

Full Length Research Paper

Leadership challenges in change intervention and navigation

Rein Coetzee¹, Jan Visagie¹ and Wilfred Ukpere^{2*}

¹School of Human Resources Science, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa.

²Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management, Faculty of Management, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Accepted 26 December, 2012

The success of any change intervention depends on the leadership of the organisation. It is therefore important to note that leadership is an enabler of any type of change. Quite often organisations require transformational leadership for the successful implementation of any change intervention. Transformational leaders focus on three critical activities namely the creation of a compelling sense of vision, the mobilization of commitment to the vision and the implementation of change. In general leadership can be seen as the driving force to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. Effective leaders know that the successful implementation of change begins with attending to the human aspect. Therefore, leadership is about the leader's ability to influence people and allowing them to change perceptions, behaviours, attitudes and finally action. It is about arousing human potential and allows for leaders and followers to be united in pursuit of high level goals common to and accepted by all parties involved. This article will mainly focus on the above scope.

Key words: leadership, change, navigating change, leading change, leadership styles, change interventions and change communication

INTRODUCTION

Globally, on all fronts, whether politically, economically and socially, it appears as if there is an intensifying and growing crisis with respect to leadership. What is not always clear is whether the crisis centres on the institution of leadership itself; the context relative to which leadership has to be demonstrated and the persons exercising leadership.

Under conditions of uncertainty, shifting and open-ended futures, such as the present and future expected challenges; the demand for leadership becomes a pressing and dire necessity. In other words, the necessity for leadership becomes all pervasive if people wish to be masters of their own destinies. The intensification of the growing crisis related to leadership thus makes sense when seen against this backdrop, since it is realized that good leadership and leaders are the essential means of actualizing desirable futures. From a macro perspective,

the debate about leadership therefore may be one of the most important issues of our present time alongside issues such as population growth, economic prosperity, world peace and environmental protection. Indeed, a sustainable and successful resolution of the latter issues may be predicated by the quality of leadership.

Owing to different macro- and micro- environmental factors it became critical for South African organizations to adapt or renew basic structures, systems and organisational culture and management practices. International competition, new information, technology and socio-economic changes can be regarded as important factors to be considered when navigating change. The process of change or transformation is difficult and a long-term process. The success of transformation however, depends on the leadership of an organization. It is possible to bring about meaningful change if credible and capable leaders navigate or lead this change. Strategic leadership is required for systematic planned and controlled change (Nel, et.al., 2011:322).

Burnes and Oswick (2012) have stated that when

*Corresponding Email: wilfredukpere.ajbm@gmail.com

dealing with change and leadership, the most crucial element is ethical values that influence both the actions of the leader as well as the outcomes of the change initiatives. They continue by stating that we are still living in a time where leaders are allowed to put their own egos and self-interests ahead of the interests of other people and this often leads to disastrous consequences. To avoid this we need to emphasize the importance of promoting the ethical dimension of change to ensure that leaders and followers act in the interests of the many rather than the few.

This sentiment was also shared by Van Dijk and Van Dick (2009) when they posited that to navigate organizational change and the resistance thereof the difference in successful transformation starts by moving away from looking at how change and change management affects what we do. A more useful model begins with looking at how the change and change management affects who we are and how we perceive ourselves, how we see others as perceiving us, organizational members and, ultimately, the organization as a whole.

In essence, leadership is the art of getting others to want to do what the leader wants to be done. Amongst other things, leaders identify opportunities build capabilities and drive for results. Leaders gain the confidence of others through their insights, interpersonal influence and competence. In concordance, Bellingham and O'Brien (2005) have correctly referred to leadership as being more about talent and behaviour rather than title and bravado. Leadership is not only about having the power and influence to command and control the performance of subordinates, however, leadership responses exist at all levels in the organizational functioning.

Problem statement

There are very few companies today that can avoid large scale organisational changes in order to improve or even survive as a business. Whatever the cause, be it market saturation, a tough macro-economic environment, standard of living costs, competitive advantages, or simply the desire to improve business results; the potential resolutions remains restructuring the organisation, changing relationships among sales, marketing, supply chain and other functions or simply improving efficiencies. All these changes commence at the top and demand a relentless focus from leaders in all spheres of the organisation. Too often top leaders overlook the "softer" skills they require to disseminate changes throughout the organization and implement such successfully.

Research question

The above statement triggered the following research questions:

1. Are there still justifications for the phenomenon called

'leadership'?

2. What is effective leadership and how does the context affect its effectiveness?
3. Where do good leaders come from?
4. Are the right persons in leadership position?
5. Are people adopting the appropriate styles and modes of leadership given changing times, shifting needs and expectations?

Research objectives

The paper will explore the field and scope of leading change; reflect on different leadership styles as well as identifying those challenges facing leaders who act as change agents. This research will attempt to indicate how top executives prepare, communicate and ultimately implement a major change intervention in a large organisation and how employees perceived the leaders ability to introduce and implement the envisaged change.

LITERATURE REVIEW- Defining leading change

The concept of managing change has been around for a long time in a typical closed-system view of the organisation. In this regard Van Tonder (2004:197) has stated: *"It implies that change can be managed in "one best way" and that such change management programmes will ensure that loss of production and performance as a results of change can be corrected swiftly and without complications"*. He further stated: *"..... this view of change management as a planned, purposive and controlled activity (and change being amenable to such activities) has been criticised for the fact that it can only be conceived of from within a closed-systems perspective – a situation of environmental stability that was more prevalent during the 1960s than in the current millennium. It is now commonly accepted that such rigid and structured programmatic approaches for dealing with change will no longer suffice in the rapidly changing and turbulent environments in which organisations now have to adapt and evolve."*

In a nutshell, Van Tonder (2004) has stated that remedies for change implementation are presented as a set of different steps and that the essential ingredients of such steps or processes do not differ that much as reflected in the figure 1 below.

Following the review of the more traditional ways of managing change it is important to look at a more modernistic approach to change management, an approach that place emphasis on leading change as appose to managing it. In this regard, Achua and Lussier (2010: 386) have averred: *"There is a growing interest in understanding how to increase the success rate of change initiatives. Experts stress the importance of leadership involvement throughout the process. Leadership must make every effort to eliminate policies,*

procedures, and behaviours that undermine the change efforts. Followers who are charged with implementing change must see in the behaviour of their leaders as honest effort to share in the challenges of the change. The leader must be willing to alter his or her behaviour in order to minimize resistance. Effective listening helps a leader to have a better understanding of the root causes of resistance". They further posited: "Ultimately, the role of the leader is to implement change that results in better organizational performance; however, the question has always been how to do it effectively and successfully, given the stress, discomfort and dislocation associated with it".

Griffin and Moorhead (2006) have emphasized the importance of the influence component of leadership. They stress the importance of the influence the leader has on followers as opposed to characteristics of the leaders when implementing large change interventions. The ability of the leader to influence others is the cornerstone to successfully lead change. In their view, there are three specific changes that will ultimately lead to success namely, change in perception, that is realizing that the current working conditions are more hazardous than a person thought it to be; change in attitude, which means that the organisation will be a far better place to work in than before; change in behaviour, which makes a person works harder and get others to emulate same.

There are also those who are of the opinion that a multi-dimensional approach to leading change is required. They reject the view that either n-step, goal directed models of change management or the more humanistic, 21st century leader with a more participative inclusive style is required. Graetz and Smith (2010) has summarised the major challenge that change leaders face today, as their ability to implement systems that can cope with ambiguity, ambivalence and contradiction. They further argued that a multi-philosophical approach reinforces the need to discard assumptions about opposing values and replacing them with an appreciation of complementary concepts. Flexibility is crucial in a turbulent environment in order to find new ways of doing things (innovation), but order is necessary to ensure that innovation is relevant. It therefore follows that, the traditional change management "steps" and/or processes can no longer be applied as a "recipe; There will be a need for a combination of system and/or goal directed change models that is based on humanistic and inclusive leadership approach; Leading change is widely accepted as appose to managing change; change is more receptive once the leaders are committed and honest towards the change interventions; Leading change deals with influencing people to change perception, attitude and behaviour.

Different Leadership Styles

Transformational and transactional leadership styles are

categorized as the new leadership paradigms and are linked to charismatic and strategic leadership (Durungs-Ruhier, 2011). Transactional leadership place emphasis on the importance of the relationship between the leader and the followers and is less concerned with the transformation of organisation. Transformational leaders set high goals for change and take responsibility for their commitments. Furthermore, they are concerned with collective well-being and can inspire and motivate their followers to cross their comfort zone in order to go beyond their potential. Derungs-Ruhier (2011:5) refers to four i's in transformational leadership namely, Idealized influence (a leader is a role model for others); Inspirational motivation (a leader provides meaning, vision, hope); Intellectual stimulation (a leader stimulates creativity and innovation); Individual consideration (a leader is concerned with the individual's needs).

Hughes (2007:148) refers to transactional leaders as believing "... to guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying role and task requirements. Whereas transformational leaders change followers' awareness of issues by helping them to look at old problems in new ways, where they are able to excite, arouse and inspire followers to put out extra effort to achieve group goals."

According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:125) a transactional style "...is a mutual influence between leaders and followers working on the basis of a reciprocal exchange relationship of costs and benefits. Decision-making takes place in a stable and certain framework where bureaucratic authority, formal rules, regulation, procedures and legitimate power are all visible and regularly exercised. Transformational leadership is based not on physical rewards but on motivation. Transformational leaders often initiate and implement changes in the structure and strategy of the business and people"

A modernistic approach to leadership styles was highlighted by Pearse (2011), in that he refers to patterns of leadership actions and mentioned that leadership patterns should not be simply interpreted as leadership styles but they are patterns arising because of the interaction between leaders and their context over a particular period of time. According to Pearse (2011), there are six patterns, with the first three as affective patterns and the last three as in effective patterns, namely Freewheeler, which is an organisation that is already in the process of moving in the direction of the desired change, where the leader maintains the momentum; Focused pioneer, is a pattern where the leader need to push ahead with the planned change and ensure that all systems and processes are aligned; Reflexive accommodator requires the leader is to slow down the pace of the change slightly to accommodate the needs

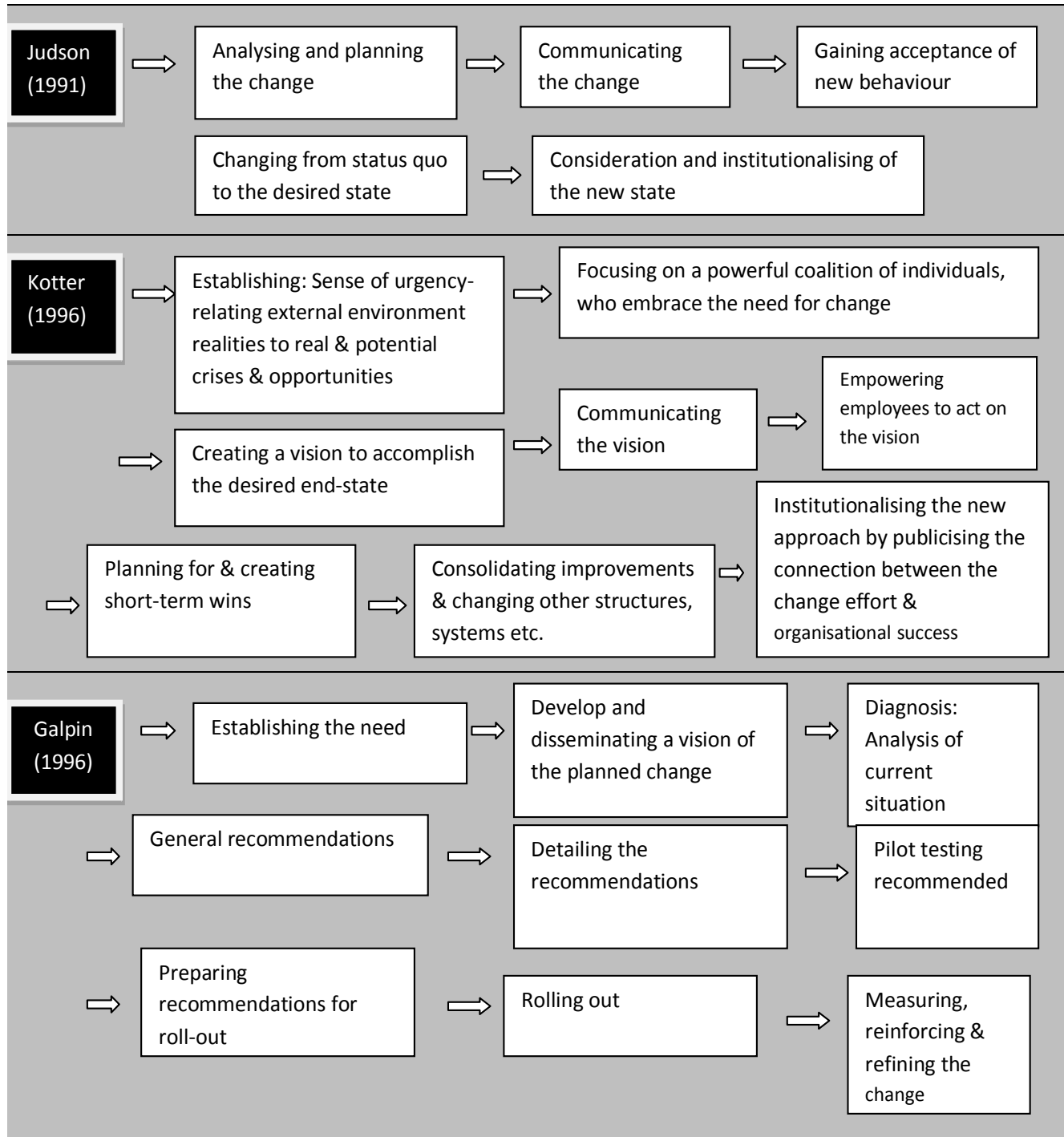


Figure 1. Change implementation
Source: Van Tonder (2004:200).

and concerns of the followers. This pattern in conjunction with the focused pioneer is important to successfully lead the change; rigid combatant is a pattern that entails excessive force in the change process. It can also be viewed as a state where caution is not applied during the change process; Popular people pleaser is a pattern that

is exactly the opposite of the above, whereby the leader accommodates the concerns of the followers at the expense of the change; Static non-leader occurs when there is no or limited influence by the leader. There is a lack of communication on progress and the vision/goals are not regularly reinforced and the momentum is

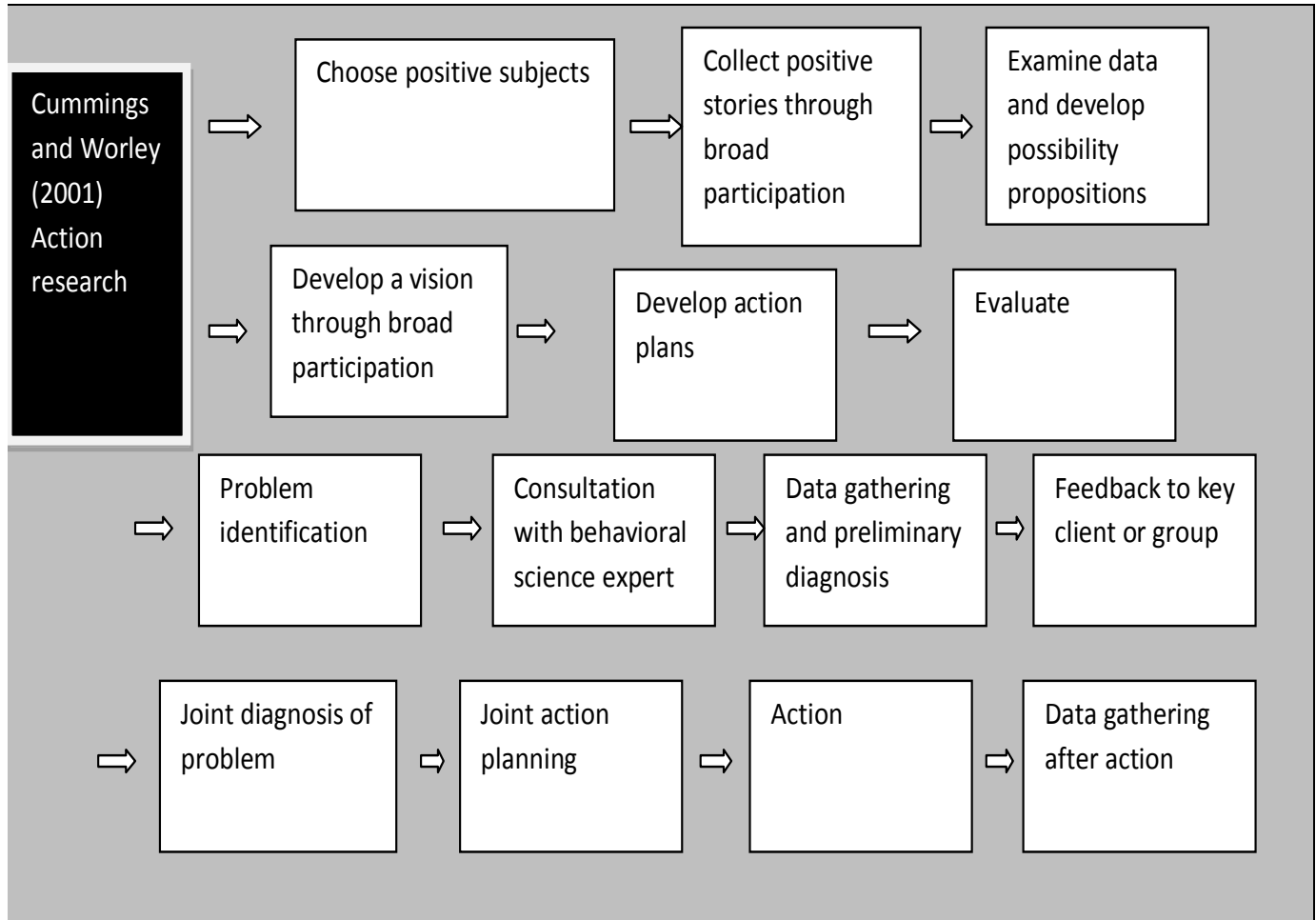


Figure 1. Continue.

subsequently lost.

Matthew (2009:7) has provided an interesting perspective known as creative leadership.

“Creativity has been linked to the function of leading change in the propulsion model of creative leadership... significant organizational change requires a type of creative leadership that rejects current ways of doing things and proposes new assumptions or paradigms. Leading organizational change is conceptualized here as a creative function that fundamentally influence change in individual and group behaviour in organizations. As such, leader creativity is expected to predict the capacity to lead change. Since leading change involves understanding and working with a range of basic human needs on multiple levels (i.e., individual, group, and organizational), social-emotional competency is expected to have a direct effect on the capacity to lead change.”

Puccio et al. (2011) support this view by asserting that highly creative leaders always challenge the status quo,

take risks, experiment with new approaches and examine alternative ways of solving problems. Therefore, creative leaders will focus on future possibilities and will think in terms of what is possible and possibly be adept at getting others to buy-in to their ideas. It is evident that creativity-related leadership practices are crucial in bringing creative change to an organisation.

Challenges in Leading Change

There exist differences in opinion in business today regarding the phenomenon of change management versus leading change as discussed above. Veldsman (2002:216) believes that leadership is one of the most important elements and mentioned the top change implementation challenges in order of importance, namely employee resistance, leadership issues, planning issues, communication failures, culture, skills issues and industrial relations issues.”

It is important to note that successful large change

needs to be implemented according to a holistic plan. Change leaders often try to balance two countervailing forces namely the need to drive change through their organization in order to respond to ever changing environments, and looking at the importance of incorporating what they know about the human aspects of change. In this respect, Herold and Fedor (2008:112) have suggested that leaders should understand the certain key elements in any change intervention, namely, that organisational changes cannot be contemplated as independent and isolated events; all changes cannot be priority one and leaders need to take a more strategic view; no matter how carefully leaders contemplate a given change, the actual benefits will be a function of the change environment in which it is embedded; the challenge associated with a given change will increase exponentially as the environment in which the change is to be embedded becomes more turbulent; not all individuals will react the same way to change turbulence; and senior leadership needs to take serious its role in orchestrating the various change initiatives. In order to successfully lead change, Spiro (2011:5) has suggested eight steps to overcome the major challenges, namely Determine the change strategy (define it specifically with timelines); Assess readiness (improve the readiness of all parties); Analyse the stakeholders (understand the motivation levels of all stakeholders); Minimize resistance (assess individual's own tolerance); Secure a small early win (plan and secure a small early win to convince); Engage the key players in planning (skilfully bring together all internal and external players); Scale and sustain the change strategy (sustain the initiative over time); Build in on-going monitoring and cause corrections (determine whether the change strategy solved the original challenge).

However, Bauman (Hambrick et al., 1998:309) reflect on five requisites for successfully navigating change, namely Cultivate a winning attitude (create an environment in which others can succeed), make the organisation the hero (managers to play a different role than previously), establish cumulative learning (educating people in ways that are in line the organisation believes are the best), promote strategic communication (look at what it is you want the employees to do and building trust and loyalty) and align strategy and behaviour (reinforcing values and concepts of behavioural change through management processes and systems that can measure and promote the desired change).

Cloud (2010:75) has pinpointed some key elements in navigating change namely, successful change leaders listen more than they talk or act; prudent leaders do not view themselves as 'the boss' with the right to coerce subordinates or force institutional changes without appropriate dialog and planning; successful change leaders are motivated to serve before they aspire to lead; change leaders articulate a vision for their followers and then persuade them to help with its implementation; effective

leaders have a high degree of emotional intelligence, which is to say that they are highly motivated, self-disciplined, empathic and caring individuals; in addition, change leaders are authentic individuals who eschew pretence. They are comfortable with themselves and open to others.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A mixed method approach was utilized in this article. While there are various definitions for mixed method methodology, the following definition will suffice as far as this paper is concerned. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009:286) has defined mixed method research as, "...research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws conclusions using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or programme of inquiry." The above definition makes mixed method design appropriate for the purpose of this research. According to Tashakkori & Teddlie (2009: 287) mixed method is normally utilized owing to certain reasons namely, it allows the researcher to gain complementary insights in the conceptualisation, experiential and inferential phases about the relative contributions of leadership in navigating change; It provides a more complete and meaningful picture of the nature and dynamics of leading change; An initial qualitative research approach allows the researcher to refine the initial research propositions in research hypothesis that can be tested quantitatively; It will allow the researcher to expand on the initial understanding of the type of leadership and provide a more comprehensive explanation at a later phase in the research process; and, it provides the opportunity to assess the credibility of the inferences that are made about leadership during one phase and thereby strengthen the credibility of inferences that are made at a later phases in the research.

In terms of the qualitative method, a convenient sample of 5 senior leaders was selected. While data was obtained from individuals, organisational-level measures were used to compare the differences in change navigation and leadership. Semi structured interviews were conducted and digitally recorded. All interviews were transcribed and content analysis of verbal response was undertaken to identify and verify different dimensions. With regards to the quantitative phase, one of the divisions in the company was purposefully selected and 301 questionnaires were distributed to all the employees in the said division. A survey questionnaire was developed and piloted at the company amongst a number of non-randomly selected employees who were not part of the initial focus group. Afterwards, 301 employees were requested to complete the questionnaire. A factor analysis to identify and confirm the questionnaire structure was used.

Comparative statistics to identify differences and similarities were applied during this process.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section will focus on the qualitative and quantitative data analysis and findings, in order to enable the research to draw suitable conclusion.

Phase 1: Qualitative analysis

Table 1 show the relevant open ending questions and responses of participants.

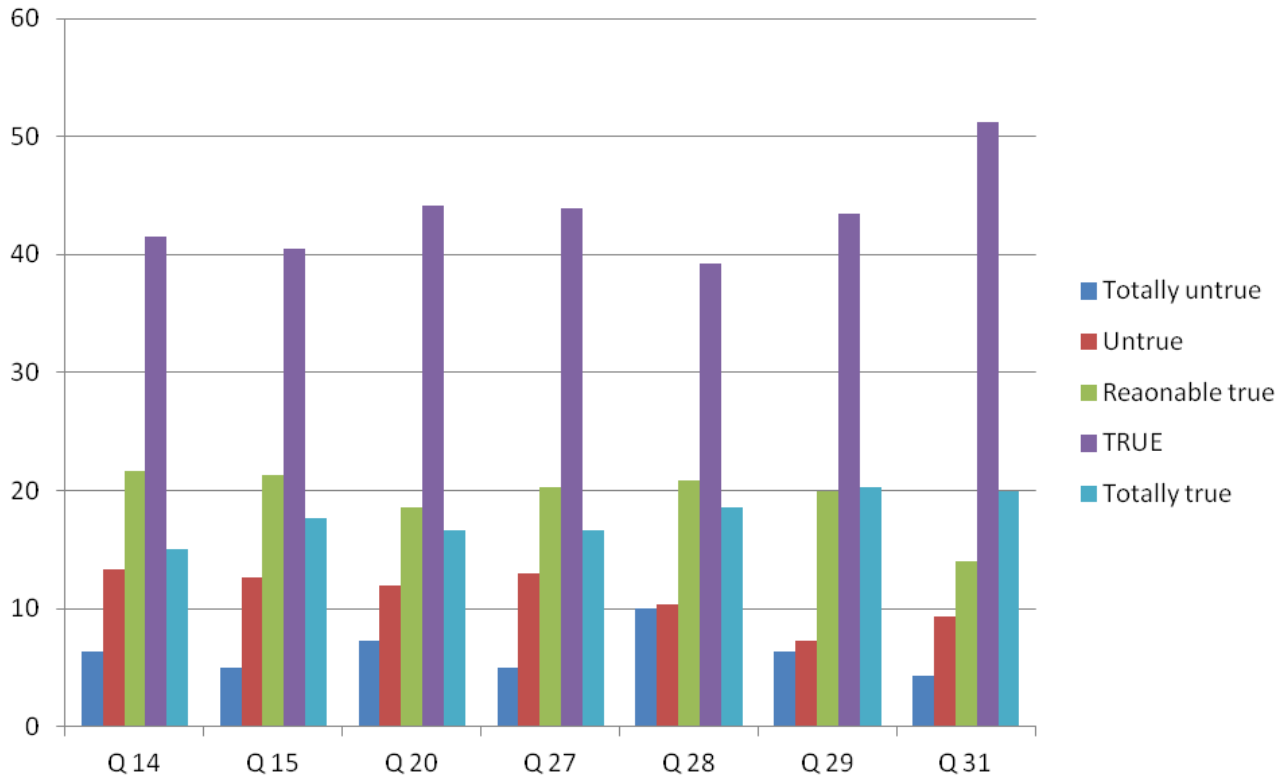


Figure 2. Summary of employees responses.

Phase 2: Quantitative analysis

Figure 2 reflects the responses of employees regarding the proposed benefits of a large change intervention, the effectiveness of communication during this process as well as leadership approach during the change process. Relevant questions from the question-naire regarding change navigation are:

Question 14: You were convinced of the benefits from the change?

Question 15: The intended change was regularly communicated?

Question 20: My role in the change process was clearly explained.

Question 27: You were personally informed by the leaders regarding the change?

Question 28: You believed the leaders made the right decision to decouple financial services and traditional retail?

Question 29: You had confidence that the leaders in the Organisation could succeed with the change?

Question 31: The leaders themselves were committed to the change?

All the factors were above the Chronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of .732 and a result of .88 was

obtained, thereby indicating adequate internal consistency.

DISCUSSION

Regarding the question whether the employees were convinced of the benefits from the envisaged change it is evident that the majority of respondents (78.1%) agreed to that. According to literature, it is important to ensure that all possible resistance factors are minimised and trust must be maintained throughout. This finding corresponds with the response to the role the employees played in the envisaged change (question 20) where 79.4% indicated they understood their role. These positive responses is supported by the majority of the participants (80%) who clearly indicated that there is a need for the change ("healthy dinosaur") and appreciate the value of the change ("ensuring people can see the light from a career perspective"). This was summarised by one participant who stated: *"There was a four step process that we applied namely, building awareness of the change to come, creating an understanding as to why we are changing, building acceptance for the change and getting the people to become involved in the change process."*

The importance of communication in navigating change

Table 1. Relevant open ended questions and responses of participants

Questions		Participants				
Questions 1	1	2	3	4	5	
How did you achieve this? (With reference to: Did you provide a clear Vision?)	Communication, communication and communication. It started of course with our shareholders – to convince them of the vision and not everybody was convinced, some had doubts and this was supported by some of our competitors. One has to be resolute and continuously communicate the strategy, benefits and keep people up to speed of where you are.	The participant stated it as follows: "... once we had made up our minds in terms of what to do, the communication process was paramount, because heaven help you go and try and implement a strategy and you forget to tell the people what you are doing and why you are doing it". How we communicated was also important (using for example road shows) – we are touching people's lives and one has to be cognisant of this. He also mentioned that they communicated to the board as well as how the different businesses were grouped together into five units and each unit receiving the same message, but differently packaged.	The participant started by saying that change management does not equate to communication only, however, it is merely one component. There was a four step process that we applied namely, building awareness of the change to come, creating an understanding as to why we are changing, building acceptance for the change and lastly is to get the people involved in the change. To get to a point where people say "I want to be involved in building the new organisation". Communication to the board was also important and we had to ask: "If we do not do it, what are the consequences?"	This participant was of the view that the further away you are from the change process the more difficult for you to accept the change. Therefore, the communication part was important; however, a lot of emphasis was put on the accompanying support provided to employees who were not necessarily involved in the initial change	The participant answered both questions 1 and 2 simultaneously. The participant felt that the communication model used was too academic in the beginning, however, once it was realised that the world we work in and the job itself has changed, only then did we start to make inroads. All that being said, a clear indication of on-going communication to create understanding and acceptance is necessary to ensure that we engage with staff.	
Question 2. Did you explain the reasons for the change interventions?	Absolutely was the response. Did we do it perfect? Most certainly not. The participant puts strong focus on ensuring that each and every level of employee must understand why we are changing. The participant also mentioned the fact that they assume that everybody understands English and Afrikaans – this in itself is dangerous – there were times when we saw in the business results that not everybody understood exactly what is expected.	The participant referred to being a healthy dinosaur and that was the message we took to all parties, our shareholders, the board of directors, the executive team, the leadership community as well as each and every staff member. The research was done, nationally and internationally and we knew that change is imminent. The participant therefore concluded by saying that the change was most certainly explained, however, that does not guarantee success.	The participant responded immediately, 'absolutely'. There were two issues around the change that we explained to our staff. There are implications if we do not change and there are implications if we do change – everybody had to understand this. Individual leadership discussions were highlighted as opposed to mass communication with the focus of ensuring that people can see the light from a career perspective.	The participant responded by saying yes, however he mentioned some real interesting challenges: a big change like this one scares people and they might even switch off or even not understand the reasons behind the change. All staff members were not necessarily involved from the start and they felt disempowered. The reason was that the decision to change was already made and I have just been informed about it – it is now a lot more difficult to get buy-in.	The participant felt it was done, but it was done poorly. The reason being that a lot of communication to high level leadership people transpired, however, the challenge was to package that same message in a language that the lowest level of employee can understand. You have to connect cognitively and emotionally with these staff members. There were good examples where relationships between certain business divisions suffered – we should have, from the start, empowered our senior leaders and enabled them to communicate one message in a language that all staff members could understand.	

Table 1. Contd.

<p>Question 3. How was the intended change communicated to all involved?</p>	<p>The participant spoke very broadly of communication mentioning all stakeholders, namely investors, community, the shareholders, senior leadership, middle management and all the staff of the company. The one thing that is mentioned is the ability of a leader to communicate the absolute truth and that the message must be consistent.</p>	<p>The participant speaks about the message (how it was packaged) as well of the timing of the message (due to the sensitive/emotional nature of the message). The initial communication was with the Union and to ensure we get their buy-in. Then communication to our staff was like a military operation: the time, the message, the messengers, the audience, the how to communicate and the objectives – everything was well planned. Following this there was road shows where the top executive leaders were involved. We communicated the intended change and dealt with questions/concerns. We also used our structures in the company to continuously communicate the process.</p>	<p>For this participant the focus was what to communicate, when, by whom, to whom and what the value we wanted to add. The participant mentioned again awareness, understanding, acceptance, and being involved. In terms of methods the participant mentioned road shows, information DVD's played in business units, emails and communication utilizing the organisational structure. Eye to eye contact was very important as well as feedback loops. Feedback loops are where following the various discussions in the business units that senior management (General Managers) will provide constructive feedback and these questions/issues were addressed in the follow up/following communication session.</p>	<p>There was a lot of discussion between senior executives and the HR community who assisted in driving the change. The point was also raised that because we have successfully implemented certain changes in the past, this will be similar – this was seen as a unique change with its own challenges. The structures in the company were also used successfully in that General managers would meet with Regional Managers and in turn they would meet with the Business Managers whom in turn would discuss the changes and challenges with the staff in the business unit.</p>	<p>This participant felt that the two main business divisions did it totally different, which was not ideal. The one division used emails and certain instruction methodologies and everybody had to ensure they implement. The other division had a change partner and they communicated using other methods such as newsletters, communication sessions (per region and division) and creating understanding and excitement surrounding the changes. Therefore these division's staff were excited, engaged and energized.</p>
<p>Question 4. Should you in future consider another major change Intervention in the Company, what would you do differently?</p>	<p>Two things were highlighted by the participant: firstly is to ensure that every level of employee must receive the message in a "language" that he/she understood – the message must be clear. The second thing is to ensure your IT platforms support your new business strategy and each and every staff member must understand the design and importance for business success thereof.</p>	<p>The participant felt extremely strong about the IT platforms and its ability to serve the business strategy and the changes. The availability of such in good time was also highlighted. The second aspect highlighted by the participant was that of having the right people/leaders to drive a changed vision/strategy. The discussion was an argument for and against in that the remark was made that one needs leaders without "baggage". Hence, one does not require statements such as "we have tried it and it did not work". On the other hand it was mentioned that experienced people are absolutely necessary to assist you in identifying risks as well as finding solutions to mitigate such.</p>	<p>The participant responded by saying "very little". The participant added that it must be stressed that change management is not about communication only – so many leaders make the mistake by thinking change is managed once we have communicated it. It involves the redesign of elements such as processes, technology, competence, structure and so forth.</p>	<p>The participant felt extremely serious about change that must emanate from the bottom and not always from the top. The whole discussion is around the advantages and disadvantages of change being initiated from top management. People are more engaged when they are allowed the freedom of initiative – more engaged people lead to better business results. People on ground level know the business extremely well as well as know the customer very well and can inform business strategy. One gets a far better and faster buy-in from people once they are involved in the design process.</p>	<p>The first point of importance to the participant was that of appointing and involving a change team from day one in all conversations and decisions. We have to simplify things and not over complicate issues/matters. The last aspect that was mentioned was that of ensuring that your top leadership has the ability to properly lead the change and it is the change team's job to constantly ensure that they are equipped.</p>

was highlighted in the literature by Hambrick et al. (1998), Veldsman (2002), Hughes (2007) and Spiro (2011). 79.4% of the respondents were extremely positive how the change intervention and its affects were communicated to the employees. Senior Leaders in the organisation all emphasised the importance of transparency and clear communication. This was illustrated by the statements of the senior leaders as the all emphasise the importance of communication. The question referring to the personal involvement (question 27) also touched on the issue of communication and 80.8% responses are positively in line with the feedback received from the five participants (senior leaders).

Employees were convinced that the right decisions were made by the senior leaders of the organisation. About 78.7% of them responded positively. Literature also emphasized the importance of a clear vision and direction in a change intervention. This response undoubtedly serves as an indicator of mutual understanding and trust. One of the participants has stated: *"being a healthy dinosaur and that was the message we took to all parties, our shareholders, the board of directors, the executive team, the leadership community as well as each and every staff member. The research was done, nationally and internationally and we knew that change is imminent. The participant therefore concluded in saying that the change was most certainly explained, however, that does not guarantee success."* Equally (83.7%) respondents indicated that they displayed confidence in the leadership which reflects a sense of trust and belief in the change intervention and the way the leaders navigated same. Achua and Lussier (2010) and Cloud (2010) stress the importance of leadership commitment in navigating change. This research revealed that 85.1% of the respondents felt that the top leaders were committed to their cause. One of the participants clearly indicated that employees may not be expected to accept change if senior leaders are not prepared to accept change.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has identified the leadership challenges in change navigation. A theoretical framework was conducted to scrutinize issues such as leading change as appose to managing change, the various leadership styles, including some modernistic approaches such as creative leadership and the various challenges facing leaders in terms of change navigation. Thus, in an attempt to clarify the challenges to an effective and efficient change navigation, different views on the prerequisites for change navigation were re-

viewed. The findings of the survey conducted in a given organisation showed a positive change navigation process with only little resistance to the outcome. Finally, in order to drive the vision of an organization, communication, trust and leadership commitment is a must for successful change intervention and navigation.

REFERENCES

- Achua CF, Lussier RN (2010). *Effective Leadership*. USA: Cengage Learning.
- Bellingham R, O'Brien W (2005). *The Leadership Lexicon*. Amherst. HRD Press, Inc.
- Burnes B, Oswick C (2012). *Change Management: Leadership, Values and Ethics*. J. Change Manage. 12(1):1-5.
- Cloud RC (2010). Epilogue: Change leadership and leadership development, *New Directions for Community Colleges*, Issue 149:73-79.
- Derungs-Ruhier IMH (2011). *Trans-cultural leadership for transformation*. United Kingdom: Macmillan Publishers limited.
- Graetz F, Smith ACT (2010). *Managing Organizational Change: A Philosophies of Change*. J. Change Manage. 10(2):135-154.
- Griffin RW, Moorhead G (2006). *Fundamentals of organizational behavior: managing people and organizations*. USA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Hambrick DC, Nadler A, Tushman ML (1998). *Navigating change*. USA: Paper for printed library materials.
- Herold DM, Fedor DB (2008). *Leading change management: Leadership strategies that really work*. United Kingdom: Kogan Page Limited.
- Hughes M (2007). *Change management: a critical perspective*. London: CIPD House.
- Isaksen S, Tidd J (2006). *Meeting the innovation challenge: Leadership for transformation and growth*. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Limited.
- Matthew CT (2009). *Leader Creativity as a Predictor of Leading Change in Organizations*, J. Appl. Social Psychol. 39(1):1-41.
- Nel P, Werner A, Du Plessis A, Ngalo O, Poisat P, Sono T, Van Hoek L, Botha C (2011). *Human Resource Management*. Cape Town. Oxford University Press.
- Pearse NJ (2011). *Effective strategic leadership: Balancing roles during church transitions*, HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies 67(2), Art. No. 980:1-7.
- Puccio GJ, Mance M, Murdock MC (2011). *Creative Leadership: Skills that drive change*. California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Spiro J (2011). *Leading Change: Step-by-step*. San Francisco. John Wiley & Son, Inc.
- Van Dijk R, Van Dick R (2009). *Navigating Organizational Change: Change Leaders, Employee Resistance and Work-based Identities*, J. Change Manage. 9(2):143-163.
- Veldsman T (2002). *Into the people effectiveness arena: navigating between chaos and order*. Randburg: Knowledge Resources.
- Von Tonder CL (2004). *Organisational Change. Theory and practice*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.