

# **Assessing the influence of organisational culture on the availability of inventory and on-time delivery**

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## NWU SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND GOVERNANCE

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## **ABSTRACT**

Technical issues and advancements have always been a key focus area in the manufacturing industry, with soft issues often ignored. Metrics such as on-time delivery, inventory performance, and first-pass-yield are easy to measure and are typical key performance indicators for the industry. Due to the significant focus to improve these efficiency KPI's, more delicate issues such as the organisational culture are often overlooked.

The manufacturing company where the study was conducted is experiencing issues in achieving the required stock holding quantities and on-time delivery to its customers. It was established that the organisation has the necessary systems to manage both inventory and OTD to its customer successfully. Therefore, the study aimed to identify the relationship between organizational culture and its impact on the on-time delivery of manufactured components and inventory targets.

For this study, the sampling frame was the selected general and precision manufacturing/engineering firm. The sample population comprised of employees from all company levels. Interviews were conducted with participants in a focus group format, with each focus group consisting of three or four participants. The techniques used to evaluate the data from the interviews were empirical discourse and relational analysis. These techniques were applied to identify a broader theme in terms of the organizational culture and identify meaningful relationships between the different concepts. The software utilised to determine the relationships is Atlas.ti.

The findings pointed to a predominantly negative culture that is present in the organisation, caused by an autocratic management style and a neglected human resource management department. It was concluded that the necessary systems are in place to achieve inventory and OTD targets. However, the middle-management team has, over time, created a negative culture through their management style and mannerisms leading to reduced inventory and OTD performance. A further contributor to the negative culture is the lack of HR policies and procedures to promote evaluation, feedback, and training for promising employees.

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## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Table 1: Definition of key terms

| Phrase                         | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Artefacts (4.2.1)              | Visible behaviours and products within an organization                                                                                                                                     |
| Competitive advantage          | The leverage that an organization gains over its competitors through a particular characteristic or product.                                                                               |
| Organizational climate (2)     | A shared summary perspective within an organization when considering policies, procedure, expectations, rewards, and support structures                                                    |
| Organizational culture (2)     | The set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that members of an organization hold and that determines how they perceive, think about, and react to their various environments |
| Sociability (4.2.2)            | Friendliness or relations among individuals who are friends                                                                                                                                |
| Study population (3.2.1)       | The population from which sample is to be drawn                                                                                                                                            |
| Total Quality Management (2)   | A culture that is created at all levels within an organization that strives for continuous improvement                                                                                     |
| Underlying assumptions (4.2.1) | This represents the unconscious and inherent level of culture in organizations and is the organizationally accepted way of perceiving the environment in which it operates                 |

## ABBREVIATIONS

Table 2: Abbreviations used in this document

| Abbreviation | Meaning                        |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| DIFOT        | Delivery In Full On-Time       |
| DPPM         | Defective Parts Per Million    |
| EOQ          | Economic Order Quantity        |
| FG           | Finished Goods                 |
| FPY          | First Pass Yield               |
| HR           | Human Resource                 |
| KPI          | Key Performance Indicator      |
| MRP          | Materials Requirement Planning |
| OTD          | On-Time Delivery               |
| OTIF         | On-Time In Full                |
| OTSR         | Off Tool Sample Report         |
| RM           | Raw Material                   |
| ROP          | Reorder Point                  |
| TQM          | Total Quality Management       |

# **ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON THE AVAILABILITY OF INVENTORY AND ON-TIME DELIVERY**

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Technical issues and advancements have always been a key focus area in the manufacturing industry, with soft issues often ignored. Organizational culture is but one of these delicate issues that can provide organizations with a lasting competitive advantage on various fronts (Nahm *et al.*, 2004:579).

### **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CORE RESEARCH QUESTION**

According to Welman *et al.* (2012:13), to define a problem appropriately, the researcher must be sure of what the problem is. This can be achieved by answering two questions:

- What is the problem?
- What is the most appropriate way to solve the problem?

Furthermore, an express relationship must exist between two or more variables, and the research problem must be unambiguous. The research problem must, therefore, be in terms that are as specific as possible.

The problem investigated during this study, is the culture present in a particular manufacturing company and the resultant impact on the achievement of inventory targets and on-time delivery to customers. Most researchers agree that organizational culture impacts process efficiencies, including inventory management. A positive consequence of addressing this issue will be an improved return on investment and increased organisational efficiency, which contrasts with a business loss if this problem persists.

For this study, a general or broad research question would be: Why is the productivity or final product inventory within a specific company down?

The research question was evolved by making the problem specific to an industry, referring to a particular type of measurable output, and referring to a particular variable.

The core research question now reads: To what extent does the organizational culture impact stock items' availability and on-time delivery of made-to-order goods within a specific precision manufacturing company?

### **1.3 Specific research questions**

The specific research questions for this study are:

- What is the organizational culture of the company in question?
- To what extent is inventory management applied?
- How does supply chain effectiveness impact the ability to keep optimal inventory levels and deliver goods on time?
- In what manner is on-time delivery and availability of stock goods related to one another?
- To what extent do the organizational culture impact stock items' availability and the on-time delivery of made-to-order goods?

### **1.4 Importance and benefits of the study**

The study aimed to identify the relationship between organisational culture and its impact on the on-time delivery of manufactured components and stock holding targets. Throughout the literature review, no research was found that directly addressed this issue, emphasising the need for a study in this field. The study will also be of practical value for the organisation where the research was conducted, as a failure to remedy the issue can lead to significant business loss. In contrast, successful completion of the study and implementation of recommendations can lead to a greater return on investment.

### **1.5 Delimitations (Scope)**

The study focussed on establishing a connection between organisational culture and the inventory and on-time delivery performance of a single organization within the manufacturing industry. The specific delimitations for the study were the following:

- The study was confined to a single organisation due to time and resource constraints
- Variations in the culture over time was not considered – a longitudinal study was not practical due to time constraints

- The financial performance of the organization was not considered
- Total quality management performance was not considered, even though elements thereof will have an impact on the study

## **1.6 Assumptions**

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions were made:

- Participants in the study truthfully answered all interview questions and were not influenced by other employees or participants;
- Participants were not taking part in the study for any other motive than assisting the researcher in achieving a comprehensive view of the culture in the organization;
- Other moderating variables impacting inventory management and on-time delivery did not affect the relationship between culture and inventory management during the study.

## **1.7 Introduction summary**

The organisational culture in an organisation is often disregarded, even though a positive organisational culture can deliver a lasting competitive advantage. The study aimed to determine the relationship between organisational culture and the effect thereof on on-time delivery and inventory performance in a general manufacturing firm.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Organisational culture and climate overview

According to Schneider *et al.* (2017:468), the study of organisations' climate and culture can be traced back to Gestalt psychology, social anthropology, and organisational theory. The culture within organisations is, therefore, a multi-disciplinary concept. Firstly, it is essential to understand the difference between organisational climate and organisational culture.

Organisational climate is a shared summary perspective within an organization when considering policies, procedures, expectations, rewards, and support structures. The climate is, therefore, a representation of how it feels to work at a specific organization. Paterson *et al.* (cited by Woods & West, 2015:469) developed the Organisational Climate Measure to measure the overall climate. This model is partly based on the Competing Values Model, represented in Figure 1.

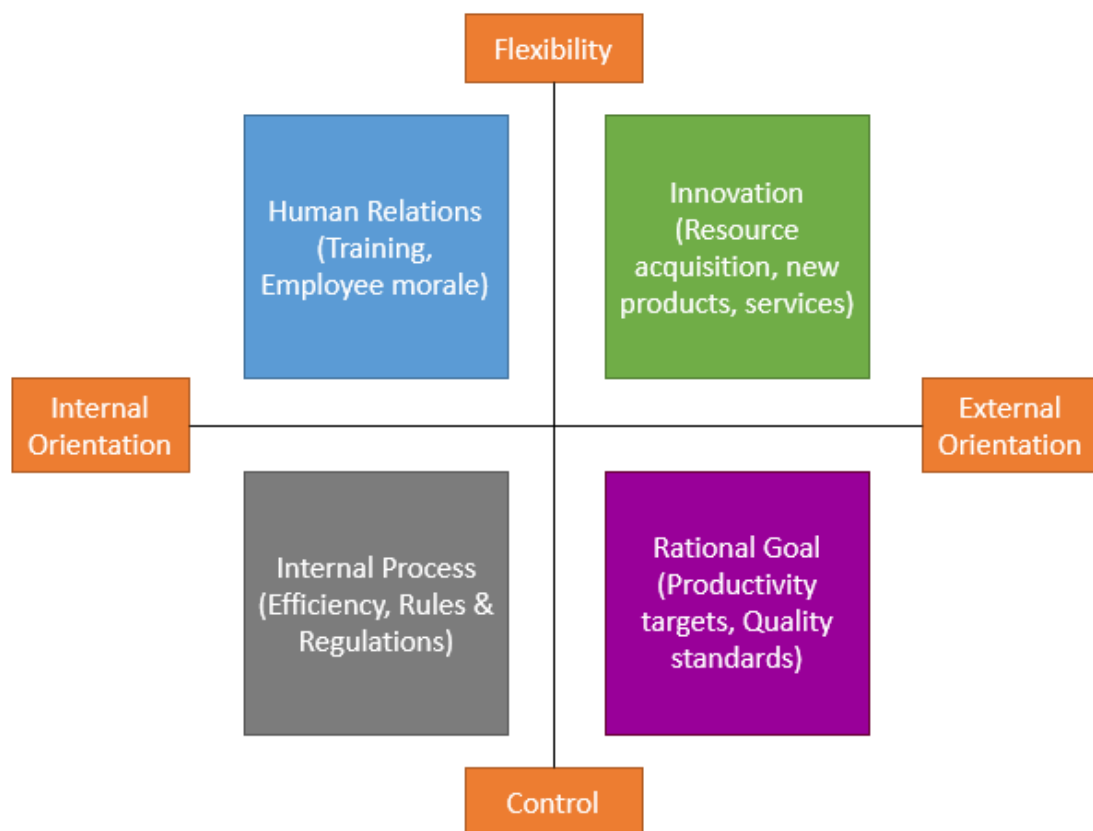


Figure 1: The Organizational Climate Measure

Organisational culture is defined by Schein (cited by Woods & West, 2015:461) as "the set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that members of an organization hold and that determines how they perceive, think about, and react to their various environments." Schneider *et al.* (2017:468) describe organizational culture as the shared values and assumptions that explain why organizations function in a specific way and why they have a particular focus area. Organisational culture exists at a primary, almost subconscious level and is shaped by the organisations' history and traditions.

## **2.2 Organizational culture, inventory, and operational performance**

### **2.2.1 Organisational culture**

According to Naor *et al.* (2014:322), the principal approach to determining the manufacturing environment's effectiveness is through results related to cost, quality, delivery, and flexibility. All four of these measurement factors can be attributed to an organisation's culture and is supported by Kotter & Heskett (cited by Naor *et al.*, 2014:321), who established that organisations that are perceived to have strong organisational cultures do have a greater return on investment in general. Schonberger (cited by Naor *et al.*, 2014:321) concluded that an organisation's culture could be a competitive advantage.

### **2.2.2 Inventory**

Baird *et al.* (2011) state that effective inventory management is crucial to organizations that need to determine their inventory needs to supply their customers on time. It is further concluded that organisations that employ a culture of supplier quality management and process management showed improved inventory management performance. This is in line with total quality management (TQM) and Deming's fourteen points on implementing quality improvement within organizations (Heizer *et al.*, 2017:258).

According to Heizer *et al.* (2017:528), "*The objective of inventory management is to strike a balance between inventory investment and customer service.*" It is further stated that organisations cannot achieve a low-cost strategy without good inventory management. Heizer *et al.* (2017:528) continuous to list the functions of inventory which is four-fold:

1. "*To provide a selection of goods for anticipated customer demand and to separate the firm from fluctuations in that demand.*"
2. "*To decouple various parts of the production process.*"

3. “To take advantage of quantity discounts.”
4. “To hedge against inflation and upwards price changes.”

Inventory can be separated into two broad categories, viz. independent and dependent demand (Sanders, 2013). Independent demand is classified as demand for a finished good, *i.e.* a bicycle, a computer, or a car. Contrary to this, dependent demand is a demand for components that form part of a larger assembly or subassembly, *i.e.* a tyre for a bicycle, a microchip for a computer, or a window for a car.

### **2.2.2.1 Economic Order Quantity (EOQ) Model**

Inventory costs can attribute up to 50% of a supply chain’s total cost (Jaber & Zolfagari, cited by Jawad *et al.*, 2015:69). Ford Whitman Harris presented the first modern EOQ-model in 1913 in *Factory, The Magazine of Management* (Erlenkotter, 1990:937). The model has been the foundation of many other inventory models in the literature due to its early adoption and basic mathematics (Jawad *et al.*, 2015:69). The EOQ-model is commonly used today, relatively easy to use, and based on the following assumptions (Heizer *et al.*, 2017:534):

1. Demand for an item or component is known, relatively constant, and not affected by the demand for other items.
2. The lead-time is known and constant.
3. The full order quantity arrives at once. Thus, the full order is completed with one batch delivery.
4. Discounts are not applied when ordering larger quantities.
5. Setup, ordering, and holding costs are the only variable costs.
6. Stock shortages can be totally avoided by placing an order at the correct time.

Making these assumptions, the economic order quantity can be formulated as:

$$Q^* = \sqrt{\frac{2DS}{H}}$$

Where,

- $Q^*$  is the optimum number or units per order (EOQ)
- $D$  is the annual demand for units of the inventory item
- $S$  is the setup or ordering costs for each order
- $H$  is the holding or carrying cost per unit per year

Subsequently, the graphical representation of the inventory profile overtime for the EOQ-model will present a sawtooth-shape as in Figure 2.

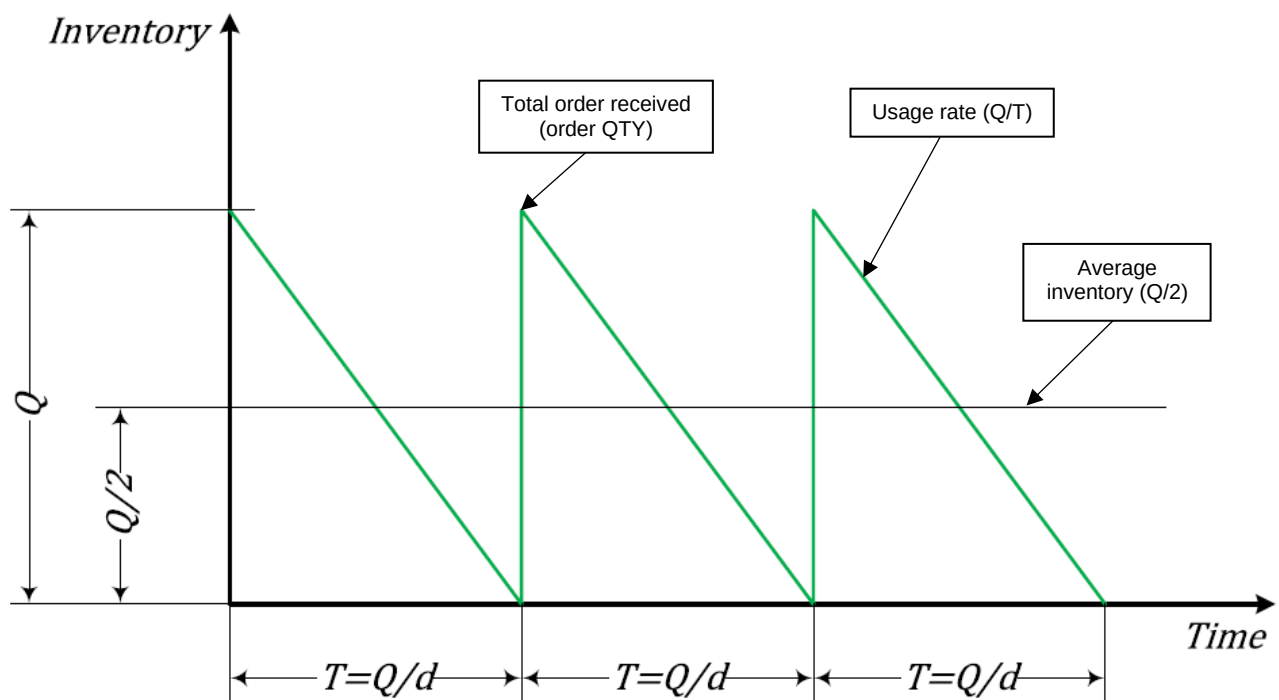


Figure 2: Inventory profile overtime for the EOQ-model (Jawad et al., 2015:69)

Ultimately, the objective of the majority of inventory models is to minimise cost. Considering the assumptions of the EOQ-model, the most substantial costs involved are setup and holding costs. Thus, if these two costs are minimised, then the total cost involved will also be minimised. The minimisation of the total cost is visualised in Figure 3. Here, the optimal order quantity is achieved at the point where the total cost is minimised.

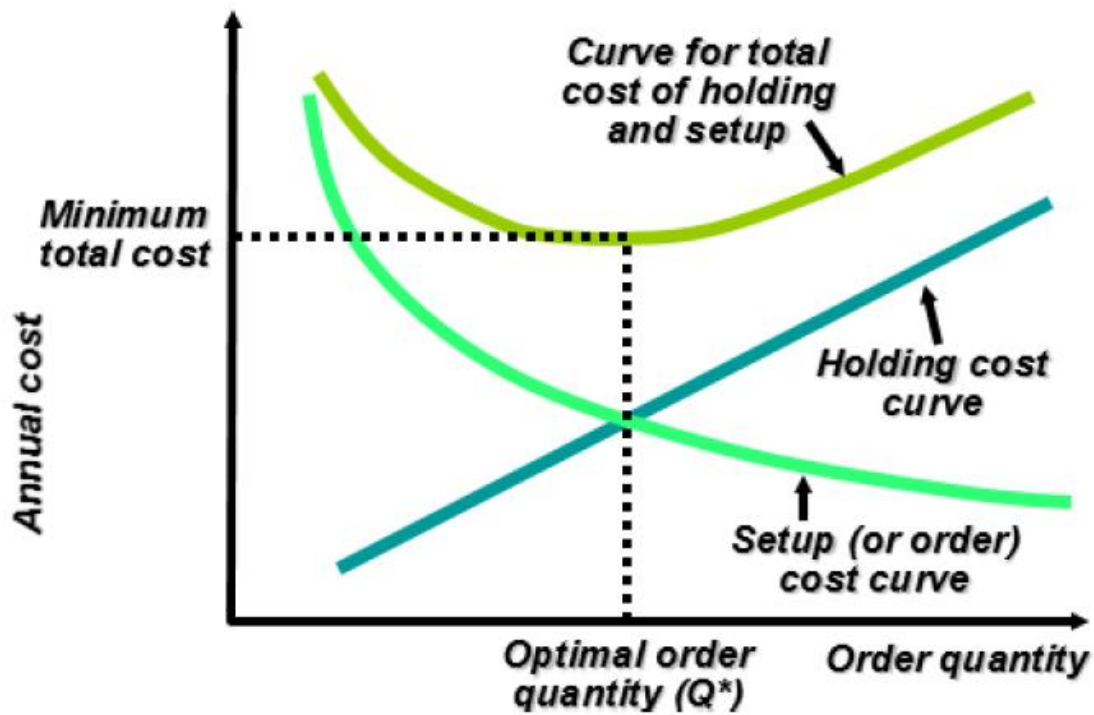


Figure 3: Optimal order quantity (Vaz & Mansori, 2017:26)

#### 2.2.2.2 Production Order Quantity Model

The production order quantity model assumes that the inventory is received over a period and not simultaneously as with the EOQ-model (Heizer *et al.*, 2017:540). This model can be applied under two circumstances, *viz.* when stock is received over a period following order placement and when components are produced and sold simultaneously. The model is visualised in Figure 4.

Making the same assumptions as for the EOQ-model, the production order quantity can be calculated as:

$$Q_p^* = \sqrt{\frac{2DS}{H[1 - (d/p)]}}$$

Where,

- $Q_p^*$  is the optimum production order quantity
- D is the annual demand for units of the inventory item

- S is the setup or ordering costs for each order
- H is the holding or carrying cost per unit per year
- p is the daily production rate
- d is the daily demand or usage rate

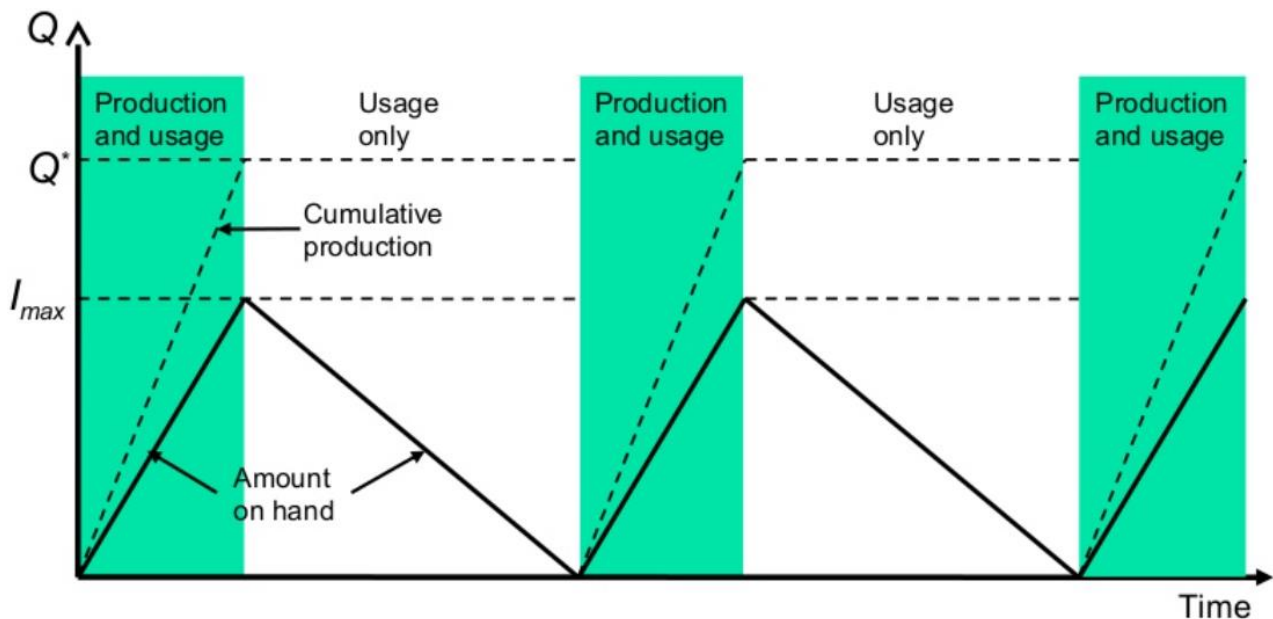


Figure 4: Production order quantity model - Inventory cycle

### 2.2.2.3 Quantity Discount Models

A quantity discount is, simply put, a reduced price for an item when purchased in larger quantities (Heizer *et al.*, 2015:543). Sellers often offer quantity discounts to motivate customers to buy in larger quantities (Liberto, 2021). The quantity discount model's objective is to minimise the total cost, as with the other inventory models. However, purchasing larger quantities at a reduced price can increase the total inventory cost due to increased holding cost. The formula for the quantity discount problem is the following:

$$Q^* = \sqrt{\frac{2DS}{IP}}$$

Where,

- Q is the quantity ordered

- D is the annual demand in units
- S is the setup or ordering costs
- P is the price per unit
- I is the holding cost per unit per year expressed as a percent of price P

#### **2.2.2.4 Probabilistic Models**

The previously discussed inventory models make the assumptions that demand is constant and sure over a specific period. However, the probabilistic inventory model is much better aligned to the manufacturing reality that demand will vary from time to time (Heizer *et al.*, 2015:546). The probabilistic model is, therefore, a practical adjustment to real-world demand and lead times.

#### **2.2.2.5 Fixed-Period Systems**

The fixed-period system entails that inventory is ordered at the end of a specific period (Heizer *et al.*, 2015:546). Contrary to fixed-quantity models, only the amount of stock required to bring the inventory levels up to a predetermined target is ordered (Figure 5). Further to this, fixed-quantity models require inventory to be monitored continuously, which is regarded as a perpetual inventory system. In fixed-period systems, inventory is only counted at the end of the specified period and then ordered based on the stock requirement. Fixed-period systems make similar assumptions as fixed-quantity systems:

- Only ordering and holding costs are considered
- Lead times are known and certain
- Inventory items are not dependent on one another

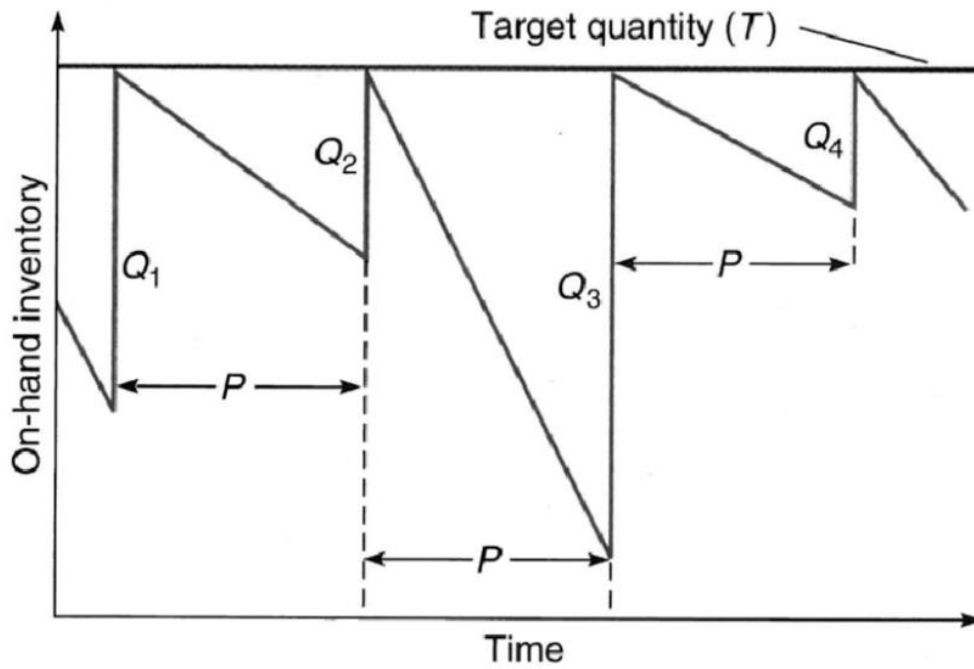


Figure 5: Fixed-period inventory system

### 2.2.3 On-time Delivery

On-time delivery (OTD) is a key metric to measure delivery performance and supply chain efficiency in an organisation. Thus, it is an indicator of how proficient an organisation is to meet customer demand compared to the promised or requested delivery date (Schmitt, 2017). In other terms, it is a measurement of the ability of a supplier to get the products to the customer, when they need them, and the quantity that was ordered (Phocas Software, 2021). The formula for OTD is simplified as:

$$OTD = \frac{\text{Order Deliveries}}{\text{Planned Order Deliveries}} * 100$$

Meeting OTD should be a priority for every business. According to the MHI Annual Industry Report (2020), four of the top six challenges facing organisations today pertains to higher customer expectations and faster delivery, viz. demand for lower cost, customer demands on response times, rising customer service expectations, and customer demands for customisation (Figure 6). The significance of OTD is supported by Davies *et al.* (2019), who states that the US food and retail industry loses approximately \$15 to \$20 billion due to stocked out items. This equates to roughly two to three percent of total sales in the industry.



**Figure 6: Top six company challenges (MHI Annual Industry Report, 2020)**

### **2.3 Literature review summary**

The manufacturing environment's effectiveness can be determined through results related to cost, quality, delivery, and flexibility. These four measurement factors can be attributed to an organisations culture. Organisations with a perceived strong organisational culture, typically have a greater return on investment and could therefore be a competitive advantage.

Effective inventory management is crucial to organizations that need to determine their inventory needs to supply their customers on time. Ultimately, the objective of inventory management is to find a balance between capital investment and customer service. On-time delivery is a key indicator or metric which measures an organisation's ability to deliver products to the customer on the required date and in the required quantity.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Description of overall research design

Figure 7 provides a summary of the overall research design. The research design is discussed in detail in the subsequent sections in this document.

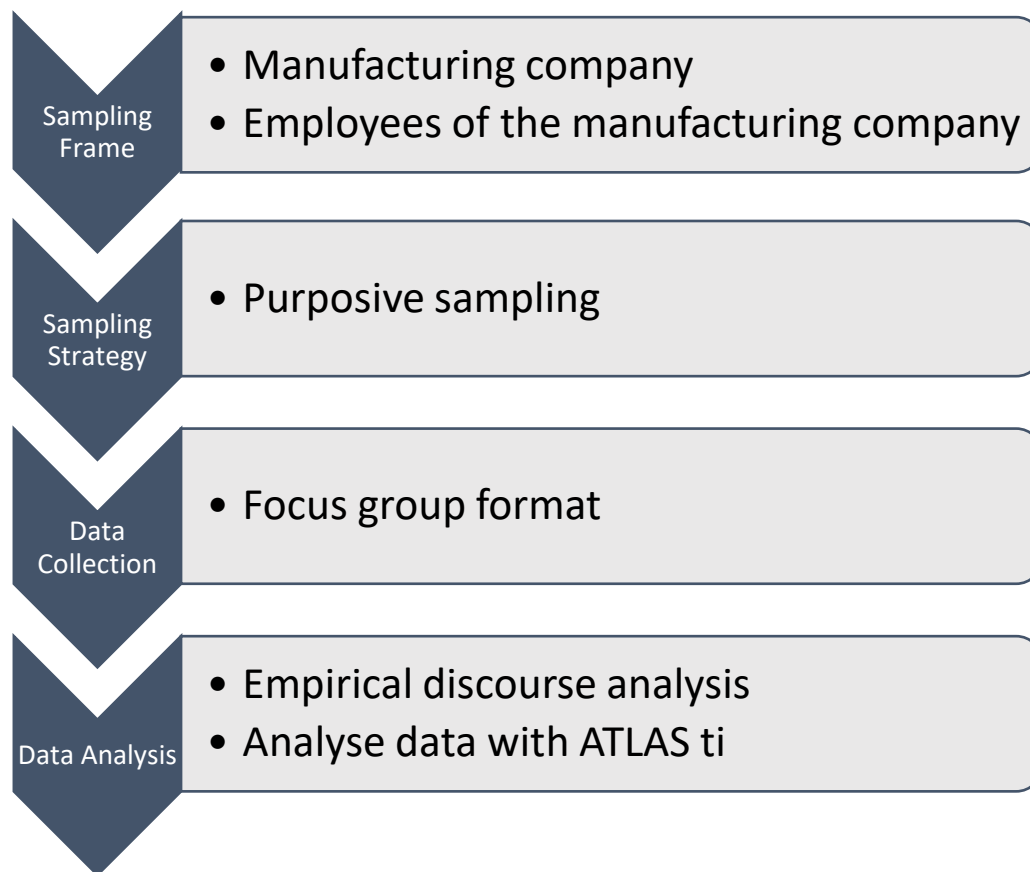


Figure 7: Research Design Overview

### 3.2 Population/Sampling

#### 3.2.1 Population/Sampling background

According to Explorable.com (2009), "*the study population is the population from which sample is to be drawn.*" In most cases, the population will be substantial and impractical to work with for researchers. A representative subset that is more manageable must, therefore, be drawn from the population. Cole (2018) further states that the most common analysis units are individuals, groups, social interactions, organisations and institutions, and social and cultural artefacts. It is also possible that multiple units of analysis are required for a research project.

Individuals are the most common unit of analysis, as sociologists look to understand the relationship between individuals and society. Information taken collectively from different individuals and their personal views and meanings can translate to specific patterns within a community or particular groups within the society.

Sociologists often study groups or different strata of individuals as a whole to reveal how social structure can influence the collective group based on gender, race, or class. Groups can be of different sizes and can be anything from whole generations of people, races, genders, couples, families, and even social groups.

Organisations are viewed more formally by sociologists and can include various forms, including but not limited to corporations, government departments, religious congregations, and judicial systems. Sociologists are typically interested in how a specific type of organisation operates, or the impact that it can have on social and economic life.

Before a sample can be pulled from the population for analysis, a sampling frame must be established (Welman et al., 2012:57). The sampling frame will consist of members from the sampling population, where each member forming part of the sampling frame is called a sampling unit. Ideally, the sampling frame will be the same as the population, but this often differs due to difficulty accessing information.

### **3.2.2 Sampling frame**

For this study, the sampling frame was the selected general and precision manufacturing/engineering firm. The sample population comprises employees from all company levels, including executives, management (administrative and operational), section leaders (operational), operators, cleaners, and administrative staff.

### **3.2.3 Sample size**

The sample size was initially between forty and fifty individuals, approaching 50% of the total population. However, interviews with focus groups only continued until saturation was reached. The sample will be from a single company in the general and precision manufacturing industry.

### **3.2.4 Sampling strategy**

According to Welman *et al.* (2012:56), sampling techniques can be divided into two separate groups, viz. probability samples and non-probability samples. With probability sampling, the

likelihood that any element is selected can be determined. Contrary to probability sampling, with non-probability sampling, the probability that any element be selected cannot be determined. These two high-level groups are further made up of different sampling techniques, as summarized in Table 3.

The strategy that was followed during this study is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique. The technique entailed that the researcher use his judgement in the selection of individuals from the population to form part of focus groups.

The primary objective of purposive sampling is to select a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population. Purposive sampling is a cost-effective strategy but can be unreliable and prone to bias. The researcher, therefore, aimed to select participants with dissimilar mentalities from all levels of the organisation.

**Table 3: Probability vs Non-probability sampling**

|                        |                                   | <b>When to use</b>                                                     | <b>Advantages</b>                                           | <b>Disadvantages</b>                                                 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PROBABILITY</b>     | <b>Simple random sampling</b>     | Similar population members                                             | The simplest form of random sampling                        | Low probability that it will not be representative of the population |
|                        | <b>Stratified random sampling</b> | A heterogeneous population that can be separated into different groups | Requires a small sample for a high degree of representation | Differential response rates may necessitate re-weighting             |
|                        | <b>Systematic sampling</b>        | Similar population members                                             | Suitable for all sizes of samples                           | Low relative cost                                                    |
|                        | <b>Cluster sampling</b>           | The population consists of units, not individuals                      | Quick there is access to information                        | Large sample required (Big Data)                                     |
| <b>NON-PROBABILITY</b> | <b>Accidental sampling</b>        | Explorative research                                                   | Most convenient sampling technique                          | Very low probability of representation                               |
|                        | <b>Quota sampling</b>             | Stratified sampling not possible, even though groups are present       | Control over sample contents                                | Moderately high costs                                                |
|                        | <b>Purposive sampling</b>         | Working with very small samples                                        | Researchers can focus their efforts                         | Cannot evaluate the extent of representation                         |
|                        | <b>Snowball sampling</b>          | With difficulties in identifying cases                                 | Can identify additional samples                             | Low probability of representation                                    |
|                        | <b>Self-selection sampling</b>    | For exploratory research                                               | Low relative cost                                           | Low probability of representation                                    |
|                        | <b>Convenience sampling</b>       | Little variation in population                                         | Low relative cost                                           | Prone to bias                                                        |

### 3.2.5 Location of the unit of analysis

At a general and precision manufacturing/engineering firm, located in the southern suburbs of the Witwatersrand.

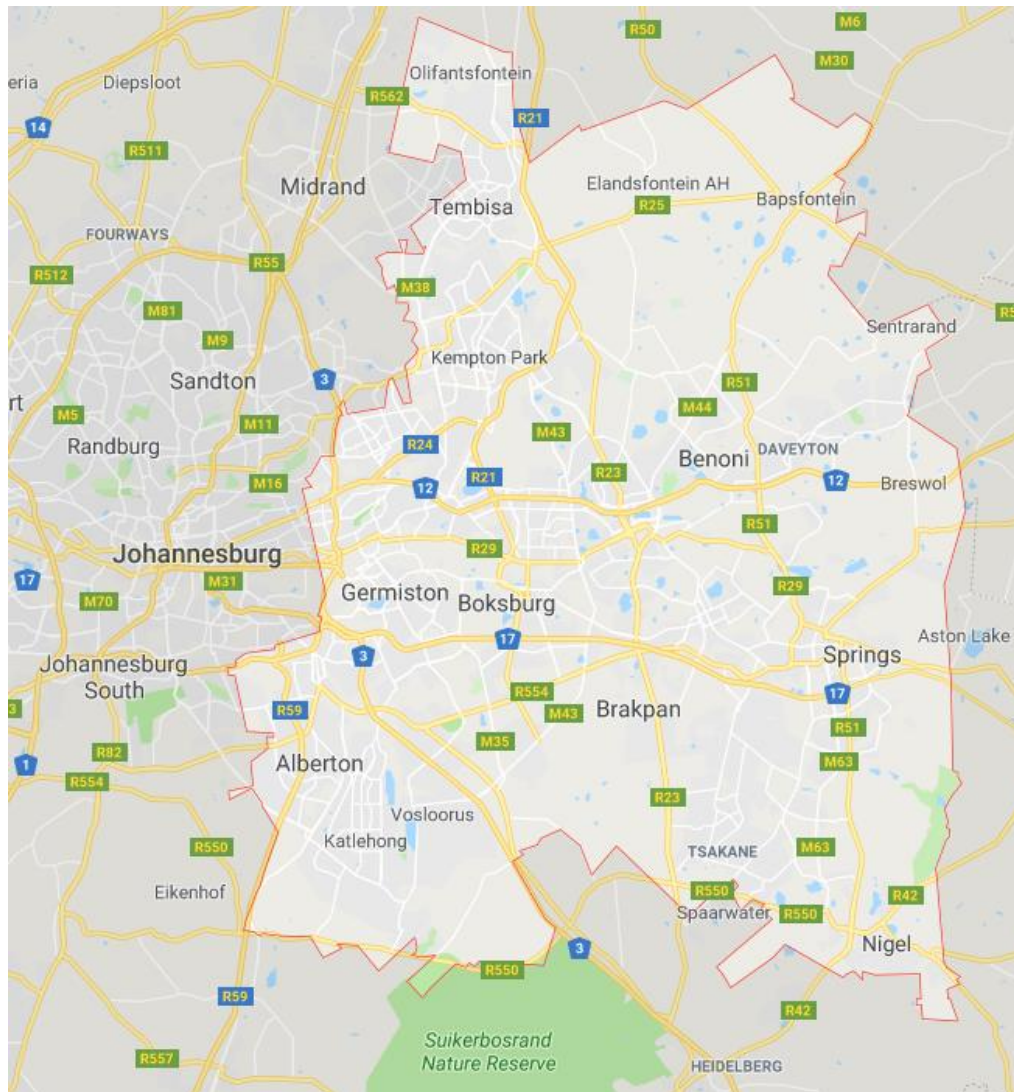


**Figure 8: Geographic location of the manufacturing firm**

There was a possibility that a secondary population could be approached. This secondary population would have been located in the East Rand area of Gauteng, which is a heavily industrialized area within South Africa. Due to time constraints of the study, the secondary population was never approached and included.

### **3.2.6 Access to unit of analysis**

No difficulty was experienced in gaining access to the unit of analysis, as the researcher is currently employed at the manufacturing company. The managing director of the company granted permission to include the organisation's employees in the sample population.

However, the culture of an organization is not discussed enthusiastically under normal circumstances. Therefore, it was required to build a relationship with the employees and gain their trust.

There is no power relation between the researcher and the participants, but the relevant line management granted permission to approach employees to take part in the study.

### **3.2.7 Suitability of unit of analysis**

This specific unit of analysis was the most suitable to answer the primary research questions due to the following reasons:

- The unit of analysis is easily accessible;
- The researcher had the opportunity to build a relationship with the individuals who formed the sample units. Therefore, the data gathered during interviews is a truthful reflection of the sample units' views and feelings;
- The majority of the sample units work at an operational level in the organization and directly reflect the organisational culture, even at the lowest level.

### 3.3 Data collection

#### 3.3.1 Nature of the data

The data that the researcher collected with this study was used to quantify the manufacturing firm's company culture and fell within different organisational culture dimensions. Open-ended questions were extracted based on information obtained from the Organisational Culture Profile (O'Reilly, C.A. *et al.*, 1991:516).

The main cultural themes targeted with the interview protocol are visualised in Figure 9.



**Figure 9: Organizational culture dimensions**

#### 3.3.2 Data collection process

Data collection was accomplished through focus group research. Focus group research is defined by Onwuegbusi (2010:711) "as a method of collecting data, in a safe environment, from more than one individual at a time, regarding a specified area of interrogation".

There are various advantages to collecting data through focus group research:

- Data can be collected faster in a group setting, and consequently at a lower cost to the researcher;
- Focus groups can extend the number of sample units;
- Social data can be collected in a social environment;
- Interaction between the participants can be identified;
- A feeling of a safer environment is created, which leads to increased participation from the interviewees.

Interviews were thus conducted with participants in a focus group format. The focus group had between three and four participants. A questionnaire was utilized to capture verbal feedback. However, non-verbal feedback was also documented and considered. An audio recording was captured, which was transcribed following the focus group session. Figure 10 visualise the steps in the data collection process. Sampling ceased once saturation was achieved.

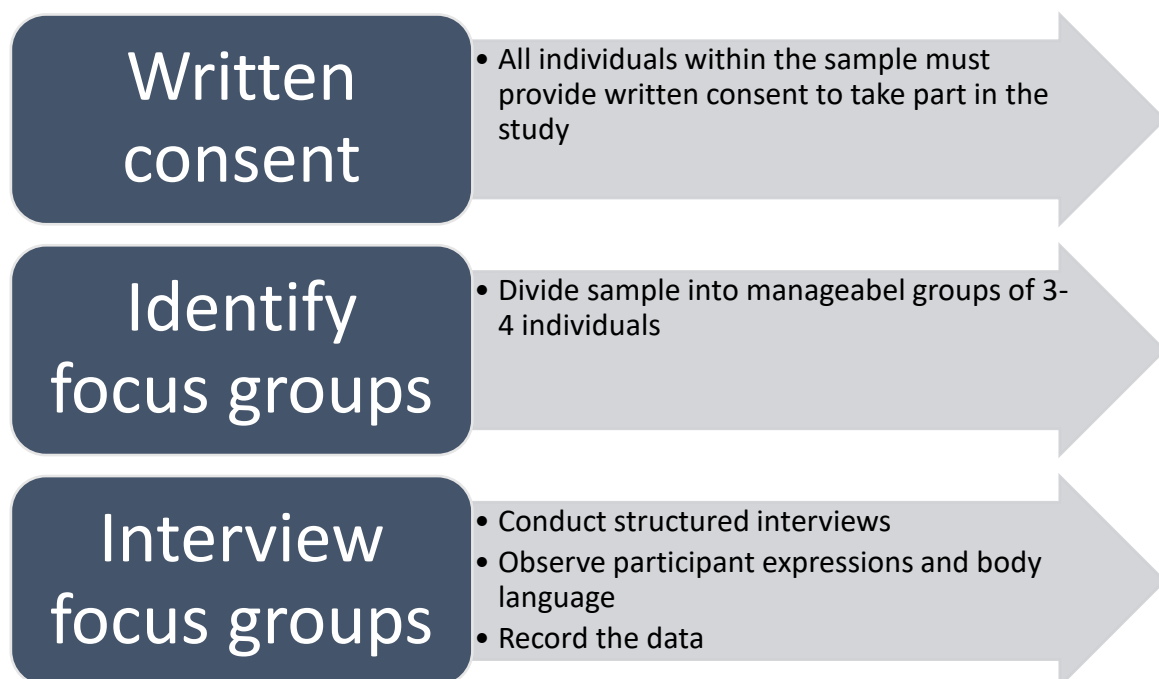


Figure 10: Data collection flow

### **3.4 Data analysis**

Medelyan (2020) states that coding of qualitative data will typically involve studying specific themes or patterns, the relationships between these patterns, and the conclusions that can be drawn by the study thereof.

There is no exact manner or generally accepted paradigm in which to analyse qualitative data. However, specific guidelines and principles must be adhered to, *viz.* the researcher must be systematic and coherent. Various analysis techniques can be used in the analysis of qualitative data. The following section will discuss the most frequently used techniques.

#### **3.4.1 Content analysis**

Content analysis is a research technique that analyses text by determining the presence of specific words. The words' presence is then used to determine the meaning and establish the relationship between the word or concepts. Conclusions can then be drawn about specific messages within the text, the audience and the culture.

#### **3.4.2 Discourse analysis**

According to Hodges *et al.* (2008:570), discourse analysis pertains to the study and analysis of language uses. Discourse analysis can be simplified into three approaches, *viz.* formal linguistic discourse analysis, empirical discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis.

The purpose of formal linguistic discourse analysis is to establish underlying rules of linguistic function from the text, by doing a systematic analysis of the text.

In contradiction to this technique, empirical discourse analysis does not utilize highly structured methods to analyze individual words in detail. This approach instead attempts to identify a broader theme of language in action.

Critical discourse analysis takes a much broader view than the previous two discourse analysis techniques. This method attempts to consider social practices, individuals, and institutions that enable understanding phenomena in a specific way.

#### **3.4.3 Relational analysis**

Relational analysis aims to identify meaningful relationships between different concepts that have been identified. This technique views individual concepts as having no inherent meaning, until the relationship between this concept and another is explored. Affect

extraction, proximity analysis, and cognitive mapping are the three approaches that form part of relational analysis.

Affect extraction is an emotional evaluation of concepts contained in a text. Problems can be experienced due to this approach's emotional nature, as the emotional or physical state will vary for populations.

Proximity analysis attempts to identify the co-occurrence of specific concepts within a text. Co-occurring concepts will be identified by scanning a pre-determined length of words across the text, resulting in the creation of a concept. The identified concepts will form part of a concept matrix that could suggest an overall theme.

Cognitive mapping advances affect extraction and proximity analysis by displaying the relationships in a visual manner. Cognitive mapping attempts to create an overall meaning of the text, and not just for a specific window. A graphical map can then be created to display the relationships between concepts.

#### **3.4.4 Selected technique**

The most appropriate techniques to evaluate the data from the research was empirical discourse analysis and relational analysis. These techniques were applied to identify a broader theme in terms of the organizational culture and identify meaningful relationships between the different concepts.

The computer software used to capture and analyze the data was ATLAS.ti, ideal for coding qualitative and mixed research.

### 3.5 Assessing and demonstrating the quality and rigour of the proposed research design

#### 3.5.1 Qualitative or Quantitative study

Barnham (2015:837) states that quantitative research and qualitative research traditionally stands in contrast with each other. Quantitative research can be seen as numerical and factual data, which is objective. In contrast, qualitative research should provide a deeper insight at the expense of being more subjective in the approach.

Table 4 aims to summarise the difference between quantitative and qualitative research.

Table 4: Qualitative vs Quantitative

|                       | Qualitative                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Quantitative                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Conceptual</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand human behaviour from the informants perspective</li><li>• Dynamic and negotiated reality</li></ul>                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discover facts about social phenomena</li><li>• Fixed and measurable reality</li></ul>                                                                                                  |
| <b>Methodological</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data collected through participant observation and interviews</li><li>• Data analyzed by themes from descriptions of informants</li><li>• Data reported in the language of the informant</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data collected through measuring things</li><li>• Data analyzed through numerical comparisons and statistical inferences</li><li>• Data reported through statistical analyses</li></ul> |

The study aimed to determine the influence that organisational culture has on inventory availability and on-time delivery of products. Thus, the impact that the organisational culture has on the efficiency at which the company operates. Data were gathered through focus group discussions with employees at all levels of the company and observation. The sample size was relatively small as the company has less than 100 employees.

#### 3.5.2 Cross-sectional or Longitudinal nature

There are two main differences between longitudinal and cross-sectional studies. Firstly, cross-sectional studies will only be conducted once for a specific sample group, whereas

longitudinal studies will consider the same sample group at several points in time. There are cross-sectional studies that do take place regularly, but different samples are then used. Secondly, cross-sectional studies provide a view of a specific point in time and show change at a societal level. In contrast, longitudinal studies will provide the change at an individual level over a period of time.

A change in any company's organisational culture and its effect will only present itself over a longer period. Unfortunately, there are time constraints involved, and due to the nature of organisational culture, the study was limited to a single survey.

The survey was conducted once to establish an understanding of individuals' underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations across different population groups. The study was thus of a cross-sectional research design.

### **3.6 Research ethics**

According to Walliman (2011:42), there is always a possibility for ethical issues to arise during research when working with human participants regarding how these individuals are treated. It is further stated that, even when not using human participants to gather data, research must always be conducted honestly. Two aspects of ethical dilemmas must be considered during research:

- The values of the individual researcher with regards to honesty, frankness, and personal integrity;
- How people forming part of the study are treated by the researcher regarding confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, and courtesy.

### **3.7 Research design summary**

The sample population comprised employees from all company levels. The sampling strategy that was followed was purposive sampling and data collection was accomplished through focus group research. The selected technique to evaluate the data from the research was empirical discourse analysis and relational analysis. These techniques were applied to identify a broader theme in terms of the organizational culture and identify meaningful relationships between the different concepts.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

Throughout the interviews with the organisation's employees, broader themes emerged pertaining to the culture and its impacts on inventory and OTD performance. It is, however, not possible to determine why the culture takes on a particular form if the underlying reasons and their relation to one another are not considered.

In order to structure the inputs and contributions from each focus group, the interviews were transcribed using Microsoft Word and then imported into Atlas.ti. Once the interviews were imported to Atlas.ti, the researcher followed the below steps to identify core concepts and their relation to one another.

### 4.2 Atlas.ti analysis

#### 4.2.1 Code creation

“Coding” entails the identification of core concepts within each of the interviews. The “code” describes a certain feeling, characteristic, mannerism, opinion, action, or any other core concept evident from the respondents’ dialogue. Codes are not unique to each interview and can, therefore, be shared between multiple interviews. Coding was done for all of the interviews, from the first to last questions.

3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)

1. Yes, I am enthusiastic. I have been doing what I do now for almost 18 years and I don't have a pain with doing something new. If the machine can do it then I will do it.

2. Yes, I do everything that I am asked to do and even more. If I see anything which can help the company then I will do it. It's not like I get to a point where I say no this is not my responsibility. If I can add value, then I do it. I like what I'm doing, and now especially that I am the position I am in, I can decide what needs to happen with the borderline scrap parts. If I can fix them then I will.

1. We always get support if we need it, does not matter from who it comes, the support is always there. If you need tools, then there is no issue to purchase the tools which we need.

2. If we get very busy, then there are many jobs that needs to go. It will help me if I get reminded of which jobs are important by other managers just to ensure all the urgent jobs are completed and sent to the stores.

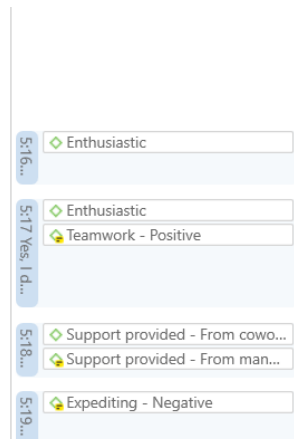


Figure 11: Atlas.ti coding

### 4.2.2 Code merging

In order to identify shared concepts or relationships between the multiple interviews, similar concepts throughout the interviews were “merged” into a single principal idea. Further to this, code merging is useful to simplify the code network.

### 4.2.3 Code grouping

“Code groups” assign individual codes to different higher-level custom categories. Each code can be assigned to more than one code group to build relations between the various concepts.

|    | Name ▲              | Size |
|----|---------------------|------|
| ◇◇ | Accountability      | 24   |
| ◇◇ | Career growth       | 19   |
| ◇◇ | Castings            | 17   |
| ◇◇ | Communication       | 40   |
| ◇◇ | Company performance | 28   |
| ◇◇ | Customer            | 6    |
| ◇◇ | Efficiency          | 25   |
| ◇◇ | Enthusiasm          | 29   |
| ◇◇ | Environment         | 9    |
| ◇◇ | Evaluation          | 3    |
| ◇◇ | Health & Safety     | 10   |
| ◇◇ | Human Resource      | 46   |
| ◇◇ | Incentives          | 19   |
| ◇◇ |                     |      |

**Figure 12: Code groups**

### 4.2.4 Network creation

In order to visualise the relationship between the various concepts (codes), the researcher created multiple networks between the concepts. Networks were explicitly developed for the broader themes identified, after which codes complementing the theme were then added to the specific network. Relationships between the codes were then identified within each particular network. The default relations that were utilised are:

- “Is-associated-with” (Label: R)
- “Is-part-of” (Label: G)

- “Is-cause-of” (Label: N)
- “Contradicts” (Label: A)
- “Is-a” (Label: O)

### 4.3 Leadership and Management

Figure 13 illustrates the relationship between management and other facets of the business, which primarily dictates the organisation's culture.

Even though there are particular positives in the network, the majority of the aspects within the business point to a management style that is not conducive to performance or a positive organisational culture. The autocratic leadership style from middle-management entirely overshadows the perceived good leadership from top management. Favouritism, nepotism, and the way conflict is handled negatively impact the respect towards middle-management and the already negative culture currently present in the organisation. A participant remarked: *"There is no respect. I make mistakes. I am a human being, unnecessary mistakes, and sometimes they are negligent. But it does not mean you have to make noise at me like I am a baby. If I end up scrapping a part then it is my fault, do not come to me and swear and shout and scream at me. Like now it is to show the other operators that if you make a mistake then I am going to do the same to you. And it is not nice. If it comes to the point that you have to give me a warning then give the warning, but if you are making noise it won't help anything because next week I will make the same mistake. Rather come to me and ask what happened so it doesn't happen again."*

The management of human resources is perceived to be falling short significantly. Employees want to see much more attention be given to targets and goals, employee evaluation and feedback, career planning, and training. This can, however, only be implemented once formal performance assessments are in place, which interviewees identified as a requirement. One of the participants remarked: *"At the company it is just you come to work, you cruise, you go home. People are overlooked due to the lack of a proper evaluation procedure to determine performance. Things like employee of the year needs to be maintained and then it truly needs to be the best performing operator and be based on merit. It also should not be everybody gets a turn reward, it should be for the person who deserves it. But if there is a grading system in place where people know they will be graded*

*it will be positive, because at this point it seems like no one sees or cares how hard I work.  
There is no incentive for anyone to shine.”*

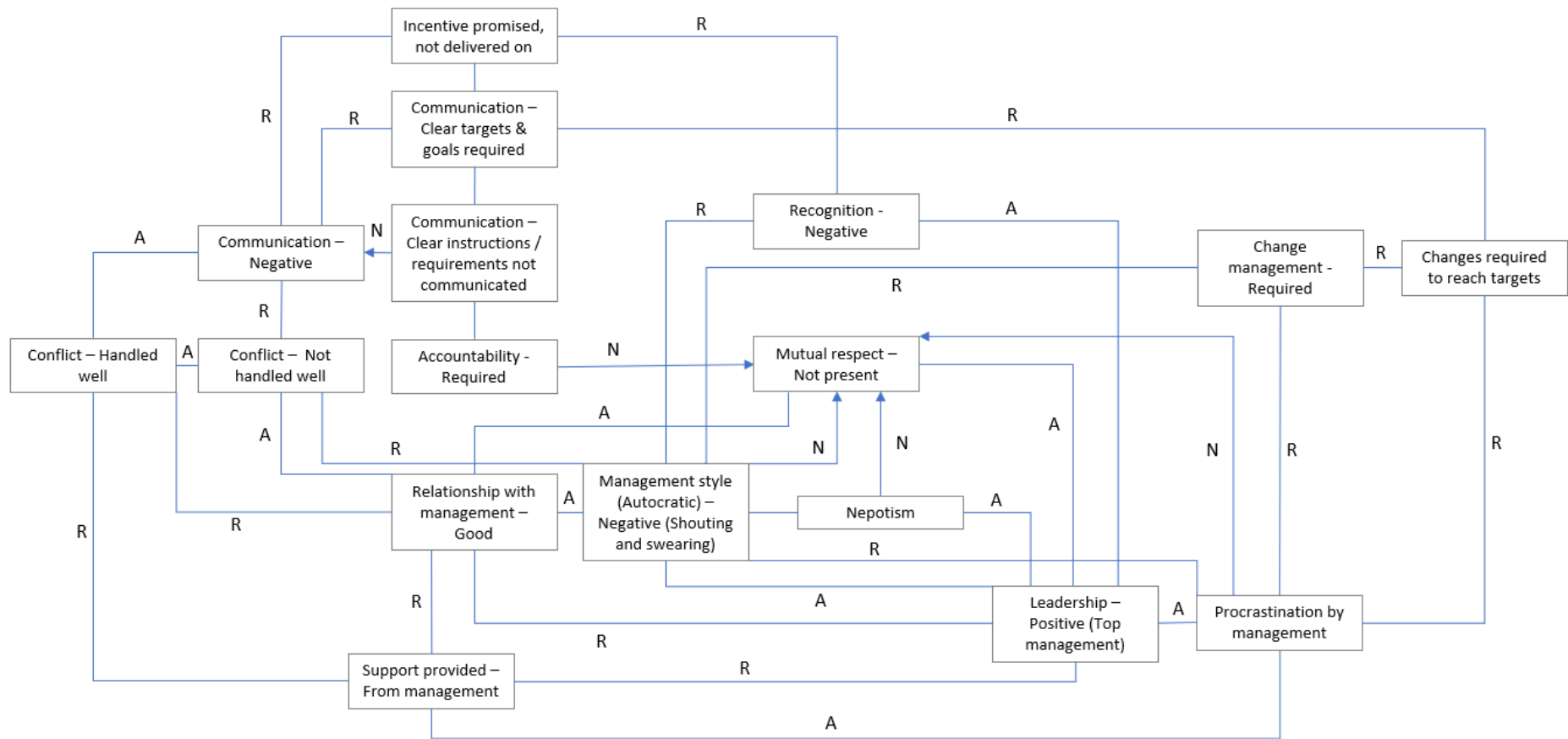


**Figure 13: Leadership & Management Network**

#### 4.3.1 Reaction Speed & Efficiency

Figure 14 illustrates the relationship between reaction speed and efficiency, and other aspects of the business.

This network points to a good reaction speed from the organisation and a significant focus on customer satisfaction. Expediting of components throughout the process is also perceived as positive. It is, however, this approach that causes substantial inefficiencies in the process, as remarked by one of the participants: *“Customer requirements reduce productivity in a sense due to multiple setups for the same batch.”*

The focus on customer satisfaction has a much more significant impact on on-time delivery and inventory than initially thought. Due to the organisation giving their customer what they want, they tend to cause inefficiencies in the system:

- The raw material is expedited to be delivered sooner than the actual due date. Procurement and expediting resources are therefore utilised to get material in sooner. These resources now neglect their daily tasks, viz. ordering material on time and expediting material to be delivered on time. Raw material suppliers, therefore, also change their priorities, which leads to additional inefficiencies in the upstream supply chain. Raw material OTD suffers as a result;
- Production managers then focus on getting the required part through the production process as quick as possible. Due for delivery or needed for stock, parts are then pushed to a later completion date as a result. Finished goods OTD and inventory performance suffers as a result.

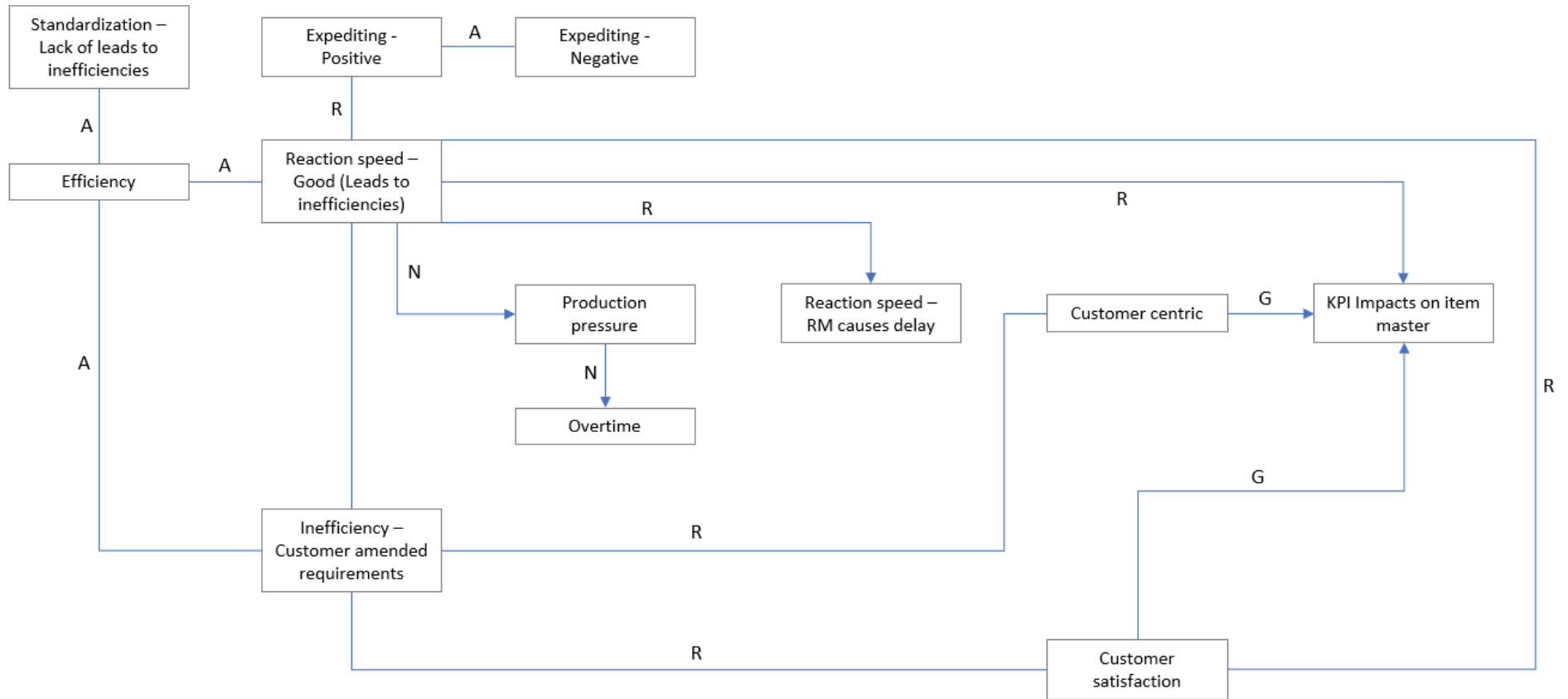


**Figure 14: Customer-Centric Network**

#### 4.3.2 Human Resources & Communication

Figure 15 illustrates the relationship between human resources and communication, and other aspects of the business.

There seems to be a breakdown in communication between middle-management and the employees on the production floor. The following HR and communication issues are evident in the study:

- Employees do not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Resultantly, there is no defined set of criteria to measure them against. As one participant remarked: *“There are overlapping tasks for individuals, and what now happens is that the overlapping task ends up not being done because more than one person is responsible for it as the one thinks the other one would’ve done it”*;
- Management does not conduct employee evaluations. Employees, therefore, do not get feedback on their performance and do not know where they need to improve. A participant remarked: *“If I’m a manager then I would put systems in place to properly grade the employees on their performance. We need to know what we are doing well and what we can improve on. You need middle management to take the lead on something like this and take the initiative. We did however have not starting point”*;
- There are not clearly defined and visible targets in place. As a participant remarked: *“Targets and bonuses in line with the targets. But if there aren’t too many jobs then you know you are not going to get a bonus. It is not all about money, there are other ways in which management can also motivate us.”*

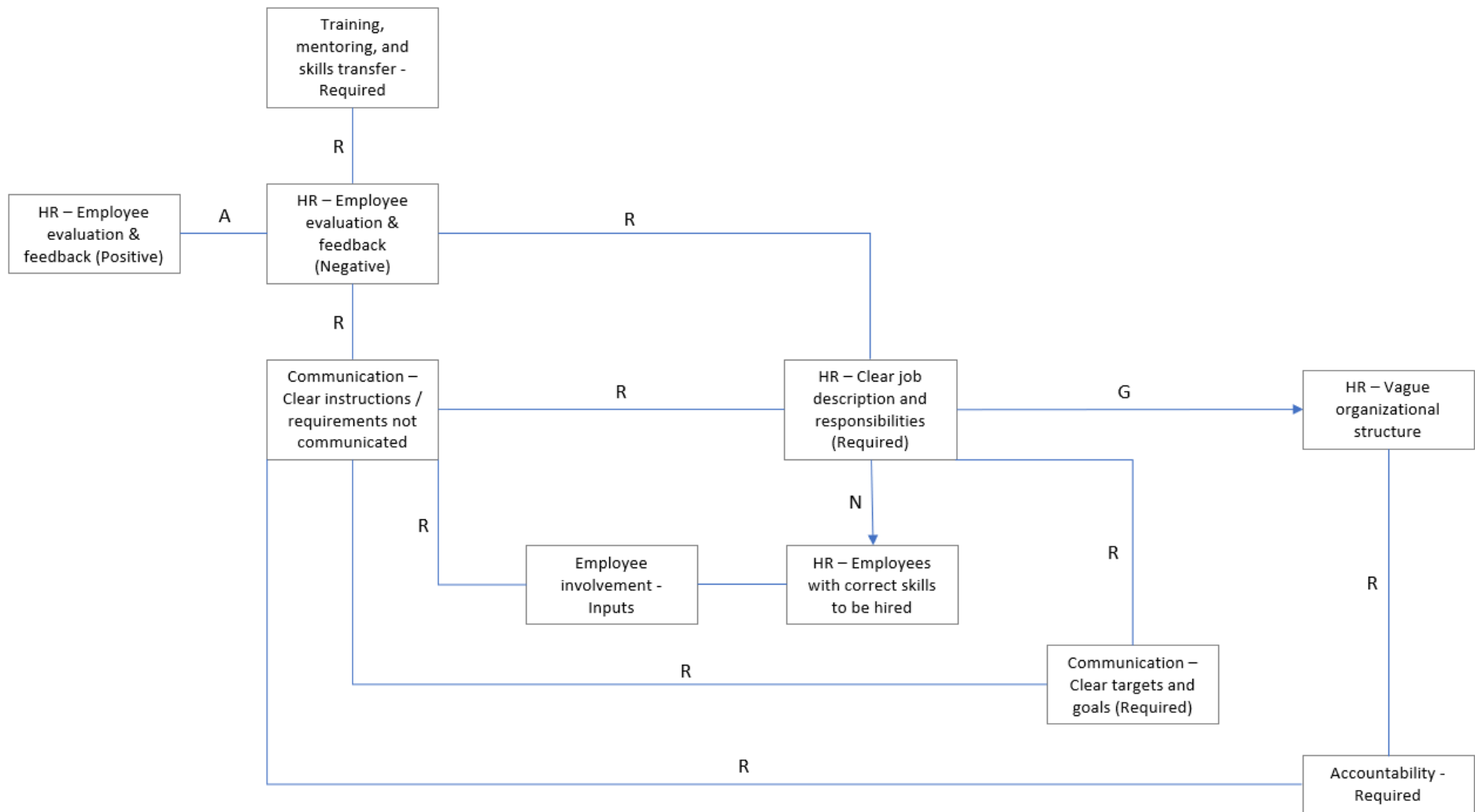


Figure 15: HR & Communication Network

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Culture**

There is currently a predominantly negative culture that is present in the organisation. This negative culture can mainly be attributed to the following root causes:

#### **5.1.1 Management style**

The management style of middle-management, explicitly pertaining to production, is autocratic. Further to this, there are additional damaging practices and mannerisms present amongst managers.

##### **5.1.1.1 Deflection of responsibilities**

Mid-level managers do not want to take responsibility for additional tasks or newly implemented processes. They will instead make this the responsibility of their subordinates. In that manner, if something goes wrong, they blame the employee they have tasked with the responsibility.

##### **5.1.1.2 Blame shifting**

Mid-level managers are not involved in solving problems that they should solve, which forms part of their responsibilities. This allows them to easily separate themselves from the issue, blaming the employee who should not have taken the responsibility. Blame shifting results in demotivated employees who no longer want to give their inputs in the various processes. Additionally, it reduces teamwork in the company, as the employees know they will have to take responsibility for their decisions in the absence of a manager.

##### **5.1.1.3 Taking credit**

Mid-level managers take credit for decisions not made by them and for manufactured components they had no input in. This results in demotivated employees who are no longer willing to take the initiative and risk coupled with making decisions. On the contrary, employees are quick to be blamed when things go wrong due to their choices.

##### **5.1.1.4 Screaming, shouting, and swearing**

Screaming, shouting, and swearing – Employees feel that they are being humiliated in front of their colleagues when they do make a mistake. Management does not correctly address issues and yell and swear at operators in front of the whole workshop. This results in reduced

job satisfaction, employees rethinking their commitment to the organisation, and more mistakes as the employee is no longer focused on the task at hand.

#### **5.1.1.5 Top-down communication**

Employees are not receiving explicit instructions from management. Further to this, different managers are giving contradicting instructions to the employees. The lack of clear instructions is causing inefficiencies in the system, with delivery dates being missed as a result.

#### **5.1.1.6 Nepotism/Favouritism**

The employees perceive that there are particular favourites in the organisation protected by management. This demotivates the committed employees and contributes to the negative culture evident in the organisation.

#### **5.1.1.7 Incentive promised, not delivered on**

Management promise incentives if specific targets are achieved. The employees perceive management to be dishonest, as they do not deliver on their commitments even though the set targets are achieved. This leads to demotivated employees, distrust in the organisation and management, and employees who cannot be motivated to perform through incentives.

### **5.1.2 Human resource**

Human resources can either make or break a business. The organisation has a significant number of loyal employees due to its stability even through challenging economic times. The company has seen considerable growth during the past eight years, but unfortunately, the human resource department has not seen the same relative growth to gear for an almost tripling of employees. Resultantly, concerns exist about the management of human resources within the organisation:

#### **5.1.2.1 Unclear organisational structure**

The organisational structure is not adequately defined. Employees are, therefore, often confused when confronted with contradicting instructions from different managers. This leads to inefficiencies and also lowers customer satisfaction.

#### **5.1.2.2 No clear definition of jobs and responsibilities**

Employees do not know exactly where their responsibilities start and where it ends. Resultantly, there are grey areas of responsibility in the organisation which nobody wants to

adopt. Coupled with blame-shifting from management, employees are hesitant to take the initiative and take up the slack of these grey areas.

#### **5.1.2.3 Equal work for equal pay is not evident**

Operators believe that they are not fairly compensated compared to other operators doing the same or similar tasks. More concerning is motivated employees doing more than their counterparts, but they are not being recognised for their efforts. Resultantly, the employees putting in the additional effort will either stop doing more than is asked of them as they are not compensated or recognised for it or move to a different company altogether.

#### **5.1.2.4 Employee development and skills transfer required**

There is no formal programme to develop committed employees and ensure generational knowledge is passed on to young operators and artisans. Thus, there is no succession plan for if critical employees are to leave. Some employees deem this very important, and especially the committed employees do not see a future in the organisation if the company is unwilling to invest in them. This can lead to a high staff turnover, loss of critical skills, a reduction in KPI performance, and reduced customer satisfaction.

#### **5.1.2.5 Career planning is not evident**

To some employees, their motivation is to provide for their families. Resultantly, job security and career planning are significant motivating factors for these employees. The organisation does not have formal career plans in place, even for loyal or performing employees. This is demotivating for these employees who feel they are committed to the organisation, but the organisation cannot commit anything back to them.

## **5.2 Inventory management**

### **5.2.1 Inventory urgency**

The necessary systems are in place to successfully manage both low-and high-level inventory requirements. However, there are issues with how the system is managed, and there is no way to track each department's performance.

Since there are not always open orders for stock items, these parts are typically seen as a lower priority than other parts for which there are open orders. The lower perceived importance of these components typically results in material not being ordered immediately, and once ordered, the material is not expedited accordingly. In the instance that raw material is already available, it is not directly issued for production. Production also does not manufacture or expedite make-to-stock items with the same effort as they do parts for orders.

The current inventory management system is designed to fill a stock bin to its highest level as soon as it is depleted. The departments not actioning their tasks within the allocated time slot have a negative snowball effect on the subsequent action that needs to occur and, ultimately, the on-time delivery KPI. Stock items that are not actioned timeously have a further negative impact on the flexibility of the organisation.

The inventory, planning, procurement, and manufacturing systems currently fall short regarding performance measurement and feedback. The systems are not designed with evaluation or business intelligence in mind, and therefore the performance of the respective departments cannot be measured or evaluated. The lack of insight into these key business metrics makes it extremely difficult for top management to identify and address the critical issues in the business. Middle-management further tends to shift the blame or responsibility to other management team members, exacerbating the problem of identifying key issues.

### **5.2.2 Business intelligence**

The organisation cannot easily track seasonal and other stock usage trends with the current systems it has. As a result, medium to long-term planning regarding stock items and resources required are currently not taking place. Spike orders placed during periods with increased demand puts the complete supply chain under pressure and further reduces on-time delivery.

### **5.2.3 External customer information and requirements**

The organisation's primary customer is responsible for more than 95% of their order book. Resultantly there is a significant reliance on the single client, and customer satisfaction is therefore imperative. Regarding inventory performance, there are two main barriers that the customer is responsible for, viz. unclear goals and targets, and neglecting seasonal demand.

#### **5.2.3.1 Unclear goals and targets**

Even though the customer is a multinational organisation, there are no clear goals or targets for the organisation to achieve. The effect of unclear targets and goals is that the customer's priorities continuously shift from one KPI to the next. Further to this, there is no formal agreement in place for the organisation to keep stock for its primary customer, even though it is expected. The client, therefore, adjusts their stock bins and levels according to their average order intake and expects the manufacturing organisation to do so accordingly. As a result, the redundant stock remains in the organisation's raw material and finished goods warehouses. The redundant stock is, therefore, stock that already utilised both machining capacity and financial capability. It will be irresponsible for the organisation to action newly classified stock items, which will place the supply chain under pressure and lead to financial distress in a worst-case scenario.

#### **5.2.3.2 Neglecting seasonal demand**

The customer does not plan for seasonal demand changes. Resultantly there are spike orders placed on the organisation during specific periods of the year. These spike orders put the organisation, and the extended supply chain, under significant pressure to supply the components in their standard lead times. Spike orders during periods of higher demand can further cause considerable damage to the perceived performance of the organisation.

### **5.3 On-time delivery**

#### **5.3.1 Employee evaluation and feedback**

There are no formal evaluation procedures to determine whether or not an employee is performing. Resultantly there is also no feedback per employee. Therefore, the organisation employees assume they are doing a good job as no one gives them any feedback on their performance. Further to this, the company has no opportunity to identify where its employees lack or identify potential talent. The organisation is, as a result, potentially missing out on efficiency and, therefore, OTD.

#### **5.3.2 Clear targets and goals**

Ground-level employees do not know which targets they are working towards achieving. The turnover target is also not set in stone (even throughout a specific month), varies from month to month, and is not based on particular metrics. Different members of the management team have different targets, ultimately causing them to pull against one another. The KPI for one manager is OTD performance, whilst the KPI for the other manager is turnover. Conflicting targets and goals set for the management team is detrimental to both teamwork and OTD achievement.

#### **5.3.3 Expediting from order placement to delivery**

Production (machining) is the last major step before a component is delivered to the customer. Inherently, this is also the department that experiences the most pressure when the customer requires a part urgently or when a component is in backlog. Not enough pressure is placed on suppliers to ensure that they deliver raw material or other off-the-shelf components on-time. Due to raw material being delivered late, all the pressure accumulates on the production team to supply the component on time. The compounded pressure increases the chance of the organisation supplying defective parts and leads to a reduction of OTD.

#### **5.3.4 Training & skills development**

There is no formal training programme in place to upskill employees. Operators working on specialised equipment do need a certain amount of aptitude and training to ensure that they can utilise the equipment to its full potential. Without the proper training and understanding of the different machining operations, operators do not run the machines efficiently. This leads to reduced profit margins resulting from slower setups, longer run-times, longer

inspection times, higher scrap rates, and increased tool usage. Ultimately operators without sufficient training negatively impact on KPI's and customer satisfaction. Due to the inefficient operation of production machines, components spend more time in production and therefore, the delivery to the customer is delayed, negatively impacting the OTD.

### **5.3.5 External customer information and requirements**

The organisation's primary customer is responsible for more than 95% of their order book. Resultantly there is a significant reliance on the single client, and customer satisfaction is therefore imperative. Regarding OTD-performance, there is one main barrier that the customer is responsible for, viz. information misalignment.

#### **5.3.5.1 Information misalignment:**

The customer does not deem the alignment of information a priority and will shift the responsibility to align information to the supplier (the manufacturing organisation). In instances where supplier performance is in question, the client will take reports at face value and not address the information misalignment's actual root cause. Root causes for information misalignment are:

- Delay in order processing: A delay is regularly experienced between when the demand is raised on the customer's MRP system to the actual date when it is approved and submitted to the manufacturing organisation.
- Lead times: Lead times between the manufacturing organisation and the customer are not aligned. The effect thereof is that the customer expects their parts before they are due. Ultimately, lead time misalignment causes the customer perceived OTD to be less than it is and diminishes customer satisfaction.

A significant disconnect, therefore, exists between the measured OTD of the manufacturing organisation and the customer. The typical variance is between 15% and 20%. To reduce the OTD variance, the organisation attempts to deliver orders on or before the customer perceived due date. In turn, this puts pressure on the upstream supply chain to deliver raw material at a sooner date than it is due, production is under pressure to produce a finished component in a shortened lead time, and logistics is under pressure to deliver parts on the same day it is inspected. There is a risk that the increased pressure throughout the supply chain can lead to quality defects that otherwise would be prevented. The quality defects will

reduce the first-pass-yield (FPY) of the organisation and possibly impact their quality KPI measured in defective parts per million (DPPM).

#### **5.4 Link between culture, inventory, and OTD**

The middle-management team has, over time, created a negative culture through their management style and mannerisms. The management characteristics that have the most significant impact on the culture of the organisation, and ultimately the inventory performance and OTD, are the following:

##### **5.4.1 Responsibility deflection**

Management absolving themselves from their responsibilities lead to an increased time to resolve issues, a decrease in FPY, and inefficient use of resources. Therefore, there is a direct opportunity cost involved in part turnover or part production. Further to this, responsibility deflection impacts the bottom line due to overclocking of resources and replacement material required.

##### **5.4.2 Enthusiasm killers**

Management was referred to as “Thunder Thieves” in the interviews conducted. This term perfectly describes how middle-management takes credit for the initiative taken or work completed by lower-level employees. Middle-management will also promise incentives and then not deliver on these once the target is reached. These characteristics are serious enthusiasm killers for employees, destroying their motivation, reducing teamwork, and reducing production.

##### **5.4.2.1 Contradicting instructions**

Different managers have contradicting KPI's; one is in charge of OTD performance, and the second manager for turnover. The result is that one manager will be pushing high-value components through the workshop, reprioritising these before items that are due. This creates confusion and inefficiencies on the production floor, as employees receive contradicting instructions from their managers. Apart from the immediate impact on the OTD, the importance of turnover in the organisation impacts inventory performance. Parts produced for inventory is not manufactured with the same urgency as parts manufactured for orders as employee performance cannot be measured. This impacts both stock-holding and OTD.

#### **5.4.2.2 Workflow management**

Orders are not expedited from initiation to order closure. Resultantly, the pressure culminates on the production team as it is the last step before delivery. Poor workflow management leads to a reduction in OTD and inventory performance and other KPI's such as FPY and DPPM.

#### **5.4.2.3 Reactive approach**

The organisation is reactive. The currently installed management systems can only provide basic business intelligence, making it difficult for top management to make informed decisions. Performance evaluation for the different departments is also problematic. Seasonal demand information for stock items is not available, and therefore the organisation reacts too late. The lack of essential business intelligence leads to uninformed planning, therefore poor OTD and inventory performance.

#### **5.4.2.4 Employee evaluation and feedback**

There are no systems or procedures in place to evaluate employees. Employees are, as a result, not adequately assessed and shown where they require improvement. Therefore, the employees will assume that they are doing well in their daily jobs, as they are not formally told otherwise and where to improve. Further to this, top management does not have a high-level view of production metrics to make informed decisions and hold management accountable. This leads to inefficient machine operation, reduced FPY, and scrapped components, all of which impact the OTD and inventory performance. It is also a missed potential opportunity to get feedback from the employees and identify potential talent in the organisation.

#### **5.4.2.5 Employee development, skills transfer, and career planning**

There are no formal employee development, training, skills transfer, or career planning programmes in place at the organisation. The lack of these programmes are both demotivating and have an impact on OTD and inventory performance. Suitable employee evaluation structures do, however, need to be in place before the organisation can embark on employee development. Suppose the organisation does not know where its employees are lacking. In that case, it will not be able to target specific training goals to improve the FPY and efficiency, and ultimately OTD and inventory performance.

#### 5.4.2.6 Unclear targets and goals

Ground-level employees do not know what their targets and goals are. Management members also pull in different directions to meet their KPI's, which is detrimental to both OTD, inventory performance, and teamwork. Further to this, turnover targets are not based on a specific metric and can change weekly, exacerbating the negative impact on OTD. This is demotivating to the whole team, as the goalposts continue to shift, even though the team achieved the initial.

#### 5.4.2.7 Equal work for equal pay not evident

It is demotivating for employees who take the initiative and go the extra mile, not to be recognised and compensated accordingly. These employees will not continue with their efforts if they are not recognised and paid accordingly. They will then instead pull back their efforts to be in line with the duties of operators that are paid a similar rate. Unequal pay leads to a demotivated workforce, not focusing on the task at hand, and ultimately negatively impacts the OTD and inventory performance.

Apart from internal factors, there are external factors at play in the organisation's primary customer.

- **Information misalignment:** There are significant issues regarding information alignment at the organisation's primary customer, viz. order processing delay, lead time alignment, and inventory misalignment. The organisation communicated all of these issues to the customer via multiple platforms, but it is evident that alignment is not a top priority for the downstream supply chain. The result is a negative impact of between 15% and 20% on OTD. The approximate negative effect on inventory performance is 15%.
- **Unclear targets and goals:** No specific goals are set for the organisation to achieve. The primary customer, therefore, shifts their focus from one KPI to the next. This leads to inefficiencies at the organisation and, ultimately, an adverse effect on OTD and inventory performance.
- **Seasonal demand:** The primary customer does not cater for seasonal demand and aims to keep their stock holding as low as possible. They work on an average demand throughout the year, which entails that fluctuations in demand are not considered

when determining stock levels. The result for the organisation is poor inventory and OTD performance due to significant seasonal fluctuation in demand.

## CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve the OTD and inventory performance of the organisation, significant changes need to take place to develop the culture within the organisation. The majority of the required changes need to occur in production management, HR management, and the way and extent to which information is collected. The recommended way forward for the organisation is listed below:

- Employ suited managers in management positions. Alternatively, employees already in management positions must be trained on how to be managers. This will ensure that appropriate management practices are implemented throughout the organisation;
- The managers of each department need to be held accountable by senior management for their respective departments' performance. The implementation of business intelligence capable systems will enable senior management to evaluate the performance of each department;
- Implement employee evaluation and feedback programmes to cultivate a bi-directional communication channel between employees and management. In conjunction with employee evaluation, the organisation must install the appropriate evaluation tools to measure production employees' actual performance;
- Set up structured and targeted training programmes to fill the gaps identified during employee evaluation and feedback sessions. Employ an experienced and suitable artisan in a management position to conduct technical training;
- The organisation must identify talented and loyal employees from the employee evaluation programmes. The HR department then needs to put career plans in place for these employees, keeping them motivated and dedicated to the organisation. In conjunction with career planning, critical resources must be identified, and succession planning carried out;
- Review the roles and responsibilities of employees and how they are remunerated for their services. The organisation must set up a five-year plan to align remuneration with the duties of the employee. This can only be done once a suitable evaluation programme is put in place;

- Senior management must align middle-management with set-in-stone and staggered targets, with performance bonuses based on a sliding scale. Concrete targets will cultivate teamwork and ensure everyone works towards a common goal. Table 5 is an example of how performance bonuses can be calculated;

**Table 5: Staggered production bonus structure example**

| KPI      | Description                            | Tier | Level 1              |              | Level 2              |              | Level 3              |              | Level 4              |             |
|----------|----------------------------------------|------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------|
|          |                                        |      | Parameters           | Bonus        | Parameters           | Bonus        | Parameters           | Bonus        | Parameters           | Bonus       |
| OTD      | On-time delivery [%]                   | 1    | OTD ≥95              | 5.0%         | 90≤ OTD <95          | 3.5%         | 85≤ OTD <90          | 2.0%         | 80≤ OTD <85          | 1.0%        |
| Turnover | Turnover in Rand value (excl. VAT)     | 2    | TO ≥R13m             | 5.0%         | R12,5m≤ TO <R13m     | 3.5%         | R12m≤ TO <R12,5m     | 2.0%         | R11m≤ TO <R12m       | 1.0%        |
| Quality  | DPPM Level                             | 3    | 1                    | 2.0%         | 1                    | 2.0%         | 1                    | 2.0%         | 1                    | 2.0%        |
| OT ratio | Overtime worked / Standard time worked | 5    | OR <1,1              | 10.0%        | 1,1≤ OR <1,2         | 7.0%         | 1,2≤ OR <1,3         | 4.0%         | ≥1,4                 | 0.0%        |
| LTI      | Lost Time Injuries                     | 4    | 0                    | 0.5%         | 0                    | 0.5%         | 0                    | 0.5%         | 0                    | 0.5%        |
|          |                                        |      | <b>L1 Cumulative</b> | <b>22.5%</b> | <b>L1 Cumulative</b> | <b>16.5%</b> | <b>L1 Cumulative</b> | <b>10.5%</b> | <b>L1 Cumulative</b> | <b>4.5%</b> |

- Implement systems that can provide business intelligence through measurement and evaluation. This system will reduce the time to identify issues, make critical business decisions, hold management accountable, improve efficiency, and ultimately improve OTD and inventory performance;
- Implement appropriate systems to highlight stock usage trends over time. The system must suggest which inventory bins to increase or decrease, based on the time of year. The organisation will no longer be dependant on its client to supply inventory information and will be able to change inventory levels pre-emptively, ultimately leading to improved OTD and inventory performance.

## 6.1 Implementation plan

As discussed, senior management must action significant change in the organisation to ensure that goals and targets are met. Due to the deep-rooted nature of the current issues, the researcher recommends that a change management consultant is contracted to ensure a smooth transition to become a more efficient producer. The change management consultant must be an expert in organisational culture and must have experience in turning damaging cultures around.

The change management consultant will be responsible for:

- Evaluation of managers and their suitability for management positions. Employees not suited to be managers must be identified and presented to the directors.
- Training of employees in management positions to be managers.

- Implementation of systems to measure and evaluate the performance of individual departments. This will be a concerted effort from the change management consultant, a selected IT service provider, and senior management. Further to this, the performance bonus structure must be aligned to reward target achievement.
- Together with the HR department, employee evaluation and feedback policies and programmes must be established.
- Once remuneration is reviewed by senior management and select middle-management members, the change management consultant must guide the process of adjusting remuneration to be in line with employees' tasks.

\*Footnote: Some urgent recommendations were already presented to senior management and implemented accordingly.

## **CHAPTER 7: ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **7.1 What is the organizational culture of the organisation?**

Considering the organisational culture framework, as discussed in chapter 3.3.1, the following conclusions can be drawn with regards to each of the organisational culture dimensions:

#### **7.1.1 Adaptability and stability**

The organisation provides a stable work environment regarding financial continuity and anchor customers. Employees are, however, worried about their specific position in the organisation due to the autocratic management style and nepotism present. The organisation is quick to adapt to new or revised requirements from its customers. However, this contributes to inefficiencies due to the frequent procedure and priority amendments and ultimately leads to demotivated employees.

#### **7.1.2 Innovation and risks**

The organisation often tries new things and new ways of doing things and is also encouraged to do so by their customers. Top management ensures the business's future by only taking necessary and calculated risks to ultimately contribute to the bottom line.

#### **7.1.3 Quality and reputation**

The organisation takes pride in the quality of the products it supplies to its customers. The reputation regarding quality is, therefore, excellent. The organisation's reputation regarding shortened (pull-forward) deliveries is good, but it lacks on-time delivery.

#### **7.1.4 Employee orientation**

The organisation has a limited employee orientation, which negatively impacts the organisational culture. This specifically pertains to communication, evaluation, and employee advancement.

#### **7.1.5 Company drive and support**

There are support structures in place throughout the organisation for employees to do their daily tasks. However, responsibility is often delegated to lower-level employees, who are held accountable if something goes wrong. Components are not prioritised throughout the comprehensive workflow, which causes pressure to culminate on the production team. This

is due to a lack of accountability, which is ultimately driven by the lack of intelligent systems capable of measuring each department's performance.

#### **7.1.6 Performance expectation**

The goalposts regarding performance are constantly shifting. This is true for both internal targets and external targets as set by the primary customer. Unclear targets and goals negatively contribute to the overall culture of the organisation.

#### **7.1.7 Job growth, pay, and praise**

The organisation is significantly lacking in this cultural dimension. Throughout the interviews, it was apparent that job growth is only possible for low-level employees. Equal pay for equal work is not evident, and praise is given to the wrong employees. This is a significant demotivating factor for all employees, as they feel their efforts are not recognised. Therefore, the lack of recognition for committed employees is probably the most important contributing factor to the negative culture present in the organisation

#### **7.1.8 Conflict and social interaction**

There is a fair amount of conflict and social interaction present in the organisation. Therefore, it does not have a considerable impact on the culture of the organisation.

### **7.2 To what extent is inventory management applied?**

The necessary systems are in place to successfully manage both low-and high-level inventory requirements. However, there are issues with how the system is managed, and there is no way to track each department's performance.

The current inventory management system is designed to fill a stock bin to its highest level as soon as it is depleted. The system is based on the basic economic order quantity (EOQ) model and is, therefore, a perpetual inventory system. Inventory records are continuously updated to accurately determine when the reorder point is reached. Table 6 practically demonstrates the functionality of the inventory management system in use at the organisation.

**Table 6: Dynamic inventory buffer management**

| Part      | FG Target | FG | FG Var | FG % | Demand | WIP | Manf. Demand | RM Target | RM Avail. | RM On Order | RM to Order |
|-----------|-----------|----|--------|------|--------|-----|--------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| 743550083 | 2         |    | 2      | 0%   | 1      | 4   | -1           | 2         | 0         |             | 1           |
| 743560119 | 1         | 1  | 0      | 100% | 0      | 17  | -17          | 1         | 0         |             | -16         |
| 743560127 | 9         |    | 9      | 0%   | 8      | 32  | -15          | 9         | 50        |             | -56         |
| 743560151 | 8         |    | 8      | 0%   | 2      | 18  | -8           | 8         | 50        |             | -50         |
| 750060015 | 5         |    | 5      | 0%   | 7      | 6   | 6            | 5         | 0         | 14          | -3          |
| 750400053 | 2         | 4  | -2     | 200% | 0      |     | -2           | 2         | 15        |             | -15         |
| 750400061 | 55        | 14 | 41     | 25%  | 0      | 100 | -59          | 55        | 200       |             | -204        |
| 750410171 | 4         |    | 4      | 0%   | 1      | 5   | 0            | 4         | 20        |             | -16         |
| 750410375 | 1         |    | 1      | 0%   | 10     | 7   | 4            | 1         | 0         | 8           | -3          |
| 750410383 | 2         | 3  | -1     | 150% | 0      | 1   | -2           | 2         | 0         | 0           | 0           |
| 753060111 | 2         | 2  | 0      | 100% | 0      | 15  | -15          | 2         | 0         | 0           | -13         |
| 753060129 | 2         |    | 2      | 0%   | 0      | 5   | -3           | 2         | 30        | 0           | -31         |
| 753060179 | 2         | 17 | -15    | 850% | 0      |     | -15          | 2         | 0         |             | -13         |
| 753060187 | 5         | 6  | -1     | 120% | 0      |     | -1           | 5         | 40        | 0           | -36         |
| 753060307 | 1         | 1  | 0      | 100% | 0      |     | 0            | 1         | 0         | 0           | 1           |
| 760370064 | 55        | 57 | -2     | 104% | 0      | 1   | -3           | 55        | 205       | 0           | -153        |
| 760370454 | 2         |    | 2      | 0%   | 3      | 3   | 2            | 2         | 0         | 0           | 4           |
| 760370713 | 5         |    | 5      | 0%   | 3      | 10  | -2           | 5         | 0         | 0           | 3           |
| 760700405 | 19        | 3  | 16     | 16%  | 0      | 40  | -24          | 19        | 130       | 0           | -135        |

The inventory system does, however, fall short regarding performance evaluation and feedback. The systems are not designed with evaluation or business intelligence in mind, and therefore the performance of the respective departments cannot be measured or evaluated. The lack of insight into these key business metrics makes it extremely difficult for top management to identify and address the critical issues in the business.

### 7.3 How does supply chain effectiveness impact the ability to keep optimal inventory levels and deliver goods on time?

Since there are not always open orders for stock items, these parts are typically seen as a lower priority than other parts for which there are open orders. The lower perceived importance of these components typically results in material not being ordered immediately, and once ordered, the material is not expedited accordingly. In the instance that raw material is already available, it is not directly issued for production. Production also does not manufacture or expedite make-to-stock items with the same effort as they do parts for orders.

The departments not actioning their tasks within the allocated time slot have a negative snowball effect on the subsequent action that needs to occur and, ultimately, the on-time delivery KPI. Stock items that are not actioned timeously have a further negative impact on the organisation's flexibility and ability to expedite the production of components for breakdown purposes.

#### **7.4 In what manner is on-time delivery and availability of stock goods related to one another?**

The researcher can demonstrate the relation between inventory performance and OTD performance with a basic calculation. This is done by considering the fraction that inventory deliveries make up of total deliveries to the customer during a specific period:

$$\text{Inventory Contribution} = \frac{\text{QTY Inventory delivered}}{\text{Total QTY delivered}} * 100$$

Substituting “QTY Inventory delivered” with 4637, and “Total QTY delivered” with 5344:

$$\text{Inventory Contribution} = \frac{4637}{5344} * 100 = 86,8\%$$

Therefore, the quantified impact that inventory items have on the OTD is 86,8% during a two-month period. The balance of 13,2% consists of made-to-order components. Therefore, the effect of inventory performance on OTD is significant, considering the organisation has an OTD target of 95%.

#### **7.5 To what extent do the organizational culture impact stock items' availability and the on-time delivery of made-to-order goods?**

As discussed in detail by the researcher in the conclusions, the cultural characteristics that have the most significant impact on inventory and OTD performance are the following:

##### **7.5.1 Responsibility deflection**

Increases time to resolve issues and decreases FPY. Therefore, there is a direct opportunity cost involved in part turnover or part production directly impacting inventory and OTD performance.

##### **7.5.2 Enthusiasm killers**

The lack of recognition and recognition for the wrong employees are major enthusiasm killers, destroying motivation, reducing teamwork, and reducing production. Ultimately a lack of motivation leads to a reduction in inventory and OTD performance.

##### **7.5.3 Workflow management**

Pressure culminates on the production team as it is the last step before delivery. Poor workflow management leads to a reduction in OTD and inventory performance and other KPI's such as FPY and DPPM.

#### **7.5.4 Reactive approach**

Management cannot make informed business decisions due to system constraints. Seasonal demand information for stock items is not available, and therefore the organisation reacts too late. The lack of essential business intelligence leads to uninformed planning, therefore poor OTD and inventory performance.

#### **7.5.5 Employee evaluation and feedback**

There are no systems or procedures in place to evaluate employees. Employees are, as a result, not adequately assessed and shown where they require improvement. This leads to inefficient machine operation, reduced FPY, and scrapped components, all of which impact the OTD and inventory performance.

#### **7.5.6 Employee development, skills transfer, and career planning**

There are no formal employee development, training, skills transfer, or career planning programmes in place at the organisation. The lack of these programmes is demotivating and impacts OTD and inventory performance due to reduced operator performance and a reduced FPY.

#### **7.5.7 Unclear targets and goals**

Ground-level employees do not know what their targets and goals are. Turnover targets are not based on a specific metric and can change weekly, exacerbating the negative impact on the culture and OTD. This is demotivating to the whole team, as the goalposts continue to shift, even though the team achieved the initial target. Reduced commitment can be expected from demotivated employees and, therefore, a reduced OTD.

#### **7.5.8 Equal work for equal pay not evident**

It is demotivating for employees who take the initiative and go the extra mile, not to be recognised and compensated accordingly. These employees will not continue with their efforts if they are not recognised and rewarded. Unequal pay leads to a demotivated workforce, not focusing on the task at hand, and ultimately negatively impacts the OTD and inventory performance.

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## APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



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15 November 2019

Dr J J Jordaan  
*Per e-mail*  
Dear Dr Jordaan

**EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 15112019**  
**Student: Briers, CJ (21144915)(NWU-01395-19-A4)**  
**Applicant: Dr J J Jordaan - MBA**

Your ethics application on, *The influence of organizational culture on the availability of inventory and on-time delivery*, that served on the EMS-REC Ad Hoc Business School meeting of 15 November 2019, refers.

### Outcome:

The study is approved as a minimal risk study. A number NWU-01395-19-A4 is given for three years of ethics clearance.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Linde'.

Prof Bennie Linde  
Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)  
Potchefstroom Campus

## **APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT**

**The following open-ended questions were asked during the interviews:**

1. How do you experience the organization's reaction speed when client needs change?
2. Tell me about your experience of the company that you work for, good and bad (Comment on whether the company provides a stable working environment and security of employment. Please explain why you say so. What makes the company different to other similar companies? How organized is the organisation? Explain your answer. Would you say that the company has a good reputation? Why? What do you think the company wants to achieve in future and how do you think it is going to get there?)
3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)
4. Tell me about your experience of the culture of the organization. (Does the company often try new things? Does the company take unnecessary risks? The level of teamwork in the company? To what extent do rules or regulations keep you from being productive? Do you feel that you have enough access to information? Tell me about the level of mutual respect in the company.
5. Do you enjoy the working environment (Do you often socialize during working hours, your experience of the environment that you work in, is excessive conflict in the workplace? How is it handled? Why is the work that you do important? Explain)
6. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve motivation in the workplace? What should the company do differently?

## **APPENDIX C: DATA COLLECTION**

### **Interview 1**

#### **1. How do you experience the organization's reaction speed when client needs change?**

I will say way we don't do good and we don't do bad but if something is new you won't be that fast you still need to check how to do it. But I know Simmer always try to be their fastest when they get something. I know Rudolph and them are always on it when something needs to be done something new him and Sinjin and they will just call us to finish it off. But they try their best to get it out as quick as possible. Maybe with more help we can do better because there are lots of jobs and other times not lots of jobs but we can do better.

Our client they want lots of different jobs, that job then we just do it like.

I think we are quickly enough as I see where I work. You can come to us and with my colleague that I work with, then tell as that by 5 o'clock I want this. So I think when you say by 5 o'clock you are specific that this thing must be finished by 5. I think you know better than us, we are quick enough because we always do that by the time you have given us so I think we are working together on it and we are quick enough. We can still do it better if you give us a specific time by 3 o'clock I want this. If we see by 3 we won't finish this we can come to you.

I think we can improve maybe. I don't say the foundry don't do their jobs right but if it castings come at a better quality from foundries we can get parts out quicker. Maybe you don't have to grind here and there. I know small things but if it can come more perfect. Some parts have lot of fettling work, other parts do not which saves time. Sometimes there are delays in orders as well, the customer says they want a part now but then the raw material first needs to be ordered which can take long to get here and then the job needs to be rushed by production to get it out.

Like the bases. You can tell us that there are bases that are coming, but we are stopped on a specific job but then have to wait for the bases. Because if we put another job then the bases come.

It doesn't mean just because I work in quality I should only do quality work. If there is no job for me there then these jobs urgently need to go out then we need to work together. We all work for one company, if the company does bad, everyone will be doing bad. It doesn't mean that we can say if it is an urgent job that it is not my job. Rather than standing around and doing nothing, everyone can help to get the parts out on time.

If I am not deliver then I can go to other departments to help with their jobs to be faster to go out.

I see most of the times it is a problem that if I want to help a person it is a problem and then at the time I didn't have another job to do and I don't want to just stand around for managers to find me doing nothing. But I know sometimes I don't ask if I can help out in other departments, I just go and help. I must ask, sometimes I do wrong as well because I do not ask.

Where we used to work with urgent jobs we need to put pressure in order to get that part out as quickly as possible.

**2. Tell me about your experience of the company that you work for, good and bad (Comment on whether the company provides a stable working environment and security of employment. Please explain why you say so. What makes the company different to other similar companies? How organized is the organisation? Explain your answer. Would you say that the company has a good reputation? Why? What do you think the company wants to achieve in future and how do you think it is going to get there?)**

Here at Simmer we have a job while we have a client. So as long as orders keep coming in, we will feel safe to work at Simmer.

I can say I feel safer here. There are companies that pay more but your job is not safe, they can easily retrench you and tell your job is not there anymore but I haven't heard of a person that was retrenched at Simmer yet. So for me I feel safer to work here than to go somewhere else. Senior management go out of their way to get new work and they will rather cut overtime than have to retrench anyone or to let us work short time.

As I am new to be scared is normal for me. I think as my colleague says there is not retrenchment in the company so it is up to us to ensure that our jobs are safe. If you work your job is safe, if you don't work your job is not safe.

As our drivers, if you see me somewhere not doing my job then I will be scared because accidents can happen anytime. I need to go straight to the clients and not do other stops along the way.

People are scared to report when they do something wrong because they are afraid that they will then lose their job. But the more honest you are the better. You must not lie about mistakes you make as then they can tell you to go. Honesty is therefore the best way.

I feel safe because we are working together well as a team and we will pull through in difficult times.

With teamwork this place can go very far, I know it is already good but it can get better if people work together. For me when managers come from meetings they do not necessarily explain what was discussed in the meeting and is expected from you. Some managers do explain well whereas others are the opposite. You then carry on as normal then there were changes in the meeting which the supervisor was supposed to convey to the rest of the employees which doesn't always happen.

Our management, I will say if we can be scared if one of the persons in management comes and doesn't know what I'm doing he just comes to shout. Then it makes me feel that I am on the wrong side and I am scared. But if I'm wrong I do understand that the tone of managers will change.

As I can hear from other people also in the engineering industry Simmer is different. They don't get bonuses when they do bad, they do not get bonuses when they meet their targets or money for shavings and stuff like that. You don't see that in other companies. Senior management also explains what is going on every Monday and Friday on how the company is performing and if things are not right. Other companies won't do that, they will just say the company is doing bad with no explanation. Here at least they explain what is going on so you know where you stand. Transparency in the company is good.

I don't know how other companies do their things but I do think we have good quality products. Every company will have their mistakes here and there and try to fix it and let it go

through because it is a loss for you if you just let it go like that. But I do think we have good quality.

I saw it where there is a product that we need to do it quickly, but there was a delay as management first had to decide whether or not we can allow that quality to pass or not. That shows that we care about our client and are not just driven by money.

I think we have good product because our clients are satisfied with what we are doing.

I don't think we would have been here if we didn't have good quality.

I think we can do better. There are too many changes too often especially from the client, we try it in a specific way and then the client suddenly wants it another way. Things change due to this which confuses employees down the line. But I do think that the structure that the organization put in place is very good. But it is going to take time, because I do not know if we will ever get to where we need to be with the changes that clients require from us. Here and there are small things that still need to be sorted out. If the client wants something then you must give it, you cannot tell them that you are busy with this and that and not give them what they want.

I think our clients are happy, because whenever we supply something to the client, managers do not come back and say there is something wrong with the part. And if it is wrong, the manager must say that the client does not want this. So I would say that it is good what we are doing for the client. Maybe the clients are complaining to management, this must be communicated to everyone of the employees so that we are aware of the current issues.

I would say the company has a good reputation, as you do not hear any complaints. Like the non-conformances compared to the year before it was twelve NCR's where the previous year it was seventy something so I would say we have a good reputation and things are improving further.

As I know senior management wants to build the company and sister company bigger so that we do not have to be dependent on other suppliers. To make the company better we have to work as a team because if we do not work as a team it will never happen.

I think we will achieve our goal through the different jobs we are doing and not being reliant on just a single client for the largest portion of our work.

The reason that I believe that is due to the owners of the company. For two young guys to have a mind like that I respect them a lot because I always say to other people check these two young boys running this company and the company is going higher and higher and they are so young. They are not just after money and buying expensive things, they are looking to improve the company to make it bigger and better.

**3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)**

I mean, I am enthusiastic, because I want the best quality to go out. That's why I'm not working there but I like to be there also to see if there is a mistake I like to help and fix it and stuff for the best quality to go out as possible. Because I know sometimes Mike and Stina have too much on their hands they can look through mistakes and stuff like that then I can show them or sometimes if you bring the jobs here to finished goods and I see a mistake then I sometimes try and fix it myself without telling them, then I will just tell them afterwards saying there was this and this mistake, I fixed it up. That's how it's supposed to be you are not supposed to burn people and stuff, you must help each other.

I do feel that I am making a difference because I don't just do my job, I do other people's jobs also

I will say not always, most of the time you do. I can say nobody's perfect, I can't expect you to be there everyday. There are lots of jobs to be done. This place is big, so we must also bring from our side to make sure everything is OK.

I think we are here to work. In our company, if they want us to knock off late, they tell us and then they organize the transport for us, that says something. I think we are on good terms with our management.

Yes, when you ask, you get. No one will just say they don't know.

I think there is opportunity. We, like us, we working like general so that we can we do anything that our management asks of us. So that when management sees there is an opportunity somewhere else, they will put me somewhere else.

I feel there is opportunity to grow.

I will say we are rewarded with the bonuses that we get. Sometimes, these guys weren't here then (referring to new employees), Philip would just go out and get us ice cream even when it's hot he would give us stuff like that. It just shows the appreciation for the guys working hard and stuff like that. They have appreciation for us, they will reward us, lot of other companies don't do that.

The reason it isn't like this now is because last year was a bad year.

I think I'm two months here, but management though this young man needs something, bonuses. And they just put something, even that they can think about you and that they need to give you this. It is happening even if you think you don't deserve it, cause I wasn't thinking that I was going to get something December. And then I thought to myself, yes this is a company.

Even when I started here I didn't think I was going to get something the first year, but I got and I appreciated it. This past year I also thought we weren't going to get bonuses, but they made a way for us to get, even though we only performed this last three months they even gave us that and our full benefits.

Ja like if you do something you have to take responsibility if you didn't ask if it is right. Like if you go on and you make a lot of jobs that are scrap which will be a loss for the company. You will have to then take responsibility for it.

I don't think it is expected, but I think it must be like that. Because you mustn't think like you will get into trouble, all of us are going to suffer under that. If the NCR's are going to get more, we will get less jobs. Because you mustn't think now Christoff is going to get into trouble alone, all of us are going to suffer under that is why we need to make sure the jobs are right. If you see a mistake, let the person know that it is not right because otherwise we all fall under that. It is going to be a bad NCR for all of us not just for John and them, we are all going to suffer because the more NCR's the less jobs we are going to get. And that is how it works.

**4. Does the company often try new things? Why do you say so? Tell me about your experience of the culture of the organization. (Does the company often try new things? Does the company take unnecessary risks? The level of teamwork in the company? To what extent do rules or regulations keep you from being productive? Do you feel that you have enough access to information? Tell me about the level of mutual respect in the company.**

I would say they try new things like taking new jobs on so we can survive. John is always on his way out looking for new jobs. I know it's tough out there, but we are doing very good according (in comparison) to other companies.

I think without taking risks you won't get anywhere, you have to take risks. Otherwise this company would have been gone a long time ago if they didn't take risks. We have to.

You mustn't just think one way you must think from both sides how it is going to be if you don't do this then this is going to happen and stuff like that.

I think there is teamwork but it can be better. If the guys are more serious and stuff then it can get better for sure.

Where I work, I have some people that I can go on to and ask to help me with the forklift. So there is still improvement to be done. I can come to Sharnau and I can say come and help me, he don't give me any problem.

You see the thing is for me né, I can help anybody. The problem is only I have always lots of things I have to do. I have to do this for this one, no one want to ask other people because they know I'm not going to say no. Now everybody is on me now, you can ask him also. If the other guys can also help, if we have teamwork this place can be perfect.

If they do have you can have some like I said he will help you anytime, he will try to make something happen. If he says he's coming, then you know he is coming (Sharnau).

Let's say I do not know how to strap a job, then Sharnau will come to me and say make so and so then I can also learn how to strap a job.

It is in all areas, it is not just here, it is all over. It doesn't mean that if you work on this machine you cannot help this person, now he is struggling just to put the thing even though you can see that you have the time to do it now, they must wait for one of us to come and

do it or whoever. One of the cleaners must come to help him to do that dingese. We must help each other, we are family, we can all benefit. So what you get we get.

There is nothing that I can think of now that keeps me from doing my job effectively. The only thing is for me we will get an instruction from you, then Nevell comes, then Jacques comes, then you do not now what you need to do anymore now. Because three different people told you to do this thing and maybe Allen also. But now this other person come and tell you if I say you must do it I don't care about Christoff. Now you do not now anymore if you are doing right or not anymore.

I do feel like that because I know what is going on in the company and where we are and stuff. John and Philip can tell us all the time in the meetings what's going on and stuff like that.

There is sometimes and sometimes there is not. It is normal for me as well, we are human all of us. You will get sometimes that this person wants and he is going to scream at you. Sometimes there is times that there is unnecessary screaming even though you did nothing they will just scream at you. But there is like respect I will say, that is just how our business is.

**5. Do you enjoy the working environment (Do you often socialize during working hours, your experience of the environment that you work in, is excessive conflict in the workplace? How is it handled? Why is the work that you do important? Explain)**

I won't lie I do sometimes. You can't lie everybody does. For me the job needs to go out, I finish a job and then socialize afterwards. If I know a job needs to go out then I will be serious on this job.

Obvious we have to work and not socialize.

Because when I am working and when I see you I start to work. Because now I am just playing, when I see you I am busy, when you pass I go to socialize.

For me I have a problem with the heat, honestly I can't take it. I even sleep with the fan on every night, it is just a problem that I have. Winter is better for me, you can still cover up. I don't know if it is the sugar that is doing that. Even in winter I do not sleep with a blanket.

I think where I work it can be too hot because of the PPE (shotblast) that we have to wear. We used to wear something on top of this wetsuit, and that thing is too hot. When I come out, this wetsuit is wet wet, like I came out of water. I just think that if I feel it this hot, what will happen if we had to close all the doors but it is work, we have to work.

For me I wont be able to work in the shotblast. The heat I will not be able to stand. I cant work in that shotblast. You can ask me anything else but not there. Especially when I have something like a mask, I cant breathe properly through the thing.

There are conflicts here and there. Sometimes people want you to do their jobs and then they stand back. It is not right like that, I am not going to mention names. You doing your job and then that person wants you to do his job then he is sitting somewhere doing nothing.

I generally resolve the problem myself if I tell that guy I am not going to do it, he must do it himself.

It is important because I put bread on the table for me and for everybody else also. We help each other so that we can look after our families.

I think mine is to clean the job. The job must go clean and it is important that I have to.

If you see the castings like that and you don't shotblast you just take it to paint and take it to the customer, other holes can come out. If you do shotblast you can still see where there are issues on the job. So it is very important for him to do his job so other people can see if there are mistakes. Whatever you do is important. Even now that the job is finished it is important to grind the edges, otherwise the edges can cut you.

**6. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve motivation in the workplace?  
What should the company do differently?**

I think as I am new, when I shotblast and I am finished. You will hear the guys that I am working with, yeah you are doing it right. I know then that I am right. That motivates me that I am doing something right. I came here knowing nothing about shotblast but now they can say you are good at this. They can see that if its covers, he like to do it and that motivates me.

When mr Allen takes me from somewhere where I am working and then take me to another workplace and when I am doing the job there and they tell me I am doing well. Those words are influencing me.

I think to be honest, we are motivating each other because when we are working with each other. He has no motivate me or say no you are not doing it right, he has to say that because he knows what he is doing and I don't. He has to motivate me when I am doing it right, so that I can work I can work that way.

Like as if, as I am a driver, I know how to drive a forklift, but it is not allowed to because I do not have a license to drive it.

I would just say we have to. We also got guys, even the management and the staff and the employees if you did something good, tell the person you did good also. I cant think of something now to say.

Don't work against each other work together. We must motivate each other like that. If you need my help and I am not busy let me help you, it motivates me also. When I struggle with a job, then you come and help me. That is how the company can grow. It is not necessarily motivation, but teamwork. Motivation can work in a lot of ways I can say.

We always need to improve. If you do anything we have to improve. So I think even if we don't know what needs to be improve, we need to improve. 4. We have to have a positive mind.

This is my first time in engineering, for me so far I cannot say this is wrong, this is right. To me it is right so far.

### Comments

But where I come from, this interviews does make a company better. You have to understand where the people comes from, but sometimes there are things that you don't see that they employees can tell you. So that's what makes a company better.

As a team, because sometimes when I come to work and I greet you, you just, so I ask this why do I greet this man, he is quite. You see, now I start to feeling something heavy, is something wrong, no this is not good. When I am happy, that is nice, then I am happy and I will work better.

But since you came here you always greet somebody, even if he's hands are dirty, you'll take his hand.

## **Interview 2**

### **1. How do you experience the organization's reaction speed when client needs change?**

We do react quick because we are breaking down all the time and stuff like that. If they need something, we give it to them. Its not like what we make can wait a week, it gets done.

We follow the instruction, to stop with one thing and start with another. We do not necessarily have the high-level view.

I haven't been here as long as the rest of the guys in the interview, but I believe that when it comes to change and what is needed from the customer we do address it as speedily as possible. I mean, we change the jaws of the chucks and get the stock to go to the floor, the raw materials and address what is needed. I think we are doing the best we can, uhm, there is no faster way of doing it based on the fact that you need to change your chucks, I mean your jaws for the different jobs, and if it is a rough job and you are busy with a finishing job, let's say on a critical list now it goes to the order list now you need to change out jaws or whatever the case might be. So I think we are doing as best we can.

2. Customer requirements reduce productivity in a sense due to multiple setups for the same batch.

### **2. Tell me about your experience of the company that you work for, good and bad (Comment on whether the company provides a stable working environment and security of employment. Please explain why you say so. What makes the company different to other similar companies? How organized is the organisation? Explain your answer. Would you say that the company has a good reputation? Why? What do you think the company wants to achieve in future and how do you think it is going to get there?)**

No. We always are threatened with being fired. If you make a mistake you will go for a hearing, many of the employees are stressed about this.

The fact that we are being held accountable is part and parcel of the industry we are in.

You can't just do what you want and mess up jobs continuously. It comes from both sides.

I think we have a stable work environment. I think job security is good in a sense that you have a job. The only problem is that I think the way of talking to the employees, you know there is no proper way of talking to the employees. Sometimes the guys feel what I've noticed on the machines the guys are scared to make a mistake because they know when they make a mistake its going to be "you are out by the fucking gate". Everytime when they talk to you its like swearing at you and "cant you fucking read drawings" "cant you fucking do this" I think that is the main problem and some of the guys they get scared to make mistakes and that is how they end up making mistakes. Because I don't know if I must do it this way or that way and then next minute he is doing it this way and its wrong. Or somebody telling, maybe one of the supervisors telling the operator do it this way and makes a fuckup and the other one comes and asks why didn't you do it this way. There is no proper channel of saying no, lets do it this way and do it the right way first time. I think that is the biggest problem, the guys don't know if they are allowed to make mistakes or if they are not allowed to make mistakes and what are the consequences of it. The consequences are always they are going for a hearing. That makes them scared and that is why they are making so many mistakes.

I haven't worked at a similar company before. But this place to me is too many chiefs, no Indians.

The reason I cant comment is that I have not worked for another engineering company.

I think we are better than other companies. Ive worked at a few engineering companies and I think we are better. We are much busier than the other companies. We have a good team, Ive been at other places and they don't function like us. So we do have a good team and I do think we are better than most places Ive been. I think we are so busy because we have a good team. We wouldn't have all this work if we were doing things wrong.

Yes we do make a good quality product. When parts come of the machines they are right.

I think from a foundry point of view we can improve, but from Simmers point of view machining the job the guys are doing the best they can to get a proper and correct part out as per drawing specification. But I think from a foundry point of view and jobs coming to us there we need to improve a lot with the quality because there are a lot of jobs that come in here where we find different defects which we need to fix. We should not be a repair shop for castings and we are doing a lot of repair work and that is keeping some of the jobs back.

If you look at the inspection department how many jobs do we repair there? Which is actually not correct. Here's a finished product so what we need to do here is just touch up and paint and then the part needs to go to the store. But we are doing too much work here, we have to grind all the foundry's jobs here. And it is keeping the production up that can go out to the store. And then sometimes you can find Alan shouting at the guys saying they are doing nothing standing around, grinding jobs for two three hours. That is why the jobs are not going out because we are doing the foundry's job. From this side here, the lady that is doing the casting inspection, it must be stopped from that side there. And sometimes you get that she is overruled and that we will fix the casting which is ultimately wrong. Because at the end of the day the foundry does not know that they are making a lot of castings scrap. We are showing them pictures and yes we will fix it, but in the end nothing happens. Because when the next casting comes from the foundry we have exactly the same issue. We keep on repairing and meanwhile our actual jobs stand still.

Yes we are organized. Sometimes there are small things which you need but that is sorted out swiftly.

I would say it is organized. Obviously in any company there are customer requirements as pertaining to the first question. We work according to the customer, so at the end of the day we are as organized as can be but that also depends on the customer's requirements and needs because that changes. I think we are well organized but we need to accommodate the customer. The customer comes first at the end of the day, that's what keeps us busy.

I think we are organized but there is also room for improvement. We can improve on a lot of things which we are currently doing. For the guys on the machines, they must work exactly according to drawing and not to what used to work previously. So I think what we need to improve on that, if the part ordered is to revision C, we need to machine the part to revision C. They mustn't say we've always been doing it to a specific revision and we never had problems. Just an example, you have an open size which you need to machine to 150 plus minus 0.3 then the operator machine to 150.3 or 150.4. Forget about the 0.3 tolerance that you have, if the drawing says 150, machine it to 150. A lot of the guys are going over that size because we have that specific tolerance.

Also, sometimes you have a jig now you want to make it a bit bigger to fit on the jigs.

Then we need to make sure that the jigs are correct, because the next job that we machine will be different to the one we machined to fit on the jig.

Those M100's that I do, on those we always machine the bore a bit bigger.

All I'm saying is that it is not all of them that you will machine, some of them will have enough material that you can take it and put it directly onto the jig, it will fit when it is machined to 150, other ones you will make 0.15 bigger but it is not all of them.

If it does not go onto a jig then I understand but there are some jobs that we have to cut larger.

The guys also need to improve on their measuring skills and look after their measuring equipment. Because that is important, if your measurement equipment is not right and you are not organized in that area, how are you going to check the jobs. We are sending the measuring equipment to calibration to ensure it is accurate, then after one, two, three months you go and check that same measuring instrument and then you will find that it is 0.05 or 0.06 out.

I agree 100%. I've seen the way people leave their mics and that. You can't put mics and verniers on top of one another. It has to be placed neatly in its box. If measuring equipment is placed on top of one another it does get damaged.

I would say yes, the company does have a good reputation.

I think because we are sending out good products, our products are good. Quality improved a lot and that is why our reputation is good.

We are the customer's number one supplier.

I think by now we should be, according to what I can call back to what oom Bokkie told me is that our NCR rate has dropped sufficiently from the year before at 82 to about 12 or 11 last year. So it has gone down more than 80% which is good. And that is one reason why our company's reputation will be good. I think we should be in the top three suppliers to our customer if not number one. Our products for last year has been one of the best.

From managements point of view it will obviously be to keep the work which we currently have, and not to lose it to other suppliers. They are also trying to approach new customers

so I believe growth is what the company is aiming for and at our meetings in the mornings or in the afternoons it does sound like management is trying to spearhead more work for us which is a good thing as it shows growth.

**3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)**

There are times when you feel enthusiastic to come to work and there are times when you don't feel enthusiastic to come to work but I'll rather not elaborate on that. Sometimes it's personal issues, sometimes it's things at work.

Money makes me happy.

it is a very broad question. There are a lot of factors that can contribute to whether or not you are enthusiastic. Work is work, we come here and do our best. We spend more time here than we do at home. Yes, stuff will happen and you will get spoken to in a manner that you don't necessarily appreciate. But that is the nature of the beast and there is not much that we can do about it. Sometimes it is just how you feel, you wake up in the morning and you are a go getter, other times you just feel a bit down.

More money will make us more enthusiastic to come to work. Work is work I guess.

I do not necessarily need support in what I do. That what I need I do get. Sometimes I do wait long for a forklift with an operator to move material around. Then the question becomes why are you not doing anything?

I do agree with him, if I didn't drive a forklift I would also be waiting plenty. But it definitely has improved a lot, previously I used to go mad and eventually I forced the company to get me a forklift license.

From my point of view I would say yes there are opportunities to grow because I am a general worker. That's my current position but it will be different from the other interviewees.

I have moved into different positions about seven times, I started off in front at inspection and moved along from machine to machine.

I say no. It does not get awarded. If you do something extra you do not necessarily get something extra. Even if you do it faster you won't get a thank you, so it is a no.

We are here to do our job but yes I do feel that there are employees who go the extra mile that are not acknowledged or get a thank you or whatever. I'm not saying that there always should be money involved but just a thank you. They kick you out when you make a mistake, but when you've done a good job a personal thank you would be appreciated for the extra mile you've gone. But I do come here to do my job, if my employer is happy then I am happy.

Yes and no. Because if you put a carrot in front of somebody and say that is the carrot you are going to get to do something you must abide by it. Yes, there are times when like Mike said we only got a bonus once last year, that is understood because the work level was very low. But if you put something there and say this is what you are going to get, you have to abide by it. If I can take an example, last year none of the guys got the awards which were promised to them. At the Christmas party John said they are going to announce the guys which are going to get awards and then the incentives will be given to them. It never happened, it is demotivating for the guys. Now the guys are going to say the year before they got, the year before that also, but this year nobody got anything. But we were promised we were going to get something, whoever it is. And nobody got something. So don't put something there and promise they guys they will get it and then it does not happen. Yes I agree with the guys, we are here to work, we are here to do a job and that is what we must do. But it is not fair to put an incentive there and not deliver on it.

If there is an award then the guys will want to excel and do better and it will also motivate others. It will motivate them more than being scared of the hearings and they will be more focused on doing the job properly and they will be awarded at the end of the day.

If I can take a small example from when Shanon was here. Are you wearing your masks, are you wearing your earplugs, are you wearing your glasses, those types of things. And I mean the guys were motivated, at the end of the month you get R250 or whatever does not matter how small the award is but they were getting something so if you go to the workshop you will always see that the guys are wearing their PPE. And if they do not have it, they will go and collect it. It motivates them to say, no, I need to do this.

You must take initiative but the okes don't want to do it because if something goes wrong then they get warnings or get fired. Now they make 100% sure before they do anything.

I think top management a lot of the times decisions are made by management and it does not get recorded. Then when an NCR is raised by the customer then the operator will still get blamed as the manager would have already forgotten about the call he made with regards to a specific part. These decisions from management should get recorded somewhere in order for the operators to feel secure as well. Because now the guys are worried that if the manager forgets about the call he made it is going to come back to bite the operator. Employees with suggestion, especially the ones with experience, their inputs or suggestions should be considered. At least then you would've tried something different.

I think the cell leaders should get more responsibility.

Whatever additional responsibility cell leaders are given, that must be noted and they need to be properly informed of that. We are here to check the jobs, not to check that the employees are not on their phones.

The cell leaders must be able to make decision to tell the other employees yes that is right or no that is not right, because honestly there are some of the cell leaders that are too scared to take that responsibility. They will always ask somebody else, either the manager or the inspector. Or they can at least come with a suggestion and then find out if it will work or not. Why are you in that position if you are too scared to take responsibility? It must be the exception not the norm that issues are escalated. If there is then an issue, then management is aware of it and they were the ones who made the decision.

**4. Tell me about your experience of the culture of the organization. (Does the company often try new things? Does the company take unnecessary risks? The level of teamwork in the company? To what extent do rules or regulations keep you from being productive? Do you feel that you have enough access to information? Tell me about the level of mutual respect in the company.**

Ja that one is a very tricky one because the company implement things and then there is no feedback coming to the employees. I'm just thinking of an example like the inspection sheets. Inspection sheets were implemented, the guys were told you fill in the inspection sheets and nobody gave feedback to the guys to say this is what you are doing wrong and this is the correct way of doing it. Management stands in front of everyone saying there is a new thing we are doing which we are doing this way and that way finish and klaar. And then the guys won't know exactly how to do it or what to do. Feedback from top management to

the workers is not good enough because the guys are not getting proper feedback. And if the guys make a mistake they get nailed for that mistake. I honestly don't think Allan is capable to explain to the guys what to do. I'm not saying Allan is stupid, but I don't think he is the proper guy to explain to the guys. I think Rudolph or maybe even the cell leaders. Rudolph should rather call the cell leaders and explain to them this is what we are going to do and this is how we are going to do it.

I don't know about that side, but this side (heavy bay) we are doing it and everybody is informed. We got all of the guys together and they all know.

I used to go to the guys to try and explain to them because they asked me how do I fill in this thing, what do I do. That's why I'm saying management need to get they guys or at least the cell leaders together to explain to them this is what is implemented, this is what we are going to do and if you have any questions there is a cell leader that you can talk to. We are trying new things but the training that goes with it is not sufficient.

It is very important as well that if a new procedure is put in place when the guys have been doing it a certain way for so many years that feedback is provided with regards to the results, is it paying off or is it worthwhile. Just management saying ok guys, we have implemented this and everyone is doing adhering well and we are on the right track to tell the guys what you are doing is worthwhile. It is not just supposed to be additional work like filling in papers if it does not mean anything for the company.

I think coming back to the drawings, the guys must have it in their minds that if they finish with a drawing they need to take it back to the drawing office or sending it to the next operation. I'm speaking specifically about those guys there with Allan, Amos and them, they've got old drawings lying there that are old revisions. They then machine the job to the old revision because that is how they have been doing it for years and we never had problems. Then there is a new revision and there is a fuckup and they want to put somebody else into trouble, no I have spoken to this one and I have spoken to that one. If you are not using drawings it must go back to the drawing office. Because that is where the biggest fuckups come from. If a guy machines a job, he must get a drawing and an inspection report with the correct revision and everything. Because now some of the guys are keeping drawings according to previous revisions at the machines, then there is a revision change and then there will be a mistake on the part without anyone picking it up.

We are not really in the position to comment on risks apart from a safety perspective. Considering that we do not take any unnecessary risks. The company does provide everything required for us to do our jobs in a safe manner. But I would not say that the company takes unnecessary risks.

I think the biggest risks are when we send parts that does not conform to drawing.

I think we are working well as a team but we can improve. This is one of the reasons that we are doing well, but there is definitely room for improvement. We can improve on a lot of aspects considering teamwork. But the guys are working well as a team apart from the 5% of the guys who are pulling to one side.

Teamwork and reassurance should also come from the cell leader who needs to get involved with the rest of the cell. I think overall we are doing well. But there is a disconnect between heavy bay and the rest of the workshop as far as I understand. It will be good if we can standardize both workshops to prevent misalignment or glitches in the workshop. We all ultimately work for the same company and towards the same goal.

We can't smoke inside which prevents us from working while we smoke.

There are not really rules which keep us from being productive.

Yes, we do get information at our morning meetings on a Monday and afternoon meetings on a Friday. We have more information than most places. The bosses don't have to do that but they do give us a lot of information. We know where we are so yes we do get enough.

It helps us also to focus and to understand. It also gives us motivation to keep doing a specific product. We also understand what the reasons are why we do what we do and why specific parts are being moved away.

Mutual respect from me to the boss? There is nothing.

I don't think that is a matter of no mutual respect. It is just the way in which you talk to each other. I think that is the biggest thing, the way people to talk to one another. Employees need to be approached differently. If you shout at some of the employees it is going to go in the one ear and out the other. The managers also speak to the operators in different ways.

**5. Do you enjoy the working environment (Do you often socialize during working hours, your experience of the environment that you work in, is excessive conflict in the workplace? How is it handled? Why is the work that you do important? Explain)**

Normally when I speak to someone else during working hours it is about work.

There are times when you will speak about something else other than work but I do not think it happens often.

You will not always talk about work but I do not think it is excessive. As long as we know our work is done then we know standing and talking to someone else is at least not impacting on your work. We do have that little bit of communication through which we build a relationship.

One person would take it one way and another person another way. The environment is okay.

I think the environment is good, it is only the dust situation. We have been talking about that. I don't think there is anything we can do about the dust because cast iron gives off a lot of dust. I don't know if there is perhaps a way in which they can extract it just to get some of it out. We spoke the previous safety guys as well but nothing has happened as of yet.

The heat. Anyone who walks past my machine says they don't know how I work there. It's crazy hot. But I've spoken about it before.

Conflict is handled afterwards and handled in the correct manner. You are here all the time and you are going to get frustrated.

Jobs needs to get done so you can carry on with the next one.

It is a collective to get a job done. Everybody needs to play their part, does not matter where in the process they fit into. That is ultimately why we are here to do a job and keep the customer happy.

You will not be here if you're job is not important. That is why every task that you get, you must make sure it is right. It's for the company as well so if the company does not send out

components of a high quality the company is going to close down. So each and every persons job is important in the company.

**6. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve motivation in the workplace?  
What should the company do differently?**

Money talks

Targets and bonuses in line with the targets. But if there aren't too many jobs then you know you are not going to get a bonus. It is not all about money, there are other ways in which management can also motivate us. I'm not sure how they can do it. For most of the guys its mostly about money.

Growth within the workplace.

A simple thing like having a braai also motivates the guys because you can socialize in a different environment and speak to management etc.

I think my main concern is the feedback because we are not getting proper feedback. Oom Bokkie is the only guy who will call us together to say this is what was discussed in the meeting. I know what is going on because Bokkie is giving us feedback. It motivates us as well, because if there is concern with inspection he comes and tells us what needs to be changed to fix the situation. Top management is giving us feedback but I do not think there is sufficient feedback coming from middle management. If it is concerning the employees or concerning the products that we produce it is important to get that feedback. The employees need to be made aware if there are any issues. It is important for us to know what is expected of us.

Communication is key. Information needs to filter down through the respective channels so that the employees know about it if it concerns them of the tasks that they do on a daily basis. The way it is done is also important, it should not be done in a derogatory manner or in a way which will embarrass the employee. We need to know are we doing it right, are we doing it wrong otherwise we will never know if we need to improve.

Also the other thing that is concerning is the way of talking to people. The other day me and Allan were fighting about a job, we were shouting and screaming at each other, it is not right.

If you have a problem, bring me into your office to talk. But now you are shouting and screaming and swearing and everybody hears it. It is not the proper way to talk to people and other adults. I don't expect my managers to come to me and swear at me. So communication and the way in which we are spoken to are the two biggest things. There are also a lot of the guys that need training, they have been working on machines for many years and don't know how to properly measure a part.

It will be good if there is suggestion box in which we can put our suggestions without the fear of being shot down. Communications and feedback and the way that it is given can play a big part.

### **Interview 3**

#### **1. How do you experience the organization's reaction speed when client needs change?**

I would say we respond quickly. Because we would take off a job that is already set up and then put on a job that is urgent.

Like he says, as long as we are changing the way we are working to make more jobs and to make jobs faster, it is not a problem for us. As long as we can deliver the part in the right time, we are happy.

I would sometimes have a job that I am busy with and then a manager comes and breaks me down to put another urgent job on. Only to find that the so-called urgent job is standing once I am done with it and nothing further happens. So it is confusing me when I break down a current job for a job that is urgent and then the urgent job sits around for a week or two weeks by inspection. So I fail to understand that when you say a job is urgent, how urgent it really is.

Sometimes when a job is urgent we have to break down and remember settings are different like when we are doing shafts we don't use any boring bars then they will come and say Sbu, break down and do a sleeve. A sleeve with boring bars. So it's like I'm starting a new setting, fresh. Because now I have to take out all the tools I use to cut outside diameters with to put in boring bars. So at the end of the day when you finish, this will be lying there for two weeks. And when you ask one of the bosses then he will say ahhh fuck you.

#### **2. Tell me about your experience of the company that you work for, good and bad (Comment on whether the company provides a stable working environment and security of employment. Please explain why you say so. What makes the company different to other similar companies? How organized is the organisation? Explain your answer. Would you say that the company has a good reputation? Why? What do you think the company wants to achieve in future and how do you think it is going to get there?)**

Yes, the company does. Because if something happens they will tell you, no you won't be working next month. They will maybe tell you in three months then you will at least be able

to look for another job. So we can say we are safe, they will not just say no the job is finished and you can't come back to work.

We are safe because we can see the amount of work that there is in the workshop. The amount of overtime that we need to work also shows that there is enough work to keep our busy and us in jobs.

As long as they are going to keep on firing people who are stealing, then we will be safe. And we can see this man what he did, is not right.

For me I can't really say because I am doing a different job to which I was doing before. Each company does have its own qualities for the specific job the company is doing. But I would say that day shift is more important than nightshift in Simmer and the necessary attention is not given to nightshift.

I think we are doing a better quality, because if we were not we would've seen a lot of trucks bringing back the jobs.

We are the ones cutting these things so we don't want to be making scrap.

I would say we are organized, but at times there is a bit of disorganization. Because you will plan a specific job and then Allan will come and say no don't do this, put this on so it does create confusion.

We don't do breakdowns so often anymore so I would say we are better.

I think we do have a good reputation especially for quality and it will be the same answer as for the quality question. Because if our quality was not that good then there would've been a lot of scraps or whatever on our side

To be one of the leading manufacturing firms in South Africa.

**3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)**

Yes we are enthusiastic to come to work in the mornings.

New parts that I get to do also keeps me enthusiastic and not doing the same thing over and over again.

All the managers provide support for us. I don't think so, they are doing their job. There are some workers that will be able to help you. If you go to Theo, Theo can help you. The experienced guys in the workshop do help you. It is important to have those guys, people who have done it many times. They will tell you that you need to watch this, check this and help you to not make mistakes. The cell leaders in that sense are doing an important job and must have the experience.

On night shift, the only guy that I can say I really get support from is Mike. He is the one person that helps me. I think if they can pay attention to people who work nightshift, because now we ask our supervisor questions and he doesn't know whatever you are asking about.

No I don't think so because, let me talk on my side. I started here with a small knowledge and I started here on the grinder. I was earning money, same money as the sweepers and I'm at the grinder. Then, I think it was two years, then I went to the CNC, there by the Mazak with the same money that I was earning on the grinder. I worked there for let me say two years or three years. Then I had to go and fight because I can see there is nothing happening, and only then they put my rate up. But to make my heart feel pain everyday when I wake up is to see a guy who is not improving and does not want to help the company earning a big salary. So when you ask them they will be telling you, no this guy has got 10 years, but he has got 10 years doing what? He has 10 years drilling holes. I can get my younger brother there by the location and he can also drill the hole. So there will be no need to go up. So no, there is no improvement. Even if they put you on the next machine you are still going to get the same money, that is the thing killing us. We came here to work to get the money but if you don't want to improve yourself you are going to stand in the same position. But if you want to improve yourself, take a risk like this guy going to the CNC's. You can make a batch of 50 sleeves without making a scrap. Then they will be coming to you giving you warnings, going home and not sleeping thinking eish, tomorrow is another day and maybe I can lose my job. Maybe I can do this. That thing is not good, because we took that risk.

(opportunity to move to new positions is there but it is not worth the remuneration and therefore there is no need from the operators to improve themselves, it is better to sweep the floor because there is no risk of making scrap)

I see that there are guys with many years of experience that can pick up that parts are wrong without even picking up measuring equipment. There are no guys working underneath the experienced people to actually pick up their skill and their way of doing things that can help a company and that can help an individual. What if tomorrow maybe he decides that he is not coming, who is going to see those things? There is a different department, there is a youth here, but I don't see that youth participating in the different departments. As example, inspection, I see the elders at inspection, people that can leave at any time. But the company itself it doesn't have that thing that we need to keep the skills that the elders have with the youth that we have. It's what I noticed.

I don't think so, because I came here knowing only turning. But in two months I already knew how to set a milling machine. The whole of last year I was doing my job, but nobody really knows what it means to be a hard worker or to perform. For me performing is showing that I want to be here and that is my career. It is not just any job, it is my career. So I don't think good performance is awarded.

Ja this is a good company. We want to see this company grow as that will mean that we can also grow. So we want to take this company beyond what is thought to be possible.

I think to his point, we don't have someone who is a supervisor or team leader who can recognize someone who is doing good so that management can look after someone including money. We lack of that because people that are supervisors they cant recognize that someone is doing good. The management in the office can't see what is happening on the floor. But the ones who are not greedy or selfish should be saying that guy came for a short time and I saw he done this and this and that. So management should then empower that employee, send him to school, give him a good rate. So down on the floor I do not see someone recognizing committed employees, he is all for himself.

If you make these guys happy, they are going to come here in the morning and not drag their boots. They will be working like nobody's business. But if you want to kill these guys, you need to give them the same rate as the guy who is sweeping. Cause when they see this guy who is sweeping, this guy is doing nothing. He sweep sweep sweep and take the

shavings out and carry on sweeping. This guy is working on a machine, once he drills these holes, he needs to make sure that these holes are centered. He can carry on with the off centre holes and then he is going to be in deep trouble. It is painful to see a guy who is working on a radial drill getting the same money as you and then they will be telling you no, he has been here for 20 years. And we are not saying that they must take the money from that guy who has 20 years, and put it in your salary. But the way the wages are, they are killing us on the floor. They make the people to drag their feet.

We rather ask.

Sometimes you will find out you are busy setting and then the programme says use a Sumo 12mm, and then the drawing states 11mm. You can't say then yes the programme says 11mm, let me go ahead and use that. You have to ask what is going on here which is the correct drill to use, and then they will confirm what should be done. But for next time it needs to change on the drawing so it does not have to be asked again.

**4. Tell me about your experience of the culture of the organization. (Does the company often try new things? Does the company take unnecessary risks? The level of teamwork in the company? To what extent do rules or regulations keep you from being productive? Do you feel that you have enough access to information? Tell me about the level of mutual respect in the company.**

Yes, we've got the stores now. I came here when there was no store. We've got the foundry also part of the company now making new jobs.

I don't think there are any risks that we take, or it was a good risk.

I think we work well as a team but there are those guys that don't do their part or are not serious about what they are doing. They don't even want to learn.

This thing that we are not allowed to be on our phones, sometimes a programme runs for 30 minutes and you just sit there and end up falling asleep. When you are on your phone it at least keeps you alert and you don't just sit there.

Ja that's a problem, this workshop is hot. Another thing that makes us read books using our cellphones, is what this guy is saying. If you going to look at the machine like this you will end up finding me I'm asleep.

I don't think as a non-smoker smoking is an issue for me inside. To me the guys can smoke inside the workshop. I don't think it can be bad for us as the guys smoke by their machines and then they stop.

But smoking close by, next to me it is a problem. I don't smoke but sometimes a person can have a medical condition that smoking is bad for. Like me, I am suffering with lung problems. If you come and smoke next to me it is a problem.

Yes, I do have enough access to information.

I'm not sure. Sometimes you ask questions but no-one will answer you. The people who have been in the company in senior positions should show the new guys, listen here, this is how we do things. But they keep those things away from us, so we won't know anything. And I can't go to John and ask him for this information. Our supervisors need to be informed of what is going on in the company so at least when I go to him he can tell me what to do and how to do it. While you are my boss, you still don't know so where will I go then. Sometimes you can even work two months without receiving any payslips.

I think the respect is there but sometimes you can just lose it and say something that you are not even aware that you are saying and then afterwards you wonder why you said that. The respect is there but sometimes when you are under pressure, you sometimes say things that you should not. (nightshift)

There is no respect, I can say that. There is no respect. I make mistakes, I am a human being, unnecessary mistakes and sometimes they are negligent. But it does not mean you have to make noise at me like I am a baby. Come to me and ask me what happened and I will be honest that I made a mistake. I was supposed to do this and I didn't. If I end up scrapping a part then it is my fault, do not come to me and tell me "what the fuck did you do" and shout and scream at me. Like now it like to show the other operators that if you make a mistake then I am going to do the same to you. And it is not nice. Come to me if I make a mistake. If it comes to the point that you have to give me a warning then give the warning, but if you are making noise it won't help anything because next week I will make the same mistake. Rather come to me and ask what happened so it doesn't happen again.

I would like to add on what he said. I realized there is a tendency which can make people lose respect. This thing of those guys who are supervisors or whatever, they team

themselves, for example, I make a mistake and then I will call him to find out if the issue is fixable or not fixable. That thing you will then hear all over the workshop, this thing and that workshop, he will make it sound like you did this intentionally. That thing is not a good habit. And when you want to challenge it you will see them team together. There are some people in the workshop who always team together. Those things will make individuals lose respect of each other. That will also make operators less likely to raise their hand if there is an issue on a component.

**5. Do you enjoy the working environment (Do you often socialize during working hours, your experience of the environment that you work in, is excessive conflict in the workplace? How is it handled? Why is the work that you do important? Explain)**

Yes we do socialize while the machines are running.

If we don't socialize we get used to not socializing. And at the end of the day new people are coming in and we are just sitting there watching the machine, you can't talk to anybody else.

Even if I do socialize, you will see me with one of the other operators, we are not talking bullshit from the location. Sometimes we are busy on that job, we are asking each other about the different jobs as well. And also to double check sizes just to make sure. The increments on micrometers can cause you to make mistakes. It can also be that the micrometers are out so it is always good to check with a different micrometer as well.

When you see that the machine has finished cutting, then you go back to your machine to make sure the next job goes on otherwise you are not serious about your job.

The temperature is killing us.

Wintertime there are heaters, but in the summer there is nothing that can be done about the heat.

Housekeeping is very important especially for dayshift and nightshift. Your work area needs to be clean before the next shift comes in. Shift handover is also important. If I handover to the next shift, then I make sure that the operator knows about the issues which I had and

what to look out for while cutting the job already set on the machine. The same happens when I take handover from the nightshift again.

Not excessive, but yes there is conflict.

Sometimes they don't argue, you will just hear this guy was complaining about this and this. Even though they don't come to you straight, you will find out there are some issues there which is completely unnecessary.

To eliminate the conflict we need the time with the next guy working on a specific job or machine. The next guy needs to know where you stopped and where he needs to carry on.

Ching ching ching.

If a person is looking for money then he will be doing many jobs and pushing jobs through as fast as possible. And then it comes where the company does not recognize him and he did many jobs which the company needed. They don't even see the this guy is working hard. He doesn't even get tired, he gets tired only when he gets home. I'll keep on pushing while I'm at work and then I am tired when I am at home.

In short, with my view. You are working to make my life easy with your job, I am working to make your life easy with my job. Or what I am trying to say is, that my job is important to you, your job is important to me. The role that you play is important if you don't neglect it so that the other persons around you can recognize how important you are. Because if you say the tea lady is nothing, then the tea won't come to your table. So you have to see the importance of what she is doing, doesn't matter how little it is.

**6. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve motivation in the workplace?  
What should the company do differently?**

Refer to previous question of enthusiasm.

Individual performance bonuses will encourage employees to do well and to do better.

I disagree. I've been in other companies they were doing that for individual. That thing doesn't end right. It is better incentive bonuses, if you see production is coming out in the right way, then you can say for a certain target there will be a certain bonus. So for a turnover between different ranges the incentive bonus will also be different. But individually I will be

jealous for him, even if he deserves it. Something like individual performance bonuses can be counterproductive.

If you value someone and show him that you appreciate what he is doing, without the money will motivate him. So by recognizing the person, he is motivated.

For me something like a braai does not motivate us. Some of the other guys also agree that they can rather give us the money than having a braai.

That is one of the things that makes us happy. You doing a lunch to thank us. That thing to thank us goes a long way. There are so many ways to thank someone, this is only an official way.

Jobwise for making our customer happy I still think we are running in the right direction and fighting to make WEIR happy. I mean if you look at the scrap, we are doing well.

#### **Interview 4**

**1. How do you experience the organization's reaction speed when client needs change?**

According to me when client needs change, what I saw Jacques will give me issue paper saying this one is urgent and I need to take it out immediately. Even that machine operator he stops what he was doing and start on the job that I take out.

We have to go with the client what he wants because we depend on the client. If he says he want this now, we have to give it to them now. And we are doing that according to what I see.

I agree because we sacrifice with overtime.

**2. Tell me about your experience of the company that you work for, good and bad (Comment on whether the company provides a stable working environment and security of employment. Please explain why you say so. What makes the company different to other similar companies? How organized is the organisation? Explain your answer. Would you say that the company has a good reputation? Why? What do you think the company wants to achieve in future and how do you think it is going to get there?)**

To me at some stage I feel like anything can happen because we are not depending on ourself, we are dependent on the customer. So when the client ends, what is going to happen in future?

To my knowledge, it seems like the company is going up. I can see that there are more and more jobs coming in.

My job is not safe because I'm working for an agent. I feel like anything can happen. I would rather be employed by the organization than by the labour broker.

Here at the company, when the management don't like you, they can fire you at any stage. Nobody's safe. When they don't want you they will find anything. So that means the company is threatening the jobs.

When you done something that is wrong, our management doesn't sit down with you telling you what exactly you did wrong. There should be first warning, second warning, then final, but now it is just final warning. Our job is safe but I can agree with the previous employee.

There is no employee coming to work to make a mistake, anyone can make a mistake. So the company seems like it is taking our mistake like we are doing it on purpose.

Another thing I noticed, I don't know who I must listen to, because one manager can come to me asking for this and this and then another manager comes and asks for something different. So I get confused. Managers will tell you to leave this part and do another one while a manager was already there telling you to do the one the next manager tells you to leave. So then the first manager comes and then shouts at you for not doing what he asked, meanwhile another manager asked for something else.

It's all the wrong things. We have a problem of discrimination, we have a problem of maybe the positions. Even if we go upstairs there is no black person. Here again other white people get more money than us even if we work the same position. That's the problem of discrimination.

I agree. Because if you can see, me and another guy doing similar jobs. The difference in our wage is so far, they can maybe double even triple my wage.

To my side the company doesn't provide. Because when I moved to stores, there were two other guys working there making mistakes and therefore I moved there. I've got my diplomas in stock keeping, stock control. But now they didn't recognize me for what I'm doing, I'm even rated at that rate at which I was before. That's why I said the company doesn't provide the guys the skills which they need to do their job. I work because my family needs to eat. The money for this diploma I took out of my pocket, because then at least I know I can get at least R70 per hour.

One more thing, our management is swearing at us too much. So there is no dignity to ourselves. I have a child, other people they have children. So how will your child look at you when he sees you in your work, there is no dignity.

We do make good quality products. There is no other company that can make the quality products we do, because we know our products for sure. We are the best in quality.

Since I've been working here I did not see our truck coming back with parts from last month that are scrap.

Even parts from other companies they bring it here to get fixed. So in quality we are the best.

To me organization wise, we are not so far out.

We have a good reputation. For the past three years we have been making a job for Nigeria.

Yes, because of our quality we have the reputation.

We want to get more clients and not just depend on one client.

Here in Simmer we need someone that goes out and sees new clients. A rep of sorts, but I noticed we don't have a rep. If we have one two reps, then we can get to the whole South Africa.

Another thing I see killing us is the BEE thing because companies like PRASA, Transnet, they always want BEE.

**3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)**

To me my job it is ok, I enjoy it. I enjoy what I'm doing.

Even my side, I'm happy what I'm doing. I enjoy my work.

I like when I have challenges, new drawings and new jobs.

I think we can do something better, for instance, my screen is broken, so if we can get a few things fixed it will be better.

To my side when I look at the floor, the guys are too slow to machine the components. The material will stand on the floor for a few days before they actually start machining.

No. Because of the company you can't go into any other positions, where you are you stay there.

It's like what I was talking about, the company doesn't provide skills. If the company see the guys operating and setting their machine, not calling someone to set their machine. They are doing from start to finish. If the company can provide those types of skills they can go further.

No, because I've never seen it.

It will be nice if that happens.

Many companies they give long-service awards to show appreciation and we don't do that.

I rather ask to be sure that is right. Because if I take my own decision sometimes I will be going upstairs to sign a warning. Therefore we have to ask to ensure we are doing the right thing.

For different roles in the company, some people can make more of their own decisions than other employees.

**4. Tell me about your experience of the culture of the organization. (Does the company often try new things? Does the company take unnecessary risks? The level of teamwork in the company? To what extent do rules or regulations keep you from being productive? Do you feel that you have enough access to information? Tell me about the level of mutual respect in the company.**

To me we don't do many new things, only the rules change. Like smoking outside, going to change first before clocking in. We can do things like send people for training, we never see one black person that went for training.

We take a lot of risks but the risks are not unnecessary. Buying a new machine is not unnecessary because it is something that we need to do our job.

To my side, the company doesn't have teamwork. Because it is only management that goes to the boardroom and discuss, there is no black person there at the boardroom like somebody from the floor to hear what the management is saying. I was working at Grundfos, monthly we were having a meeting everybody together. They would then show us you did

well or you didn't. We would like more feedback about our performance and how we are doing. Nobody is currently giving us feedback on how we are doing. I am just working and I don't know am I doing well or not.

Like another interviewee said earlier, there is no teamwork between the managers as all of them will give you contradicting jobs to do. So that is a problem which we have. And to me it is also important to have representative in the management meetings so that management can know about issues we are having on the ground.

Nothing, the rules and regulations do not keep us from being productive.

There is not always information about the company, it is always just push push push.

We would like to have information about what the order book is looking like and if the jobs that we currently have are sustainable. The information which we are getting on especially Monday's is good. It will be good to know where we made target and if we missed the target and by how much.

We are being sworn at for everything. We already raised this in the meeting, swearing around here is not good at all for us.

**5. Do you enjoy the working environment (Do you often socialize during working hours, your experience of the environment that you work in, is excessive conflict in the workplace? How is it handled? Why is the work that you do important? Explain)**

I can socialize the whole day but the boss does not like that the guys are standing two-two.

No, we don't socialize often during working hours, when we get together during work it normally will be about work.

The temperatures in winter it is cold because our heaters are up there.

Our environment is not allright because it is dusty inside there. Housekeeping is also very very poor.

Sometimes it does happen. And it was not handled correctly. Arguments are normal though.

Here at the organization it does happen often, even though not with me personally but with other employees. It was ultimately handled correctly.

It is about supporting my family and putting food on the table which is so important.

It is important for the end customer because without us the end customer will not be able to make their product.

**6. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve motivation in the workplace?  
What should the company do differently?**

By providing incentives to the employees. Also for employees to have suggestions and for those suggestions to be considered and implemented. That will make us feel good about ourselves and feel proud.

Money can motivate any working person, if you get enough then you will be motivated.

Incentive bonuses. For if we reach target then we get a bonus on top of our salary.

You know the father of the MD, he used to make many surprises. He will just bring us a pie unexpectedly. Or when someone passes by with icecream then he will tell them to stop and give us the ice cream.

I know things are going bad in South Africa, so even if we can just get a small increase, 1,5% then that will motivate the guys. Making sure we work so maybe next year we are going to get more than this 1%.

We can look at delivering our components in boxes, even if we are storing them in the stores. It will also help us identify the components easier.

For me where I am working it is ok. I would however like that if I need something let's say a specific tool that it come sooner to be productive to sooner.

Other companies they have people who are fixing machines in the workshop and we are big enough to employ someone permanently to do that. He can work on a machine until there is a breakdown and then he can fix it immediately.

If we can get another forklift then we will be alright. If there is a breakdown on the forklifts then we are struggling or if two are busy then another one will always be available. Also if

the guys are loading the trucks for deliveries then you can't disturb them as they will be using both forklifts to make money.

The company needs to take people to school to develop their skills. Because now the operators need to go to a specific person or wait for a specific person to set their machines. If they can set it themselves then they won't need a supervisor or setter.

When they hire people for these machines, they hire people without the skills. We need to get people who already have the know-how to operate these machines.

## **Interview 5**

### **1. How do you experience the organization's reaction speed when client needs change?**

I don't really know how it changes as normally only management see how the requirements change from the customer.

I would say that we do react quickly but some of the things which the customer needs they would say that they needed it last week already. And then we don't even have material yet, that can cause problems. The guys on the machines can only do so much and they should not be held accountable for parts being late if we were still waiting for material. In that sense it will be better to keep raw material in stock so that we can react to customer requirements even quicker. We used to keep 5x of each shaft in stock for if something like this happens. Now if the material only arrives after two weeks, the pressure translates to the operator. He can then not be blamed if any mistakes are made on the specific part.

If there is something given to me to do that is urgent then I get it out as quickly as I can. I don't have a problem to change to what is required.

I find it frustrating. Not to give the part, but to get the part out. We would make a part urgently, only to find out that the part is still in the workshop two days later. We need to get our facts right that if we break down a specific machine, that it is not for nothing. And if a job is urgent, the job should not be pushed through the whole system only to get stuck at one of the machines. And then when it is finished, inspection has to drop everything to get the part out. But it was lying on the floor for a week and it was not urgent. If we are chasing a part, it should be chased through the whole shop up until delivery. It is frustrating and demotivating to see that a job is pushed only to come to a standstill.

### **2. Tell me about your experience of the company that you work for, good and bad (Comment on whether the company provides a stable working environment and security of employment. Please explain why you say so. What makes the company different to other similar companies? How organized is the organisation? Explain your answer. Would you say that the company has a good reputation? Why? What do you think the company wants to achieve in future and how do you think it is going to get there?)**

No, I don't feel safe. If we have a bad day and make scrap then we sign a warning. Two months later you again have a bad day and you will sign a warning again. The third or fourth warning you are out the door and we have seen it with two operator recently. Especially now that I am getting closer to pension I am getting more concerned about it. It feels to me like I am going to be told now that I am 60 I am no longer welcome anymore. I don't make a lot of scrap and therefore I am alright, but not all the operators are in that same position.

I haven't really worked at other companies so I can't really say.

For me we are worse than the previous company I worked at to get jobs through the system. The previous company had trackers on the part batches, so as soon as a part is complete at one operation it is marked as completed and then immediately it is flagged to be moved to the next operation.

I've been here for so long I can't even remember what they do differently.

I've been at this company for 22 years. I enjoy what I'm doing and people do what is expected of them, but sometimes people get away with murder which would not have happened at other companies. There are employees who do however not give their all and therefore other employees have to take up their slack and they get away with it which is not fair. It is demotivating for the ones doing their part.

I can add to that, the people who give their everything everyday are being watched carefully while other employees just go with the flow. If it is pointed out by us then it is made out as if you want to get someone into trouble. The ones giving their all see this and it is starting to become an issue. It is up to everyone to make the company a success.

I think it is organized, much more than in the past. There is however still room for improvement.

It does happen that you wait for the paperwork from when the raw material was signed out to when it actually gets to you which sometimes mean that you cannot carry on with the job that was assigned to you.

I would also say that there was significant improvement over the last few years, but there will always be room for improvement still. Much better than it was though.

Yes. We do have a good reputation otherwise we wouldn't have been top supplier. We are definitely doing something right.

We would not be where we are if we had a bad reputation. We would not have grown the way we had if our reputation was bad.

Hopefully to grow even larger and get better over time.

I think the company still wants to grow but we need to be careful that we don't become too big. If you get too big then there are many other issues that come out.

We need to keep doing what we do well.

**3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)**

Yes, I am enthusiastic. I have been doing what I do now for almost 18 years and I don't have a pain with doing something new. If the machine can do it then I will do it.

Yes, I do everything that I am asked to do and even more. If I see anything which can help the company then I will do it. It's not like I get to a point where I say no this is not my responsibility. If I can add value, then I do it. I like what I'm doing, and now especially that I am the position I am in, I can decide what needs to happen with the borderline scrap parts. If I can fix them then I will.

We always get support if we need it, does not matter from who it comes, the support is always there. If you need tools, then there is no issue to purchase the tools which we need.

If we get very busy, then there are many jobs that needs to go. It will help me if I get reminded of which jobs are important by other managers just to ensure all the urgent jobs are completed and sent to the stores.

No. Or I would say there are opportunities but it goes to the wrong people. There are people who have been here for almost 20 years and then people who have been her for a few months and then they are helped to empower themselves and move forward in their careers.

People are given opportunities but when they are complete with their training then they step out of the company. The company should rather invest in the people that has been with the company for longer and which they know will stay to grow the company and make us better. I've had external opportunities which I saw over for the sake of the company, but it seems like I will keep doing what I am currently doing for time to come.

I believe there are opportunities even though I am not interested in them. I don't want to be promoted.

I am happy to do what I do and where I am currently at, but there hasn't been an opportunity in the last 17 years for me to get my red seal. I walked in here with promises that was made to help me to achieve that. I have been working for 17 years as a qualified turner but I don't have the papers to show it. It's probably not going to help me now but I just feel there are people who really can benefit the company with qualifications behind their names and then young inexperienced people are brought in who are helped with it who then step out of the company once they received their qualification.

As one of the interviewees said in the previous question, there really are employees who give their everything and then other employees who just go with the flow. But everyone is treated the same, there is not a thank, I am not saying we should be rewarded but you don't feel appreciated if you walk the extra mile.

There are people who really give their all working late nights to get urgent components out, just to be swore at the following day because the wrong commitments were made and that is what you get for working till late. There are certain people who do the work and then other people are rewarded for the work which they did.

You can walk 5 extra miles to get the work out, even doing other peoples work to get the work out. And it doesn't get recognized.

The wrong people get credit for the work which is done in the organization, not the people who actually did the work.

This makes everyone negative and the guys in the workshop take notice of how situations like this is handled. On the other hand, if the employees are appreciated, they will also see what is happening and push harder from their side.

It only needs to be a thank you, not necessarily a monetary reward. The people who worked on a specific project or urgent part, just needs to get a thank you.

It's almost like the effort you put in is not seen.

There are things which you know after many years at the company and decisions you take yourself and then there are things especially with the new jobs that you will rather find out about to ensure that you are correct. So I would rather say that you must find out from the persons directly dealing with the customer that they must confirm before you carry on with a job and then it is not right. You can't take responsibility for a decision you take on a new job which you have never done before. You can't take the risk to do something the way you think is right and then it ends up not being right. You also need to ensure that you speak to the right persons for new jobs, because someone would've said to do the job in a certain way and then if it is wrong it cannot come back to you again. There are however people who try and cover for themselves and then put the blame on you. Like when you are instructed to cut shafts without thread gauges and then the shaft comes back as scrap and then you are questioned about the your sizes which you measured. Then it is said that you know you are not supposed to cut shafts without gauges, but ultimately you were instructed by management to cut the shaft without a gauge so they should take responsibility. That is why some of the operators refuse to do some jobs without drawings or inspection sheets to protect themselves.

**4. Tell me about your experience of the culture of the organization. (Does the company often try new things? Does the company take unnecessary risks? The level of teamwork in the company? To what extent do rules or regulations keep you from being productive? Do you feel that you have enough access to information? Tell me about the level of mutual respect in the company.**

Yes, because we can see the new different components coming through the workshop, exciter casings, train wheels.

We are trying new things to ensure that the company is sustainable and that there is a future. So I am happy to see new parts coming through the workshop and we will do what we need to get it out.

If a new project is started, people with experience should be involved. Currently new projects are given to people that does not have the experience or skills and then issues arise throughout the project. Before the project starts, let's get together to get a plan together and work the plan. It's like we start a project and then only start sorting out the issues as they arise and don't identify them as risks beforehand. That also causes issues with regards to delays. Problems can be identified before the project is kicked off.

We don't really know if any risks are taken. Decisions that are shared with us I don't really see as a risk, so I can't really comment on anything. Until the message gets to you, we don't really know. If we buy new machines that we need it is not a risk as long as the appropriate operator is assigned to that machined. If an inexperienced operator is assigned to a machine then it is a risk. But otherwise anything new that comes in can only be a benefit to the company.

There are some of us who works together and then there are employees who just go with the flow.

The company has its top group, people who you can go to for anything and they will do it as soon as possible. Then you get to other employees who have excuses for everything and don't want to work together. But they are the minority. So teamwork in the group that wants together is good.

Rules with regards to smoking cause that I am much less productive. It is not just the time I spend outside to smoke, it takes my focus away from the task at hand and I have to focus all over again. I don't know a life that I can't work and smoke so I am struggling. My concentration is significantly down as well. Safety glasses and earplugs don't affect me but not smoking in the workshop affects me bigtime. Someone that doesn't smoke will probably not understand it, but my production from when the rule was implemented definitely came down. I can't even concentrate properly, forgetting sizes on the drawing. The thing is, I want to work, I don't want to go stand outside just to smoke as it feels like I am wasting time.

Same with me, I don't want to go outside just to stand and smoke. I want to be busy.

There is not much respect from the bosses as they don't even greet us when they come through the workshop. If I walk past the MD I will greet him and get no response back so it feels like I am wasting my breath. So where is the respect if he can't even greet me. I don't

want to chat with him as I am not his buddy, but he is my boss and can at least say good morning. So no there is not mutual respect from everyone. That bothers me as well not even being greeted in the morning.

The same respect I have for other people, I just expect the same back. I don't want more or anything, just to be treated the way I treat other people. I don't have a pain with it, but when there is talk about mutual respect, I just want the same respect as I give others. Does not matter the position you have in the company.

**5. Do you enjoy the working environment (Do you often socialize during working hours, your experience of the environment that you work in, is excessive conflict in the workplace? How is it handled? Why is the work that you do important? Explain)**

No, definitely not. Only lunch time, and many of the lunch times we work through lunch even on the CNC. If a cycle runs for two hours then you can't stop it. Many of the CNC machines run right through lunch. There are people who socialize, but the majority do not socialize excessively.

I don't even socialize lunch time, I sleep.

One guy gets away with murder and the ones doing all the work normally, they get all the pressure to get the work out. The rest of the people just cruise along and they get the same bonus as the rest of the guys who gave their all.

I'm happy with the environment.

In summertime it is very hot in both workshops. Measuring equipment that are overheated operators then need to take sizes which will lead to mistakes being made. Because now when the part or measuring equipment has cooled down and the part gets to inspection, then you get different sizes than the machine operator got. Then you cannot blame the employee if his equipment was so hot that it gave incorrect readings.

I don't think there is any abnormal conflict.

I don't think conflict, even between management is handled well. Because if there is conflict, they shout and swear at each other with the whole workshop watching. It doesn't concern

us but it makes you negative to see how conflict is handled between them. Go outside and sort it out, don't take it up in front of the whole workshop.

Even if there is any issue with someone, take him into the office and speak to him there, don't attack him in front of everyone. I had the issue that it wasn't my mistake but I was sworn at in front of everyone which is embarrassing. The whole workshop stopped to look at what was going on.

Because otherwise my family can't eat. I come here to do what I need to do so that I can live my life outside of work. That what is expected of me, I will do that to the best of my abilities, I am not going to screw around today to put my job in danger tomorrow.

My work is my life, if I don't have this work then where am I supposed to go otherwise. So that is also why I like to see the company grow. I don't feel like this is only the owners' company, it is each and everyone of ours and we need to take care of it so that everyone has a job in future. The company provides food to our company and that's why we need to take care of it and to ensure that everyone else is doing their work and doing it right.

99% of my life I spend at work and I spend it at work so that I can enjoy the 1% of my time at home with my family. And to make sure that I have job tomorrow. It does not help that I come here with a bad attitude and that causes the work to run out in future.

**6. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve motivation in the workplace?  
What should the company do differently?**

There is only one thing that can motivate us and that is money. How else will you motivate me if it is not with money?

Don't promise something to someone and then go back on that promise or commitment. In my eyes, if I commit anything to someone then I am going to do it does not matter if it to my disadvantage but I will do it. Don't promise me something and then turn around and don't give me what you promised as I counted on that and lived my life with that promise in mind. Then if the promise does not get delivered on then I am going to be in trouble. I take a man on his word. If you don't plan on delivering on your promise, then don't make the promise.

When you ask me for something I am going to do it anyway, you don't have to wave a carrot in front of my face to get it done. But when you make a commitment or promise then

management needs to stick to it. And if I query when there are not delivered on promises then I get the response that I must go and find out about it as it doesn't concern my supervisor. It does not work like that, many people have gotten into trouble due to empty promises. You can't promise people something and then not give it to them as they will come and look for it.

The forklifts can be replaced with electrically powered forklifts as the forklifts are smoking excessively in the workshop. That is pollution in the workshop, me smoking by my machine is nothing compared to the forklifts. The diesel forklifts are not made to operate in the workshop.

You also get gas forklifts that are much better options than diesel forklifts. When jobs are being moved around in the workshop it is impossible for you to remain working at your machine and you have to step away for a while until the forklift has finished moving parts.

Some of the forklift drivers will rev the forklifts on purpose as well.

We need to go back to the PPE which we had and fought for for many years. Everytime we get a new safety officer he does his own thing and gets PPE from a different supplier. PPE that is flame and heat and acid resistant and things does not work in these hot workshops. We fought to get the Johnson's overalls for us. The ones I'm wearing now are 8 years old. The ones we got last year, are ruined. If you grind with them then they catch fire. Give us two overalls, and a proper pair of safety boots. If you give us proper overalls each year then we will already have more than two pairs of overalls by the following year. I can't even wear the ones I got last year. It seems like the safety officers always have their own agenda when it comes to PPE. It is important to look at that. The safety boots we got last year, the shavings stick right through the soles. I am now wearing boots from two years back. The Johnsons overalls were the best from the ones we got in the past. We are also the ones that have to stand in the hot workshop with the hot overalls on while the safety officer is in his airconditioned office. It is important that it is comfortable for us because we need to wear it the whole day.

Other years we used to get T-shirts with the PPE or jackets and it has been a while since we got something like that.

To get back to the motivation. If you tell the guys that every five years they will get a jacket or two extra T-shirts or something similar then they will jump up and down for that.

Now only management gets a jacket and they in anyway sit in their nice warm offices while we have to work in the cold workshop.

I will even be willing to add some money so that we can get proper warm jackets. If management says they are willing to contribute a certain amount to it and expect us to add a R200 then I will definitely do that. I don't know how the rest of the people will feel but it will be nice to say listen here, this is my company. I even know of companies where people are required to purchase additional workwear. But just to be able to show I am proud of my company I would like to wear my company jacket. It is even good marketing for the company.

## **Interview 6**

### **1. How do you experience the organization's reaction speed when client needs change?**

I think it depends what it is and who it is. Some people are quicker than others and some tend to procrastinate. So I would say it is reasonable.

If it is castings that needs to change it can take forever due to lengthy procedures, but that is not our problem. Problems that arise from that is that once the castings have change the pressure is on the production team to get the parts out as they are normally critical by the time the part has been fixed. And then when the part is a day late due to production then the production team gets the hiding while it took six weeks for the casting to get sorted out first. When a change like that needs to take place, we need to start pushing from the beginning, and put pressure and the patternmaker or the foundry to get the part out. We must not only start pushing once the ball is in our court and all the pressure is on us. Someone needs to be identified to place pressure on the process from the beginning to ultimately allow us more time to supply a better quality product.

### **2. Tell me about your experience of the company that you work for, good and bad (Comment on whether the company provides a stable working environment and security of employment. Please explain why you say so. What makes the company different to other similar companies? How organized is the organisation? Explain your answer. Would you say that the company has a good reputation? Why? What do you think the company wants to achieve in future and how do you think it is going to get there?)**

Yes, I don't think there is a threat. There have been times when we where threatened and being told there are a 1000 people lined up outside the gate looking for work, but the company know full well that those people can't come in and do what we do. But day to day I don't think.

I've been working here for 17 years and I'm still here. There is no threat as long a you do the work.

As long as you tow the line you are safe. Financial stability there is not a problem, we all know the company is strong. One thing, in the negative process of saying other companies

are closing down. You can't really go out there and find work with other companies. The positive side of that, everyone can see that in the company and that we are financially stable. There are a lot of reasons for that.

I come from a different background so I can't really say.

Also the teamwork in this company is much better than the place I used to work. There was too much negativity.

When it comes down to us having to work as a team we get it done.

We have owners who are very involved in the day-to-day running of the company whereas you will find managers employed by the owners to run other similar sized companies. Owners are rarely involved in companies like this, they are doing something else and they trust their managers back at the ranch. It's not always good but it is not always bad. I think there is more pro's in that than con's to have the owners directly involved with the company. It's a fact that if the cat's away the mice will play.

What I've seen at other companies where I worked is that we had systems in place on which employees were graded from the broom sweeper right up to the highest manager, they were rated and graded by the person most qualified to grade that person. So to me there is no system to bring out the positives, plenty systems bringing out negatives though.

The grading system will tell you what you are doing right, what you are doing wrong and what you can improve on. There is nothing like that here.

At the company it is just you come to work, you cruise, you go home. People are overlooked due to the lack of a proper evaluation procedure to determine performance. Things like employee of the year needs to be maintained and then it truly needs to be the best performing operator and be based on merit. It also should not be everybody gets a turn reward, it should be for the person who deserves it. But if there is a grading system in place where people know they will be graded it will be positive, because at this point it seems like no one sees or cares how hard I work. There is no incentive for anyone to shine.

From this side to that side our quality is good.

Quality is excellent at the company and the proof is in the pudding. We wouldn't have the work that we have if our quality was perceived to be bad either. If you talk about companies

that are battling, then you need to realise your true resource lies with your people and not necessarily the machines. That is where you make your money, but if your people can't produce a quality product on a specific machine then it does not contribute to the company. If we look at the quality that our subcontractors are supplying us, then we can see that our quality is much better than theirs.

I'll give it a 4 out of 10. And if you look at certain sections I'll give it 9 out of 10.

I think our structure is not really organized if you look at all the different roles that people in managing positions need to fulfil. There is no real firm structure of who reports to who and what their roles are. But I think also that is for a reason.

Like we discussed in the previous question there should be a system in place to grade the employees. There was also no initiative from the managers here to say it doesn't matter what the boss says, but this is what I am going to implement. If I'm a manager then I would put systems in place to properly grade the employees on their performance. We need to know what we are doing well and what we can improve on. You need middle management to take the lead on something like this and take the initiative. We did however have no starting point.

There are overlapping tasks for individuals, and what now happens is that the overlapping task ends up not being done because more than one person is responsible for it as the one thinks the other one would've done it.

I have an opinion about the reason managers do not get involved where responsibility is overlapping, if something goes wrong then he is not the responsible person for that task. However if it goes right then they get in there to get the praise for the job well done. Ultimately that is not the case because one guy would've taken the lead and should be getting the praise. Now the managers are getting a pat on the back while they were not even involved. However when it goes wrong, they all withdraw and say it wasn't me and point the finger at someone else.

Who's responsible for what is therefore a grey area in the organization. You only see the organizers of the organization when things go well. But when things don't go well there is a pointing of fingers. In my day we had chargemen and foremen to get the jobs done on the machines, the managers sat in their offices and the chargemen sorted out the issues with

production. Some guys are also excelling and others are staying behind. Rather than waiting for the operators to make a mistake, we can ensure that they get the training that they require to prevent mistakes from happening. If a guy makes a mistake then we use the negative procedures which we do have in place to reprimand him. Yet we know this guy has a problem and he cannot actually cut the job correctly. Now we move jobs around because we know that a certain person cannot do a specific job where that should not happen. People on a specific machine should not be on that machine if they cannot cut the work that goes to that machine and if he is not capable but capable to learn, then your chargemen or foremen needs to spend time with this guy to make sure that he is able to do as well as the other operators. Only then if he is not up to the task even after training then we look at other places to use him. Horses for courses, if this guy is a show horse or jumping horse you will not put him on the racetrack. In the company we know some horses cant jump, and then we just takes the job to a different machine. So the organization needs to be streamlined top down and bottom up.

Yes, we do. Not because of the fancy machines which we have but because of the human capital we have.

I'm quoting our MD now. "What I want to achieve is to make this company a billion Rand company." That's what he said and that is what the owner of the company wants to achieve. Getting there is impossible unless major changes are made in the company. My opinion is that we are a R15 million a month company and we have the machines and skills available to do that. We need to change the negative culture to a positive culture, reward achievers and cut the dead wood out as far as I am concerned. It's achievable but major changes need to happen right through the company to achieve that. That will be the start when people realise they are being graded, not shouting and screaming at them when they made a mistake. The time will be there to evaluate employees and their performance at the end of the year. We won't achieve a billion Rand company by humiliating and stepping on people on a regular basis, embarrassing them for mistakes made in front of other people. The problems however need to be identified and fixed slowly but surely.

Rewards do not necessarily have to be money, if you give me off early to surprise my wife on a Friday because we pushed hard during the previous week and you got two hours more with your family at home, to me that is worth more than anything. So that is a quick and simple incentive to keep the guys positive. Or when the guys have worked on a weekend

and the work is complete and the boss says your work is up to date you can go home early, that type of thing. It's a positive reward that is not just dishing out increases left right and centre which we all know is impossible. Now the guy who is negative and not interested, will think that two weeks ago I refused to work a Saturday, if the boss asks me again I will agree. And then everyone will slowly but surely lift their game.

The right information does however need to get to the boss. When a manager tells the boss that it is the machine that is fast, and the operator does not have an impact on that then the right information is not getting to the people that needs to know. Some operators just are not as fast as other operators.

But you must remember that some of the operators have additional work to do before they can start machining their parts.

You must know that something is wrong when the nightshift operator does double what the dayshift operator does and that is ultimately the reason the nightshift operator left. I get back to my point, reward the people that shine and cut out the dead wood.

Because it is exactly what I had when I had to stop my machine and go and weld stainless steel parts on somebody elses boring mill. I'm doing that work but meanwhile my work is standing still. It seems now like my work is falling behind but no-one realized the other things that I had to do or help with.

That brings us back to the management we were talking about, the people that should be involved, are not involved with what they should be involved with. Who's responsibility is it that jobs are completed on time and moved around the workshop to the next operation. Responsibilities need to be clear. And if we highlight issues as cell leaders, before you can even finish your sentence they make it your responsibility. Again, at previous companies I worked at we had chargehands and foremen responsible for moving parts around and ensuring everything runs smoothly in the workshop. We need to get the organizers of the organization to understand what it is that they have to organize.

**3. How do you experience your own job? (Your level of enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm), the level of support that you get to do your daily tasks, opportunities to grow professionally at the organisation? Do you feel good performance is**

**awarded? Explain why you say so. To what extent is it expected of you to take initiative and accept responsibility for that?)**

I think when I started here I was probably one of the most enthusiastic employees at this company. End of last year I was still more enthusiastic than most of these people but that decreased dramatically due to the previous topics we spoke about and because I have to do other people's jobs which are not my daily tasks. But if I don't do it, I'm with most of the guys on the floor so I find out what they need and how I can help them. I do what I have to do and then I assist where I can. The lack of enthusiasm to do jobs because I know I will have to do this, this, and this where I should only be doing this because someone else did not do their job. But that doesn't get done, last year it was to a point when I was done.

You know what is an enthusiasm killer. If a person enthusiastically takes on a job by his own initiative and once this job is complete, somebody else comes in and steals the credit for himself. An employee would've proved his worth and proved that he wants to excel through what he did and then here comes the next guy who has not been close to the project comes and steals the thunder. Kneels down and rubs the job like he is making love to it and then the MD comes past and say well done well done. And the poor guy at his machine who did the job is completely oblivious to what is going on and then his enthusiasm will be killed.

The second time he might do something with a little less enthusiasm and the third time it will just get less. Now that person is going to affect the next person that he speaks to and it becomes a negative discussion that gets worse and worse.

If we bring this to an experienced manager, then he will get the guy involved together as well so that the right guy can get the credit. That is what should be done. Again, a manager is not someone who should be worried about the machines but about his human capital. Because if he manages his human capital then those guys will manage the machines and the equipment. The enthusiasm is there but it is getting killed not by top management but by middle management stealing credit.

In my job I suppose I was the only one doing programming, doing measuring and doing puzzling those kinds of things for minimum 8 months.

There are certain things in which management should get more involved with like sorting issues out with operators etc.

But from my side I can say that I do assist the other employees with whatever they might need. Even with the reordering of inserts for the workshops. It was not an expectation or a task that was assigned to me, I just took that over for the sake of the workshop and to ensure we do not run out of inserts.

In the broader context I would say that we are getting support to do our daily tasks, because the MD has never said no to order a specific tool. He would however get cross because people did not order tools even though it will cost R18 000 for a spotfacing tool to do a certain job. There is not a shortage of money and if the people who had to order the tool did their job then the tool would've been here. So the support you get with the tools you need to carry out your daily tasks from top management there is no problem with that. However getting it done with middle management is not always that easy, procrastinating is a big problem. Yesterday we said to one of the managers that we need a new vernier which I would like to hide in my food cupboard to make sure we don't have a problem when measuring grooves or fussy sizes. We have day to day verniers which we use, but for specific tasks we need a vernier that gets kept a 100% at all times. That is a R6000 vernier, half an hour later not even I get my vernier. Last year I asked for a depth vernier and next thing I see it is on my table.

It depends on who you speak to as well. Sbu needed a tape measure that he needs to measure shafts which he only got end of last year.

A tape is a R70 piece of thing and seen as not important, he is not going to scrap a job because he doesn't have a tape. If you ask the right people, no problem. If you ask the wrong people procrastinating. From the company's policies point of view all the support will be given to you what you need. The MD is not stingy when it comes to buying the right tools for the job.

Yes, I do think if you pick up enough experience and you improve yourself all the time. In the company there are not many promotions available. It does however depend very much on who you are, we have 38 car washes that now works in the factory as machinist and whatever else. Our health and safety officer used to be a car wash, our HR lady used to be a tea girl and that is something that we need to look at. She needs to be sent on a course to get the proper training as a HR representative in this company and to grow professionally. How can you however grow your employees if professionally if you do not train them?

Therein lies the problem because there is the perception that once we have trained someone to be good at what he does he is going to leave the company. Therefore let us just work with semi-trained people so that they cannot leave us. My viewpoint has always been to train people well enough so that they can leave and treat them well enough so that they don't want to leave. There are opportunities to grow, but you reach a ceiling and then stagnate. The HR lady now has the title and can perform certain functions but I don't want you to get better. Operators can cut several different parts which is good enough because the next guy can cut the other seven and the next guy the other seven. That leads to stagnation in most positions.

You kick down doors to get into a company and then you just stay in the position where you started at.

As an example, some people are contractors being paid per job and they get paid well enough cutting those jobs. I can cut those jobs that he is cutting exactly the same but I am not getting the money he is getting for those jobs. If I get the same money per part then we will all push.

The MD came to me a few years ago asking the operator next to me if he will be able to run my machine. The purpose of that was that he needed to know that he has someone to run the machine if he needs me to move into another position. A year went by and I asked myself when is this going to happen. Not necessarily that I want to be a programmer, but I want to go where there is more money. So nothing happened and I asked the manager what's going on, the response I got was that I will never move that man off the machine because he makes me too much money. The same person who said this in the meeting is the same person who said to me he wants to move me off a machine and into another position.

There are a lot of emphasis on when you make a mistake and everybody knows about it. However if you do something good then nobody knows or exceptional then other people get the credit for that.

Yes, you are expected to take responsibility for everybody and everything. If someone is on his phone even on the other side of the workshop.

It is expected of you to take initiative but never rewarded. I take initiative to help one of the highest paid operators on his machine to make decent settings and assist where I can. It is not necessarily my title, but I don't mind doing that.

Who's responsibility is that supposed to be? Because it is expected of certain people that is not in their job description, but they do not get the recognition for that.

I'm going to use an example. Certain people are doing something completely out of their scope of work which is actually supposed to be somebody else higher up's responsibility. That should be that person's job to make sure that if a new job goes onto the machine that a proper setting is made and all the rest. The person who was actually involved would then not get the credit because the person whose job it actually is will not go to the MD and say listen this employee did all this and it worked out to be brilliant. The MD does not get the full picture. The question then becomes why is the manager not going to the MD and telling him that the other employee assisted with all of that? Because then the MD will tell him that that is actually all his job. Therefore information like that will never get to the MD.

Initiative is expected to be taken, but once a project is completed successfully, then that initiative leads to no reward for you and that is a problem. The praises are being stolen from you by somebody that was not even involved in the whole process.

**4. Tell me about your experience of the culture of the organization. (Does the company often try new things? Does the company take unnecessary risks? The level of teamwork in the company? To what extent do rules or regulations keep you from being productive? Do you feel that you have enough access to information? Tell me about the level of mutual respect in the company.**

Yes, we often get new parts and funny things that we have to machine and make a plan on.

There are certain individuals in the company who do try new things and bring in new things.

If it fits my machine and I have the tools then I will cut it.

If a part comes from the other workshop and they have done the machining in a certain way in the past then there will rarely be moved away from it. But yes I do think we try new things.

As far parts are concerned yes we try new things. New procedures, checking jobs, signing off jobs, jigging. We still have long way to go, and there are always the guys in the company saying no we can't do this. We've cut patterns and things, we make a plan.

As far as financials are concerned not at all, we should be taking a bit more. We are just floating this boat so safe, there is no risk. We are not taking fat chances and I like that. The company is not spending money on unnecessary things or anything fancy.

Teamwork in the sense of team players no problem at all.

People who should be involved in specific teams are not always involved.

Managers will only come after a job is complete and say you should've done it like this or that. They should've told the operators before they started with the job to ensure that the parts are not scrap. It always comes after a part is scrapped, why didn't you ask me or why didn't you do this or that. If the manager was there when he was supposed to be then he would've known that the operator was going in the wrong direction and he would've stopped him.

There are also sometimes when there are too many people getting involved.

If there are too many people working on a job then it can also be that it is causing a delay and some of those people needs to be removed from the job. Too many people cause that you don't get the job out because everyone is looking at the next guy.

Rules and regulations are there for a reason. Safety rules, checking jobs, signing inspection sheets, that is all there for a reason. I think it enhances production, because if you follow the procedures and you cut something then you know you are cutting right. If the operator doesn't follow procedure and he scraps a batch of 20 components, then all that production is lost.

Some certain things we don't have to know. We get informed of what we need to know. I don't always believe the information that I receive though.

Yes, like saying we haven't made a profit or that we can't employ more people.

The one thing that I can say is misinformation is a big issue leading to people having negative moods. Many messages are relayed to the employees by starting with the MD said

this or the MD said that trying to manipulate the people into a direction that they want you to go into. The people then walk away and think don't come and bullshit us because they know better. That information is then turned into a completely negative thing, but because I am such a nice guy, I will be paying leave pay. Alternatively it could've been said that by law it is required that leave pay should be paid out and management will be paying with a clean conscious so thanks for the effort and the hard work you put in and therefore it is a pleasure for me paying this leave pay and bonus for you. Now people walk away and say this man appreciated what we are doing and next year they will come back with a positive attitude, or they walk away thinking they are a beggar or a hawker.

Most employees have mutual respect. Some people in management maybe don't have the skills in the position that they are to actually be in that position. There are some individuals who I also lost respect for just in the way that they handled situations and other people saw it too. Again I was negative and other people saw what happened so they became negative as well.

Between co-workers there is definitely respect. We unfortunately see that our superiors scream and shout at each other and call each other terrible names in front of us where they should be leading us and arguments like that should never happen. I myself had a few arguments with some of the managers, I did however make a mistake and it will never happen again. My temper did get the better of me. I should however not feel guilty because I've seen it a hundred times before from the people much higher up than I am screaming and shouting. People will never give their best to the production manager if there is no respect, respect is something that you have to earn. We are sending our people on all sorts of courses, why aren't we sending our managers on management courses. Let's teach them up and if they are not suited let's move them out. If an operator cannot do a job on a machine we find someone who can do the job and move him somewhere else. The same with managers, if they don't have the social skills or corporate skills to manage people properly, lets use him where he can actually thrive.

The respect between managers are not there because you can see what they say to each other in public, but not only that, they also say certain things about one another in private conversations to me. And you think to yourself how can these guys work together.

One of the operators said to me that even though he knows he is right he won't go against his managers as he is afraid of the backlash. No you should not fear, you should respect your supervisors.

One simple way to show mutual respect is by greeting one another.

Also by having interest in the employees' lives shows respect.

**5. Do you enjoy the working environment (Do you often socialize during working hours, your experience of the environment that you work in, is excessive conflict in the workplace? How is it handled? Why is the work that you do important? Explain)**

There is still a level of socializing during working ours.

When we get the chance we do talk on a personal level of what is going on in our lives, but that is if our machines are running. I don't think there is a limit on that as long as the machine is running.

Very hot. The heat is extreme that is why I have my fan and water bottle. Apart from that the smoking was a problem which is now under control. Other than that there is not a problem. We can do more around the machines with organizing tools and equipment, putting in shelves to put jaws on so nothing will be lying around.

Very hot.

Very hot. I received my induction from the safety officer yesterday and it has everything in there, waste management etc. But it says nothing about the temperature that we are working in. Last time they checked it was about 37 degrees.

The fumes by my machine next to the paint plant is actually very bad coupled with the heat. I've brought that up with multiple safety managers.

There are not conflict between peers as there is a lot of respect. We fight more with certain managers than we fight with each other. There are conflict amongst managers and it is not handled professionally. They take the argument up with one another in front of the whole workshop and everybody just shakes their heads. Management is supposed to set an example for everyone from bottom to top.

I've lost my cool with one of the managers last year because he wasn't involved and then he gets involved when it is far too late. Me and him went at it full blast and it wasn't handled well.

My family needs to eat and that is why it is important I would think. Secondly my job is important to ensure that him and him and him stays in a job. Everybody's work is important because we all feed of each other. Even the cleaner cleaning your machine each day is important. There is not a single person here who can say his job is not important. If people were made to be felt they are important everyday I would say that they will also produce better.

The importance of the people and the work that they do each day is not seen. If a person leaves the company then it is said that is was like that person was never even there and if the employee knows that then, that is bad from management to say as the employees will not feel like he was important. The work that we do is important but it does not feel like the guys doing the work are also regarded as important.

My job is important so that I can feed the next machine as well.

**6. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve motivation in the workplace?  
What should the company do differently?**

Recognition.

I think that is very important. There are many parts for the projects that I programmed, cut myself. But the MD did not even know of my major involvement in these projects and there was no recognition for that. There are guys making the step up, either through their own initiative or higher expectations of them, but their pay is not aligned to what they do as an employee. The responsibility that they are expected to take does not align with what they are being paid.

There are new people starting at much higher wage rates than people already in the company and they don't mean the same for the company as the people already working here.

It's mad, employees are saying they just want to learn as much as they possibly can so that they have the ability to leave. They will stay for even R5 more. Employees doing similar jobs are not getting the same wage rate even though they are doing the same thing.

There is unfair treatment of employees in this company. The answer from the managers are always the same, I can't do much for you, the MD does not want to pay. Is that what the answer is supposed to be? Had that been the truth, how can you then start a new guy on R95/hour? If you are liked in the company then you are sorted. I know why I'm not liked, because I'm too outspoken. It is not fair that if you are not liked that you are not getting paid.

Assess people fairly and treat them fairly.

Identify the future leaders and who you want to have here in the next fifteen years. Identify talent.

Need to look at ways to improve people's skill on the machines.

Take care of the people that are loyal to the company

Do not make promises or commitments you do not intend to keep.

Greet people.

Appreciate people – Recognition. If you recognize the efforts and the loyalty of people you will motivate them. Don't thank the wrong people.