data collection methods to supplement the participative observation approach. Vinten (1994) supports the use of triangulation, suggesting that an experienced observer will not rely on participative observation alone, but will supplement its use with other approaches.

Vinten (1994) concludes that, where the researcher is an integral feature, as in the case of "researcher as employee", there is also a dimension of self-reflection and self-evaluation. In the current study, the researcher utilised and maintained a research diary to record his self-reflections.

5.2.3 The use of interviews

Most of the interviews were semi-structured. Perry (2001:311) supports the fact that researchers should utilise a less structured approach to interviewing for specific case studies. The author suggests that the interviewee merely be invited to “tell the story of their experience of whatever the research is about”. Although the interviewees were encouraged to speak for themselves, the author of this case study used probing questions when the interview approach did not seem to be delivering the comprehensive responses that allowed for appropriate analysis. Perry explains that the use of such questions serves to elicit free-flowing answers and response. The final interview schedule, containing a list of probe questions

based on the contents of the literature review, is attached as appendix A. This list evolved as key themes emerged during the research process.

5.2.3.1 Sampling methodology

Yin (1989) questions use of the term 'sample', due to its association with the parameters of a population in qualitative research, and explains that the results of qualitative research are intended to be generalisable with regards to specific theories and not to populations. Patton (1990:7) expands on this view, adding that the “validity, meaningfulness and insight” provided by qualitative research depends more on the richness of information discovered by means of case studies and on the observational ability and skills of the researcher than on the actual sample size.

Stenbacka (2001) supports a strategic choice of participants relevant to the study at hand and not a statistical sampling method for the undertaking of qualitative research. Schatzman & Strauss (1973:23) refer to ‘selective sampling’ as a frequent qualitative sampling method, defining the term as “the calculated decision to sample a specific locale or type of interviewee according to a preconceived but reasonable initial set of dimensions (such as time, space, identity) which are worked out in advance for a study”. For the purpose of this research study, a purposeful sampling method was applied, with particular focus on criteria such as employment period, race and competencies. A list of interviewees is detailed in Table 4 according to their positions in the organisation.

Table 4: List of participants in the research study

Population	Total number in population	Sample method	Criteria	Sample	Sequence of interview
In-house facilitators	2	-	-	2	4th
Superintendents	5	Purposeful and triangulation	1 Ex-supervisors 2 New appointees	3	2nd
Supervisors	30	Purposeful and triangulation	Period with company, race and competency	11	1st
Steering committee (HR)	1	-	-	1	3rd
Line managers – support	4	Purposeful	Engineering Planning	2	5th
General Manager	1	-	-	1	7th
Total	45			20	

The author of this case study originally only intended to interview production supervisors – however, this category was opened up to include maintenance supervisors specifically in order to explore the barrier associated with lack of a stable workforce, to which the maintenance supervisors had much greater exposure.

The participants were first contacted telephonically and then by electronic means. The nature and purpose of the research were explained and all participants were requested to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. Initially the intention was to interview the facilitators and supervisors, as they had greater insight into the specific barriers specifically impacting on CML's teamwork initiative. Readjustment of the sequence of interviews during the progress of research enabled a focusing in on specific themes that emerged from the study. The initial emphasis on the interviewing of facilitators and supervisors, as they were seen as having greater insight into the barriers specifically relating

to CML's teamwork initiative. A micro evaluation conducted after the first four interviews proved invaluable and assisted the researcher in identifying initial core issues and in ensuring that the research was focussed and consistent with its initial intent. Interviews with more senior role-players were scheduled last, since these interviews shed light on underlying themes that only became apparent during interviews conducted with supervisors and facilitators.

An important observation that was made was the fact that very limited information regarding the barriers presented by supervisors emerged during interviews with the supervisors themselves; instead, these barriers became more apparent during interviews with more senior personnel.

The interviews revolved around the following themes:

- a general discussion concerning demographics relating to the interviewee
- the interviewee's narration of his or her participation and role in the process
- the interviewee's elaboration of perceived barriers and enabling factors

In addition to conducting interviews in English, as originally intended, interviews were also conducted in Afrikaans, due to the lack of fluency in English exhibited by some participants. Such participants were found to be able to express their views better in Afrikaans, with which they felt more comfortable. All interviews were taped after permission was obtained to do so from the interviewees concerned. However, extensive notes were made during the interviews and the researcher was allowed adequate time after each interview to transcribe the recordings concerned. Difficulties encountered included the following:

- The degree of honesty of the response might have been negatively impacted by the sensitivity of the issues discussed. In an attempt to overcome part of the acknowledged difficulty, a signed letter providing

assurance of confidentiality and anonymity was personally handed to all the supervisors involved in the study.

- Underlying reasons were difficult to detect during the interviews. However the reasons became more clearly apparent during interviews with more senior participants, as well as during reflection on, and processing of, the full range of data sources.

Despite initial fears to the contrary, supervisors were not unwilling to participate in the study. A difficulty that was, however, not originally anticipated arose directly from the researcher's position in the company and his working relationship with the participants concerned. His managerial status meant that he initially tended to promote teamwork during the interviews, which discouraged the interviewees concerned from responding openly and honestly. The researcher, therefore, had to learn consciously to guard against facilitating the interview from the managerial viewpoint rather than from that of a researcher. In later interviews the researcher overcame this difficulty by only providing comment after the interview had ended.

5.3 Data analysis

Data analysis suitable for qualitative analysis, notably case research, included the use of coding and rich description. The rich description consisted of narrative text, including viewpoints and history. Perry (2001) supports the capacity of rich description to provide for the use of the interviewee's own words as evidence of the validity of the study. Networks and matrices were used to present and display data. Coding was used to facilitate content analysis and code groups were used to identify outstanding themes and characteristics (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The initial micro evaluation effectively broadened the basis from which themes were identified, as more data was collected and interpreted. The initial evaluation expanded in depth and breadth, as more themes were generated that contributed to the development of the report. Issues and questions arising from the process

stimulated and directed further investigation. The gathering of additional data allowed for the additional categorisation and constant revaluation of emerging themes.

Hand coding facilitated analysis of content analysis. The utilisation of code groups facilitated the identification of prominent themes and characteristics (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Barriers identified in the literature were used as data codes together with the additional new barriers that emerged during the investigation. As the research progressed, the barriers identified proved capable of being collapsed into three key themes. The key themes were then used to cluster together barriers both encountered and presented during the final write-up of the report. The use of networks facilitated the identification of timelines in event flows and causal loop diagrams, whereas the use of matrices assisted in the identification of critical incidents. Appendix B gives a detailed matrix of the codes assigned for the study, while Appendix C presents a breakdown of the barriers identified, as well as of underlying issues that emerged during the research process.

5.4 The validity of the study

Stenbacka (2001:551) explains that the basic question relating to validity is “whether the intended object of measurement actually is measured”. Yin (1994) identifies four tests for the quality of case research, namely: construct validity; internal validity; external validity; and reliability.

5.4.1 Construct validity

Riege (2003:78) explains that construct validity aims to establish “operational measures for theoretical concepts being researched”. The author adds that case study research is generally perceived as being subjective, since the researcher is in close and direct contact with the organisation. Riege stresses the need for the

researcher to make an effort to prevent making subjective judgements during the research design and data collection.

Riege identifies the following methods of heightening construct validity. These methods were all applied in this study:

- In terms of the triangulation method used, multiple sources of data (consisting of documents and interviews) were used to protect against research bias (Flick, 1992; Perakyla, 1997; Perry, 2001).
- A chain of evidence was established during data collection, in terms of which the researcher made use of interview transcripts, notes and observations during his field trips in order to supply evidence of cross-checks (Hirschman, 1986).
- Both a mini-evaluation and draft case study reports were used during the write-up phase in order to obtain greater clarity on the study (Yin, 1994).

5.4.2 External validity

Riege (2003) states that external validity is concerned with the generalisation or extrapolation of research findings across people, settings and time. Perry (2001) finds that the need for external validity can limit the ambit of case study research, but that case studies, by their very nature, aim to build theory and not necessarily to test the applicability of a theory to a population. This study employed the following techniques that Reige recommends for improving the external validity of a study:

- The definition of the scope and boundaries of the research design facilitated the achieving of analytical, rather than statistical, generalisations about the data collected (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).
- The evidence obtained during the course of the study was compared with that present in related literature in order to assess the relevance of

contributions made within the scope and boundaries of the current research and not as they impacted on a larger population (Yin, 1994).

- The interviewees were all carefully selected against identified criteria (Perry, 2001).

5.4.3 Internal validity

Internal validity is traditionally recognised as consisting of the establishment of cause-and-effect relationships, whereas, in case research, the emphasis lies on the credible establishment of phenomena (Riege, 2003). Internal validity refers to the extent to which the measuring instrument succeeds in proving adequate coverage of the topic under study. Riege argues that the researcher, therefore, does not simply need to highlight major patterns of similarities and differences between the respondents' actions and beliefs, but also to determine what components and mechanisms result in their production. The following design tests were applied to improve internal validity of this research:

- Diagrams and illustrations were utilised to assist with ‘explanation building’ during the data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
- The cross-checking of results was achieved by means of ensuring the coherence of internal findings and data (Yin, 1994).
- Prior theory, probe questions and expert analysis were employed (Perry, 2001).

5.4.4 Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent that other researchers can repeat the operation and procedure used in the research inquiry, in order to achieve similar results (Riege, 2003).

The following techniques for improving the reliability of the case study were applied:

- All observations were recorded as concretely as possible (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982).
- Raw data were audiotaped when permission was granted by the interviewees concerned (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
- Methods of peer review and examination of supervisors were employed (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982).

6. Results and analysis

6.1 Introduction

The importance of teamwork in facilitating workplace change and increasing productivity is widely recognised. However, one aspect of teamwork implementation that has been neglected in previous research is the importance of the role of the supervisor. The objective of this study, therefore, was to identify both barriers to the successful implementation of teamwork encountered by, as well as presented by, supervisors and, in so doing, to enhance understanding of the role of the supervisor in the implementation of teamwork. The purpose of this chapter is to report back on the findings of the fieldwork undertaken during research, as well as to analyse these findings.

Three key themes, consisting of institutional culture, the motives of senior management, and the changing role of the supervisor, emerged during analysis of the research findings. Barriers encountered were clustered together under the themes of institutional culture and the motives of senior management, whereas barriers presented were clustered together under the changing role of supervisors theme. A culture of mistrust, early adoption, initiative overload and zero tolerance were recognised as collectively shaping the institutional culture of the company studied. Lack of transparency regarding the need for teamwork as well as management intention regarding the teamwork initiative featured as key themes underlying the commitment of senior management. An exploration of the changing role of the supervisor focussed attention on the fact that supervisors resisted the adoption of teamwork due to their seeing it as a threat to their current management style. The following subsections consider the key themes already mentioned in greater detail.

6.2 The institutional culture

6.2.1 Introduction

Institutional culture emerged as one of the key underlying theme identified in the research findings. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) support this finding and add that corporate history, business domain and company culture are all factors that uniquely shape specific organisations. The culture of the company was of particular importance to teamwork since it was mainly characterised by a sense of mistrust throughout all levels of the organisation, poor initiative implementation practices in the sense of early adoption and initiative overload as well as limited tolerance for mistakes. The following subsections are devoted to the discussion of evidence in support of these characteristics as well as how these issues manifested itself in the form of barriers encountered by supervisors.

6.2.2 Culture of mistrust

6.2.2.1 Introduction

Lack of trust between those at all the different levels in the organisation appeared to be one of the most prominent characteristics of the company culture. Research findings indicated that this lack of trust was a direct result of both poor historical encounters between management and employees, as well as a perceived lack of training and suspicion of the relative incompetence of subordinates. In the case of the company's history, specific emphasis was placed on the manner in which initiatives had been implemented in the past. Huszczo & Hoffman (1999) claim that the reason for the fallibility of a company in an instance such as this tends to lie with management's having come to distrust the workforce and particularly the unions due to unfulfilling past relationships with them.

The earlier process reengineering programme served as an effective example of how the company's history had shaped this relationship of mistrust between members of management and those on the shop floor. One superintendent contextualised this issue by saying: "People are not aggrieved by the process reengineering programme; they are aggrieved by the way that this initiative was implemented. The rule that applied was that this was the way we are going to implement the process and, if you do not agree, take your things and leave" (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005). The superintendent added that he believed that the employer is responsible to a certain degree for looking after the interests of their employees, but that implementation of the process reengineering programme had resulted in total disregard of that responsibility.

The research indicated that relationships had been especially weakened by the power struggle following on the implementation of the process reengineering programme during 2001. Employees involved in the struggle had resorted to pursuing illegal industrial action against retrenchments, which had resulted in management retaliating with an employee lockout of almost two months duration. Management's ability to overcome worker resistance had undermined the already fragile manager-employee relationship, while leaving an indelible impression of untrustworthiness of the other party, which was experienced at all levels of the organisation. A superintendent stated that when it came to issuing orders: "We discuss issues and then send an e-mail to ensure that there is proof that an instruction was given, trust is lacking" (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005).

The retrenchments that resulted, although mainly focussed on unskilled employees, in fact impacted on all levels of the workforce. One of the managers explained how this came about: "Apart from union members losing their jobs, artisans were especially affected, since they lost their assistants. The work, however, remained the same; therefore, in some instances today we utilise

artisans to do the job of an assistant – there is just no one else to assist" (Manager A, personal communication, 1 October 2005). One of the steering committee members agreed, saying that: "the process reengineering program destroyed the teamwork spirit at the company. Before this initiative, people felt good to come to work. I honestly believe that this initiative negatively affected productivity, cost effectiveness and efficiency" (Steering committee member, personal communication, 4 October 2005). The general feeling amongst employees, especially supervisors, was that there was a strong teamwork culture within the organisation; however, the process reengineering programme destroyed that culture and resulted in an even greater feeling of scepticism and lack of trust regarding the new teamwork initiative.

Apart from historical encounters, the general perception amongst management was that employees and specifically supervisors lacked training and therefore competency to be able effectively to operate independently. Huszczo & Hoffman (1999) state that, apart from any reluctance to surrender control, management may be reluctant to delegate responsibility, as a result of the perceived lack of training and managerial competency of supervisors or team leaders. The interviews conducted by the researcher revealed that superintendents were profoundly sceptical of the ability of supervisors to make decisions due to their inadequate training. One superintendent even commented: "I do not think that supervisors have the necessary experience to make the correct decisions by themselves" (Superintendent A, personal communication, 14 September 2005).

The lack of trust prevalent at CML had a markedly deleterious effect on the introduction of teamwork, as it resulted in: a lack of feeling of empowerment and the inability to participate fully in implementation of the process; a lack of clear vision and direction; inadequate levels of senior management commitment; the reluctance to recognise institutional barriers; and consequently poor industrial relations. The rest of this section discusses supporting evidence, as well as the impact that these barriers had on the introduction of teamwork.

6.2.2.2 The lack of empowerment and the inability to participate fully in the process

A lack of empowerment and the inability to participate fully in the process presented itself as a barrier to the introduction of teamwork during the research process. In agreement, Nurmi (1996) adds that if management is not committed to the implementation of teamwork and refuses to sacrifice control over the employees, the initiative will be used simply as a 'camouflage' for the further entrenchment of autocratic control. Ray (1994) and Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) indicate that the primary difficulty confronting managers as they increasingly seek to empower employees is their innate sense of distrust. The lack of involvement in business decision making and strategic conversations that emerged during the research indicated the general perception of a lack of empowerment that was experienced throughout the organisation.

Interviews conducted with supervisors indicated that, at first appearance, supervisors generally seemed to perceive that they were effectively empowered. When supervisors were asked directly if they felt that they were indeed sufficiently empowered, the response tended to be positive. One supervisor responded: "I feel that supervisors are empowered. We are effectively running the plants when the superintendent is not present" (Supervisor J, personal communication, 3 October 2005). This perception could only be attributed to the nature of the operation, which entailed supervisors effectively managing the day-to-day operation of the plant for a minimum of eight hours per day.

However, on closer scrutiny, observations and conversations indicated that the contrary was, in fact, true and that the degree of empowerment experienced was indeed quite limited, especially in light of the requirements for the implementation of effective teamwork. The perception of lack of empowerment was strongly supported by supervisor responses on questions regarding the degree of empowerment that they experienced. Supervisors generally complained about

their lack of authority to manage their subordinates effectively. One supervisor commented: “When there is a vacancy on my shift, I am not part of the interviews; I simply get told that this is the new guy on my team” (Supervisor J, personal communication, 3 October 2005). The company’s policies regarding access and authorisation levels supplied further evidence in support of the existence of this barrier, indicating that supervisors were not endowed with sufficient authority, for example, to authorise their subordinates’ annual leave (Documentation review, company systems policy, June 2003).

Superintendents noted that the supervisor’s level of control over decision-making extended, only to their being able to tell their subordinates what to do. No explanation of why things had to be done had, however, to be given. One superintendent complained that: “instructions from above were not based on teamwork and that the supervisor did not have the authority to change these instructions to fit in with teamwork” (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005). Bozionelos & Lusher (2001) also identified this barrier to the empowerment of supervisors in their study that revealed that fifty percent of all team leaders see their managers as restricting their freedom to make decisions. MacNeil (2004) stresses the difficulties that supervisors experience, especially in the form of political inequalities and anomalies with middle managers involving power and responsibilities, adding that the attendant tension is increased by the limitations placed on the supervisor’s ambit of power and authority.

Lack of empowerment and participation also manifested itself during the formulation of the company’s vision, goals and objectives. A strong case was made for teams to have a clearly defined purpose, goal and direction. Senge (1990) stresses that teamwork can only be successful if the team involved has clearly defined parameters within which to operate. The increased attention paid by management to the strategic direction taken by the company highlighted the fact that management was conscious of this issue. As a result, immediately prior

to the rollout of teamwork; the company developed a ‘strategic direction’ document.

Although compilation of the document was seen by most interviewees as a starting point for goal alignment, use of this approach was severely criticised by these employees in light of its complexity and the fact that it was developed in isolation, excluding any employee, particularly supervisor, participation. One superintendent commented: “I myself struggled to get direction when I read it [the company’s strategy direction]. It was too complex and tried to cover too many aspects. It felt as if the strategy was written to only look good on paper” (Superintendent B, personal communication, 15 September 2005).

Research findings indicated that the lack of empowerment and participation impacted not only on teamwork in general, but also specifically on the supervisors’ role within the teamwork environment. This was as a result of the fact that, on the one hand, the lack of employee empowerment increased the resistance that supervisors experienced from subordinates, while, on the other hand, the fact that supervisors were not themselves effectively empowered limited their buy-in and motivation regarding the project. This, in turn, undermined their credibility with the workforce, only serving to further encourage its innate scepticism.

The historical lack of involvement of employees in business decision making shaped employees’ perceptions regarding the initiatives taken by CML, resulting in their, therefore, being bound to attain only suboptimal outcomes. The negative tendency added significantly to the difficulties experienced by supervisors in struggling to overcome resistance to their implementation efforts. The earlier process reengineering programme led to the fear expressed by employees that some of the changes would not work. The company had reverted in many instances to the way in which the company had operated before implementation of the programme. This reversion in itself heightened employee resistance to

future changes. Feedback provided by shop-floor employees to the steering committee team during rollout sessions supported this finding. One employee commented: “We do not trust this programme, because when programmes have been started and fail there is no feedback as to why this happened and I specifically refer to the process reengineering programme; employees are afraid teamwork will also result in job losses” (Documentation review, employee feedback, 22 May 2005).

Though the teamwork strategy required supervisors to facilitate teamwork at the shop-floor level, the supervisors themselves were still subject to autocratic management, which further prevented supervisors from changing their own management style. McHugh *et al.* (1999) notes that when the organisational environment supports the retention of power by management, supervisors often find it difficult to change their own management style from traditional to facilitative. Management’s lack of confidence in supervisors further undermines their morale and distracts managers from pursuing other, more important, tasks.

Senge (1990) emphasises the need for employees to understand what is required from them as a team, adding that a poor understanding of what is required of them leads to a poor sense of direction, mismatched needs, confused goals and unresolved role-related issues. Apart from the failure of management to assist in empowering employees, the lack of participation as well as simplification of the design of the company strategy significantly added to the difficulty that supervisors encountered during teamwork facilitation. All these factors served to hinder employee understanding of the process, to create more confusion and ultimately to limit buy-in from shop-floor employees.

6.2.2.3 Lack of senior management commitment to the process

Lack of senior management commitment to the implementation of teamwork was a second barrier, in addition to the lack of empowerment and trust described in the previous section. The research findings identified that the lack of senior management commitment manifested itself in two key ways: the lack of time spent by management on the implementation of teamwork and the inadequacy of resources made available to teams. This section discusses the impact of these two issues on teamwork.

Observations during teamwork rollout indicated that the amount of time that senior management devoted to teamwork was extremely limited. Published research cites lack of senior management commitment, as can be seen in management not devoting sufficient time to teamwork once the implementation begins, as one of the fundamental reasons why teamwork implementation may fail. Observations conducted during the rollout process indicated that senior management was not seen to be active on the shop floor. Senior managers failed to encourage, guide and support the teams concerned. One facilitator commented: “Senior management only attended team meetings if they were invited; they did not go out of freewill” (Steering committee member, personal communication, 4 October 2005). The documented evidence also supported this finding, as employees noted that: “management is never seen on the shop floor, so why should it change now” (Documentation review, employee feedback, 1 June 2005).

Management’s time was occupied by attending to too much detail at a much lower level than was, in fact, necessary. One of the facilitators explained how: “Management operates at too low a level. It seems that the company is always in a semi-crisis mode – this is why managers hardly have any time to plan and strategise and, when they have the time, they did not trust subordinates

sufficiently to involve them in these business processes" (Steering committee member, personal communication, 4 October 2005).

Lack of senior management commitment further manifested itself in the inadequacy of resources made available to the teams. Manz & Sims (1995) and Church (1998) stress the need for support and conclude that if management does not make resources available to teams they tend to lose both their technical and motivational capacity to excel. The research particularly identified the lack of information and appropriate material as forming a barrier that manifested itself not only during the initial communication sessions to the shop-floor employees, but also during the teamwork training sessions for supervisors. Contrary to the initial belief of the researcher, this barrier, however, went beyond simply precluding access to operational data required by teams, but also impacted negatively on access to information regarding management intent and commitment to the teamwork initiative.

This barrier came about as the result of the teamwork implementation strategy. In order to encourage a sense of ownership of the teamwork initiative, the implementation strategy encouraged employees to bring to the forefront issues and barriers that they themselves perceived as stumbling blocks to the implementation of teamwork. This was in line with the strategy as suggested by Caruth, Middlebrook & Folger (1995:5) "In order for leaders to overcome resistance to change the organizational leader must first: create the proper attitude, and flood the organization with communication about the change. Then the leader must set a good example, solicit opinions from employees and, last, reward acceptance".

The lack of feedback regarding the barriers that were perceived and articulated by employees resulted in supervisors questioning the degree of commitment from senior management. This underlying theme was strongly supported by documentation indicating that management was extremely selective in the

feedback that it provided, as well as keen to avoid overemphasising sensitive issues. The documentation indicated that most of these issues reflected back to the way in which the process reengineering program was managed, and included employee requests for explanations regarding what they perceived as being a futile attempt at improving efficiencies and saving costs. Other key issues included transport arrangements, the lack of a reward system and, ultimately, the motivation behind teamwork (Documentation review, steering committee minutes, 12 May 2005).

To elaborate on these issues, as early as the process reengineering programme, the inadequate transport system formed a discussion point on the agenda between management and employees. Management avoided discussing the fact that employees felt that a travel allowance would resolve most of their transport-related problems. The financial investment that CML made in sponsoring public transport bus tickets for employees, management argued, would be insufficient to provide employees with an alternative means of transport. Employees would, therefore, still be forced to make use of existing public transport, irrespective of whether the company sponsored the bus tickets or whether employees bought them themselves.

The issue of the granting of rewards was closely linked to management's intentions regarding teamwork, and employees were sceptical regarding the potential benefits that they might receive from any new initiatives. Management's argument was that employees were earning salaries above the market average and therefore any form of reward system was out of the question.

One supervisor specifically referred to the business process reengineering programme to show his frustration with management's reluctance to respond to issues regarded as pressing by more junior employees, "During the business process reengineering programme the same issues were raised, yet still

management chooses to remain silent" (Supervisor A, personal communication, 25 August 2005).

The lack of senior management commitment was particular detrimental to the motivational capacity and the willingness of supervisors to believe that the company as a whole truly had their interests at heart. One supervisor voiced his frustrations that: "many questions subordinates asked me about teamwork, I could not answer" (Supervisor C, personal communication, 1 September 2005). Observations conducted during the initial feedback from the consultants to senior management lent further credence to the difficulty that supervisors encountered as a result of this barrier. The consultant identified the issues that were raised by employees; however, senior management clearly expected the supervisors not to 'sympathise' with employees, but to manage employee perceptions regarding any issues that they had with the company. Bruniquel (1991) confirms that supervisors have a critical role to play in teamwork facilitation, but that they encounter specific difficulties with motivating team members in the absence of wide-ranging support from management.

One area that had so far received little attention in the literature, but which emerged as significant in this research study, was how important senior management commitment was in achieving middle management commitment, in the form of support from the superintendent level, as well. Though middle management commitment is a direct consequence of senior management commitment, where middle management proactively dealt with issues on the shop floor, supervisors experienced much less resistance from subordinates than they might otherwise have done. Middle management support can clearly, therefore, achieve results from a teamwork initiative, even in the absence of senior management commitment.

One of the facilitators identified the importance of the superintendent in assisting supervisors to avoid 'red tape' (Steering committee member, personal

communication, 4 October 2005). Superintendents specifically assisted supervisors in gaining access to required teamwork information by authorising computer access for subordinates. Such access, to some degree, empowered the supervisor and proved to be invaluable in increasing the supervisors' motivational capability to achieve employee buy-in. The documentation further indicated the marked correlation between middle management buy-in and team performance, not only in terms of implementation targets, but also in terms of the level of understanding that the team members expressed (Documentation review, implementation progress report, 4 October 2005). Observations undertaken during progress audits further supported this finding, highlighting the fact that team members attained a much better understanding of the principles of teamwork where the superintendent provided active visible input.

6.2.2.4 The reluctance to recognise institutional barriers

The third barrier associated with this culture of mistrust was the inability of management to recognise the existence of institutional barriers. Interviews with supervisors served to identify some of the barriers that were not fully taken into account during the design of the initiative. The existing barriers included the skills and literacy levels of the workforce, specifically with regards to accessing information and the language barrier that supervisors had to overcome. One superintendent commented: "It takes a unique skill to facilitate teamwork especially given the language barrier, skills level and negativity of shop-floor employees" (Superintendent B, personal communication, 15 September 2005).

One of the key issues that emerged during the interviews was the fact that the teamwork programme implemented ill matched the corporate culture at CML. The underlying theme that became apparent during the data collection process for this research report was the fact that a teamwork programme cannot simply be bought off the shelf to apply in a company without first customising it to suit the specific needs of the company concerned. Procter & Ackroyd (1998:35)

caution organisations against blindly transplanting what they call ‘Japanization’ into other countries with different institutional norms, since doing so assumes that the pattern of change in organisations is known. This practice hinders the understanding of distinct qualities that have developed in different industries.

Wellins (1992) explains that the transition to teams can be classified into six steps: (1) gaining knowledge; (2) conducting a readiness survey; (3) communicating organisational vision and values; (4) redesigning the workplace; (5) implementation; and (6) evaluation. In the case of the company studied, where a ‘readiness survey’ was not conducted, interviews with superintendents later highlighted that such a survey would have enabled the identification of company-specific issues and could have assisted in developing a teamwork programme that was more sensitive to company-specific issues.

One company-specific issue that emerged from the research which was not covered in the literature surveyed was the importance of having a stable workforce. Supervisors identified the lack of a stable workforce at CML as impacting on team development as a result of management’s ignorance regarding existing specific institutional barriers. Though CML’s permanent employees had quite a long service record with the company – one out of five employees had more than 20 years service with CML – the large number of contract workers was seen as a barrier to the implementation process, since these employees were more than often seen as outsiders, whose commitment to the team and the company was questionable. The documentation, however, indicated that contractors had not been included in the teamwork process, as the specific teamwork initiative was a proprietary product unavailable to contractors, who were not included under the existing agreement. The exclusivity of the process might, therefore, have contributed more to the lack of commitment than did the temporary nature of the contracts themselves (Documentation review, steering committee minutes, 30 July 2005).

Participative observations highlighted the fact that senior management seemed to be cautious regarding the possible outcome of a ‘readiness survey’. One of the steering committee members supported this finding, providing an explanation in stating that management felt “a readiness survey would only have created expectations, which could have resulted in a ‘dilemma’ if these expectations could not be satisfied by management” (Steering committee member, personal communication, 4 October 2005). The motivation behind a ‘readiness survey’ might not have been fully appreciated at the time. Again, the issue of trust emerged as the underlying theme. Management was afraid of what questions such a survey would raise, rather than in what potential value it could have added in facilitating the design of a suitable teamwork programme and in establishing buy-in to the implementation programme.

A better understanding of these issues would indeed have assisted in directing focus during preconditioning as well as in facilitating the customisation of a programme sensitive to these issues. The barriers placed enormous pressure on the supervisors concerned, since they were expected to manage these issues with limited support from senior management.

6.2.2.5 Poor industrial relations

A culture of mistrust is inevitably associated with poor industrial relations, which also brings us to the fourth barrier concerned. As early as the 1970s, when worker participation in decision-making first gained attention, union leaders were noted as stating that they felt that they could not trust members of management sufficiently to share their work-related ideas and thoughts with them (Huszczo & Hoffman, 1999). Interviews and observations conducted indicated that unions refrained from taking a stance with regards to teamwork and supervisors commented that team members were quite conscious of this lack of involvement on the side of the unions. One of the supervisors, who joined the company six month prior to the rollout of teamwork, commented that he found the lack of

union involvement on this issue very surprising, adding that the situation was not one to which he was accustomed (Supervisor I, personal communication, 3 October 2005).

Observations during the initial rollout of teamwork indicated that, though the unions were briefed about the implementation, active involvement in the development of teamwork was not encouraged. This in itself brought back memories of the process reengineering programme. Documentation strongly supported the fact that unresolved issues that emerged during this initiative again acted as stumbling blocks. As one employee argued: “Sort out the employee relations issues (transport, grading) first before you can expect teamwork to be a success” (Documentation review, employee feedback, 3 May 2005). The underlying theme here is the general lack of trust between employees and management in the company, specifically regarding the way things were done in the past. The union’s uncertainty regarding management’s motives with regards to the teamwork initiative led to its being noncommittal during the early stages of teamwork implementation.

Employees were very suspicious of the perceived lack of involvement of unions, despite one supervisor’s vouching for CML employees being strong supporters of the unions: “Guys do not come to you [management]; they talk to the unions first if they have a problem” (Supervisor G, personal communication, 20 September 2005). Supervisors at CML seemed, on the one hand, to be trying to convince their subordinates of the need for teamwork, while, on the other hand, being overtly conscious of burning issues of the past and the lack of union involvement in the issue.

6.2.2.6 Conclusion: Culture of mistrust

In conclusion, five of the barriers encountered by supervisors including: (1) the lack of empowerment and participation; (2) the lack of clear vision and direction;

(3) the lack of managerial commitment; (4) the lack of recognition of specific institutional issues; and (5) poor industrial relations had come about as a direct result of the culture of mistrust within the organisation studied. The lack of trust that emerged as a key underlying theme throughout the research process was mainly the result of poor historical relationships and significantly affected the basis on which the teamwork initiative was rolled out.

6.2.3 Culture of early adoption and initiative overload

6.2.3.1 Introduction

Among the various subsidiaries in the holding company, CML customarily was the first to implement initiatives within the timelines and budget set by management. One manager commented in this regard, saying that: “we always try to be the first to complete implementation of initiatives in the group. Senior management makes commitments which is not always realistic, this is why a lot of our projects either overrun their intended implementation date or we simply rush to implement without ensuring that it is done properly” (Manager A, personal communication, 1 October 2005). Management was consistently criticised for being too optimistic regarding the target. Due to its haste to implement the new strategy, often initiatives and projects were only superficially implemented, without embedding the intended culture among the employees. One superintendent commented: “We always rush things, which leads to misdirected targets and window dressing. The process reengineering programme served as a very good example, as the company in a lot of the areas reverted back to the way things were before the programme” (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005).

The situation was also worsened by too many initiatives taking place simultaneously, leading one of the senior staff to remark: “I think the company’s problem is the fact that we have an initiative overload. Our supervisors do not get

the chance to fully embed the one initiative before the next one is on them" (Manager A, personal communication, 1 October 2005).

This culture of premature adoption and initiative overload was directly responsible in the rollout of the programme for the lack of proper preconditioning of employees, the design of inappropriate measures and rewards and the failure to adapt training and development policies to suit the intended changes. The rest of this section evaluates the culture of premature adoption and initiative overload and its impact on teamwork, as well as on the role of the supervisors concerned with the rollout.

6.2.3.2 Lack of pre-conditioning

Preconditioning, although critical, is inevitably the aspect of implementation that is neglected when unrealistic implementation deadlines are set. The reason for this is that preconditioning is more than often time and resource consuming and therefore the easiest aspect to sacrifice when pressured to shorten the required time taken to implement a programme. The lack of proper preconditioning detected in this study impacted on training, facilitation and communication.

The lack of training and facilitation emerged especially since the implementation strategy adopted by CML, as explained in the background to the teamwork initiative, was such that the supervisors were trained and then expected to facilitate teamwork on the shop floor. This approach, although allowing supervisors from the outset to take on a more facilitative role, meant that the success of the programme largely depended on three critical prerequisites. Firstly, supervisors had to be effectively trained; secondly, subordinates had to be effectively preconditioned regarding the change; and, lastly, some level of trust had to exist between subordinates and supervisors. As a result of the company's already existing culture, neither one of the prerequisites was completely satisfied when implementing the teamwork initiative, a factor which

resulted in great difficulty for the supervisors concerned. The three prerequisites now require further discussion.

The supervisors were not properly preconditioned to assume the role of teamwork facilitator as far as training went. Strong evidence in support of this emerged from observations conducted during their initial training. During their two-day training session, they general felt that they had had to cover too much material and only limited attention was paid to effectively preparing them for their facilitative role. Interviews with more senior staff supported this sentiment. As one superintendent commented, “people did not walk out of the training hall feeling ready for teamwork” (Superintendent A, personal communication, 14 September 2005). Inadequate understanding of the meaning of teamwork expressed even up to superintendent level meant that the focus mainly lay on the visual aspect of teamwork and not on the associated participative and empowerment aspect. The misplaced focus was apparent throughout the interviews as well as the observations undertaken during the teamwork audit. Most of the discussion centred on updating visual charts in order to indicate positive performance during an audit, with limited attention paid to the meaning of these measures and the possible value of sharing this sign of productivity with the whole team.

Lack of proper preconditioning regarding communication, specifically regarding the need for teamwork, emerged as one of the key barriers to teamwork implementation in close connection to training. Interviews and documentation supported this finding – it seemed that the company lacked the ability to communicate the intended change effectively. One supervisor commented: “most employees asked me what teamwork was about; there was this general perception that teamwork was another process reengineering programme” (Supervisor E, personal communication, 6 September 2005). Supervisors further commented on the negativity associated with the implementation of the information system and process reengineering programme, admitting that these

initiatives would have been accepted with less resistance if the need for these changes had been better communicated and understood.

The fact that the shop-floor employees were not effectively preconditioned regarding the new expected role of the supervisor, as well as the limited degree of trust, presented a further barrier, as supervisors were expected to ‘convince’ subordinates of the benefits of changing their management style from directive to participative. One supervisor commented: “It would have been better if the supervisor and team were taken through teamwork, since then subordinates could see that it was not something that the supervisor requested from them” (Supervisor B, personal communication, 29 August 2005).

Note worthily enough, the company had already experienced similar shortcomings with previous initiatives, specifically with the implementation of the information system, as well as with the process reengineering programme regarding preconditioning. This was supported by the fact that four years after the implementation of these initiatives, supervisors reported that employees were still requesting explanations of the need for these initiatives to have been taken in the first place. Although the information system had been implemented within the required time span and on budget, the company had struggled to quantify any benefits relating to efficiency and cost saving as a result of this initiative. Most employees struggled with the system and extensive effort had to go into training and educating employees long after implementation of the information system had already taken place.

In the present instance, the lack of preconditioning regarding training and facilitation impacted especially on supervisors, resulting in a critical skills gap that inhibited the supervisors effectively imparting knowledge to team members. The inadequate knowledge transfer ultimately resulted in team members questioning their supervisors’ ability. The facilitators reported that the employees felt that

“team leaders require more training as they are stubborn, ignorant and resisted change” (Documentation review, employee feedback, 28 May 2005).

Supervisors especially found the lack of preconditioning regarding communication to be a barrier, since they were expected to communicate and train employees in a field in which they themselves had minimal experience. One supervisor commented: “when teamwork was introduced to me the first time, I did not know what it was all about, to tell the honest truth, it was actually very scary” (Supervisor H, personal communication, 30 September 2005). This supervisor also referred back to an attempted teamwork initiative that had unsuccessfully taken place in 1992, primarily because it had required additional after-hours work from employees. He added that employees who could remember the initiative accordingly immediately resisted the implementation of teamwork, while, this time around, better communication might have eliminated some of the negative perceptions involved.

Lack of preconditioning indeed not only placed immense pressure on supervisors, but also resulted in supervisors questioning their own abilities. Supervisors felt that their inability to understand the process fully was a function of their capability, whereas, in fact, their lack of understanding was a result of inadequate training and exposure to the teamwork initiative. One supervisor remarked: “I went out and did a lot of work after the training; since I thought I was the only one not understanding what is required” (Supervisor D, personal communication, 1 September 2005).

6.2.3.3 Inappropriate measures and rewards

Inappropriate measures and rewards emerged as the second barrier resulting from inadequately thinking through the implementation strategy. The barrier was important to teamwork, as measures and rewards were inherently associated with the motivation of team members. Inappropriate measures and rewards,

however, conflicted with attainment of the intended objectives of teamwork, only serving to reinforce the autocratic management style innate to the company culture by their focus being placed on the measuring of implementation rather than on the results themselves. Measures and rewards, although linked, are dealt with separately in this section.

The application of inappropriate measures served to dampen not only the supervisors', but also the superintendents', enthusiasm for teamwork. Two reasons became evident in support of the fact that management spent too little time on establishing appropriate measures that might not only have served to measure the value added by teamwork, but also supplemented and directed the supervisors' efforts. The first reason highlighted was the fact that measures became a statistic tracked by senior management. Meyer (1998) suggests that, in order to maximise the effectiveness of teams, the critical focus point of team measures should have been to help the teams themselves perform better, rather than to assist top management to gauge the progress of the teams. In other words, the measures adopted did not help the supervisors concerned to entrench the principles of teamwork among team members, but rather it was used by management to gauge their compliance with the new system. As regards measures being used to monitor implementation rather than results, one superintendent commented after the initial progress audit that: "the facilitators, did not care about what the team members understanding was, they only cared about whether the charts against the wall seemed to be in use" (Superintendent A, personal communication, 14 September 2005).

Further observation during the initial feedback session that took place immediately after the implementation process supported this viewpoint and strong evidence emerged that senior management used the performance of the teams with regards to teamwork progress as a measure of the superintendents' and supervisors' commitment to the process. Where teams performed well in terms of the set teamwork measures, the supervisor and superintendent heading

the team were praised for their positive attitude, whereas in the case of teams not performing as well, the converse was true. Emphasis was thus accordingly placed on measuring teamwork implementation progress or 'window-dressing', as opposed to on measuring the true effectiveness of the team. Such failure to measure what should have been one of the central concerns of the programme followed a long-standing pattern in the company. Similar examples were identified regarding other initiatives and projects, indicating that the emphasis had in the past been consistently placed on measuring the implementation progress of projects, while the 'value added' component of these projects had, in fact, never been effectively gauged after implementation of the projects concerned. One of the superintendents commented: "look at all our capital projects that we implement, we measure the implementation progress, since that becomes the target we chase, and we never go back and measure the value that was added" (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005).

The second reason why inappropriate measures were highlighted as a key issue was the fact that teams were penalised for lack of management input. Though this measure had been intended to encourage management participation, where the goal was not achieved it actually served to demotivate teams. Management support and involvement were clearly predominantly and specifically measured in terms of visible management of the shop floor.

Individual rewards, in the sense of annual salary increases, were based on individual performance unrelated to teamwork as such. Documentation and observation supported this and indicated that key performance indicators (KPI's) used for performance appraisals and ultimately salary increases were not adequately aligned with the teamwork initiative. This was particularly evident in terms of the lack of support provided by service departments. Departmental goals differed from those of the production teams, which focused on different areas. Table 5 compares production and engineering employees' KPI's in evidence of this fact.

Table 5: The comparison between production versus service departments KPI's

CML - Key performance indicators 2005				
Key performance indicator	**Production personnel**	**Weight**	**Service departments (Engineering personnel)**	**Weight**
Safety, environment and health	Maintain a safe working environment	20%	Maintain a safe working environment	20%
Production	**Achieve production target**	**25%**	**Achieve availability target**	**20%**
Quality	Achieve product specification	15%	Maintain maintenance quality	10%
Cost	**Achieve budget cost for the year**	**10%**	**Achieve a 10% saving on budget cost for the year**	**20%**
Leadership	Compliance to list of skills and qualities	15%	Compliance to list of skills and qualities	15%
Human resources	Meet budget training and development quotas	15%	Meet budget training and development quotas	15%

Source: Adapted from KPI tables for production and engineering personnel, (Documentation review, key performance indicators, January 2005)

In Table 5 the difference in focus areas for production and service personnel is clear. Production personnel KPI's emphasised "achieving production target" and carried a much higher weighting than did the KPI's for engineering employees. The opposite was true for "achieve budget cost for the year". One supervisor noted that the misalignment between engineering and production directly resulted from misalignment in the reward system, explaining that: "engineering employees strongly focussed on costs, since that was what they were measured against, whereas production focussed on producing product" (Supervisor I, personal communication, 3 October 2005).

Employees conscious of this lack of alignment indicated that company compensation of team members for individual performance served to undermine any benefits that might otherwise have been gleaned from the team-building exercise (Documentation review, employee feedback, 12 June 2005). Church (1998) supports the importance of having an aligned team reward system and

expresses the need for all team members to receive the same recognition and monetary gains for outstanding team performance.

Measures and rewards are predominantly implemented to drive behaviour. In the case study, management consciously sought two sets of behaviours. On the one hand, management wanted to cultivate and instill a culture of cooperation and empowerment that imbued employees with a sense of being in charge of their own destinies. On the other hand, measures and rewards associated with teamwork drove a culture of compliance. These two unaligned sets of behaviours resulted in the demotivation of team members as regards teamwork and increased the resistance with which supervisors had to deal. Supervisors' enthusiasm for teamwork was still further dampened as a result of this barrier, since progress measures was seen as forming yet another "stick to hit employees with".

6.2.3.4 Inappropriate training and development of supervisors

Inappropriate training and development policies for supervisors emerged as the third barrier associated with a culture of premature adoption. Mumford (1997), Harrison (1997) and Mabey & Salaman (1999) suggest that the current inability of some supervisors effectively to facilitate teamwork will continue if organisations do not adapt their existing training and development of potential supervisors to current demands. Research findings supported those present in the literature. The company was found to be lacking an effective succession plan for future supervisors. Training and development policies were only inadequately reviewed after the change had already taken place.

Contrary to findings discussed in the available literature, in the case studied the mismatch of supervisors' skills was seen to result from inappropriate training and development policies, rather than constituting a barrier presented by the supervisors themselves. Management's neglect of training, development and

selection policies aimed at addressing the new requirements for supervisors following restructuring resulted in a mismatch of supervisor skills. As over much focus was placed on the technical expertise of supervisors, they were found to lack planning, training, facilitating and team-building skills. MacNeil (2004) adds that, given the current increasing complexity of the supervisor's role, today organisations require a much more 'demanding skill set' for supervisors. The resulting mismatch between the requirements set for supervisors and the current selection criteria is inevitable.

The supervisors interviewed in this study acknowledged that certain supervisors did indeed lack necessary skills as a result of the reduction in supervisory levels. "Today there is no senior supervisor which can help new supervisors; that coaching role has disappeared" (Supervisor A, personal communication, 28 August 2005). Interviews with more senior staff revealed that the reduction in supervisory levels following the implementation of the process reengineering programme created a 'missing step' in the supervisory hierarchy. The general feeling was that training and development policies failed to adequately address this issue. One of the superintendents commented: "The new structure after the process reengineering program required supervisors to become people managers, and we have not fully catered for this in our training and development programmes" (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005).

A review of CML's supervisor selection process provided additional evidence in support of this lack of skills, claiming that these processes mainly focussed on technical experience, in other words the 'ability to get the job done'. The existing role descriptions were extremely vague and were characterised by a general lack of the softer people management skills. Bunning (2000) adds that traditional selection processes focused on the technical expertise and experience of supervisors, explaining that supervisors' role descriptions need to be rewritten to ensure that new supervisors need only a moderate amount of technical skills, while possessing a contrastingly high level of people skills.

The documentation studied indicated that the company had only so far made provision for the incorporation of teamwork modules in the training programme for future supervisors. Additionally, reliance on people management skills and succession planning to create a pool of potential future supervisors was still absent from the human resource development practices followed in the company (Documentation review, steering committee minutes, 23 June 2005).

Inappropriate training and development policies resulted in an inadequate skill complement, specifically as regards people management, which effectively prevented most supervisors from achieving teamwork objectives. Bozionelos & Lusher (2001) strongly urge management to pay sufficient attention to the training and development of supervisors, adding that the supervisors responsible for the implementation of teamwork initiatives need to have the appropriate skills for eliciting the desired performance from their team members. The need for such skills could clearly be seen in the difficulties that supervisors encountered during the facilitation stage of teamwork, as well as in the general lack of trust apparent between supervisors and subordinates. Apart from their inability to lead teams efficiently, supervisors tended to perceive their incompetence in this area as a stumbling block to their career advancement. This in turn resulted in a sense of low morale and inadequate commitment to the implementation of teamwork.

6.2.3.5 Conclusion: Culture of early adoption and initiative overload

In conclusion, the culture of premature adoption and initiative overload presented a number of barriers, including: (1) a lack of preconditioning; (2) the presence of inappropriate measures and rewards; and (3) irrelevant training and development policies following on the implementation of teamwork. The culture of premature adoption and initiative overload was seen to have had a debilitating effect on the implementation strategy, since it had significantly undermined the ability of the organisation to implement an appropriate teamwork culture effectively.

6.2.4 Culture of zero tolerance

6.2.4.1 Supervisors fear of making mistakes

MacNeil (2001) finds that traditional supervisors may respond defensively to being seen to make mistakes, due to the negative consequences and impacts that they have experienced from being seen to do so in the past. The supervisors' fear of making mistakes did not come across as a barrier during their interviews, particularly due to the nature of the operation. However, interviews with more senior staff indicated that the contrary was indeed true. The defensive responses of supervisors may result from the prevailing tendencies of the company culture, which was experienced by the supervisors as disallowing room for error, while rigidly relying on rules and procedures that limited the flexibility of employees when making decisions. Being himself a manager in the organisation concerned, the researcher could vouch for the strong culture of compliance that prevailed in the company. The documentation further supported this viewpoint, with one of the comments made during the feedback session from the shop floor indicating that: "management doesn't attend to mistakes, but only discipline" (Documentation review, employee feedback, 20 July 2005). Observation during teamwork audits further supported this culture of zero tolerance of mistakes as some teams chosen to measured number of disciplinary cases as a measure for 'people performance'.

Racial differences between respondents were only clear in the area of the non-admissibility of mistakes, as white supervisors seemed to exhibit a much higher fear of making mistakes than did their African and Indian counterparts. One superintendent stated that: "Supervisors, especially the white supervisors do not want to accept that they are wrong" (Supervisor E, personal communication, 6 September 2005). Most of the white supervisors were older and therefore much more cautious of the negative consequences of past experiences – in other words, they tended to be "once bitten, twice shy". African and Indian supervisors also showed a much higher willingness to learn than did their white counterparts,

as, having been historically excluded from the decision-making process, they found it much more acceptable to make mistakes based on ignorance. White supervisors, however, being overly conscious of their vulnerability in the labour market, therefore saw any commission of error as directly threatening their future careers.

The culture of zero tolerance of mistakes was detrimental to teamwork implementation, which was extremely unfortunate, as, according to McGill, Slocum & Lei (1992), a teamwork environment can only be optimally functional when mistakes are seen as opportunities for both learning and change. In this instance, the barrier of non-tolerance curbed the supervisors' willingness to delegate responsibility and to change their management style, which ultimately led to the suppression of both innovation and participation. One of the steering committee members concluded that: "supervisors do not want to delegate, since the company have a culture where you do not bugger up" (Steering committee member, personal communication, 4 October 2005).

6.2.5 Conclusion: The institutional culture

The institutional culture significantly impacted on the teamwork initiative, presenting the majority of the barriers that supervisors encountered during the teamwork initiative. Drew & Coulson-Thomas (1997) warn that the importance of institutional culture is often insufficiently emphasised during the implementation phase of teamwork and has resulted in the derailment of many such initiatives in the past.

The culture of mistrust, identified as one of the key underlying themes during the research process, mainly manifested itself in a lack of empowerment and participation, a lack of clear vision and direction, a lack of senior management commitment, a reluctance to recognise institutional barriers and finally in poor industrial relations. The supervisor is ultimately the centre point, not only of the

interface between senior management and the team, but also of team management, motivational and facilitational opportunities.

The culture of premature adoption and initiative overload were directly responsible for the lack of proper preconditioning of employees, the design of inappropriate measures and rewards and the failure to adequately address training and development policies. This culture of premature adoption therefore resulted overall in only the superficial implementation of teamwork, with the true value-adding capability of the initiative being only questionably introduced throughout the organisation. A culture of zero tolerance of mistakes inevitably inhibits organisational learning, since the ability to learn from one's mistakes should form a critical strength of any teamwork initiative.

6.3 Senior management's motive behind the implementation of teamwork

6.3.1 Introduction

The motives behind the implementation of teamwork emerged as the second key underlying theme identified in the research findings. Church (1998:44) identifies that, apart from any possible lack of commitment and support, the managerial intention or motivation to implement teamwork needs to be clearly understood and communicated. He adds that "there is no doubt that teams occasionally get implemented as a misplaced curative for organizational ills". In the case of the company studied, two aspects regarding the motives behind teamwork became apparent. The need for teamwork was not overtly transparent, especially not to shop-floor employees, while, on a more strategic level, management's intention with teamwork was also questionable. These two aspects are discussed in the subsections that follow, including the impact that these factors had on teamwork and on the supervisors concerned.

6.3.2 The lack of transparency regarding the need for teamwork

Research findings identified that the need for teamwork was not clearly evident in the company, as, rather than being driven by the financial reality of the company, the implementation of teamwork formed part of a broader quest for continuous improvement. Though company survival did not depend on the teamwork initiative, its successful implementation would have, in fact, assisted in improving profit margins. Although the motivation for the implementation of teamwork was quite evident given the market demand for the company's product, the interviews and observations conducted indicated that individuals on the shop floor did not see this as transparent. Supervisors argued that, if the need for change had, in fact, been driven by pressing financial reality, subordinates would most probably have been much more receptive to the changes involved.

Uncertainty regarding the need for teamwork also was evident in the fact that most employees interviewed perceived the need for teamwork to be, in fact, a means of rectifying scars left by past initiatives. Interviewees often referred to teamwork as a means of restoring a sense of belonging and ownership. One supervisor commented: "teamwork is very necessary since it will draw employees closer and by so doing rekindle the sense of togetherness and belonging" (Supervisor B, personal communication, 29 August 2005).

The need to perceive a sense of working towards a common goal was also strongly linked to the timing of teamwork. Interviewees specifically felt that employees would have had a much more positive view towards teamwork if it had been implemented immediately after the process reengineering programme had taken place. One of the steering committee members commented that: "There was no attempt to regroup employees after the process reengineering programme, and the longer we waited the further people drifted apart" (Steering committee member, personal communication, 4 October 2005). The failure to pull people into the new company structure immediately after implementation of the

programme in itself created a mindset among employees of ‘each person for himself’. No evidence during the research study, however, emerged in support of the fact that management perceived the importance of teamwork rekindling this sense of belonging.

The failure to perceive the need for teamwork created some confusion and increased the resistance to change experienced from subordinates, which ultimately the supervisors were expected to overcome.

6.3.3 Managements intention questionable

On a more strategic level, the motivation behind teamwork was indeed, to some extent, questionable, since the initiative did not empower employees or offer them more substantial rewards for improved performance. The interviews with supervisors substantiated the lack of motivation present in the implementation process for the average employee. As one supervisor reported: “employees felt that teamwork was implemented for the sole purpose to benefit management and the company” (Supervisor C, personal communication, 1 September 2005).

Management’s reluctance to change policies specifically highlighted the ongoing lack of employee empowerment and participation. Kotter’s model (1995) emphasises the need for the creation of a vision of the desired end-state in the empowering of employees through changes brought about in policies, structures and procedures. The management of CML was clearly very selective regarding changes to policies, as was evidenced by the heated discussions amongst the management team that followed the proposed policy changes, specifically regarding computer access for shop-floor employees, the authority levels involved in spares releases and transport arrangements. Supervisors specifically identified that they felt that policies were only changed if the company would gain tangible benefits from such a change, and not when employees requested such changes. One supervisor commented that: “management only changes policies

that will benefit them, the transport policy that will benefit everyone is not being looked at" (Supervisor I, personal communication, 3 October 2005).

Supervisors also specifically referred to the fact that the employees had to rely on unreliable public transport, which, apart from being detrimental to their teamwork, also contributed to other difficulties that the company encountered, such as hours of work and absenteeism levels. Bussing schedules formed a crucial point on the agenda of steering committee meetings as a concern raised by employees and supervisors. Management, however, denied that the discussion of teamwork should allow for a discussion of transport-related issues (Documentation review, steering committee minutes, 12 May 2005). At the same time, in one of the company's teamwork communication briefs, management in fact ironically took pride in the improvement in levels of efficiency and productivity that the change in policy would bring about, citing it as "a perfect example of employees challenging current practices, management listening, and changes being implemented" (Documentation review, company brief, 6 May 2005).

The lack of any substantial reward system for performance also showed the reluctance of management to concede any benefits to employees arising from the teamwork initiative. This was despite the fact that supervisors found that the first question asked by subordinates tended to be "What is in it for me?" (Supervisor F, personal communication, 13 September 2005). One of the superintendents interviewed added to this point by asking: "What does the supervisor have to motivate his team members with, besides maybe job satisfaction?" (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005). Abebanjo & Kehoe (2001) strongly support the motivational capacity of appropriate measures, recognition and reward for team achievement, adding that it serves both as an acknowledgement of the contribution made and as a source of motivation for other teams.

Where management's intentions regarding any initiative are questionable, inevitably employee resistance will increase. Supervisors revealed their frustrations regarding their inability to influence company policies. They added that, though they were aware of the issues that hindered effective teamwork, they only had limited authority to influence the decisions made. Management's dismissal of suggestions that might have assisted supervisors to create a better teamwork spirit also made it extremely difficult for supervisors to be able to motivate their subordinates.

Supervisors were also expected to manage employee expectations in the absence of appropriate rewards. The difficulty that supervisors encountered in this regard emerged most markedly during a feedback session to senior management following on the initial progress audit. Despite facilitators reporting that employees felt that they would receive no tangible benefits from a change over to teamwork, senior management made it very clear that no reward system would be implemented and that it expected supervisors to address and manage this issue 'correctly'.

6.3.4 Conclusion: Senior management's motive behind the implementation of teamwork

In conclusion, the importance of a clear understanding of the need for teamwork must not be underestimated. Holt *et al.* (2003) maintain that if management successfully identifies the appropriate strategy and implementation process in terms of which it can send appropriate messages about the impending change, the implementation will be successful and leaders will reap the desired benefits. Armenakis *et al.* (1999) emphasise the content, rather than the process, of communication, adding that leaders should communicate positive implications of the required change.

On a more strategic level, management's motives behind the implementation of teamwork strongly related to the institutional culture. The lack of empowerment and participation resulting from a strong culture of mistrust undermined the principles of teamwork. The reluctance of management to sacrifice control over their employees led to questioning of its intentions.

6.4 The changing role of the supervisor

6.4.1 Introduction

The implementation of teamwork requires a completely new outlook on the roles and responsibilities of frontline supervisors. They need to undergo a complete metamorphosis from their role as traditional "frontline supervisors" to their new role as "team leaders". The implementation of teamwork involves revised expectations of supervisors and their functions, as well as of any power relationship involved. Williams (1995:34) explains that supervisors will now be called upon to "guide the work group in its development and empowerment". Research findings indicated that supervisor resistance to any change in their roles and responsibilities manifested itself in two ways: supervisors not only felt threatened by the implementation of teamwork, but also resisted having to change their management style. The following sections discuss these issues, as well as the implications that they hold for both teamwork and supervisors.

6.4.2 The perception of teamwork as a threat

Balkema and Molleman (1999) suggest that supervisors' perception of teamwork as a threat may be due to the possibility that it holds of effectively removing the vertical boundaries previously existing between other team members and themselves. The removal of such boundaries may, in itself, be perceived as threatening their current status and, ultimately, their career advancement possibilities. Evidence in this regard was raised by one of the steering committee members, who noted that supervisors felt threatened by subordinates with strong

personalities (Steering committee member, personal communication, 4 October 2005). Documentation regarding feedback from shop-floor employees supported this viewpoint, with one employee mentioning that team leaders always tended to discourage experienced employees from applying their tried and true techniques to resolving problems (Documentation review, employee feedback, 12 May 2005).

Changes that occurred during the process reengineering programme substantiated supervisors' perceptions of their own status and authority. Supervisors were especially upset by the fact that the process reengineering programme forced them to travel to work together with their subordinates, as they felt that doing so undermined their status and authority. A new supervisor commented that some supervisors still wanted to be seen as having a "macho image, they wanted to stand out" (Supervisor J, personal communication, 3 October 2005). Documentation provided strong support for this view, with one of the shop-floor employees commenting: "The programme will work but we need to break the line between us and them especially when it comes to uniforms and transport" (Documentation review, employee feedback, 12 May 2005).

The perception of teamwork as a threat therefore not only increased the resistance of supervisors to teamwork, but also negatively impacted on the supervisor-subordinate relationship.

6.4.3 Reluctance to change management style

A key issue that initially emerged was the lack of trust between supervisors and team members that led to the lack of empowerment experienced by subordinates. Supervisors tended to blame their lack of trust on a number of issues, ranging from their awareness of the lack of ability of their subordinates to the reluctance of subordinates to accept responsibility. However, observations as well as interviews with more senior staff claimed that the lack of trust was due

more to the reluctance of supervisors to change their management style, than to the lack of ability of the subordinates. Traditional supervisors were seen to be tellers not leaders, which further explained why subordinates were perceived as not wanting to accept responsibility. One of the superintendents explained: “we have created this culture where people wait to be told what to do” (Superintendent B, personal communication, 15 September 2005).

The long service histories of the company’s supervisors –- one out of five supervisors had a service record of more than 20 years with the company (Personal details of supervisors, 1 June 2005) – partially explained the resistance encountered, with one superintendent stating that most supervisors had, prior to the process reengineering programme, been conditioned to be directive and that it would take time for them to change their management style. He added: “before the process reengineering programme, no decision was made by subordinates unless the senior supervisor gave the permission” (Superintendent C, personal communication, 30 September 2005). Observations made during team facilitation exercises further highlighted the existence of this autocratic style, as some supervisors, although discussing participation, prevented team members from participating in teamwork meetings. In some instances, the supervisor continuously chaired the morning team meetings, whereas the teamwork initiative specifically required that subordinates take turns at chairing the meetings concerned.

A close relationship was detected between supervisors’ reluctance to change their management style and their ability to effectively manage people. Interviews with more senior management indicated that supervisors frequently used “management by fear”, according to which they discouraged mistakes on grounds that their subordinates would have to face the attendant consequences. One superintendent added that supervisors frequently used the phrase: “If you make a mistake, you will have to explain to the manager” (Superintendent A, personal communication, 14 September 2005).

An important observation linked to the supervisors' skill set was the fact that three categories of supervisors became apparent. One group of supervisors saw themselves as part of management and recognised the importance of good people management skills for motivating subordinates to accept teamwork. One of the supervisors associated with this group commented: "We as management need to sell teamwork to our subordinates, and a successful supervisor can only achieve that if he manages his people correctly" (Supervisor F, personal communication, 13 September 2005). The second group consisted of supervisors who, though they saw themselves as part of management, due to their limited people management skills failed effectively to establish a teamwork culture amongst their team members. Supervisors from this group actively supported teamwork, and tried to force teamwork onto their subordinates by effectively using "management by fear". One supervisor commented: "I believe in teamwork and the importance of this initiative for our company, but my subordinates need to be told what to do. You cannot just empower these guys" (Supervisor C, personal communication, 1 September 2005). The third group of supervisors saw themselves as part of the shop floor, as they shared the same fate as that of shop-floor employees and therefore naturally grouped together with them. One supervisor specifically commented: "Teamwork has always existed on the shop floor; management has now only formalised what we have been practising for a long time" (Supervisor G, personal communication, 20 September 2005).

The implication of this form of resistance for change management styles was that some supervisors found it extremely difficult to change from a directive to a participative management style, resulting in questions from subordinates regarding the motives behind the implementation of teamwork, which ultimately increased the resistance supervisors both encountered and presented.

6.4.4 Conclusion: The changing role of the supervisor

In conclusion, the changing role of the supervisor in itself presented barriers to the implementation of teamwork in the form of supervisors seeing teamwork as a threat and, secondly, supervisors being reluctant to change their management style. Supervisors saw teamwork as a threat largely because its implementation removed vertical boundaries that traditionally existed between supervisors and subordinates, so that it appeared as a risk to their career development opportunities. The reluctance to change their management style resulted from the traditionally autocratic way in which supervisors used to manage the shop floor. Morgan (1986) and Kirk & Broussine (2000) assert that supervisors difficulty with assuming the facilitator role lies in their traditionally being part of the power structure in the organisation, which may lead to their team facilitation being more influenced by their own goals than by the learning goals of the team.

6.5 Summary

6.5.1 Barriers supervisors encountered to the implementation of teamwork

6.5.1.1 The institutional culture

The research conducted identified institutional culture to be one of the key underlying themes that impacted on the implementation of teamwork in the company. The culture of the company was of particular importance to teamwork, since it was characterised by a sense of mistrust prevailing throughout all levels of the organisation, poor initiative implementation practices, in the form of premature adoption and initiative overload, as well as limited tolerance of mistakes.

The culture of mistrust resulted from a history of inadequate relationships, as well as from management's perception of the relative incompetence of supervisors. The study found that the culture of mistrust undermined the basis on which the

intended teamwork initiative was to be established. The result was a lack of empowerment and participation, misalignment of goals, inadequate strategic direction, lack of management commitment, the reluctance to recognise institutional barriers and poor industrial relations. Lack of empowerment of employees increased the resistance that supervisor had to face, whereas the lack of empowerment of the supervisors themselves resulted in the inability of supervisors to change their management style. The lack of management commitment was particularly detrimental in that it influenced the motivational capacity and the credibility of supervisors in the company under review. Inadequate perceptions of specific institutional barriers resulted in a mismatch of the specific initiative with the organisation as a whole and further reduced buy-in into the teamwork initiative. Poor industrial relations inevitably resulted from a culture of mistrust and placed particular pressure on the supervisor during the teamwork initiative, since the supervisor formed the key link in the relationship between management and the shop floor.

The culture of premature adoption and initiative overload was the second characteristic of the institutional culture identified by the study. This culture of premature adoption and initiative overload impeded the effective preparation of the organisation, and especially the supervisor, for the adoption of a teamwork culture. The lack of readiness of the company concerned prevented management from spending adequate time on developing a robust implementation strategy that might have allowed sufficient time upfront for: (1) the adequate training and preconditioning of stakeholders and especially supervisors concerned; (2) the establishment of correct behavioural change drivers in the form of appropriate measures and rewards; and (3) the alignment of training and development policies with the new desired skill set. The gaps in the implementation strategy not only resulted in the poor preparation and conditioning of the supervisors concerned, but also inadequately shaped the organisational policies to support supervisors effectively in the diffusion process. The research undertaken also served to identify, contrary to findings elsewhere in the literature, that the

mismatch of supervisors' skills had resulted from a lack of appropriate training and development policies rather than being a pure barrier that the supervisors themselves presented.

The culture of zero tolerance which was identified as yet another characteristic of the institutional culture was especially detrimental to the establishment and entrenchment of true teamwork principles within the organisation studies. This barrier curbed the supervisors' willingness to delegate responsibility and to change their management style, which impeded innovation and participation.

6.5.1.2 Senior management's motive behind the implementation of teamwork

In the case of the company studied, two aspects regarding the motivation behind the implementation of teamwork became apparent. The need for teamwork was not apparent, and especially not to shop-floor employees. Secondly, and on a more strategic level, what management intended to use teamwork for was also questionable.

The research findings revealed that management did not effectively communicate the motivation behind the adoption of teamwork, which resulted in a poor understanding of the need for teamwork. The lack of communication resulted in scepticism regarding the required change which limited the supervisors' motivational capacity and dampened enthusiasm regarding the initiative.

On a more strategic level, the motivation behind teamwork was to some extent questionable, since the initiative did not deliver any tangible benefit to employees in terms of additional opportunities for empowerment and participation, or substantial rewards for performance. This barrier, in turn, eroded the supervisors' motivational capacity.

6.5.2 Barriers presented by supervisors

6.5.2.1 The changing role of the supervisor

Research findings have found that the supervisors' role changes with the implementation of teamwork. Bozionelos & Lusher (2002) add that the supervisor's role has especially changed in organisations that have downsized to a flatter structure, featuring more egalitarian processes than before, such as the use of teamwork. The change in the supervisors' role emerged as the underlying theme responsible for barriers presented by supervisors, as supervisors perceived teamwork as a threat and wished to retain their existing management style. Research findings identified that the barriers concerned were detrimental to teamwork implementation, since the success of any teamwork initiative depends on the facilitation skills of the supervisor, which can only be effectively liberated through concomitant change in the supervisors' management style.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

Extensive research has already been undertaken into the value and application of teamwork in various industries, resulting in insights into team initiatives and the appropriateness of a team approach for workplace organisation. Corbery, Mueller & Smith (1991) suggest that, for companies to succeed in today's uncertain work environment, the knowledge, skills, experience and perspective of a wide range of people must be integrated. As a tool for the maximisation of human resource input, teamwork is often over-promoted, while the difficulties of implementation are often underestimated (Dumaine, 1994).

The role of the supervisor, although often overlooked in the past, should be acknowledged as the key driver and enabler of the development of learning within an organisation. In light of the paucity of existing literature on the topic, the current study investigated the role of the supervisor in the implementation of teamwork as a workplace organisation initiative, with specific emphasis on the barriers encountered and presented by these key players in the teamwork implementation process.

Three key themes, institutional culture, senior management's motives and the changing role of the supervisor, emerged during the analysis of the research findings. Barriers encountered were clustered together under institutional culture and senior management's motives, whereas barriers presented were clustered together under the changing role of supervisors.

7.2 Barriers encountered by supervisors

7.2.1 The instructional culture

The institutional culture impacted significantly on the role of the supervisor in the diffusion of teamwork within the organisation studied. The underlying themes that resulted in the creation of barriers consisted of the culture of mistrust, the culture of premature adoption and initiative overload and the culture of zero tolerance. The culture of mistrust was detrimental to teamwork, as trust is generally acknowledged as an essential ingredient in the success of any teamwork initiative, particularly since it forms the basis on which any successful teamwork initiative should be established. Trust enables empowerment and participation in the process, which, in turn, significantly contributes to the establishment of management commitment, the recognition of specific institutional barriers and the development of good industrial relations. Barriers associated with a lack of trust in most cases resulted in scepticism regarding managerial intent. The research concluded that without trust management's efforts to improve productivity would continue to be met with resistance from the workforce, which the supervisor was expected to overcome.

The study further reinforced the fact that management cannot demand trust from employees. In practical terms, management cannot change its past, but it can determine to listen to the voice of the shop floor in future. Opening communication channels is the first step to the empowerment of workers, allowing, as it does, for employees to express their views and receive feedback, so that they can develop a sense of belonging and ownership in the company concerned. McHugh, O'Brian & Ramondt (1999) add, in support of this view, that the interfacing can form a valuable, though generally overlooked, learning resource allowing for organisational change.

The culture of premature adoption and initiative overload in the company studied resulted in the mere superficial implementation of teamwork, with the true value-adding capability of initiatives being only tentatively introduced throughout the organisation.

The culture of zero tolerance of mistakes smothered the lateral expansion of teamwork by curbing the possibility of organisational learning taking place through the making of mistakes. Though compliance to set rules and regulations is very important, management needs to realise that the importance of establishing an environment where supervisors can admit to their own mistakes, without having to fear the negative consequences that were associated with such admissions in the past.

The institutional culture uniquely shaped the way in which initiatives are implemented in organisations. In the present case, management's failure to recognise the importance of institutional culture detracted from the successful implementation of teamwork, as it will continue to do in the future, if management does not revise its outlook.

7.2.2 Senior management's motive behind the implementation of teamwork

The research identified that the strategies used by leaders to encourage the adoption and implementation of change impacted on the degree of success attained. Kotter (1995) specifically emphasises the importance of communicating the motivation behind the introduction of teamwork, explaining that management needs to create a vision of the desired end-state that can be achieved by means of empowering employees through the reformulation of policies, structures and procedures. The research indicated that the need for teamwork must be effectively communicated, since if it is not, it will result in scepticism regarding the required change, which will ultimately limit the supervisors' motivational capacity

and dampen enthusiasm regarding the initiative concerned. On a more strategic level, the research findings indicated that if management's motives behind the implementation of teamwork are unclear and fail to translate into benefits for employees in the form of increased empowerment, participation and significant rewards for improved performance, the intended benefits from the teamwork initiative will not be achieved.

The research further supported findings in the literature that, where management's motives regarding the implementation of teamwork are questionable, the resistance from unions and shop floor employees will increase. If teamwork is imposed top-downwards by management, the change involved will simply become a 'window-dressing' exercise for the supervisors concerned.

7.3 Barriers presented by supervisors

7.3.1 The changing role of the supervisor

Where fully autonomous teams come into being, the traditional function of the supervisor inevitably becomes redundant. Research findings indicated that the changing role of the supervisor with the implementation of teamwork manifested itself in two ways. Supervisors not only felt threatened by the implementation of teamwork, but also resisted changing their management style. Supervisors found it extremely difficult to change from a directive to a participative management style, leading to subordinates questioning the motives behind the implementation of teamwork, which ultimately also increased the resistance that supervisors both encountered and presented in the rollout of the programme concerned. Katzenbach & Smith (1993) explain that management needs to revisit job descriptions, compensation schemes, career-pathing and performance evaluation during the implementation of teamwork if it wants to initiate active involvement from the key players, the supervisors, concerned with the teamwork implementation process.

7.4 Conclusion

Team leadership is increasingly seen as a critical component of the never-ending quest for competitiveness. Teamwork is seen as the major management tool facilitating the transformation of an organisation from a traditional bureaucratic structure to a “lean and mean machine”. The research undertaken for the current study serves to address how best the transition of management, unions and shop-floor employees to teamwork can take place. The study provides an explanation of team-related roles, and of barriers to the fulfillment of these roles, existing at lower management and especially frontline supervisory level.

7.5 Recommendations

Management can no longer ignore the critical nature of the role of the supervisor, not only in the day-to-day management of a operation, but also in the implementation of change and especially in the implementation of a teamwork initiative. The effective and successful implementation of teamwork can only take place in an environment that has been effectively prepared for such an initiative to take place. Such preparation involves the detailed assessment of the institutional culture, the motives behind the desire to implement teamwork, as well as the potential impact and dynamics associated with the changing role of supervisors.

An institutional culture effectively shapes the way in which implementation of initiatives takes place, since the culture defines the environment in which the organisation and its employees interact. Management needs to critically assess the organisational culture present in a firm in order to identify potential barriers that might prevent the company supervisors from fulfilling their critical role in the implementation of the teamwork initiative. Additionally, organisations that opt for a teamwork initiative need clearly to determine the possible benefits and

limitations of the initiative concerned and should pay attention to the way in which they intend to implement the teamwork. Management must be able to envisage a clearly defined implementation plan that customises the implementation process around the current situation and defined barriers.

Management needs to understand that the implementation of a teamwork initiative is a dynamic process, and must not only ensure that the motives behind the implementation reflect senior management's belief in the need for the initiative, but also facilitate the buying in of employees into the process. Therefore, the implementation needs to accommodate possible employee resistance to the initiative. Management should understand that resistance may be based on sound reasons that it cannot simply dismiss out of hand.

In order for organisations to enhance the performance of their teams and to prepare a sufficient pool of satisfied and confident team leaders, management must adapt, develop, implement and maintain necessary structures for supervisors' technical and managerial development. The structures must then be integrated into the training, performance management and career development systems aimed at supervisors.

Reference list

Adair, J. (1986). *Effective team building,* Gower, Aldershot.

Adebanjo, D. and Kehoe, D. (2001). An evaluation of factors influencing teamwork and customer focus, *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 49-56.

Applebaum, E. and Batt, R. (1994). *The new American workplace,* IER Press, Ithaca, New York, NY.

Applebaum, S.H., Lavigne-Schmidt, S., Peytchev, M. and Shapiro, B. (1999). Downsizing: measuring the cost of failure, *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 18, No. 5, pp. 436-463.

Arkensas, R., Ulrich, D., Jick, T. and Kerr, S. (1995). *The boundaryless organisation,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Armenakis, A.A., Harris, S.G. and Field, H.S. (1999). Making change permanent: a model for institutionalising change interventions, *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, Vol. 12, pp. 97-128.

Arnold, J. (1997). *Managing careers in the 21st century,* Chapman Publishing, London.

Austin, N. (1993). Making teamwork work, *Working Women*, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 28.

Babson, S. (1995). When empowerment means exploitation: negotiating the terms of lean production, *Working USA*, Sharp, M.E., Armonk, NY.

Bacon, N. and Blyton, P. (2000). Industrial relations and the diffusion of teamworking, *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, Vol. 20, No. 8, pp. 911-931.

Bacon, N. and Storey, J. (1996). Individualism and collectivism and the changing role of trade unions, in Ackers, P., Smith, C., and Smith, P. (Eds), *The New Workplace and Trade Unionism: Critical Perspectives on Work and Organization*, Routledge, London, pp. 1-40.

Balkema, A. and Molleman, E. (1999). Barriers to the development of self-organising teams, *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 134-149.

Bamber, C., Sharp, J. and Hides, M. (1999).*Journal of Quality in Maintenance Engineering*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 162-181.

Barney, J. (1999). Looking inside for competitive advantage, in Schuler, R.S. and Jackson, S.E. (Eds), *Strategic Human Resource Management*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, pp. 128-141.

Beech, N. and Crane, O. (1999). High performance teams and a climate of community, *Team Performance Management*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 87-102.

Belbin, M. (1993). *Team roles at work,* Butterworth-Heinmann Ltd, Oxford.

Bell, J. (1987). *Doing your research project,* Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

Bennis, W. and Powell, S. (2000). Great groups and leaders, *Career Development International*, Vol. 5, pp. 112-115.

Berggren, C. (1993). Lean production – the end of history, *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 163-188.

Bergman, B. and Klefsjo, B. (1994). *Quality – from customer needs to customer satisfaction,* McGraw-Hill, London.

Black, J. and Ackers, P. (1994). Between adversarial relations and incorporation: a study of the joint process in a US auto-components plant, in Elger, A. (Ed.), *Global Strategies in the Auto-Industry*, Routledge, London.

Boxall, P. and Steeneveld, P. (1999). Human resource strategy and competitive advantage: a longitudinal study of engineering consultancies, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 442-463.

Bozionelos, N. (1996). Organizational promotion and career satisfaction, *Psychological Reports*, Vol. 79, pp. 371-375.

Bozionelos, N. and Lusher, S. (2002). Team leader's development: findings from a case study, *Career Development International*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 47-51.

Brauchle, P.E. and Wright, D.W. (1993). Training work teams*, Training and Development*, March, p. 68.

Brown, C., Reich, M. and Stern, D. (1993). Becoming a high-performance work organization: the role of security, employee involvement and training, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 4, pp. 123-134.

Bruniquel, B. (1991). Employee empowerment: can it be a reality?, *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 7, No. 6, pp. 16-20.

Bunning, R.L. (2000). Ensuring effectiveness in our front-line leaders, *Industrial and Commercial Training*, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp. 99-105.

Burke, W.W. and Litwin, G.H. (1992). A casual model of organizational performance and change, *Journal of Management*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp 34-45.

Caruth, D., Middlebrook, B. and Rachel, F. (1995). Overcoming resistance to change, SAM Advanced Management Journal, Vol. 50, No. 3, pp. 23-27.

Castka, P., Bamber C.J., Sharp, J.M. and Belohoubek, P. (2001). Factors affecting successful implementation of high performance teams, *Team Performance Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 7/8, pp. 123-134.

Church, A. (1998). From both sides now: the power of teamwork – fact or fiction, *Team Performance Management*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 42-52.

Clifford, G.P. and Sohal, A.S. (1998). Developing self-directed work teams, *Management Decisions*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 77-84.

Cole, R. (1984). Some principles concerning union involvement in quality circles and other employee involvement programs, *Labour Studies Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 4.

Colenso, M. (2000). How to accelerate team development and enhance team productivity, in Colenso, M., *Kaizen Strategies for Improving Team Performance*, Prentice- Hall, London.

Conti, B. and Kleiner, B. (1997). How to increase teamwork in organizations, *Training for Quality*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 26-29.

Corbery, J.L., Mueller, W.S. and Smith, L.M. (1991). Attitudinal and behavioural outcomes of autonomous group working: a longitudinal field study, *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 34, pp. 464-476.

Cully, M., O'Reilly, A., Millward, N., Forth, J., Woodland, S., Dix, G. and Bryson, A. (1998). *The 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey: First Findings,* HMSO, London.

Da Cruz, C. and Kay, J.M. (1995). Penetration of Japanese manufacturing methods into UK automotive companies, *Proceedings of the 11th National Conference on Manufacturing Research*, Taylor and Francis, pp. 252-256.

Darlington, R. (1994). Shop stewards organization in Ford Halewoood: from Beynon to today, *Industrial Relations Journal*, Vol. 25, pp. 136-149.

Darling, M. (1996). Empowerment: myth or reality, *Executive Speeches*, Vol. 10, No. 6, pp. 23-28.

De Jong, J.A. and Versloot, B. (1999). Job instruction: its premises and its alternatives, *Human Resource Development International*, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 391-404.

De Jong, J.A., Leenders, F.J. and Thijssen, J.G.L. (1999). HRD tasks of first level managers, *Journal of Workplace Learning: Employee Counselling Today*, Vol. 11, No. 5, pp. 176-183.

Deming, W. (1986). *Out of the crisis,* Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge. MA.

Denyer, D. (1992). The role of the British Quality Association*,* in Hand, M. (Ed.), *Quality Management Handbook*, Butterworth-Heinemann, pp. 218-223.

Denzin, N. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

Drew, S. and Coulson-Thomas, C. (1997). Transformation through teamwork: the path to the new organization, *Team Performance Management*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 162-178.

Dumaine, B. (1994). The trouble with teams, *Fortune*, Vol. 130, No. 5, pp. 86-92.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Lowe, A. (1991). *Management research: an introduction,* Sage, London.

Eden, D. (1990). Pygmalion without interpersonal contrast effects: whole groups gain from raising manager expectations, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 75, pp. 394-398.

Edwards, P. and Wright, N. (1993). HRM and commitment: a case study of teamworking, in Sparrow, P. and Marchington, M. (Eds), *Human Resource Management: The New Agenda*, Pitman, London, pp. 272-285.

Eisenhardt, K.M. (1989). Building theories from case study research, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 532-550.

Ellinger, A.D. and Bostrom, R.P. (1999). Managerial coaching behaviours in learning organisations, *The Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 18, No. 9, pp. 752-771.

Ellinger, A.D., Watkins, K.E. and Barnas, C.M. (1999). Responding to new roles: a qualitative study of managers as instructors, *Management Learning*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 387-412.

Evans, D. (1996). Supervisory Management: Principles and Practice. Cassell. London.

Feurer, R., Chaharbaghi, K. and Wargin, J. (1996). Developing creative teams for operational excellence, *International Journal of Operation & Production Management*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 5-18.

Finnemore, M. (1999). The history of labour relations in South Africa, Chapter 2 in *Introduction to Labour Relations in South Africa*, 7th Edition, Butterworths, Durban.

Flick, U. (1992). Triangulation revisited: strategy of validation or alternative?, *Journal of the Theory of Social Behaviour*, Vol. 22, pp. 175-198.

Foster, N. (2000). Setting up the team – preconditions of success, in Colenso, M. (Ed.), *Kaizen Strategies for Improving Team Performance*, Prentice-Hall, London.

Francis, D. and Young, D. (1979). *Improving work groups: a practical manual for teambuilding*, University Associates, La Jolla, CA.

Gardner, J.W. (1990). *On leadership,* Free Press, New York, NY.

George, J.M. and Bettenhausen, K. (1990). Understanding prosocial behaviour, sales performance and turnover: a group-level analysis in a service context, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 72, pp. 493-511.

Geust, D. (1987). ‘Human resource management and industrial relations’, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 5, pp. 503-521.

Guimaraes, T. (1997). Assessing employee turnover intentions before/after TQM, *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 46-63.

Gutteridge, T.G., Leibowitz, Z.B. and Shore, J.E. (1993). *Organizational career development*, Jossey Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Guzzo, R. A. and Shea, G.P. (1992). *Group performance and intergroup relations in organizations*, Dunnette, M. D., Hough, L. M., Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Vol. 3, Consulting Psychologists Press, Palo Alto, CA, pp. 269- 313.

Hamel, G. and Prahalad, C.K. (1994). *Competing for the future,* Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.

Hammer, M. and Champy, C. (1993a). *Re-engineering the corporation: a manifesto for business revolution*, Harper & Row, New York.

Hammer, M. and Champy, J. (1993b). *Re-engineering the corporation: a manifesto for business revolution*, Nicholas Brealey, London.

Hammer, M. and Champy, J. (1993c). Re-engineering the corporation, *Insights Quarterly*, Summer, pp. 3-9.

Hand, M. (1992). Total quality management – one God but many prophets, in Hand, M. (Ed.), *Quality Management Handbook*, Butterworth-Heinemann, pp. 26-40.

Harrison, R. (1997). *Employee development,* Chartered institute of personnel and development, London.

Hirschman, E.C. (1986). Humanistic inquiry in marketing research: philosophy, method, and criteria, *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 23, pp. 237-249.

Holt, D.T., Self, D.R., Thal, A.E. (Jr) and Lo, S.W. (2003). Facilitating organizational change: a test of leadership strategies, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 5, pp. 262-272.

Horwitz, F.M. (1991). Teamwork and flexibility: problems and challenges in South Africa, *Superteams Seminar*, Johannesburg.

Hovemeyer, V.A. (1993). How effective is your team?, *Training and Development*, September, p. 68.

Howe, R., Gaeddert, D. and Howe, M. (1993). *Quality on trail,* McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

Huszczo, G. (1996). *Tools for team excellence,* Davies-Black Publishing, Palo Alto, CA.

Huszczo, G.E. and Hoffman, D. (1999). Reasons for and against the use of the team concept in joint settings, *Team Performance Management*, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 4-15.

Imai, M. (1986). *Kaizen, the key to Japan's competitive success*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

Irani, Z. and Sharp, J. (1997). Integrating continuous improvement and innovation into a corporate culture: a case study. *Technovation*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 199- 206.

Ishikawa, K. (1985). *What is total quality control? – the Japanese Way,* Prentice-Hall, London.

Johnson, D. and Johnson F. (1991). *Joining together: group theory and groupsSkills*, Prentice-Hall, London.

Johnson, R. (1996). Effective team building, *HR Focus*, April, p. 18.

Jones, S. (1985). *Depth interviewing in applied qualitative research*, in Walker, R. (Ed.), Aldershot, Gower, pp. 45-55.

Judson, A. (1991). *Changing behaviour in organisations: minimizing resistance to change,* Basil Blackwell, Cambridge, MA.

Junkers, B.H. (1960). *Fieldwork: an introduction to the social sciences*, Chicago University, IL.

Kamoche, K. (1996). Strategic human resource management within a resource-capability view of the firm, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 213-233.

Katzenbach, J. and Smith, D. (1993). *The wisdom of teams: creating the high-performance organization*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

Keenoy, T. (1990). HRM: a case of the wolf in sheep's clothing?, *Personnel Review*, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 3-9.

Kets de Vries, M. (1999). High-performance teams: lessons from the Pygmies, *Organizational Dynamics*, Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 66-77.

Kirk, P. and Broussine, M. (2000). The politics of facilitation, *Journal of Workplace Learning: Employee Counselling Today*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 18-22.

Kochan, T. and Osterman, P. (1994). *The mutual gains enterprise,* Harvard Business School Press, Cambridge, MA.

Korukonda, A.R. (1998). Management of quality *vis-à-vis* quality of management in the Asia-Pacific region: a conceptual analysis, *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, Vol. 15, No. 8/9, pp. 892-906.

Kotter, J.P. (1995). Leading change: why transformation efforts fail, *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 73, pp. 59-67.

Kur, E. (1996). The faces model of high performing team development, *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 32-41.

Lacey, C. (1976). Problems of sociological fieldwork: a review of the methodology of “hightown grammar”, in Shipman, M. (Ed.), *The organization and impact of social research*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Lau, R.S.M. and Anderson, C.A. (1998). A three-dimensional perspective of total quality management, *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 85-98.

Lawler, E., Ledford, G. and Mohrman, S. (1997). *Employee involvement in America: a study of contemporary practice*, American Productivity Center, Houston, TX.

Lawrence, P.R. and Lorsch, J.W. (1967). *Organization and environment: managing differentiation and integration*, Graduate School of Business, Harvard University, Boston.

LeCompte, M. and Goetz, J. (1982). Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research, *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 52, No. 1, pp. 30-60.

Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E. (2001). *Practical research: planning and design,* 7th edition, Upper Saddle River: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics: concept, method, and reality in social science – social equilibria and social change, *Human Relations*, Vol. 1, pp. 3-41.

Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*, Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

Lowe, J. (1993). Manufacturing reform and the changing role of the production supervisor: the case of the automobile industry, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 5, pp. 739-758.

Lynch, R.F. and Werner, T.J. (1994). A league of their own, *Small Business Reports*, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 35-42.

Mabey, C. and Salaman, G. (1999). *Strategic human resource management*, Blackwell, London.

MacNeil, C.M. (2001). The supervisor as a facilitator of informal learning in work teams, *Journal of Workplace Learning*, Vol. 13, No. 6, pp. 246-253.

MacNeil, C.M. (2003). The line manager as a facilitator of team learning and change, in Lee, M. (Ed.), *HRD in a Complex World*, Routledge, London, pp. 218-230.

MacNeil, C.M. (2004). Exploring the supervisor role as a facilitator of knowledge sharing in teams, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 93-102.

Macy, B.A. and Izumi, H. (1993). Organizational change, design and work innovation: a meta-analysis of 131 North American field studies: 1961–1991, in *Research in Organizational Change and Design*, Vol. 7, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT.

Manz, C.C. and Sims, H.P. (1987). Leading workers to lead themselves: the external leadership of self- managed work teams, *Administrative Science Quaterly*, Vol. 32, pp. 106- 128.

Manz, C.C. and Sims, H. P. Jr. (1995). Business without Bosses: How Self-managing Teams are building high- performance companies. New York, Wiley.

Marshall, R. (1987). *Unheard Voices: Labour and Economic Policy in a Competitive World*, Basic Books, New York, NY.

Marshall, C. and Rossman, G.B. (1989). *Designing qualitative research*, Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

McCabe, D. and Black, J. (1997). Something's gotta give: trade unions and the road to team working, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 110-127.

McGill, M.E., Slocum, J.W. Jr and Lei, D. (1992). Management practices in learning organisations: adaptive and generative styles of organisational learning, *Organisational Dynamics*, Summer, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 37-57.

McHugh, M., O'Brian, G.A. and Ramondt, J. (1999). Organizational metamorphosis led by front line staff, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 21, No. 6, pp. 556-576.

McKinlay, A. and Taylor, P. (1996). Power, surveillance and resistance: inside the "factory of the future", in Ackers, P. *et al.* (Eds), The *New Workplace and Trade Unionism,* Routledge, London.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis: a sourcebook of new methods*, Sage, California.

Miles, M. and Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded sourcebook,* Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

Mink, O., Owen, K.Q. and Mink, B. (1993). *Developing high performance people: the art of coaching*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.

Mintzberg, H. (1979). An emergency strategy of "direct" research, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 24, pp. 582-589.

Mitchell, V.W. (1993). Industrial in-depth interviews: some considerations for first-time users, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 25-29.

Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of organisations*, Sage, London.

Mouton, J. and Marais H.C. (1994). *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences*, HSRC Publishers, Pretoria.

Mueller, F. and Kamoche, K (2000). The implications of the appropriability perspective for human resource management, *Comportamento Organizacional e Gestao*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 227-249.

Muhleman, A., Oakland, J., and Loycker, K. (1992). Production and Operations Management, 6th ed., Pitman, London.

Mumford, A. (1997). *Management development strategies for action,* CIPD, London.

Nisbet, J.D. (1977). Small-scale research: guidelines and suggestions for development, *Scottish Educational Studies*, Vol. 9, pp. 13-17.

Nonaka, I. and Takeuchi, H. (1995). *The knowledge-creating company: how Japanese companies create the dynamics of innovation*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Nurmi, R. (1996). Teamwork and team leadership, *Team Performance Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 9-13.

Nutt, P.C. (1986). Tactics of implementation. *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 230- 261.

Oakland, J.S. (1989). *Total quality management: The Route to Improving Performance,* Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.

Oakland, J.S. (1993). *Total quality management: The Route to Improving Performance*, 2nd ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.

Parkhe, A. (1993). “Messy” research, methodological prepositions, and theory development in international joint ventures, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 491-500.

Parry, I.J., Transheld, D., Smith, S., Foster, M. and Wilson, S. (1998). Reconfirming your organisation: a team work approach, *Team Performance Management*, Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 1-8.

Patterson, M.L. (1993). *Accelerating innovation,* Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.

Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods,* Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

Paulsen, K. (1994). Total employee involvement – why are you waiting?, *Industrial Engineering*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 16-18.

Perakyla, A. (1997). Reliability and validity in research based on tapes and transcripts, in Silverman, D. (Ed.), *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, Sage, London.

Perry, C. (2001). Case research in marketing, *The Marketing Review*, Vol. 1, pp. 303-323.

Perry, C. and Coote, L. (1994). Process of a case study research methodology: tool for management development?, *National Conference of the Australian–New Zealand Association of Management*, Wellington, pp. 1-22.

Peters, T. and Waterman, R. (1982). *In search of excellence: lessons from America' s best-run companies*, Harper & Row, New York, NY.

Pettigrew, A.M. (1985). Contextualist research: a natural way to link theory and practice, in Lawler, E.E. (Ed.), *Doing Research That is Useful in Theory and Practice*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 222-248.

Pollert, A. (1996). Teamwork on the assembly line: contradiction and the dynamics of union resilience, in Ackers, P. *et al.* (Eds), *The New Workplace and Trade Unionism*, Routledge, London.

Procter, S. and Ackroyd, S. (1998). Against Japanization: understanding the reorganization of British manufacturing, *Employee Relations*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 237-247.

Pycraft, M., Singh, H., Phihlela, K., Slack, N., Chambers, S., Harland, C., Harrison, A. and Johnston, R. (2001). *Operations management,* South African Edition, Pearson Education, South Africa.

Quick, T.L. (1992). *Successful team building,* Worksheet Series, Amacom.

Ray, D.W. (1994). The missing "T" in TQM… trust, *Journal of Quality & Participation*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 64-67.

Riege, A.M. (2003). 'Validity and reliability tests in case study research: a literature review with "hands-on" applications for each research phase', *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 75-86.

Robbins, H. and Finley, M. (1996). *Why teams don' t work: what went wrong and how to make it right*, Orion Publishing Group.

Rose, D., Marshall, G., Newby, H. and Vogler, C. (1987). Goodbye to supervisors, *Work, Employment & Society*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 7-24.

Scarnati, J.T. (1999). Beyond technical competence: the art of leadership, *Career Development International*, Vol. 4, pp. 325-335.

Schatzman, L. and Strauss, A. (1973). *Field research,* Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Scholtes, P., Joiner, B., and Streibel, B. (1996). *The team handbook.*

Schendel, D. (1996). Introduction to the Winter 1992 Special Issue: fundamental themes in strategy process research, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 13, pp. 1-3.

Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline: the art and practice of the learning organization*, Random House, London.

Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. and Smith, B. (1994). *The fifth discipline fieldbook: strategies and tools for building a learning organization*, Nicholas Brealey, London.

Shaiken, H., Lopez, S. and Mankita, I. (1997). Two routes to team production: Saturn and Chrysler compared, *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 17-45.

Sharp, J., Hides, M., Bamber, C. and Castka, P. (2000). Continuous organisational learning through the development of high performance teams, *Proceedings of International Conference on Systems Thinking in Management*, Geelong.

Sheenan, M. and Kearns, D. (1996). Using Kolb, implementation, and evaluation of facilitation skills, *Industrial and Commercial Training*, Vol. 27, No. 6, pp. 8-14.

Sims, H. P. Jr. and Manz, C.C. (1996). *Company of Heroes: Unleashing the Power of Self- Leadership*. New York, Wiley.

Sisson, K. (1993). In search of HRM, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 201-210.

Smith, A.C. and Greeb, F.B. (1993). Managing employees as if they were volunteers, *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 3, pp. 42-46.

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research,* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Stenbacka, C. (2001). Qualitative research requires quality concepts of its own, *Management Decisions*, Vol. 39, No. 7, pp. 551-555.

Stewart, G.B. and Manz, C.C (1995). Leadership for self-managing work teams: a typology and integrative model, *Human Relations*, Vol. 48, pp. 747-70.

Storey, J. (1992). *Developments in the management of human resources,* Blackwell, Oxford.

Storey, J., Bacon, N., Edmonds, J. and Wyatt, P. (1993). The “new agenda” and human resource management: a round-table discussion with John Edmonds, *Human Resource Management Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 63-70.

Stott, K. and Walker, A. (1995). *Teams, teamwork & teambuilding,* Prentice- Hall, London.

Strauss, A.L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*, Cambridge University Press.

Sweeney, A.J. and Allen, D.M. (1984). Teams which excel, *Research Management*, Vol. 1, pp. 19-22.

Tannenbaum, D.I., Salas, E. and Cannon- Bowers, J.A. (1996). Promoting team effectiveness, in West, M.A. (Ed.), *Handbook of Work Group Psychology*, Wiley, Chichester.

Thompson, C. (2001). Time for employers and workers to pull together, *Business Day*, 10 December 2001, p. 7.

Tomasko, R.M. (1978). *Downsizing: reshaping the organization for the future*, Amacom, New York.

Truth and reconciliation commission. (1998). Institutional Hearing: Business and Labour, Chapter 2 in *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Volume 4*, CPT Books, Cape Town.

Venter, G.D. (1994). *Successfully applying first world productivity techniques in a third world labour environment*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Vinten, G. (1994). Participant observation: a model for organizational investigation?, *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 30-38.

Watson, T.J. (1994). Managing, crafting and researching: words, skill and imagination in shaping management research, *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 5, Special Issue, June, pp. 77-87.

Wellins, R.S. (1992). Building a self-directed work team, *Training & Development*, Vol. 46, No. 12, pp. 24-28.

Wickens, P. (1993). Lean production and beyond: the system, its critics and the future, *Human Resource Management Journal*, Vol. 3, No 4, pp. 75-90.

Weick, K. (1979). *The Social Psychology of Organisations*, 1st ed., Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.

Williams, R. (1995). *Self-directed work teams: A Competitive Advantage*, www.qualitydigest.com/nov95/html/self-dir.html.

Wooldridge, B. and Floyd, S. (1990). The strategy process, middle management involvement, and organisational performance, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 8, pp. 231-241.

Yin, R.K. (1989). *Case study research*, Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

Yin, R.K (1989). *Case study research – Design and Methods*, Applied Social Research Method Series 5, Sage, London.

Yin, R.K (1994). *Case study research – Design and Methods*, Applied Social Research Method Series 5, Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

Zairi, M. (1994). *Measuring performance for business results*, Chapman & Hall, London.

Zucchi, F. and Edwards, J.S. (2000). How similar are human resource management practices in re-engineered organisations?, *Business Process Management Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 214-223.

Appendix A: Interview schedule and list of probe questions

Interview schedule

Personal info

Date:

Name:

Age:

Race:

Education level:

Union association:

Employment history

Current Position:

Number of subordinates:

Period in current position:

Employment duration:

The following list of probe questions was based on the literature review:

1 Role of the interviewee: The interviewee will be asked to tell the story of their participation or that of a supervisor (where not a supervisor themselves) in the teamwork initiative roll out as well as how they perceive the execution of the role out process

Based on the literature review, the researcher will try to encourage the interviewee to elaborate on perceived barriers and enabling factors should these issues not emerge during the discussion.

2 Supervisor Roles:

Changing role of the supervisor: Please explain in what way the role of the supervisor is changing as a result of teamwork?

Barriers and enabling factors

3 Implementation difficulties:

What in your opinion are the barriers and enabling factors to the implementation of teamwork at CML?

Barriers encountered by supervisors

3.1.1a Senior management commitment and intention:

Supervisors' complaint about lack of feedback – burning issues? (KEY)

Why this lack of feedback?

What role does middle management play?

3.1.1b Need for teamwork at CML

What do you belief is the need for T/W

Do you feel that employees are fully aware of the reason for T/W

Do you feel that employees see a hidden agenda in T/W

If yes, why would they? (Communication)

3.2 Shared vision, goals and objectives:

Strategy

Do you think supervisors understand the purpose and strategy

If no, why? (Complex)

3.3 Timing:

Please elaborate on the appropriateness with regards to implementation timing at CML?

3.4 Empowerment and Participative decision-making:

Do you feel supervisors are empowered?

If not, why not?

Do you feel management operate at the correct levels?

If not, why not

What are the implications of this for T/W and supervisors?

3.5 Pre-conditioning:

Do you feel that sufficient effort and time has been spent on preparing supervisors to facilitate T/W?

Why do management always rush things?

Do you feel we have communicated sufficiently regarding T/W?

In not, why do management not communicate effectively?

3.6 Institutional barriers:

To what extent is company history, culture and structure influence the implementation and sustainability of teamwork?

Why do you think was a readiness survey at CML not conducted?

Structure and policies. What would you have changed regarding policies (transport etc)

Why do you think this was not done?

3.7 Measures and reward systems:

Please comment on the appropriateness of current measures

Does it drive correct behaviour?

Please comment on the appropriateness of rewards

Does it reward correct behaviour?

Why the expectancy for a reward?

How do you manage this expectation?

3.8 Team Development:

Do you feel that teams were developed correctly, what should be different if any

Contractors – issue with commitment?

How do you treat contractors on your team?

3.9 Industrial Climate:

Please elaborate on the industrial climate and how the current situation will influence the implementation process?

Do you feel that trust is limited between employees and management?

Why do you feel that unions do not commit to t/w?

Barriers presented by supervisors

3.10 Barriers as presented by supervisors:

What barriers to teamwork in your opinion do supervisors present?

3.10.1 Traditional selection process:

Do you feel that supervisors have the correct skill set?

If no, why do you think this is the case (Selection processes)?

What is the correct skill set (Technical and soft)

Does this have anything to do with the perceived lack of trust between supervisors and employees?

3.10.2 Supervisor's skills and development:

Do you feel that supervisor training and development policies are adequate to prepare future supervisors – specifically with regards to teamwork?

Why do you think this is the case?

Have we addressed this issue now with teamwork roll out?

3.10.3 reluctance to change

Issue of trust between supervisors and subordinates – why is there a lack of trust? (People management skills/reluctance to change)

Do you think race and maturity play a role regarding the relationship between supervisor and subordinate?

People management skills – is that important

3.10.4 Room for learning – fear of making mistakes:

Will teamwork in your opinion allow for learning through mistakes?

If no, why not?

3.10.5 Additional workload:

In your opinion will teamwork increase the workload of the supervisor?

If yes, why?

Thank participant for cooperation

Appendix B: Presentation of research matrix and coding process

Appendix C: Flow chart of key themes and barriers