

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF AN 'ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE
CONSULTING COMPANY' AGAINST HIGH PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

by

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MINOR DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER COMERCII

in

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

in the

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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OCTOBER 2011

Declaration of original work

I, Bindya Jaraim, declare that this assignment is my own unaided work. Any assistance that I have received has been duly acknowledged in the assignment. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Commerce at the University of Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or at any other university.

.....
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Acknowledgements

To my parents and siblings: I am who I am today because of you.

To my husband: when hope was lost you encouraged and motivated me to succeed in any endeavour,

My sincere appreciation to:

- The management and staff of Company X for your support during my studies.
- Prof. C. Nieuwenhuizen for your guidance, support and patience during this process to achieve my goal.
- With humbleness I thank Lord Swaminaryan and Bapa for the strength and endurance received to complete this study.



Abstract

As the South African economy has begun to recover after the financial crisis of the last few years, most organisations have initiated cost-cutting initiatives to ensure sustainability. With increased globalisation and a more competitive environment the challenges for organisations to survive and grow have increased.

The objective of the study was to determine high performance criteria of successful organisations and to evaluate Company X according to the identified performance criteria. This will enable Company X to determine according to which criteria it is performing well and where improvement is needed to transform itself into a high performing organisation. Becoming a high performing organisation can assist Company X to become more competitive in the enterprise architecture and business process management consulting industry.

The first phase of the study involved a literature review to identify high performance criteria of successful organisations. The identified criteria provide a guideline against which Company X could be evaluated. The results of the study showed that the criteria of a high performance organisation are an articulated strategy, a culture of customer satisfaction and continuous improvement, a structure that is flat and adaptable, consistent financial performance and quality services.

The second phase of the study was conducted at Company X with the collection of secondary data through documents and primary data through interviews. The data were analysed and combined through thematic and content analysis. The assessment of Company X's performance determined that Company X does comply with some criteria of high performance organisations. These include the culture of the company, consistent financial improvement and effective leadership. It was identified that attention have to be paid to the development of its human resource practices, documentation and optimisation of the company's processes, increased collaboration and knowledge sharing, and documentation and communication of strategies and goals.

The conclusion is that Company X complies with some of the important criteria of a high performing organisation and by attending to the improvement of identified criteria has the ability to become a higher performing organisation. This will enable Company X to distinguish itself from competitors and foster stronger relationships with clients.

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CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The recent upheaval in the world economy started in 2007 and is still affecting countries globally in 2011. According to Bandyk (2011), countries such as Greece, Germany, Pakistan, Spain and the United States of America are severely affected. Research demonstrates that the recession has negatively impacted and transformed industry landscapes and countries (Latham & Braun, 2011:96). The recession has resulted in industry leaders failing, unemployment increasing and competition between companies growing. The impact of the recession is that a rethink in corporate strategy and simplification of business practices should be undertaken. Since the eighties business writers have been postulating that the world is increasingly becoming unpredictable, turbulent and competitive. There are more trends and developments that are drastically reshaping the business environment today. This sentiment is also echoed by Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric (De Waal, 2010:4).

Both profit and non-profit organisations globally are facing the era of extreme competition. Organisations are facing continued pressure of increasing demands from stakeholders due to, globalisation and technological changes (De Waal, 2010:4). With continued economic instability in Europe and America there is an indication of more instability in the world economy.

The economic crisis faced by different industrial sectors in South Africa has had an impact on project spend in companies, thus reducing the available funds usually used for consulting services. Consulting companies are thus facing increased competition for a larger portion of a decreasing demand in consulting services.

Many companies across the world have unbundled their businesses to focus only on core competencies (Naidoo, 2007:11). He is of the opinion that one of the outcomes of unbundling is the reduction of the workforce. Within South Africa, approximately 95% of small business start-ups experience failure and shut down each year. One of the reasons for this mortality rate is based on the

performance of these small and medium enterprises according to (Naidoo, 2007:14).

As the South African economy is gradually beginning to recover after the financial crisis in 2009, most organisations have introduced cost-cutting initiatives to be able to sustain themselves. Since then, the global economic situation has become positive and organisations are now looking forward to possible growth.

According to a research paper on a high performance workforce study, Accenture (2006:6) states, "As organisations enter the 21st century, it seems as if the global economy is dramatically changing, regardless of the industry. Most companies are looking for growth once again after cost-cutting initiatives." According to Accenture (2006:7), few companies can address the factors that can be applied to achieve high performance. Accenture (2006:8) states that, "organisations report that their workforce lacks the skills and understanding of strategy needed to gain a competitive advantage."

Company X is a small-sized business that is a specialised provider of world-class enterprise architecture and business process management and solutions. "Their wealth of experience, expertise and product knowledge has delivered strategic business application solutions that have created value by helping their clients implement their strategic visions" (Company X Background, n.d.).

According to Kiehne, Klien and Lachenmayer (2009:4) high performance organisations characteristics seems to provide the answers for corporations that are faced with complexity and frequent changes in technology.

"The consumer technology marketplace is marked by convergence, erasing what were once clear delineations of product, services and content" (Accenture, 2009:3). The impact of such convergence is that there are more new entrants into the market and shifts in consumer relationships. According to Accenture (2009:4), this creates challenges to consumer technology companies striving to achieve high performance.

A major issue for all small enterprises in existence for some years is succeeding to survive by maintaining and increasing their market share.

These companies have competition from both within their sector, and outside of the sector (Laforet and Tann, 2006:363). Company X strongly believes in unlocking value through value-added collaboration with solution partners and peer organisations (Company X Background, n.d.: para 3). The peer organisations and competitors that Company X has are all in the business process management and enterprise architecture industry.

Company X has a strategic affiliation as a service provider with Software AG in South Africa. Software AG is an enterprise software company that is the second largest in Europe. One of the business software products developed and supported by Software AG is ARIS (Architecture of Integrated Information Systems). ARIS is a business software tool that enables businesses to align to information technology. According to the Gartner's Magic Quadrant (2007: para 4) which aims to provide a qualitative analysis of a market and its direction, maturity and its participants, ARIS is depicted in the leader quadrant. This ranks ARIS as a market- leading product.

Company X is one of the enterprise architecture consulting companies in the enterprise architecture and business process management industry. For the last ten years they have been implementing and providing consulting services for the ARIS tool to assist their clients in obtaining their visions. However, since the ARIS tool has grown into one of the leading business process mapping tools, an increasing number of consulting companies have started providing consulting services related to the ARIS tool. Hence the competition in the business process management and enterprise architecture industry has increased.

In an interview with Jacobs, D the current managing director of Company X (2 August 2009) she stated that Company X's peer organisations and competitors are the following: Real IRM, South Paw, Volition, IQ Business Group, Ovations, Accenture, KPMG, PricewaterhouseCoopers, and Gijma AST.

With such a competitive landscape, Company X's senior management has set a strategy with the "30, 60, 90 plan" for competing in the future. The long-term strategy for the year 2030 is that Company X will have 90 employees and will generate 60 million Rands in revenues. In order to reach this target, Company

X will have to continuously rethink the way business is conducted, and contemplate the manner in which they add value to customers, shareholders, employees and societies (Hamel & Prahalad, 1996:36). According to Hamel and Prahalad (1996:32), in order to be able to compete in the future, organisations will have to learn how to reshape the industries they are in. In order to achieve this, Nel and Beudeker (2009:89) regard it as vital that organisations need to create a climate that allows intellectual capital to grow.

The management at Company X currently has strategies to improve the brand image of the Company, develop strategic partnerships with SAP (Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing). The management of Company X has started to redesign some of their policies and procedures in an effort to maintain a better image in the market.

Due to the lack of diversity in the founding years of the organisation, establishing the new diverse culture is challenging. Existing social norms in the organisation, generational difference between young and old, authoritative culture vs. inclusive cultures are all examples of this. Company X is on a drive to establish a business culture that mirrors the diversity of the South African workplace.

With fluctuations in the economic environment, it is essential that Company X views the measurement of performance not only in the economic sense, but also considers other factors. High performance organisations do not only measure their performance against financial analysis, but other measures as well. As Company X is a young enterprise architecture consulting company, the pressure to continuously rethink the way they do business and the way they add value to customers, shareholders and employees, is ever increasing.

According to De Waal and Frijns (2009:31), the pressure of external factors such as globalisation, changes in technology, environmental regulations and stakeholder demands has made the search for continuous organisational success more urgent. Bititci, Ackermann, Ates, Davies, Garengo, Gibb, MacBryde, Mackay, Maguire, van der Merwe and Shafti (2011:852) state that for years management practitioners have been trying to gain an understanding of how organisations survive and grow. It is vital for management to understand that a broad spectrum of characteristics will impact on the growth

and survival of organisations. Organisations that have the ability to identify threats and opportunities and implement innovative responses that allow them to become successful, rely on the set of characteristics below. Bititci et al. (2011:853) state the following as those unique characteristics that allow organisations to sustain performance:

- Leadership
- Strategy making
- Dynamic capabilities
- Change management
- Business processes

The Accenture high performance workforce study (2009:7) has yielded findings that determine the factors that need to be capitalised on to achieve higher performance .The following have been identified:

- Infusing innovation across the organisation at all levels;
- Managing risk effectively in the organisation;
- Dealing with the regulatory environment effectively;
- Generating superior business value with the aid of technology;
- Acquiring new customers and increasing market share;
- Building strong customer loyalty;
- Bringing new products or services to market quickly;
- Finding and developing talented leaders;
- Attracting and retaining skilled staff; and
- Having a performance-oriented mindset in the workforce.

According to Evans (1996: 43), “Successful companies in every industry engage in a variety of practices which lead to quality and high performance.” Leading consulting companies such as Accenture have branded themselves as high performing and have extensively researched high performing organisations in various industries.

According to Accenture (2009:12), in adverse economic situations, leading companies are developing sustainable strategies that focus on external and internal efficiencies.

1.2 IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF THE STUDY

Entrepreneurship in South Africa has the ability to contribute to the economic growth of the country, as the private and public sectors have been unable to absorb the large number of job seekers in the country. Herrington, Kew and Kew (2010:5) state in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2010 that there is currently 8.9 % entrepreneurial activity in South Africa. Herrington et al. (2010:5) further state that South Africa's entrepreneurial activity is below average for all middle-to low-income country. The lower entrepreneurial rates in South Africa can be attributed to a poor skills base, environmental limitations and lack of access to resources. The failure of the formal and public sector to create job opportunities for the growing number of job seekers in South Africa has increased the focus on small businesses to absorb these job seekers (Herrington et al., 2010:5).

Sithole (2006:4) asserts that small to medium enterprises contribute to between 35%-50% of the total gross domestic product of the South African economy. Small to medium enterprises generate 65% of all jobs created in the economy. Small to medium enterprises are true survivalists as they confront adverse situations and are able to maintain sustainable growth (Berry, 2002:14). The value of the research to small businesses in South Africa is that it can assist them in becoming competitively stronger in facing competitors. The research conducted can help other small businesses develop themselves into higher performing organisations. The study can help and empower currently struggling small businesses to grow by ensuring sustainable performance.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Due to the global recession starting in 2008, there has been an increase in competitors in the enterprise architecture and business process management consulting industry. The performance of an organisation is an indication of the success of the organisation's strategy. Company X needs to differentiate its

strategy, culture and processes from its competitors in order to achieve higher performance, which will lead to greater sustainable growth.

1.4 PURPOSE TO THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Primary objective

The main objective of this research is to understand how Company X, an enterprise architecture consulting company which is defined as a small-sized business, will need to transform itself into a higher performing company. The study will therefore provide understanding of Company X's current performance assessing it against high performance criteria. This will advocate changes that will impact the performance of the company. The changes will allow Company X to differentiate from its competition in the enterprise architecture and business process management consulting industry.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

The secondary objectives of the research are the following:

- To identify the characteristics that define a high performance organisation in the consulting industry;
- To assess Company X's current performance in terms of high performance characteristics;
- To determine if Company X demonstrates its stated values,
- To understand the relationship between performance and Company X's culture, strategy and processes; and
- To develop an action plan to establish high-performance culture, strategy and processes at Company X.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design, according to Fisher (2007:136), will present the research approach and research methodology. Zikmund (2003: 65) further states that research design is a 'master plan' which details the method for collecting and analysing the information gathered.

For the purpose of the study, qualitative methods will be implemented within a case study. This form of research, according to Smith (2002:57), is a more

naturalistic process, which is not as rigidly structured. McGloin (2008:45) states that qualitative research is concerned with explaining social phenomena. This form of research focuses on people's behaviour, opinions and attitudes, also studying the effects of events on people, cultural influences and developments and differences between social groups.

The qualitative method will enable the researcher to 'get under the skin' of the organisation to find out what is really happening (Gillham, 2000:11). The case study research methodology is ideal for this study. The case study portrays human behaviour, thoughts and feelings in the context of the environment within which people work.

1.5.1 Sample of the study

The purpose of a sample, according to Fisher (2007:189), is to obtain results that are representative of the whole population being sampled without going to the trouble of asking the entire population. The population consists of a total of forty one (41) respondents who are employees, shareholders and contractors. The simple random sampling technique will be used in the study, as each member of Company X has an equal probability of being selected (Zikmund, 2003:379). The sample of this study will be a subset of 25 interviewees from Company X. The sample will be divided into the following categories:

- Employees from the various levels at Company X;
- Subject matter experts at Company X;
- Employees according to the different roles they conduct;
- Company X shareholders;
- Contractors at Company X; and
- Employees from the Western Cape region.

1.5.2 Methods of data collection- the case study

According to Rosenberg and Yates (2007:449), the selection of the data collection methods is driven by the endeavour to answer the research question. Yin (2003) states it is essential in a case study to determine if single or multiple data collection methods will be used.

The forms of secondary data that will be analysed in the study are the following:

- The research study will firstly focus on the literature review; this will be conducted to gain a theoretical overview of the elements, attributes and characteristics of high performance organisations. The literature review is the review summarising the existing literature within journals, books and peer reviewed articles (Rowley & Slack, 2004:32). The theoretical foundation set by the literature review will provide a frame of reference for the analysis of internal data and for the development of the interview.
- Internal data (Zikmund, 2003:144) is data that has been gathered and stored by Company X for decision-making purposes. For this study, letters, policy statements, regulations and guidelines will be used.

According to Smith (2002:59), a limitation on the reliability of secondary data collected can be that the researcher is unable to control the errors inherent in the data collection. He further states that in terms of secondary data the researcher is restricted to the purpose of the study.

Primary data will be collected by means of the following:

- Personal in-depth interviews will be conducted in this study with 25 employees, contractors and shareholders at Company X. The interviews will be conducted with the various stakeholders of the company. The interviewees comprise of shareholders, contractors and employees at different levels in the company, senior managers, engagement managers, subject matter experts at the company and those from the Western Cape region.

1.5.3 Methods of data analysis

The data analysis procedures determine how the researcher will order and present the findings. According to Fisher (2007:181), there are a few methods of analysing data collected by means of interviews.

- Firstly, content analysis will be conducted on the documents gathered during the data collection phase. The documents gathered will be analysed and measured for the frequency of themes that appear in the information gathered. The objective of the content analysis is to identify the characteristics of a high performance organisation, as identified by

the literature review. The analysis of secondary data will provide information of Company X's demonstration of performance characteristics within their internal documentation.

- Secondly, the data collected by means of interviews will be analysed with thematic analysis. Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behaviour. The thematic analysis will uncover ideas, experiences and feelings towards Company X's performance. The purpose of the thematic analysis is to:
 - Assess the current performance levels of Company X.
 - Provide an understanding of the relationship between performance and Company X's culture, strategy and processes.
 - Identify themes to develop an action plan to establish a high-performance culture, strategy and processes at Company X.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Derman (2008:30), ethics in sciences provides constructs as to what may be deemed as moral behaviour. In terms of research methodology, Derman (2008:30) states that it is the moral behaviour in which the researcher conducts data collection, data analysis, and then lastly, the manner in which the dissertation is written, that can ensure ethical behaviour during the research. The research will be conducted ensuring the following:

- Approval from the organisation being researched.
- All information made available from Company X will remain confidential and will be utilised only for the purpose of this study.
- Ethical considerations with regard to participants will be adhered to.

Derman (2008:31) states the following factors as requirements for the ethical consideration of a study, and these are the considerations that will be applied to this study.

- Participants will be informed by means of a letter that the research has been approved by the management of the organisation.
- To ensure no harm will come to participants or the organisation, all methods of data collection will first be approved by Human

Resources at the organisation before participants are approached to contribute to the study.

- All participants will be informed of their right to privacy, right to refrain from participation in the study, or the right to withdraw during the duration of the study.
- Participants will also be able to view the research findings.

1.6.1 Ethical considerations for the researcher

According to Zikmund (2003:81), researchers have certain ethical considerations they need to ensure they follow.

- **Objectivity:** To ensure objectivity of the study, high standards will be maintained to ensure accuracy of the data. Research findings will also be discussed with the management of the organisation to ensure data accuracy. The researcher will remain objective during interviews and not be biased or attempt to impose subjective views on the participants.
- **Respect and trust:** The researcher will show respect to all participants and ensure that the nature and extent of the study are accurately described to participants.
- **Misrepresentation of research findings:** All findings disseminated will be genuine conclusions drawn from the study.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

The study is divided into a systematic structure as follows:

1.7.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter covers the reason behind the organisation's need to transform into a high performance organisation. The section discusses the background of the organization and the purpose of identifying the characteristics of a high performance organization and evaluating them for applicability to Company X. Objectives of the research are documented and discussed.

1.7.2 Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter is an intensive literature review conducted on the study topic, and for this study the characteristics of high performance organizations were evaluated. The approach to creating a high performance organization is analysed in the literature review. Therefore, the literature review discusses the importance to understand which of these characteristics can be optimally developed in a small to medium enterprise.

1.7.3 Chapter 3: Research methodology

This section covers the methods used in gathering data and the analysis of the data collected. This study will be a case study which is a qualitative form of research in order to evaluate the organization's performance and the relationship between a high performance organizations' characteristics identified in the literature review, and the performance of the organization in the study.

1.7.4 Chapter 4: Presentation of results

This section covers the presentation of the descriptive statistical analysis and content analysis results. This will also cover the answer to whether high performance characteristics currently exist in the organization, and the applicability of these characteristics.

1.7.5 Chapter 5: Interpretation of results

The data analysed will be interpreted and findings will be deduced. Issues will be identified in the process of the study. The findings from this study can shape the future of the organization. This section also contains the limitations of the study and the relevance to the interpretations.

1.7.6 Chapter 6: Conclusion

A summary of the research objective of the study is documented in this chapter. The correlations between findings of the study are documented in this chapter. Future recommendations in terms of the application of high performance organizational characteristics to small and medium enterprises will be documented. This section also discusses future research that can be conducted on the topic.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The changes encountered in the last few decades, especially the last five years by organisations have not only impacted larger organisations, but also impacted small-sized organisations. These changes have made businesses rethink the way they achieve higher performance from all relevant stakeholders. Therefore, the future and focus of Company X will be to become a high performance organisation. The challenge for Company X will be to implement the recommendations and have employee acceptance of such changes. Before an evaluation of Company X can be made, it is essential to understand the characteristics of a high performance organisation in the literature. This information will be gathered by means of the literature review. The next chapter reviews the literature on high performance organisations.



CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The survival for small-sized organisations in the current and future competitive environment will become more challenging for organisations that are resource constrained. The importance for an organisation to perform and sustain superior performance is driven by the need for organisations to outlast their peers. High performance organisations strive towards optimal financial results, an aligned and integrated management structure, increased employee involvement and an organisation that can successfully interlink the tangible and intangible assets to create a flexible and dynamic organisation. “If organisations wish to be able to compete successfully in the global marketplace, they need to develop innovative products and services quickly and cost-effectively. They need to be able to operate beyond their own boundaries and maximise potential synergies” (Holbeche, n.d:4).

Chapter two therefore conducts a literature review of data which pertains to the creation and measurement of higher performance within organisations. The chapter will define a high performance model that depicts the links between organisational characteristics and performance, and finally recommend a method of creating a high performance organisation. The chapter begins with the definition of high performance organisations in literature and the characteristics that are found within high performance organisations.

The chapter then continues with an in-depth review of some important characteristics and the influence of these aspects on high performance. The chapter ends with Brokaw and Mullins’ work which defines the need for a high performance organisation model that is used to assess an organisation and develop an action plan for the organisation to increase performance. The findings from the literature review will form the foundation on which the interview questions will be prepared for the purpose of this study. The study will determine an organisation’s performance and establish an action plan to achieve higher performance.

2.2 DEFINING HIGH PERFORMANCE

The definition of high performance organisations has been debated by academics

for many years. Initial definitions of high performance organisations were based on financial performance, productivity and innovation (de Waal, 2010:10). The definition of high performance organisations suggested by Jones (2005:34) comprises that performance in an organisation is defined by five characteristics. These are vision, achievement, innovation, adaptability and wellbeing. Jones (2005:34) further states that high performance organisations ensure a balance of these five levels, and this will ensure harmonious output and experience which create high performance. Jamrog, Vicker and Overholt (2007:31) state the definition of high performance organisations as the following: these organisations represent a managerial ideal, an organisation that excels in many areas and which outperforms many of its competitors for longer terms.

High performance organisations have become a concept commonly used by business. There are many definitions of what constitutes a high performance organisation in business literature. Researchers have defined high performance organisations using various perspectives, depending on the objective of their studies.

Kiehne et al. (2009:5) state the definition of high performance organisations as one that succeeds at delivering better outputs than comparable organisations. These organisations show high adaptability in cases of change. The management of these organisations are focused on continuous improvement and appreciation of employees.

De Waal defines a high performance organisation as an organisation that does financially better than its peer organisations and that has the ability to react and change quickly by managing and planning for the long term. High performance organisations can also be seen as having integrated and aligned management structures that continuously improve capabilities and treat employees as key assets (de Waal, 2007:180).

De Waal (2010:10) later states a way to identify a consistent definition of high performance organisations would be to identify common themes in various studies. According to the research paper based on 290 studies conducted on the topic, the definition of high performance organisations should be derived from the

common themes of these studies (de Waal, 2010:10).The following themes were identified:

- Ability to achieve sustained growth over a longer period of time;
- Ability to adapt to change;
- Ability to react quickly to market changes;
- Ability to orientate themselves for the long term;
- Ability to continuously improve and provide customer value;
- Ability to develop their workforce.

De Waal (2010:11) proposes that the definition of a high performance organisation is, “It is an organisation that achieves financial and non-financial results that are better than those of its peer group over at least five to ten years.” It is clear that academics have defined high performance organisations by various means. High performance organisations are set apart by what Jones (2005) defines as a level of performance, what Jamrog et al. (2007:31) define as characteristics, and what de Waal (2010:10) defines as themes. Jones (2005:34) states that the following are levels of performance of a high performance organisation:

- Vision: This is articulated in a concrete and overall performance sense;
- Achievement: Performance is measured against traditional targets, success and quality of service ;
- Innovation: The organisation’s ability to stay ahead to ensure a competitive advantage ;
- Adaptability: Ensuring the processes of an organisation can respond to changes in the competitive environment quickly and effectively ; and
- Wellbeing: Ensuring the organisation cares for its employees and the organisation’s fate.

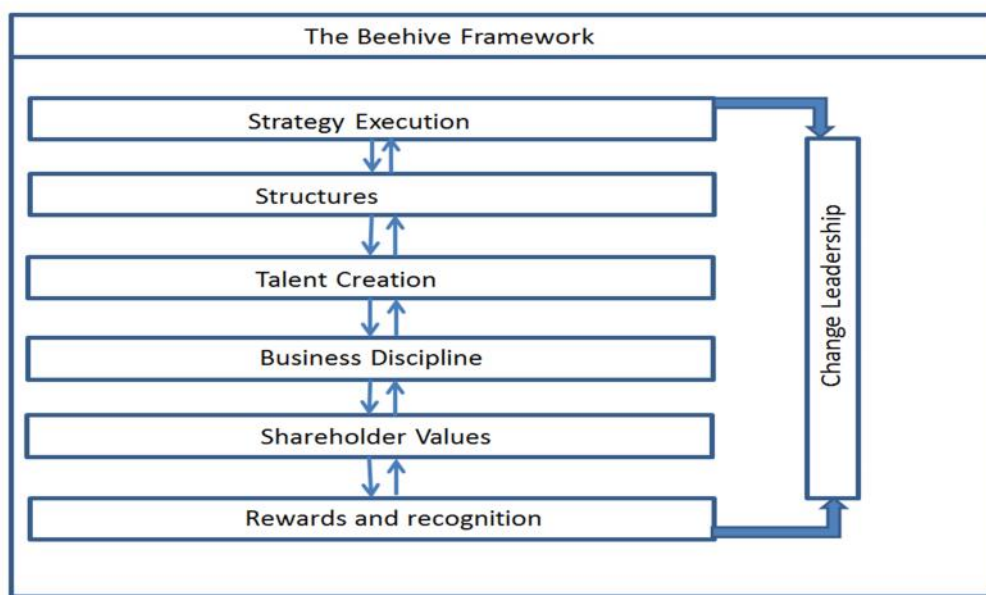
Jamrog et al. (2007:31) have developed a model of high performance organisations which centres on the following characteristics:

1. Strategic mindset;
2. Leadership;
3. Optimised process and structure ;

4. Focus on customers ; and
5. Values and beliefs.

Nel and Beudeker (2009:41) have developed the 'The Beehive Flow' which is a framework to ensure the continuous evolution of an organisation to remain competitive. The framework also provides a starting point for leaders to position their organisation to meet the challenges of the next decades and become a high performance organisation. The model shows there is a flow from one area to the other. The Beehive Flow framework is depicted in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. The Beehive Model depicting the creation of a high performance organisation.



Source: Adapted from Nel and Beudeker (2009:45).

The creation and sustainability of a high performance organisation according to Owen, Mundy, Guild and Guild (2001:10) is a cause and effect relationship between certain factors. The ability of an organisation to become a high performance organisation is easier than the ability of an organisation to sustain being a high performance organisation.

When these factors are aligned, business performance will consistently improve. (Owen et al., 2001:10). The factors that can negatively influence the ability to become a high performance organisation are the following:

- Senior leadership's perception of the marketplace;

- Shared vision, mission, values and strategies that are not aligned;
- Ineffective leadership practices;
- Employee attitudes and behaviours; and
- Customer needs and values not being met and understood.

According to Kiehne et al. (2009:6) there are 19 characteristics that constitute a high performance organisation. They state the characteristics and their definitions as:

- Continuously improving customer value creation: Organisations need to establish an understanding of how to sustain a relationship with the customer. The objective is to ensure the organisation is continuously improving to ensure customer satisfaction and provide value-added products or services.
- Increased autonomy of employee decision making: Organisations delegate responsibilities and decision making to teams or individuals. These teams or individuals are supported in the decisions made by them. This supportive behaviour fosters shared mindset, confidences objectives and values within the organisation.
- Creating a learning organisation: Organisations that continuously improve their knowledge base. Employees are encouraged to develop their skills through learning activities both internal and external to the organisation.
- Establishing a fair incentive and compensation system: An organisation's incentives and compensation systems support the facilitation of the organisation's values and strategies. Organisations need to support incentives that stimulate joy, growth and teamwork. These organisations ensure compensation based on employee performance is done in a transparent manner which encourages results that are long-term orientated.
- Establishment of trust within the organisation: Organisations must encourage continuous communication between employees and management. Management must acknowledge and appreciate employees' work to foster self-confidence. Management must consciously ensure they display the values of loyalty, learning, asking for help and building relationships. This display will establish and maintain trust.

- Continuous process improvement within the organisation: Operational processes of organisations need to be evaluated, simplified and standardised. This will remove inefficiencies in the process leading to simple and appropriate processes.
- Display integrity: Organisations must ensure they have employees and management who behave in an ethical manner which is consistent and cordial. Management must ensure they retain the values of the organisation and ethical standards.
- Building relationships with stakeholders: Organisations must establish relationships with stakeholders that build trust, openness and responsibility. Managers are tasked to develop extensive networks and be socially committed to stakeholders.
- Measuring performance meaningfully: Organisations must develop objectives that can be measured using defined criteria. Organisations must consistently observe and measure improvements and targets achieved. Employee assessment needs to be objective, comprehensible, calculable and inter-coordinated.
- Disclosure of financial or non-financial data that has potential to support improvements: Organisations need to disclose relevant data to employees for them to draw conclusions out of the information in order to achieve their goals. Data can provide different perspectives for assessment that can provide inputs for improvements.
- Cultural connectivity and positive attitude: Organisations must ensure within their recruitment process, they evaluate potential employees to have a cultural fit and positive attitude to ensure performance.
- A vision that inspires and challenges: The organisation must possess a vision that inspires, captivates and creates meaning and provides future direction for the organisation. The vision should unite employees with shared goals and purpose.
- Establishing meaningful and strong values: Organisations must establish a system of values that demands commitment and has a clear ethical basis.

- Measure success against benchmarks: The organisation's success should be measured in relation to its competitors. Organisations must achieve a competitive advantage by studying competitors' behaviour.
- Decisive decision making: The management of the organisation must be able to take decisions in a crisis situation and implement them effectively. These managers should act quickly and support each other's initiatives.
- Flat organisational structures: Organisations that have established flat structures reduce vertical barriers and bureaucracy. Flat hierarchies reduce the complexity of organisations, thus reducing structural limitations.
- Organisational collaboration: Organisations need to ensure teamwork and cooperation is the highest priority. Management must ensure they stress the importance of teamwork.
- Monitoring of environment and ability to change: Organisations must monitor market conditions and enable rapid response to these situations.
- Development of new products and service: Organisations must have the ability to develop new products and services to ensure they are on par with developments in the market.

In a study conducted by De Waal and Frijns (2009:29), the common characteristics that influence high performance were statistically analysed, using both correlation and factor analysis. The 35 characteristics which had the strongest correlation with organisational performance were extracted and identified. The results of this study showed that there is a direct relationship between high performance factors identified, and competitive performance. (De Waal & Frijns, 2009:30). De Waal and Frijns, in 2011, detail the results of a worldwide survey depicting the manner in which organisations became high performance organisations (De Waal & Frijns, 2011:6). The five factors identified in the study are:

- high management quality,
- openness coupled with action orientation,
- long-term commitment,
- focus on continuous improvement and renewal and
- high workforce quality.

According to De Waal and Frijns (2011:5), high management quality entails that management develop and maintain trusting relationships with employees. Managers at high performance organisations work with integrity and ensure they establish respectful relationships with people at all levels within the organisation. Managers in high performance organisations apply decisive decision making by ensuring they do not over analyse, but rather develop effective action plans. High performance organisations have managers who nurture mentoring relationships with employees to ensure clear and effective communication.

The ability to be open coupled with an action orientation is one of the characteristics of a high performance organisation (De Waal & Frijns, 2011:7). High performance organisations display an environment of openness. This entails management being open to communication from employees, involving employees in important decision making and permitting mistakes. In order to be action orientated management should welcome change and continuously strive for improvement in services and products. Employees in high performance organisations develop knowledge sharing networks and exchange new ideas to improve their work.

According to De Waal and Frijns (2011:8), long-term orientation is the ability of an organisation to place more importance on longer-term gains. A high performance organisation continuously strives to enhance customer value creation. High performance organisations are responsive to customer needs and strive to build good relationships with them. A high performance organisation builds relationships with all stakeholders to develop win-win relationships.

The above authors also state that high performance organisations must be able to develop strategies that will initiate alternative strategies. The organisation must continuously improve and align its processes and respond efficiently to change. The people in these high performing organisations are motivated to continuously improve, develop new products and services to effectively respond to market change. Continuous improvement allows organisations to meet the rapidly changing needs of its customers to ensure the customer obtains value from their products and services.

De Waal & Frijns (2011:8) also state that the quality of an organisation's workforce is one of the characteristics of a higher performing organisation. High performance

organisations have stringent recruitment processes that ensure they hire a complementary workforce. Training and development comprise some of the key mechanisms to build a quality workforce that will produce extraordinary results.

Taking into account the various characteristics identified for a high performance organisation, the following characteristics need to be explored, evaluated and developed to create a high performance organisation. These characteristics are chosen as they are the most commonly identified by various authors. The characteristics have been identified to have the strongest correlation with organisational performance, according to the literature review.

- The role of an organisation's strategy;
- The organisational leadership;
- The organisational structures and processes;
- The organisational culture is important in creating a high performance organisation ; and
- The organisational customer approach.

2.2.1 Strategy in high performance organisations

Nel and Beudeker (2009:45) are of the opinion that an organisation's strategy is determined and compiled by people who execute plans at all levels. To achieve this, there are widely understood frameworks and timetables of strategic work that are implemented at all levels. Nel and Beudeker (2009:45) have quoted Anotote France who states, "To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream, not only plan, but also believe."

In order for an organisation to develop a strategy that is driven towards high performance, Nel and Beudeker (2009:47) discuss four aspects of strategies that need to be evaluated and developed. These aspects are vision, interdependence, structure and action. The abbreviation 'VISA' was created by Nel and Beudeker to represent these elements. Vision refers to the understanding of the organisation's current competitive environment and positioning. Interdependence refers to all external, internal and people variables that must be identified and aligned. Structure comprises the establishment of process standards that focus on resource utilisation to create

customer value. The element Actions are the steps taken to ensure service which meets and needs the expectations of customers.

De Waal and Frijns (2009:31) state that focus on continuous improvement and renewal constitutes a factor in developing a high performance organisation. This continuous improvement and innovation can only be created by adopting a strategy that will set the company ahead by developing many new options and alternative strategies that are successful. A high performance organisation should ensure its strategy encompasses innovation in terms of products, processes and services that consistently create a competitive advantage. High performance organisations' strategy must improve and align all their processes to improve their ability to respond to events, and to eliminate unnecessary work, unproductive work and information overload (De Waal & Frijns, 2009:31). In essence, a high performance organisation's strategies will ensure the organisation masters these assets, and is an innovator in its core competencies which will ensure core competencies are developed and retained within the organisation.

2.2.2 Leadership in high performance organisations

Leaders in the 1950s realised they would have to make a total mindshift to cope with the challenges of later eras. The same applies to leaders in the future if they want to be high-performance driven (Nel & Beudeker, 2009:12). The future in 2020 will have rapid technological advances as we are entering the age of imagination, according to Nel and Beudeker (2009:11).

Jamrog et al. (2007:30) describe leadership as the organisation's structure in managing people to achieve a particular set of behaviours. High performance organisations, according to Jamrog et al. (2007:31), have defined employee behaviour in order to execute strategies. Da Silva, Tadashi and Kikuo (2005:78) evaluated leadership in top world-class organisations, and the following were identified as characteristics which stimulate high performance. Firstly, leaders continuously find ways to update and improve their leadership skills. Secondly, finding effective ways to delegate and empower employees, thirdly, the incorporation and involvement of employees, customers and suppliers in strategic planning.

Jones (2005:33) echoes the importance of empowerment in high performance organisations. Leaders, according to Jones (2005:34), should recognise the following factors that determine, distinguish and guide them to be a high performance organisation. These are:

- Leaders must learn how to lead themselves;
- Leaders must be able to respond to challenges in a positive way;
- Leaders must recognise their leadership responsibilities and provide a climate in which performers can thrive; and
- Leaders must embrace and foster internal leadership capabilities at all levels.

High management quality can be seen as an important factor for high performance organisations, and this characteristic not only applies to senior managers, but to any manager in an organisation (De Waal & Frijns, 2009:30). The attributes of a manager in a high performance organisation according to De Waal and Frijns (2009:30), ensure that managers live with integrity and are role models for employees. These attributes play an important role in ensuring that the organisation develops into a high performance organisation. Managers of a high performance organisation create relationships which are based on the values of loyalty, respect, trust and keeping people happy with all employees in the organisation.

According to De Waal and Frijns (2009:30), managers of a high performance organisation must ensure they have a strong management style by:

- Communicating the organisation's values;
- Communicating and gaining approval for the organisation's strategy;
- Being committed to the organisation for the long term by balancing common purpose and self-interest;
- Encouraging people to become leaders and fill positions internally; and
- Creating an environment which will provide a sense of safety, job security and fulfilment.

In order for organisations to perform and be able to compete in the future, they need the ability to cope with change at various levels. Leaders need to enable people to develop self-mastery and confidence as core capabilities to perform at peak levels (Wing 2005:5). To achieve this, leaders need to ensure the organisation's structures and processes are aligned in becoming high performance.

2.2.3 Structures in high performance organisations

Nel and Beudeker (2009:69) have quoted Peter Drucker who stated, "A company has to be fit and friendly for human life and it has to be designed to achieve that."

Process and structures in a high performance organisation according to Jamrog et al. (2007:31), capture how the high performance organisation arranges its work processes, policies and procedures to support the organisation's strategy. Rogers and Blenko (2006:137) state that high performance organisations have roles clearly defined and hold people accountable for tasks.

Morley and Heraty (1995:56) promulgate that high performance organisations are characterised as being built on socio-technical systems with a team approach. They state that high performance organisations have developed autonomy and control, flat lean structures and advanced Human Resource practices. The classical organogram has become a familiar feature of most organisations. The new economy, according to Nel and Beudeker (2009:89), requires organisational structures to be depicted differently. They visualise structures and hierarchies in a different view. These two views are value streams of services and molecular structures.

Nel and Beudeker (2009:89) define the value streams of the service provision model as the designing of work in terms of processes that provide a competitive service to customers. This is both functional and places accountability for delivery at the lowest level of operation in an organisation (Nel & Beudeker, 2009:90).

Molecular structure is based on self-managed teams and the increased need to empower people to take maximum accountability for their areas of work. Molecular structures are part of fast and flexible organisations.

In the future organisations will become so- called 'shopping malls' of work and learning opportunities. Employees will begin to take their own development more seriously. Employees will take greater charge of their own involvement in making a greater contribution (Nel & Beudeker, 2009:91). In order to reach the future envisaged by Nel and Beudeker, organisational culture plays an important role.

2.2.4 Culture in high performance organisations

Levine (2006:375) states that organisational culture includes both social and behavioural actions and experiences. It is the way organisations work and are organised and experienced. Organisational culture also depicts the way in which people are rewarded, recognised, organised and controlled. Culture comprises the set of attributes and characteristics that is unique to each organisation.

An organisation's culture should be one which drives performance. This will ensure organisations can compete in the future. According to Rogers and Blenko (2006:139), companies with a high performance culture inspire loyalty from employees. This culture creates employees who are positive about business to customers. Scanlan (n.d.:5) discusses the climate for performance cultures, and states they have goals which will provide the employee with a sense of achievement. High performance organisations ensure employees set goals for themselves, and secure a culture with motivational feedback.

Rewards and recognition are part of an organisational culture and reinforce strategy execution and the fulfilment of outputs. Organisations need to understand that the best people will always be able to earn money. The need to provide a culture that encompasses other motivational factors for performance is thus important.

It is essential for high-performing organisations to have a culture that is open and focuses on taking action to achieve results. In order to develop this culture, management needs to allow risk-taking, innovation and stimulate

change which will create the renewal. In order to create an organisation that displays a culture of open communication and flexibility, managers need to be personally involved in the change process (De Waal & Frijns, 2009:31).

In a high performance organisation a culture of long-term commitment needs to be extended to all stakeholders of the organisation. The stakeholders are comprised of shareholders, employees, suppliers, clients and the society at large (De Waal & Frijns, 2009:31).

Rogers and Blenko (2006:139) state that a high performance organisation does not take its culture for granted, it is consistently managing its culture. Managing culture can seem to be a daunting task. Managing culture is about engaging people's inherent beliefs about the added value they bring to an organisation, ensuring appropriate feedback and giving rewards. The management of culture in a high performance organisation will show the propensity to change as strategic goals shift.

2.2.5 Customer approach in high performance organisations

Knox (2004:105) quoted Oscar Wilde who stated, "A cynic is someone who knows the price of everybody but value of nothing." The importance of customers has become ever more vital in the future business environments with more competition. The challenge executives and managers will face is how to further increase the value of their service (Knox 2004:105).

High performance organisations have clear approaches to obtaining and maintaining new customers (Jamrog et al., 2007:31). Evans (1996:56) describes customer focus as a leading practice to achieve high performance. According to Evans (1996:56), customer focus is the cornerstone of today's leading organisations. The same sentiment is echoed by de Waal (2007:184) who stipulates that high performance organisations strive to enhance customer value and maintain good and long-term relationships.

Rogers and Blenko (2006:136) also state that to achieve high performance in an organisation, customer focus is vital. High performance organisations are engaged and focused on their customers' needs. Owen et al. (2001:16) state that customers' needs have to be met. In order to ensure meeting these

needs, the correct approaches play a vital role. Gaps between high performance characteristics will lead to lower performing organisations.

A high performance organisation should ensure they take cognisance of the customer by learning what the customer wants, understanding the customer's values and building excellent relationships with him (De Waal & Frijns, 2009:31).

2.3 ASSESSING THE NEED TO BE A HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANISATION

Brokaw and Mullins (2007: 29) state that a high performance organisation model will assist member organisations to systematically explore their environment. The high-performance model investigates organisations, identifies desired outcomes and develops a comprehensive action plan for achieving higher levels of performance. The high-performance model can be seen as an intellectual journey of introspection and discovery which is a method of assessing the organisation's effectiveness to achieve high performance. The high-performance model is composed of several questions which will establish causal reasoning between elements of the organisation and its performance (Brokaw & Mullins, 2007:29).

According to Brokaw and Mullins (2007:29), the following are the questions that are asked to assess high-performance:

1. What is higher performance for us (this organisation)?
2. How would we know (if we were high performing)?
3. According to whom are we higher performing?
4. Why do we need to be higher performing?
5. Are we delivering the right service?
6. How could we know if we are delivering products and services in the correct manner?
7. Are we going to keep our customers and stakeholders satisfied?

The first question that needs to be asked is, "What is higher performance for us (this organisation)?" Brokaw and Mullins state (2007:29) that understanding what higher performance for the organisation is, implies doing better than its current performance. If organisations understand what the current performance levels are, they will be able to define and ultimately measure their performance in a

qualitative and quantitative manner. High performance translates into the accomplishment of the mission at the level defined by its vision, in essence stating that higher performance is measured by the results achieved by an organisation in the endeavour to achieve its vision. (Brokaw and Mullins, 2007:29).

The second question is, "How would we know if we were high performing?" According to Brokaw and Mullins (2007:30), the ability of an organisation to prove that they are superior to the competitor becomes a challenge, and most businesses will consider themselves higher performing in terms of quality and price. The high-performance model defines high performance through three elements, these being: quality, customer value and financial performance. These measures not only determine the organisation's performances today, but also tomorrow, and in the future. For an organisation to succeed over time they must consider both the outcome factors that acknowledge high performance, as well as those factors that forecast future performance.

Brokaw and Mullins (2007:30) state that in the high-performance model, high performance requires consistent delivery of quality, customer value and financial performance. With the consistent delivery of quality, customer value and financial performance over time, the high performance which is created according to the high-performance model is called "pick 3+", which reflects customers' expectations of what they would receive. The positive sign reflects that customers demand continuous improvement. According to Brokaw and Mullins (2007:31), organisations need to measure the quality, customer value and financial performance to be able to answer the question, "How does an organisation know if it were higher performing?"

Question three is "According to whom are we higher performing?" This question requires a thorough analysis of the organisation's customers. The organisation needs to conduct a thorough analysis of customer value to be able to understand customer expectations, and to align strategies to ensure that value is created over time. This analysis will require that the organisation develops a collaborative relationship with customers to ensure that there is an understanding of the wants and needs of the organisation and its customers.

Question four: "Why do we need to be higher performing?" This question evaluates the need to be higher performing within the organisation, identifying the reason to change. Organisations need to establish a clear vision of the future to ensure that they have the energy source for their actions to achieve their goals.

The first questions will assist organisations in identifying and understanding what they are trying to achieve, how much progress they have made, and why it is important to sustain these factors during this process. Brokaw and Mullins state, "The next three diagnostic questions become relevant as they take into account the answers to the previous questions."

Question five asks, "Are we delivering the right service?" This question is composed of a subset of questions which will analyse the kind of organisation and its strategies, structures, systems and practices. The subsets of question are:

- What should be the objectives to keep products and services?
- Does it provide the right products and services to the right customers?
- Does it produce excellent customer value?
- Is the organisation effectively serving its customers?
- What is or should the organisation's unique niche be?
- What should the organisation take responsibility for in order to compete in the near future and the long term?
- How do the efforts contribute to achieving the larger vision?

Question six asks, "How could we know if we are delivering products and services in the correct manner?" This question is based on the organisation's ability to work flawlessly to execute the right strategy, using the right structures and systems. Organisations need to evaluate their overall strategy to ensure the effective and efficient accomplishment of their goals. An organisation should evaluate its current structure, and change it if a different organising principle will allow it to better support its strategy. In this question the organisation also has to review its systems and processes to determine the extent to which it is capable of delivering the organisation's mission and to ensure alignment with the organisation's values (Brokaw and Mullins 2007:29).

Question seven, according to Brokaw and Mullins (2007:33) is "Are we going to keep each other, customers and stakeholders?" This question identifies how the

organisation will gain a culture of customer satisfaction, continuous improvement and accountability towards stakeholders in the long term. The organisation must possess assets to guide the organisation in terms of its decisions, actions and behaviours to generate value for customers, employees and stakeholders.

Therefore, these seven questions can help an organisation identify current and future gaps in order to take meaningful actions to achieve high performance. Research conducted by De Waal and Frijns in 2011 identifies the same characteristics as those depicted in the high performance model developed by Brokaw and Mullins. The questions of this model are clear and concise to provide comprehensive information to evaluate the performance of Company X. Therefore the research questions developed for this case study will be based on the high performance model developed by Brokaw and Mullins.

2.4 CONCLUSION

In order for a small-sized enterprise to become a high performance organisation, management would have to evaluate customer value, financial performance, strategy, culture, customer satisfaction and structure. The findings then need to be evolved into those identified as vital by literature. Therefore it becomes important to understand which of these characteristics can be developed, and how this can be achieved in Company X to pave the way to their successful future strategy.

The research question thus arises: To investigate Company X's current performance using the questions defined by Brokaw and Mullins in the literature review, and to establish a path to high performance for Company X.

CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design according to Smith (2002:56), is established by the problem statement's solution or the research question's answer. Fisher (2007:136) is of the opinion that the research design will present the research approach and research methodology. Zikmund (2003: 65) further states that the research design is a "master plan" which details the method for collecting and analysing the information gathered. An essential component of good research according to Denscombe (2007:3) is to ensure that the research approach is appropriate for the type of investigation that will be conducted. Zikmund (2003:65), postulates that it is essential to understand the objective of the study, this in turn will determine if the research is causal, descriptive or exploratory.

According to Zikmund (2003:110), exploratory research has three purposes which are to diagnose the situation or current events, evaluating alternative possibilities and generating new ideas. The primary objective of the study is to evaluate current performance of Company X by assessing it against high performance characteristics. To achieve this objective the results of the performance assessment will be used to develop an action plan for Company X.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

3.2.1 Quantitative and qualitative research

Quantitative and qualitative methods of research are the two main types of approaches. A combination of these approaches can be used within a research study (Geldenhuys, 2010:34). According to Flick (2002:262), qualitative methods were developed to critique quantitative methods and strategies. Qualitative methods have now become independent of quantitative research and strategies.

Flick (2002:262) stresses the incompatibilities of quantitative and qualitative research, as these two methods encompass different paradigms and will create conflicts. The same sentiment is held by McEvoy and Richard

(2006:66), as they opine that a combination of these approaches can lead to the incorrect alignment of investigation and research method.

Geldenhuys (2010:35) provides a comparison of these two approaches, comparing the paradigms, tools, methodology and data analysis. The quantitative approach is based on the “identification of statistical relationships between dependent and independent variables”, which is hypothesis testing, whereas the qualitative approach is based on “understanding the way in which the world is socially constructed and understood, non-numerical.” The tools that are at the disposal of a researcher when using these approaches vary as quantitative methods denote empirical research, whereas qualitative methods imply obtaining knowledge via social interaction (Geldenhuys, 2010:35).

According to Geldenhuys (2010:35), the tools a researcher has at his disposal in quantitative and qualitative approaches are the following:

Quantitative approaches:

- Structured interviews
- Questionnaires
- Randomised control trails
- Systematic reviews
- Statistical analysis
- Laboratory experiments
- Surveys.

Qualitative approaches:

- Focus groups
- Unstructured interviews
- Textual analysis
- Observations
- Documents
- The researcher’s impressions and interactions.

For the purpose of this study, qualitative methods will be implemented by means of a case study. Qualitative research, according to Smith (2006:57), is less intrusive and not reliant on measurements. This form of research is a

more naturalistic process, which is not as rigidly structured. McGloin (2008:45) states that qualitative research is concerned with explaining a social phenomenon. This form of research focuses on people's behaviour, opinions and attitudes, also studying the effects of events on people, cultural influences, and developments and differences between social groups.

3.2.2 Case study

The definition of a case study has changed and evolved through the decades. According to Yin (2009:17), older definitions of a case study were insufficient in their explanation of a case study. The lack of definition to the case study method can be attributed to the fact that 'many of the earlier social science textbooks failed to consider the case study as a formal research method'(Yin , 2009:17).

Yin (2009:18) states the definition of a case study as twofold. The first part aligns with the scope of the case study. The second part of the definition relates to the technical characteristics of a case study. Yin (2009:18) states that a case study is: 'An inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in depth within a real- life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin, 2009:18).

According to Stake (1995), case study research can take three forms; these are intrinsic, instrumental and collective. For the purposes of this study the case study will be instrumental in nature. The advantages and disadvantages of a specific approach should be understood by the research before selecting an approach. The advantages of a case study approach are the following (Denscombe, 2007:45):

- The case study approach allows the researcher to focus on the subtleties and intricacies of a social situation.
- It allows for a holistic analysis.
- It encompasses a variety of research methods and multiple sources of data which facilitates the validation of data through triangulation.
- The case study approach works well within a small-scale research projects concentrating efforts on one such site.

There is much debate as to the validity, trustworthiness and rigour of qualitative research, and the disadvantages of qualitative research in the form of case studies are the following (Denscombe, 2007:45):

- Case studies provide little basis for scientific generalisation.
- There is a lack of rigour within the case study research method.
- The case study research method is time consuming.
- Negotiating access to case study settings can be demanding, as access to documents, people and settings can generate ethical problems in terms of confidentiality.
- The boundaries of a case study can prove difficult to define in an absolute manner, which creates difficulties in determining which sources of data to incorporate.

According to McGloin (2008:45), case study research is increasingly being used as a suitable research methodology. The disadvantages noted above can be corrected by means of ensuring validity, trustworthiness and rigour of qualitative research. Trustworthiness should be applied to the case study approach to ensure validity and trustworthiness. The first criterion is truth value, which considers how confident the researcher is with the truth of the study's findings. In order to assess the credibility of the study, triangulation of data should be conducted (McGloin, 2008:45).

The issues relating to the generalisation of a case study refer to the degree to which findings can be applied to other groups. As a case study has a naturalistic nature, the applicability and the generalisation of a case study are irrelevant in a qualitative approach. The third criterion of trustworthiness considers the consistency of data; this consistency is determined by the dependability of the data. The dependability of data can be through the use of an audit trail to ensure accurate data collection. The final criterion is trustworthiness; this is established by the neutrality of the data.

According to Darke, Shanks and Broadbent (1998:279), it is appropriate to conduct a case study research project in the instances where a contemporary phenomenon is to be studied in its natural context, and the focus of the study is to understand the dynamics present in a single setting. Within the context of

this study, a case study method has been chosen, as it allows the researcher to focus on contemporary events within Company X to gain an understanding of the 'how' and 'why' of its operations. The forms of questions that contain 'how' and 'why' are more explanatory and likely to lead to operational links within the study. For the purpose of this study it is appropriate to use the case study approach, as the objective is to gain an understanding of how and why processes or a phenomenon occurs.

Therefore, this form of research will be ideal for this study as the study will evaluate both the tangible and intangible characteristic of Company X to determine performance and establish a way forward to improve performance. The case study approach enables the understanding of how Company X is socially constructed in order to perform. Therefore, the case study approach is beneficial for this study, as it allows the researcher to obtain a holistic view of the company by knowing the people, and understanding their views on the company's performance.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.3.1 SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of a sample according to Fisher (2007:189) is to obtain results that are representative of the whole population being sampled without going to the trouble of asking the entire population. The total population of the study is 41 employees, contractors and shareholders. The simple random sampling technique will be used in the study, as each member of Company X has an equal probability of being selected (Zikmund, 2003:379). The sample of this study will be a subset of employees from Company X which will contain 25 contractors, employees and shareholders who represent 60% of the population. Due to research limitations it is not feasible to use the entire population. This sample is comprised of a representation of contractors, employees and shareholders. The sample will be divided into the following categories:

- Employees from the various levels at Company X
- Subject matter experts at Company X

- Employees according to different roles they conduct
- Company X shareholders
- Contractors at Company X
- Employees from the Western Cape region.

3.3.2 Methods of data collection- the case study

According to Rosenberg and Yates (2007:449), the selection of data collection methods is driven by the endeavour to answer the research question. Yin (2003) states it is essential in a case study to determine if single or multiple data collection methods will be used. According to Stake (1995), multiple methods provide a rich picture of single analysis.

The forms of secondary data that will be analysed in the study are the following:

- The research study will firstly focus on the literature review. This will be conducted to gain a theoretical overview of the elements, attributes and characteristics of a high performance organisation. The objective of the literature review is to identify the characteristics that define a high performance organisation. The literature review will provide a high performance framework as input to the interview schedule.
- Internal data (Zikmund, 2003:144) is data that has been gathered and stored by Company X for decision-making purposes. For this study, letters, policy statements, regulations and guidelines will be used. Internal data collected from Company X will be analysed to identify the existence of high performance characteristics currently displayed. By identifying the current high performance characteristics within Company X, it is possible to identify the missing characteristics. This identification will be used as input to the development of an action plan.

According to Smith (2002:59), a limitation on reliability of secondary data collected can be that the researcher is unable to control the errors inherent in

the data collection. He further states that in terms of secondary data, the research is restricted to the purpose of the study.

Primary data will be collected by means of the following:

- Personal in-depth interviews will be conducted in this study on a sample of the employees, contractors and shareholders at Company X. Yin (2009:107) states that within an in-depth interview, the interviewee can provide his/her own insights and suggest other sources of evidence. The interviews will be conducted with the employees at different levels in the company, with shareholders, senior managers, engagement managers and subject matter experts at the company. There will be 25 interviews that will be conducted to gather insight into Company X. The interviews will comprise of open-ended and unstructured questions. The results of these interviews will allow for the analysis of Company X's performance in terms of its culture, process and strategy. This in turn will allow for the creation of an action plan stimulating higher performance within Company X.

3.3.3 Research questions for interviews

The research design is comprised of interviews, and for this the research questions were drawn from Brokaw and Mullins' article relating to high performance organisations. The high performance model developed by Brokaw and Mullins is valid as a performance measurement model, as the characteristics identified in the model are relevant today. De Waal and Frijns in a 2011 study identified the same characteristics as having the strongest correlation with organisational performance. Therefore, the research questions for the interviews have been drawn from the Brokaw and Mullins model as they are clear and concise and provide comprehensive information with regard to Company X's performance. The questions are as follows:

- Question 1: What is the organisation's vision and mission?
The intention of this question is to initially establish if the interviewee is aware of the organisation's vision and mission. The vision and

mission establish goals and targets for the organisation; performance is measured against the achievement of these goals.

- Question 2: Has the organisation achieved the goals stated in their vision/mission?

The intention of this question is to establish the interviewee's perception of the organisation's performance. This question will also establish the interviewee's perceived view on the level of performance achieved by the organisation.

- Question 3: What is higher performance for the company?

The intention of this question is to establish if the interviewee understands that the company's vision and mission drive performance. The question is to establish the perception interviewees have on the company's ability to achieve the objectives stated in the mission and vision statements, and if the organisation has the ability to perform better.

- Question 4: As an organisation, how important is it to ensure the customer obtains value from the organisation's services?

The intention of this question is to determine the following:

- Does the organisation have a culture of ensuring they deliver customer value
- Is the organisation consistently delivering value?
- Question 5: As an organisation, how important is it to ensure quality in the services provided?

The intention of this question is to ascertain what the interviewee's perception on the standard of work produced by the organisation is.

- Question 6: Do you believe the organisation has consistently improved their financial performance?

The intention behind the question is to determine the interviewee's thoughts on the organisation's financial performance.

- Question 7: Do you believe the organisation needs to be higher performing? If yes, in what aspects should the organisation change to achieve higher performance?

The intention of this question is to establish the interviewee's view on performance and to determine which aspects of the organisation need to be changed.

- Question 8: Has the organisation executed its strategy using the right structure and leadership, culture and systems?

The intention of this question is to obtain an understanding of how effectively the organisation's strategy is being implemented in terms of the execution of processes, the leadership of the organisation, and the structure of the organisation.

- Question 9: Does the organisation have a culture of customer satisfaction, continuous improvement and accountability towards stakeholders? How does the organisation plan to maintain these cultures in the future?

The intention of this question is to determine the long-term view of the company in terms of its decisions, actions and behaviours to generate value for customers, employees and stakeholders.

3.3.4 Method of data analysis

The data analysis procedures determine how the researcher will order and present the findings. According to Fisher (2007:181), there are a few methods of analysing data collected by means of interviews and a questionnaire. Rosenberg and Yates (2007:449), opine that as an act of methodological rigour, the selection of analysis methods must correspond with the chosen data collection method. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:150) state that within a case study the following steps must be followed:

- Organisation of data about the case: The arrangement of facts in a logical order.
- Categorisation of data: Data is categorised into meaningful groups. The researcher must identify the categories.

- Evaluation of single instances: The researcher must evaluate specific occurrences of data and interpret the meaning they might have in relation to the case.
- Identification of patterns: The data collected and interpretations deduced by the researcher are assessed for themes or patterns.
- Synthesis and generalisations: Conclusions are developed that may have implications on the case study.

Firstly, content analysis will be conducted on the documents gathered during the data collection phase. The documents gathered were arranged in logical order. They were arranged according to the purpose of the document. The documents gathered will be analysed for the frequency with which themes appear in the material. Once the analysis is conducted, the results will establish the extent to which high performance characteristics are currently displayed in Company X. The results of the content analysis will therefore be used as input to the assessment of Company X's current performance and the development of an action plan.

Secondly, the data collected by means of interviews will be analysed with thematic analysis. Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behaviour. The thematic analysis will assist in recognising patterns of behaviour related to the performance of Company X. The thematic analysis will uncover ideas, experiences and feelings towards Company X's performance.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Derman (2008:30), ethics in sciences provides constructs as to what may be deemed as moral behaviour. In terms of research methodology, Derman (2008:30) states that it is the researcher's duty to behave morally correct when conducting data collection and data analysis and then also with the manner in which the dissertation is written. In order to ensure ethical behaviour during the research, certain procedures will be applied. The research will be conducted ensuring the following:

- Approval from the organisation being researched.
- The research will be done in accordance with the ethical requirements of the University.
- Ethical considerations with regard to participants will be adhered to.

Derman (2008:31) states the following considerations as requirements of ethical considerations of a study. These are the considerations that will be applied to this study.

- Participants will be informed by means of a letter that the research has been approved by the management of the organisation.
- To ensure no harm will come to participants or the organisation, all methods of data collection will first be approved by the Human Resources department of the organisation before participants can participate in the study.
- All participants will be informed of their right to privacy, right to refrain from participation in the study, or the right to withdraw during the study.
- Participants will also be able to view the research findings.

3.4.1 Ethical considerations for the researcher

According to Zikmund (2003:81), researchers have certain ethical considerations they need to ensure they follow:

- **Objectivity:** To ensure objectivity of a study, high standards need to be maintained to ensure accuracy of the data. Research findings will also be discussed with the management of the organisation to ensure data accuracy. The researcher will remain objective during interviews and not be biased or attempt to impose subjective views on the participants.

- Misrepresentation of research findings: All findings disseminated will be genuine conclusions drawn from the study.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter of the study was to outline the research methodology of the study. The study will employ a qualitative research method in the form of a case study. Data collected will be in the form of primary and secondary data. Interviews will be conducted to gather primary data, which will be analysed with thematic analysis. Secondary data will be gathered with internal documentation reviews and analysed with content analysis. While conducting the study, the researcher will ensure all ethical considerations are maintained.



CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 is the presentation of the research findings of the study. This section consists of the presentation of findings of internal data belonging to Company X, and the findings from the unstructured open-ended interviews conducted. Internal data collected was analysed for information relating to Company X's decisions on the elements in the interview schedule. The chapter then discusses the findings related to interviews conducted with the members of Company X.

4.2 INTERNAL DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Internal data was analysed to identify and count the frequency of the existence of high performance characteristics identified in the literature review within Company X. Internal data received from Company X was analysed by means of thematic analysis, this involved the creation of codes to discover the meaning Company X associates with certain themes.

Internal data in the form of presentations, marketing material, strategy documents and human resource documents was logically ordered and then analysed for the existence of high performance characteristics. From the documents analysed the finding show that:

- 'Strategy' was mentioned in 6 of Company X's documents.
- 'Values' was mentioned in 5 of Company X's documents.
- 'Business plan' was mentioned in 3 of Company X's documents.
- 'Structure' was mentioned in 3 of Company X's documents.
- 'Financial performance' was mentioned in 1 of Company X's documents.
- 'Value proposition' was mentioned in 5 of Company X's documents.
- 'Growth history' was mentioned in 3 of Company X's documents.

Table 4.1: High Performance Characteristics

| High Performance characteristics developed from thematic analysis | | Number of documents in which high performance characteristics identified |
|--|--|---|
| Strategy | Company X's operating models and strategies | 6 |
| Values | Company X's values | 5 |
| Business plan | Company X's operating plan | 3 |
| Structure | Company X's management structure | 3 |
| Financial performance | Data relating to Company X's financial performance | 1 |
| Value proposition | Proposed value the company delivers | 5 |
| Growth History | Company X's growth history | 3 |

4.2.1 Strategy: Company X's operating models and strategies

From data collected, Company X does not have a formally documented strategy document, but they have developed alternative documents within which they briefly discuss certain aspects of Company X's strategy. For the purposes of the study alternative documents were analysed to identify the strategy, a vision and mission of Company X. From the presentations and governance documents, it is deduced that Company X has developed two operating models. These models depict the strategic vision of Company X (Operating Model 1) and how to achieve this vision in terms of resources (Operating Model 2). The objective of these models is to provide guidance to the members of Company X as to what the future of the company could be, and how resources will need to develop and resource levels maintained to obtain a sustainable level of growth.

4.2.1.1 Operating model one

This model depicts Company X's strategic path for the company. It shows that Company X currently deals mainly with projects that are based on systems implementations. Systems implementation

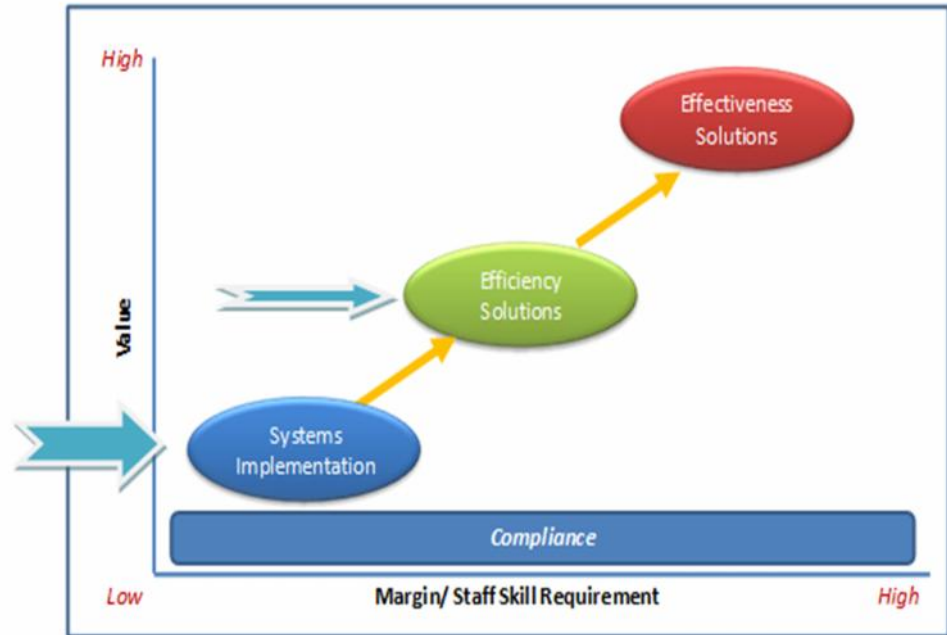
projects are those where a technological system is being implemented to automate a process. These system implementation projects provide low integration value to clients, and the staff skill requirements are lower than with efficiency solution projects. The company has started to provide efficiency solutions on certain projects. Efficiency solutions are those that allow Company X to integrate existing systems with new systems to provide added value. These projects provide higher value to clients and require that the staff members are more highly skilled. Company X, according to Operating Model 1, wants to achieve the ability to work on projects that deal with effectiveness solutions which will require staff to be highly skilled. This will provide high levels of value for clients. Effectiveness solutions are those projects where Company X can provide a service of measuring the saving created by automating and integrating systems. The model is depicted in Figure 4.1.

4.2.1.2 Operating model two

This operating model developed by Company X depicts the Human Resource strategy that will provide a sustainable level of resources through years of high demand and low demand. This model depicts that a sustainable level of employees over time generates a certain level of revenue. This level of revenue fluctuates according to the level of demand for services required. Company X is currently experiencing a high level of demand for services which generate high level revenue. An optimal level of resources is needed by Company X to ensure effective profit generation and survival in the future. This model is depicted in figure 4.2.

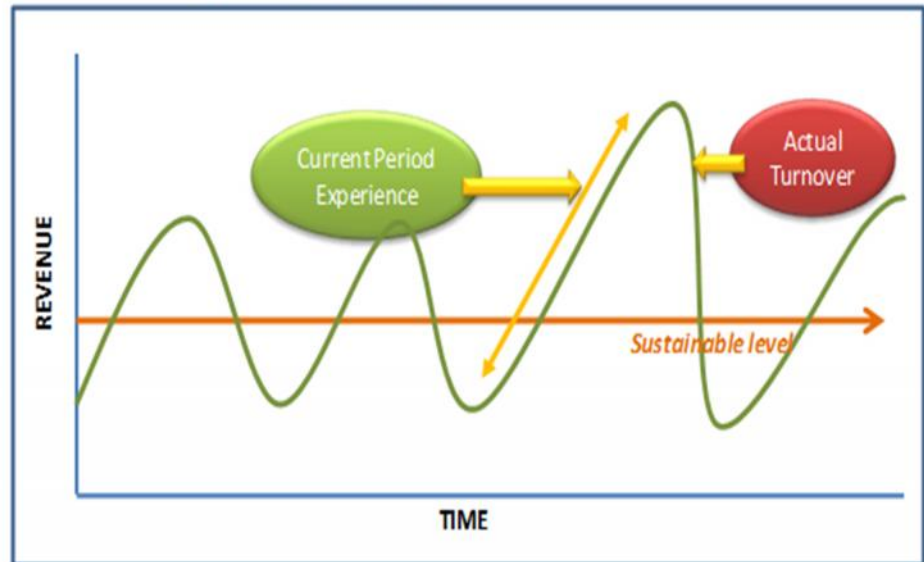
The two operating models are integrated by a common element, which comprises the employees of Company X. Once a sustainable level of resources has been established within Company X over time, the revenue generated will also stabilise.

Figure 4.1: Company X Operating Model One



Source: Company X Conference Presentation.

Figure 4.2: Company X Operating Model Two



Source: Company X Conference Presentation.

These resources will then acquire skills to be able to work on projects that deal with efficiency solutions. As the skills level of employees increases over time, the company will be able to move to projects that deal with effectiveness solutions. As the company moves from projects that are efficiency solutions, to projects that are effectiveness solutions they will have to assess their sustainable level of employees and the demand for their services.

4.2.1.3 'SMART Approach' strategy

From internal strategy documents it is found that Company X has developed a 'SMART Approach' strategy. The word 'SMART' is an acronym for scripter, engagement manager, repository manager and an analyst. This strategy states that with each client, Company X will strive to have employees with different skill sets. This will ensure that Company X has the relevant expertise at the client's disposal. 'SMART' represents having a software developer known as a scripter at Company X, and an engagement manager, repository manager and an analyst who make up a team. This strategy was developed in an effort to alleviate employee shortages and employees being overworked.

4.2.1.4 Identity statement

From the marketing material, Company X's identity statement is deduced, which provides its clients with an understanding of the company's services, and the reason why they are a partner of choice:

'Company X is the partner of choice in delivering value-adding enterprise architecture, business process management solutions, distinctive for its application of expertise and appropriate technology, enabling business strategy, demonstrated by measurable improvement.'

4.2.1.5 Business plan: Company X's operating plan

A business plan was developed by Company X to action their risk mitigating strategy and resource allocation strategy. Company X's business plan has been developed for the following two years to implement their risk mitigation strategy. The business plan denotes what actions will be implemented when current projects run by Company X are ended or stopped. The business plan objective is to denote how resource allocation will be conducted. The business plan depicts what action must be taken when employees are not allocated to a project. The business plan is based on a client-tier system; the first-tier clients have the most resources placed on their projects, with the third-tier clients having the least amount of resources placed. The first-tier clients provide the highest level of revenue for Company X, whereas the third-tier clients generate the smallest revenue. The first-tier client projects have more than 8 of Company X's employees allocated to them. The second-tier client projects have between 4 to 8 employees allocated to these projects. The third-tier client projects have up to 4 employees allocated.

As new clients are obtained by Company X, employees will be allocated to these projects. According to the business plan, employees who are not allocated to any clients will be allocated to the new client.

This plan was created to activate Company X's risk mitigation strategy. If a tier-one client contract for services is not renewed, the employees allocated from the tier-one client would move to a tier-two and/or a tier-three client. If a tier-two client's contract for services is not renewed, the employees allocated from the tier-two clients will be moved to another tier-two client or alternatively moved to a tier-three client. Table 4.2 depicts the tier system. To retain the confidentiality of the clients the clients' names have been changed.

Table 4.2: Company X's Business Plan

| 1st tier client | 2nd tier client | 3rd tier client |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Client 1 | Client 5 | Client 11 |
| Client 2 | Client 6 | Client 12 |
| Client 3 | Client 7 | Client 13 |
| Client 4 | Client 8 | Client 14 |
| | Client 9 | |
| | Client 10 | |

4.2.1.6 Partnering strategy

From internal partnership strategy documents, Company X is strategically positioning itself to be the second company in South Africa to have a 'SAP (Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing) Business Process Management Special Expertise Partnership'. Company X has demonstrated at various SAP client sites that they are well-positioned to promote integration across the SAP application life cycle, ensuring a one version of the business process and sustainable environment post implementation of SAP systems. Therefore Company X can be seen as the ideal for the partnership with SAP. The partnership with SAP will allow Company X to enter new markets, have access to new technology and training material, allow for the certification of employees and build networks with other SAP clients. The strategy model is depicted in Figure 4.3.

Components of the Model to Execution Strategy:

- **Business Process Management Capability:** Implement solutions based on a well-established business process management approach and enterprise architecture principles.
- **Sustainability:** Ensure clients' solutions are sustainable. Implement the application life cycle management which is the integration of various systems.
- **Model to execution:** Implement process orchestrations and

business rules automation to ensure that a process that is developed can be executed by means of technology.

- Process optimisation: Establish the ability to measure process execution to be able to continuously improve processes.

Figure 4.3 Model to Execution Strategy



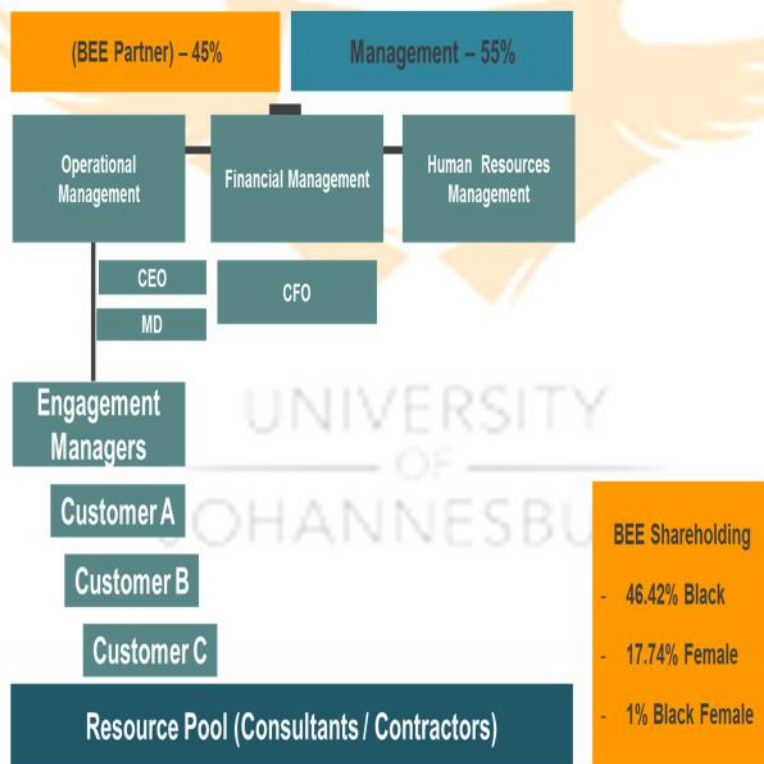
Source: Company X Internal Presentation Document.

The partnership with SAP will enable Company X to be able to grow, build skills and partner with SAP in order to influence business process management and enterprise architecture management. To be able to be an effective partner with SAP, Company X has initiated a 'Model to Execution' strategy. This strategy entails establishing a Business Process Management Capability with clients, using SAP related products. Company X will thus ensure the business process management capability is sustainable. Once sustainability has been reached, Company X will assist their clients to achieve the 'Model to Execution'. This will be done by means of process automation and business rule automation. Once the clients have been able to execute systems from processes, Company X will measure the process usage from system logs which will set the foundations for continuous improvement.

4.2.2 Structure

From the internal data gathered, Company X formally depicted a governance structure model that encompasses shareholders, a board of directors and a simplified view of the organisational structure. Figure 4.4 depicts Company X's shareholding and organisational structure. The governance structure also depicts the new BEE shareholder of Company X. Company X has also formally depicted their senior management structure which displays who the chief executive managers of the company are. The data gathered shows clearly that the company has a flat matrix model structure where members of the governance structures are also the senior managers at the company, fulfilling dual roles.

Figure 4.4 Company X's Shareholding and Organizational Structure



Source: Company X Internal Documents

4.2.3 Financial performance

Company X's financial details are not accessible for this study, a brief summary was provided which states Company X's financial performance is consistently improving and the company is generating profits. Therefore, from internal data provided it is clear that Company X's increase in profits shows an increase in financial performance.

4.2.4 Value proposition

From the internal data gathered, one of the elements identified in the documentation is the need to provide value to clients and acknowledge that delivering of value to clients is Company X's highest priority. Company X has a value proposition model which states "product and expertise combined will deliver solutions to the clients and create real business value". The objective is to deliver sustainable solutions that meet the most demanding of clients' expectations. To achieve this objective, some values, products used and expertise Company X can leverage to meet clients' expectations have been identified.

Company X has refined their values to the core values of the company:

- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Learning
- Caring
- Growth
- Sharing in success

Company X is specialised in the following products:

- Aris–Business Process Management Software
- Metastorm- Business Process Management Software

Company X's expertise:

- Business analysis
- Supply chain optimisation
- Aris modelling
- Aris repository management

- Enterprise architecture
- Aris training
- Methodology development

The objective of the secondary data analysis was to identify high performance characteristics from the literature review in Company X's internal data. The following characteristics appearing in the literature review were identified in internal data:

- Structure
- Values
- Financial performance
- Strategy

Therefore, from the internal data provided it can clearly be seen that Company X has goals, an identity, a vision for the future, and a business plan that provides strategic direction. These are not documented in vision or mission form, but they have the elements to compose a vision and mission. From internal data it can be observed that Company X has areas where improvement can occur to establish higher performance.

4.3 PRIMARY DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF INTERVIEWS

The objective of this section is to present the findings of the study pertaining to primary data collected. The findings of the primary data gathered have been analysed according to the interview schedule developed, and are grouped thematically. Table 4.3 depicts the number of interviews conducted and the various components of the sample as defined in the research methodology.

Table 4.3: Listing of interviewees per type

| Types of Company X Members | Number of Interviews Conducted | Percentage of Company X |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Employees from the various levels, 8,9,10 | 8 of 12 | 66% |
| Subject Matter Experts | 4 of 5 | 80% |
| Engagement Managers | 4 of 5 | 80% |
| Shareholders | 2 of 6 | 33% |
| Contractors | 3 of 5 | 60% |
| Employees from the Western Cape Region | 4 of 8 | 50% |
| Total | 25 of 40 | 62% |

4.3.1 Strategic direction-vision, mission, operating models and values

Awareness and understanding of the strategic direction Company X is heading towards is important to ensure higher performance levels. The findings show the following:

4.3.1.1 Awareness of Company X's strategic direction

- Employees from various levels: Half of the employees (4) from level 8, 9 and 10 were not aware that company X, does not have a formally documented strategy document.
- Subject matter experts: Half of the (2) subject matter experts (4) interviewed were not aware that company X, does not have a formally documented strategy document.
- Engagement managers: Half of the (2) engagement managers (4) were not aware that company X, does not have a formally documented strategy document.
- Shareholders: All shareholders (2) interviewed were aware that company X, does not have a formally documented strategy document.
- Contractors: All contractors (3) interviewed were unaware that

company X, does not have a formally documented strategy document.

- Employees from the Western Cape Region: All of the employees from the Western Cape region (4) were unaware that Company X does not have a formally document strategy document.

The majority of the interviewees (15) were unaware of the fact that Company X does not have a formal strategic document.

4.3.1.2 Identification of the values of Company X

The interviewees were asked to identify the values of Company X. Interviewees could identify multiple values. Table 4.4 gives a listing of the values and indicates how many interviewees could identify the values of Company X. Interviewees in each category associated Company X with the values of integrity and caring.

Table 4.4: Value identification by interviewees

| VALUES OF COMPANY X | Employees from various levels | Subject matter experts | Engagement managers | Shareholders | Contractors | Employees from Western Cape region | Total |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| Integrity | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 15 |
| Collaboration | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Learning | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Caring | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 16 |
| Growth | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Sharing in success | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| Total | 11 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 14 | 45 |

4.3.1.3 Understanding of Company X's operating models

Interviewees were asked if they understood Company X's operating models and knew what the objective of the models was.

- Employees from various levels: Five of the eight level 8, 9 and 10 employees did not understand the operating models.
- Subject matter experts: Two of the four subject matter experts interviewed did not understand the operating models.
- Engagement managers: Two of the four engagement managers interviewed did not understand the operating models.
- Shareholders: All shareholders (2) interviewed did understand the operating models.
- Contractors: All contractors (3) interviewed did not understand the operating model, as certain strategic information is not disseminated to contractors within Company X.
- Employees from the Western Cape Region: Three of the four employees from the Western Cape did not understand the operating models.

A large percentage of interviewees (15) 60% did not understand the operating models of Company X.

Interviewees' responses to what the objectives of the operating models are were grouped into the following themes:

- Revenue stabilisation: Company X is striving to stabilise its revenue to ensure that the current staff levels can be maintained. Once revenue has been stabilised, the company will be able to grow and expand.
- Resource allocation: Company X is striving to obtain an optimal resource allocation strategy. The company needs to be able to allocate the appropriate employees to client projects and ensure employees are given required experience.
- Skills development for projects: Company X must train its employees and ensure that they are able and equipped to handle the demands from the clients.

4.3.2 Achievement of goals

In order to determine Company X's performance levels, the interviewees provided their perceptions on Company X's ability to achieve their stated goals and the level of performance achieved.

4.3.2.1 Achievement of Company X's operating model

Interviewees were asked to provide their input on whether Company X was achieving the goals of their operating models. The responses are reflected in Table 4.5.

The majority of the interviewees (17) stated that the operating models' goals are not being achieved and provided their reasons for this. The reasons identified have been grouped according to the following themes:

- **Clarity on key performance measures:** Interviewees stated that more visibility on the key performance measures of Company X is required. This will allow for employees to know what the goals are, and they can thus aim to achieve them.
- **Lack of required skill sets:** Interviewees stated that goals are not being achieved as certain employees lack required skill sets.
- **Ineffective resource placements:** Interviewees stated that there is a lack of effective resource placement and ensuring that suitable employees are placed with clients and have the skill and capabilities to deliver a value-adding service.
- **Inadequate experience and mentorship:** Interviewees stated that due to lack of mentorship and experience, employees cannot develop, build self-confidence and acquire the required skills.

Table 4.5: Achievement of Company X's operating model

| Types of Company X Members | Achieving Operating Models | Not Achieving Operating Models | Total |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Employees from the various levels, 8,9,10 | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| Subject Matter Experts | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Engagement Managers | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Shareholders | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Contractors | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Employees from the Western Cape region | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Total | 8 | 17 | 25 |

4.3.2.2 Achievement of higher levels of performance

Interviewees were asked their views on Company X's performance.

- What is driving the performance of Company X?
- Does Company X have the ability to perform at a higher level?
- What is currently driving performance levels at Company X?

All (25) interviewees in the study stated that Company X can perform at a higher level.

Responding on the question of, what is currently driving performance levels at Company X; interviewees indicated the following:

- "Doing the right thing the first time around": A driver of performance at Company X is that employees provide services to the client by ensuring that they provide the right deliverables the first time around.
- "Employees have to provide a high quality service that satisfies our clients, as we are in a competitive environment": A driver of

performance for Company X is that the company is in a competitive environment.

- “Obtain organic growth”: A driver of performance for the company is to be able to grow organically.

The majority of the interviewees’ responses to the current driving forces for performance are grouped as follows:

- Competitive pressure of working in a niche market: A driver for performance for Company X is the pressure of being in a niche market. Company X has to ensure they keep their current clients and are able to obtain new clients.
- Culture of customer satisfaction: Company X has a culture of satisfaction. This implies ensuring clients are satisfied with the services provided.
- Ensuring the company delivers a value-added service: Ensuring the company delivers a value-added service to the client is a driver of performance.
- Organic growth: The ability of the company to grow organically is driving performance.

4.3.3 Demonstration of Company X’s values

Interviewees were asked to provide their inputs on whether Company X’s employees are demonstrating the values of the company.

The responses to this question were categorised between Company X is demonstrating their values, or Company X is not demonstrating their values. The following table depicts the number of interviewees who believe that Company X is, or is not demonstrating their values.

Table 4.6: Demonstration of Company X's values

| Types of Company X Members | Demonstrating Values | Not Demonstrating Values | Total |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Employees from the various levels 8,9,10 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Subject Matter Experts | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Engagement Managers | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Shareholders | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Contractors | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Employees from the Western Cape region | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Total | 20 | 5 | 25 |

Those interviewees who stated that the values of Company X are not being achieved validated their reasons for their opinion. The reasons identified have been grouped according to the following themes:

- Values are entrenched in a few of the senior managers: Interviewees stated that Company X's values are entrenched in a few of the senior managers. The values of Company X are thus not being reinforced and strengthened in the company.
- Dilution of values across client sites: Interviewees stated that the values of Company X are being weakened as employees begin to demonstrate the values of the clients they work for. There are many clients of Company X with whom employees have been for many years, these employees are beginning to demonstrate the values of these clients.
- Visibility of values: Interviewees stated that as there is a lack of visibility of the values of the company, employees are not aware of them. Therefore they cannot demonstrate them.

4.3.4 Providing value from services

Interviewees were asked their views on the importance of Company X providing

services that add value to the client. This shows that Company X has the drive to perform optimally.

The question asked was:

As an organisation, how important is it to ensure the customer obtains value from the organisation's services?

All (25) interviewees in the study stated that it is essential that the clients obtain value from Company X's services.

Interviewees were asked to provide their perceptions on the culture of ensuring value to clients and the ability to continuously deliver value.

4.3.5 Culture of ensuring value to clients

Interviewees were asked to provide input on Company X's culture of ensuring value to clients.

Interviewees' responses to Company X's culture of ensuring value to clients are grouped next.

- Culture of adding value through specialisation of skills and services: Company X has a culture of ensuring value to clients; this value is created through specialisation of skills they provide.
- Development of subcultures dependent on engagement managers' culture: As engagement managers at various client sites differ, the culture of employees at these sites differs. This therefore leads to subcultures.

4.3.6 Consistently delivering value

Interviewees were asked if Company X is consistently delivering value and if not, why value delivery is inconsistent. The responses to the question are grouped in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Consistently delivering value

| Types of Company X Members | Consistently Delivering Value | Not Consistently Delivering Value | Total |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Employees from the various levels 8,9,10 | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| Subject Matter Experts | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Engagement Managers | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Shareholders | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Contractors | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Employees from the Western Cape region | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Total | 12 | 13 | 25 |

Some of the interviewees (12) stated that Company x is delivering value consistently, whereas (13) stated that that Company x is not delivering value consistently. The reasons for this are grouped in themes:

- Demotivated employees: Employees at Company X feel demotivated and feel as if their work is repetitive.
- Resource constraints: Due to resource constraints at certain clients, the workload on current employees is overwhelming.
- Lack of collaboration and information sharing within Company X.
- Lack of mentoring and training within Company X.

4.3.7 Quality of service and standards of work

The quality of the service Company X provides is important for the survival of the company. Does Company X place high importance on the quality of their services?

All interviewees (25) stated that the quality of the service provided by Company X is important.

Is the level of the service provided by Company X consistent? If not, what do you believe are the reasons for the inconsistencies?

The responses of the interviewees have been grouped in Table 4.8. The responses of interviewees were categorised as the 'quality of service is consistent', or 'the quality of the service is inconsistent.'

Table 4.8: Consistency of service quality

| Types of Company X Members | Quality of the service is consistent | Quality of the service is inconsistent | Total |
|---|---|---|--------------|
| Employees from the various levels, 8,9,10 | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| Subject Matter Experts | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Engagement Managers | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Shareholders | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Contractors | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Employees from Western Cape region | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 9 | 16 | 25 |

Interviewees (16) stated that the quality of the services provided by Company X is inconsistent.

Reasons for consistency in service provided by interviewees were grouped according to themes:

- Specialised skills and services: Interviewees stated that Company X's employees have specialised skills and services they offer clients, such as the creation of reports in the language Java scripting.
- Competitive pressure: The competitive pressure to retain clients is essential to Company X's survival, and therefore this ensures the quality of the service is consistent.
- Passionate senior managers: The drive and passion of the senior managers and leaders at Company X ensure that the quality of the service provided is consistent.
- Profit generation: The quality of the service is consistent as Company X has to generate a profit.
- Culture of client must obtain value from services: Company X has a culture to ensure value is obtained from their services, therefore they strongly believe in providing a consistent service.
- Adapt to change: Company X is able to quickly adapt to change and initiate change management plans to ensure they manage the change over a long term.

Reasons for inconsistencies provided by the interviewees were grouped according to themes:

- Recruitment practices: Interviewees stated that a reason for inconsistencies is that the recruitment practices of Company X need to be refined and standardised. This will ensure the correct employee is hired who has the skills required, for his specific position.
- Induction programme: Interviewees stated that a reason for inconsistencies is a lack of an induction programme that will allow for employees to become accustomed to the standards of work produced by Company X and Company X's expectations.
- Training and development: Interviewees stated that Company X needs to ensure employees are given the appropriate training and development. This will allow employees to deliver a quality service.
- Development of templates and frameworks: The development of frameworks and templates will allow for employees to deliver services and produce deliverables that adhere to these frameworks and

templates. This will align the quality of the work produced by employees.

- On boarding at client sites: Employees moving to a new client site should be given the time to board at the client. This is to ensure the employee is familiarised with the client's culture and values. The employee will understand what is expected of him, and comprehend what deliverables should be produced, and how to produce the deliverables.
- Knowledge sharing and collaboration: To improve consistency of quality services provided by Company X, they need to ensure knowledge sharing and collaboration among employees.
- Mentorship: The establishment of mentors at various client sites will ensure employees have the ability to develop networks. Mentors can be seen as a source of information and assistance when needed.

4.3.8 Financial performance

Financial performance is a good indicator of a company's performance levels. As Company X is a private company and financial results are not public, employees and contractors were not able to provide detailed data on this matter.

All interviewees (25) stated that Company X, to the best of their knowledge and experience, has consistently been improving their financial performance.

4.3.9 Extent of change required

Does Company X need to implement change to improve performance? What changes are required to improve performance?

All interviewees (25) stated that changes are required to improve performance. The changes that will be required, as stated by the interviewees have been grouped according to themes and interviewee groups.

Table 4.9: Change required

| Types of Company X Members | Responses Grouped |
|---|--|
| Employees from the various levels, 8,9,10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of an induction programme for new employees. • Effectively using the current mentorship program in place. • Developing a technological assistance department to assist employees with hardware and software- related issues. • Greater visibility on the current career development paths of employees. |
| Subject Matter Experts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardise the technological equipment used by the employees of the company. • Provide employees the opportunities to specialise in different tool sets. |
| Engagement Managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the resource constraints of Company X. |
| Shareholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a dedicated sales team that can ensure Company X has new clients in order to be able to grow. |
| Contractors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase contractor inclusion in knowledge sharing and information sharing. |
| Employees from Western Cape region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase collaboration within Company X to assist in the development of employees. |

4.4 EVALUATING STRUCTURE , CULTURE AND SYSTEMS

Interviewees were asked to evaluate Company X's structure, culture and systems to be able to implement their operating models and partnership strategy. The contractors interviewed did not have the ability to express the views on this matter as they did not have enough knowledge to do so.

4.4.1 Company X's structure

The structure of a company should support its employees in achieving its strategy. Interviewees in Company X were asked if the current structure supports the company's strategy. All interviewees (25) confirmed that the structure does support the strategy. The interviewees also stated that certain issues existed within the structure of the company.

Responses from the interviewees regarding Company X's structure are grouped in Table 4.10.

Interviewees were asked to comment on the leadership within Company X. The responses were grouped as follows:

- Encourage challenges: The senior leaders at Company X encourage and thrive on challenges. They believe in consistently challenging the norm. One of the senior leaders at Company X is seen as one of the leading consultants in enterprise architecture.
- Encouraging growth: Interviewees stated that the senior leaders provide an environment for junior employees they believe are ready to grow. This is achieved by allowing employees to learn new skills and perform different roles on projects.

Table 4.10: Structure of Company X

| Types of Company X Members | Responses Grouped |
|--|--|
| Employees from the various levels 8,9,10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and visible senior management structures exist in Company X. • Lower level structures in Company X are unclear and not well defined. • Greater visibility is needed on career progression paths. |
| Subject Matter Experts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater visibility is needed on career progression paths. |
| Engagement Managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level structures in Company X are unclear and not well defined. |
| Shareholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and visible senior management structures exist in Company X. |
| Employees from the Western Cape region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level structures in Company X are unclear and not well defined. |

4.4.2 Company X's culture

The interviewees' responses are grouped as follows:

- Culture embedded in senior management: Interviewees stated that the culture of Company X is strongly embedded in the senior managers, but has not been embedded in lower level employees. Interviewees felt that they could not associate Company X with a distinctive culture.
- Development of subcultures at different client sites: Interviewees stated that employees of Company X begin to emulate the culture of client sites as they have been exposed to these cultures for a longer period. This therefore leads to the development of a subculture within Company X.

4.4.3 Company X's systems and processes

The ability to execute Company X's strategy relies on the systems they have in place to support their strategy.

- Does Company X execute its strategy using the right systems and processes?
- Do the current systems support Company X's strategy?

The majority of the interviewees' (18) responses stated that the systems do support the strategy of the company.

Interviewees highlighted the following concerns with regard to systems supporting Company X's strategy. These are grouped as follows:

- Increase the management of the technical aspects of systems: Company X needs to manage their current systems more effectively. Company X needs to establish online help.
- Integrate disparate systems: This integration needs to be done in order to make current processes more effective.
- Document processes: Company X does not have its processes clearly documented and visible to employees.

4.4.4 Company X's decisions, actions and behaviors

The decisions and behaviour of Company X can affect their performance, therefore it is important to establish if Company X behaves in a manner that ensures customer satisfaction. Company X must also identify how they will obtain a long-term culture of customer satisfaction, continuous improvement and accountability towards stakeholders.

Does Company X behave in a manner that ensures customer satisfaction?

All interviewees (25) stated that Company X always ensures that their clients are satisfied, so they can continue to provide their reliable services to their clients.

How will Company X maintain the culture of customer satisfaction? Interviewees' responses have been grouped as follows:

- Establishment of a quality audit process: Senior managers of Company X will conduct a quality audit at various client locations to ensure the services provided by Company X meet client expectations and requirements.
- Establishing customer satisfaction as a performance measure: Company X will link customer satisfaction and project success to individual employees' key performance indicators.

In an extremely competitive environment that is consistently changing, Company X must be able to continuously improve to retain current clients and obtain new clients.

Does Company X strive for continuous improvement?

The majority (20) of the interviewees stated that Company X does strive for continuous improvement. Those (5) who stated that the company does not strive for continuous improvement provided reasons. The reasons have been grouped as follows:

- Lack of employees: Company X deploys too few employees at certain clients. Employees are overwhelmed with the workload.
- Demotivated employees: Employees doing repetitive work for long periods has led to employees becoming demotivated.

How will Company X maintain the culture of continuous improvement?

Interviewees' responses have been grouped as follows:

- Establishment of an employee development strategy: Company X should develop an employee development strategy. This strategy should make training a key part of Company X. Employee development should be incentivised, therefore motivating employees to continuously improve.
- Demand from clients: As clients will demand the latest technology, Company X will have to continuously improve its knowledge and methods of work. This could therefore ensure that they can retain clients and obtain new clients.

Company X must possess assets to guide them in terms of decisions, actions and behaviours to generate value for customers, employees and stakeholders. Therefore it should be established whether Company X shows accountability towards all its stakeholders.

Does Company X show accountability towards stakeholders when making decisions?

All of the interviewees (25) stated that Company X does show accountability towards stakeholders when making decisions.

How will Company X maintain the culture of accountability towards stakeholders when making decisions? Interviewees' responses have been grouped as follows:

- Greater transparency in decision-making processes: Company X should provide greater transparency about the decision-making process on those decisions that affect stakeholders.
- Clear communication: Company X will need to communicate clearly to all stakeholders what the effects of their decisions will be.

4.5 REALIZATION OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The findings of the study have provided information that answers the primary and secondary research objectives of the study.

4.6 ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

The study found that technology in terms of software, hardware and technological support influences Company X's performance.

The study found that the creation of frameworks or templates for services provided would influence Company X's performance.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings of both secondary data and primary data gathered. Secondary data gathered from Company X was analysed by means of thematic analysis. Primary data gathered by means of interviewees was analysed and grouped thematically.



CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five contains the analysis of the findings of the study conducted. This section will contain reporting on an analysis conducted in order to be able to assess high performance characteristics within Company X. The analysis will be presented according to the framework highlighted in the literature review. The study will be set out in the following sections:

- Higher performance for Company X;
- Company X's performance according to quality, customer value and financial performance;
- Company X 's values and collaboration;
- Company X's need to deliver higher performance;
- Company X's structures and systems supporting its strategy; and
- Company X's ability to take meaningful actions to achieve high performance.

5.2 IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

An objective of the study was to identify the characteristics that define a high performance organisation. The literature review showed that the following findings define what the characteristics of a high performance organisation are:

- A clearly defined, articulated and aligned vision, mission and strategies.
- A clearly stated performance goal which allow for measurement of performance.
- Attitudes and behaviours of employees that display quality of work and customer value.
- Consistent financial performance.
- Structure of the company.
- The processes that support the company

5.3 HIGHER PERFORMANCE FOR COMPANY X

The findings of the study show that Company X has started to achieve the goals set in their operating model. Company X does not have a clearly defined vision or mission, but rather has operating models, values, a business plan and the

'SMART Approach' strategy. The findings show that the employees do not have a clear understanding of these elements.

In terms of the operating models of Company X, the findings of the study show that these models are not adequately developed and presented to the employees of Company X. These models need to be developed with more detail which provides information about the models. Company X needs to define the operating models to ensure they can be interpreted correctly by employees. From the findings of the study it is clear that in order for Company X to be able to measure their performance in a qualitative and quantitative manner, they will need to ensure their operating model can be understood by the stakeholders of the company.

Therefore in terms of Company X's strategy, the study showed that Company X does not have a formal strategy document. Company X is relying on operational plans to drive performance. The study shows that these plans are not clearly articulated and communicated. In terms of the achievement of values, the findings of the study show that employees and contractors at Company X do not remember most of the values Company X would like to achieve. The fact that the employees lack the ability to identify the values shows that most of these values are not embedded within the company.

It is clear from the findings that a lack of consistent communication on the values of Company X and the importance of implementing them are missing. The findings of the study show that Company X needs to reduce the number of values they believe they need to achieve.

The findings also show that the value of integrity in Company X is one of the values that all employees identified with, and felt that all members of Company X are trying to implement. Another value that was identified by all employees was caring for people. This means that the values that are implemented most by Company X, are caring for people and integrity.

In terms of the business plan of Company X, the findings show that an effective business plan is a sustainable manner for Company X to diversify risk. The

findings of the study show that Company X is not actually implementing this model correctly. The perception of employees is that placements at clients' sites are done spontaneously and not well planned. Therefore it is clear from the study that Company X needs to implement their business plan with a defined resource strategy plan.

The main objective of this research is to understand how Company X, an enterprise architecture consulting company which is defined as a small-sized business, will need to transform itself into a higher performing company. This will enable Company X to distinguish and differentiate itself from its competition in the business process management and enterprise architecture consulting industry. Therefore findings of the study show that Company X is slowly achieving the operating model, but in order to quantify and measure the operating models, employees will need to know what the key performance measures are. The study also shows that Company X has the ability to achieve their stated goals and increase their performance if they have more clearly defined and well-communicated values, an operating model and a functionally developed resource planning strategy.

5.4 COMPANY X'S PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO QUALITY, CUSTOMER VALUE AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

5.4.1 Company X's quality

According to the findings of the study, quality is a vital component of Company X. The employees of the company believe that quality is very important in the industry that they are in. Ensuring quality is important for Company X, as they are in a specialised niche market with a handful of clients. The findings of the study showed that there are inconsistencies as well as consistencies in the quality of the services provided by Company X. The inconsistencies are due to the following:

- Inconsistently applied mentorship programmes: The findings of the study show that Company X has a mentorship programme that is not well defined and not consistently applied throughout the company. The

findings show that Company X needs to establish a formal mentorship programme that will be well documented and clearly communicated. The employees, according to the study, are looking for guidance and mentorship. The study also shows it is important to correctly allocate mentors to entry-level employees to ensure they stay positive and learn as much as they can.

- Lack of stringent recruitment practices: According to the findings of the study, Company X does not have a stringent recruitment practice. Company X needs to ensure that entry-level employees should meet predefined criteria developed specifically for the industry sector Company X is in. Recruitment of higher level employees should also be implemented with specific criteria. From the findings of the study, the perception about Company X is that they sometimes recruit employees who do not have the skill sets and knowledge to provide the services required. In the rush to ensure contracts are delivered and new clients are obtained, Company X has at times placed human resources on client sites that have decreased the quality standards of work. Therefore the study shows that Company X needs to have recruitment policies that test potential employees' skill sets, knowledge and ability to handle client requirements.
- A need for an induction programme: Findings of the study show that there is a need for an induction programme at Company X. The induction programme will ensure new employees have a basic level of skills, and this will ensure they can manage client expectations.
- Training and development: The findings of the study show that Company X needs to have training that is specifically developed for employees' weaknesses. The study shows that employees need more career development path guidance. Company X needs to assist employees in identifying the possible development paths in the company and should recommend what steps need to be taken. The study shows that Company X needs to develop their employees into business analysts and not just 'modellers'. Company X lacks developed and documented

career paths, and needs to assess what developmental needs are required to ensure employees can achieve these.

- Development of frameworks: The findings of the study show that Company X has inconsistency in quality as they do not have standard frameworks, standard templates and mechanisms to ensure the standard of the service delivered is consistent and of a high quality. Therefore, the lack of frameworks and standard templates means that Company X recreates and applies the same set of services at different client sites with varying needs, which therefore implies various levels of quality.
- On boarding at client sites: The findings of the study show that Company X should allow employees time on board at a client site. This on boarding is not just time required, but also imparting of knowledge and establishing a clear understanding of expectations.
- Knowledge sharing: The findings of the study show that there are inconsistencies in quality as there is a lack of knowledge sharing within Company X. Company X has highly skilled employees and but due to time constraints employees cannot effectively transfer knowledge.

Company X, according to the study, is however also consistent in delivering quality in certain instances. Company X has been able to maintain consistency due to the following reasons:

- Specialised skills and services: Interviewees stated that Company X has specialised skills and services they offer clients such as the creation of reports in the language Java scripting.
- Competitive pressure: The competitive pressure to retain clients is acknowledged as essential to Company X's survival, and therefore this ensures the quality of the service is consistent.
- Passionate senior managers: The drive and passion of the senior managers and leaders at Company X ensure that the quality of the service provided is consistent.
- Profit generation: The quality of the service is consistent as Company X

has to generate a profit.

- The culture of the client must obtain value from services: Company X has a culture to ensure value is obtained from their services, therefore they strongly believe in providing a consistent service.
- Adapt to change: Company X is able to quickly adapt to change and initiate change management plans to ensure they manage the change over a long term.

According to the findings of the study, it can therefore be stated that Company X needs to constantly maintain the quality of their services. They have been inconsistent in some instances in the quality of the services they provide.

5.4.2 Company X's values

The study determined if Company X demonstrates their stated values. The study found that Company X is demonstrating its stated values. The study also found that the value most demonstrated is that of caring within Company X.

An important factor in the high performance framework is the culture of customer value and the ability to consistently deliver customer value, by Company X to its clients. In terms of a culture of ensuring customer value, the study shows that Company X has this ethos embedded within senior management. The leaders of the company have the culture that they must provide a value added service. The leadership mindset is that Company X must provide value for their clients, but this culture is clearly embedded in only a handful of senior leaders. The culture to ensure Company X provides customer value is being diluted across different client sites, and therefore the same emphasis is not placed on customer value.

In terms of consistently delivering customer value, the study showed that Company X's employees and contractors have the attitude that they want to deliver value to clients and produce high quality work. According to the study this is not always a reality. The reasons for the inconsistency are the following:

- Lack of motivation: The study shows that employees in Company X are

unmotivated to put in the extra effort required to ensure that value is consistently delivered.

- Resource constraints: The study shows that resource constraints hamper the ability of employees to consistently deliver value. The lack of resources places a heavy burden on the already overworked company staff leading to inconsistencies in providing customers a valuable service.

Therefore, the study shows that Company X does believe in providing consistent customer value, but has difficulty ensuring that it can provide the consistent customer value. Therefore, Company X needs to ensure that employees are motivated to consistently deliver value to the customer.

5.4.3 Company X's financial performance

The findings of the study show that Company X is consistently increasing their financial performance. Company X recently signed on a BEE shareholder to the company. This partnership will stimulate business and therefore consistent improvements in finance performance in the future.

Company X has the ability to consistently deliver quality, customer value and financial performance if changes are made to the identified issues above. According to the findings, Company X has been able to continuously renew their contracts and meet with customers' demands for continuous improvements with clients. There are some instances where they have not been able to deliver value or quality, and do not have good financial performance in certain projects. Once they have managed to implement the required changes successfully, they will perform at a higher level.

5.5 COMPANY X'S COLLABORATION WITH CUSTOMERS

The findings from the study show that Company X values collaboration with customers as extremely critical to delivering a value-added service. As Company X provides a niche market service that has rival competitors, the study shows that interviewees firmly believe that collaboration is important to ensuring the customer obtains value from their services. The findings also show that the collaborative

relationship can be developed to enhance the relationships between clients and Company X.

5.6 COMPANY X'S NEED TO BE HIGHER PERFORMING

According to the findings of the study, Company X has a need to be higher performing, as this will impact the ability of Company X to obtain new clients, as well as retain existing clients. In order for the company to expand and be able to achieve their operating model, Company X needs to change. The following reasons indicate the need to change:

- **Increased collaboration and knowledge sharing:** From the findings of the study it is clear that Company X can increase knowledge sharing and collaboration of employees and contractors. This knowledge sharing will promote skills development and will ensure the clients obtain value from their services.
- **Effective resource planning:** From the result of the study it is clear that Company X at certain times experiences resource constraints. The need to ensure effective resource planning is developed and communicated, as the adverse financial effects of not having employees on a client site weigh heavily on Company X's financial performance.
- **Specialisation in different software tools:** According to the findings of the study, Company x needs to focus on specialising on other software tools. The reason for this change is to diversify Company X's available services. This will provide Company X with risk mitigation options if the company does not renew contracts with clients.
- **Standardisation of technological equipment and technical services within the company:** According to the findings of the study, Company X needs to develop and standardise technological equipment and services. The reason for this change is to ensure employees of Company X are productive and are equipped with the technology to deliver a consistent high quality service. The study shows that the lack of standardisation results in a lack of quality in deliverables, and deliverables are not being consistently delivered.
- **Dedicated sales team:** According to the study, Company X needs to ensure that there are dedicated resources allocated to tender distribution,

sales and proof of concept services. The reason for this change is that the burden of these aspects is currently falling towards a handful of senior managers who are also core experts in the company. This leads to inadequate knowledge transfer and mentorship from them. The change will thus allow for younger employees to be mentored and groomed for future management roles.

The study clearly shows that there is a need for Company X to perform at a higher level to sustain its growth plans and financial stability. Company X needs to change to ensure a consistent value for clients, quality in services and increased financial performance.

5.7 COMPANY X'S STRUCTURE, LEADERSHIP AND SYSTEMS SUPPORTING ITS STRATEGY

According to the study, it is important to understand if Company X's strategy is supported by its structure, leadership and systems. The findings of the study show that from internal data the company shows it is a flat, matrix structure. The study shows that Company X has clearly defined and documented higher level structures. The study shows that interviewees need greater visibility of the lower level organisational structures and career paths of Company X.

According to the findings of the study, leaders at Company X provide certain employees with the opportunity to grow. They are willing to take on challenges to develop new services for the company. The findings of the study show that the leaders of the company motivate intellectual capital growth within Company X.

According to the findings of the study, Company X needs to integrate their current Human Resources systems namely the payroll, timesheet and leave application systems. The integration of these systems will lead to Company X's Human Resource and billing processes being optimised.

The study also shows there is a need for increased management of the collaboration and knowledge sharing system at Company X. According to the findings, Company X needs to establish a help centre for employees with regard

to systems training and problems.

Therefore the findings show that the structure being flat and matrix to some extent supports the strategies of Company X. The study also showed Company X needs to document the lower level structures of the company more clearly. Company X does not have many systems but the systems that do exist, namely the, payroll, timesheet, and the leave and knowledge sharing systems are supporting the current strategy of Company X.

5.8 COMPANY X'S ABILITY TO TAKE MEANINGFUL ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE HIGH PERFORMANCE

The study showed that there is a relationship between Company X's performance and the company's strategy, process and culture. The findings of the study provide an understanding that a company must have processes that support the execution of their strategy. The findings also show that the culture of a company plays an important role in execution of a strategy. There needs to be a culture of continuous improvement to ensure that performance improves. The culture of ensuring customer value will allow the company to retain customers and obtain new customers, and therefore achieve the strategy of the company. As part of the action plan to transform Company X as a high performance organisation, the following recommendations are proposed.

The findings of the study show that Company X currently has a culture of customer satisfaction, continuous improvement and accountability to stakeholders. The study also postulates how they would maintain this culture in the longer term. The findings of the study show that to maintain a culture of customer satisfaction, Company X will have to implement the following:

- A quality audit process: Senior managers of Company X will conduct a quality audit at various client locations in order to ensure the services provided by Company X meet client expectations and requirements.
- Establishing customer satisfaction as a performance measure: Company X will link customer satisfaction and project success to

individual employees' key performance indicators.

The findings of the study show that to maintain a culture of continuous improvement, Company X will have to implement the following:

- Establishment of an employee development strategy: Company X should develop an employee development strategy. This strategy should make training a key part of Company X. Company X should develop and communicate a reward and recognition programme to motivate employees. Employee development should be incentivised, therefore motivating employees to continuously improve.
- Meeting the demands of clients: As clients will demand the latest technology, Company X will continuously have to improve its knowledge and methods of work. Company X should initiate methods to increase collaboration and knowledge sharing. Therefore they need to ensure they can retain clients and obtain new clients.
- Establish a salesteam who will be dedicated to the renewal of contracts and, submission of tenders to obtain new clients. The team will also provide input in resource allocation to optimise the use of current resources.
- Develop Human Resource practices that integrate disparate HR and billing systems.

The findings of the study show that to maintain a culture of accountability towards stakeholders, Company X will have to implement the following:

- Greater transparency in decision-making processes: Company X should provide greater transparency about the decision-making processes on those decisions that affect stakeholders.
- Clear communication: Company X will need to communicate clearly to all stakeholders what the effects of their decisions will be.

Therefore, the findings of the study show that Company X is currently taking meaningful actions to obtain higher performance in terms of having a culture of customer satisfaction, continuous improvement and accountability towards stakeholders. Company X, according to the findings of the study should take

action to ensure the culture of customer satisfaction, continuous improvement and accountability towards stakeholders is maintained in the company.

5.9 FINDINGS LINKED TO LITERATURE CITED IN THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The findings of the study show links to the literature stated in the literature review pertaining to high performance organisations. The findings from the study of Company X clearly show that certain characteristics of a high performance organisation are found in Company X. The following are the links to the literature review:

- De Waal postulates that a high performance organisation has the ability to react and adapt quickly by managing change on the long term (De Waal, 2007:180). According to the research findings, Company X is in a competitive niche market with rapid changes to technology. Company X has successfully been able to adapt quickly to changes in the market and to manage these changes over a long term.
- One of the factors identified as a characteristic of a high performance organisation by De Waal and Frijns, (2009:30) is focus on continuous improvement and renewal. According to the findings of the study, Company X has an existing culture of consistent improvement and a plan to ensure there is consistent improvement is maintained in the future.
- Leaders, according to Jones (2005:34), should recognise the following factors that determine and distinguish leaders of a high performance organisation. Leaders must be able to respond to challenges in a positive way and provide an environment for employees to thrive. According to the findings of the study, the senior leaders at Company X encourage and thrive on challenges in order to be the best in the industry. The senior leaders in Company X also provide opportunities to those they believe have the ability to develop new skills and to grow.
- According to De Waal and Frijns (2009:30), managers of a high performance organisation must ensure they are continuously

communicating the organisation's values and strategy, and are able to balance common purpose and self-interest within the company. According to the study, managers of Company X need to communicate the values and strategies of the company more effectively. The study shows there is a lack of visibility of values and strategies.

- High performance organisations have developed flat lean structures according to Morley and Heraty (1995:56). According to the findings of the study, Company X has a flat structure, with a well-defined higher level structure and a more flexible lower level structure.
- Brokaw and Mullins (2007:30) state that in the high-performance model, high performance requires consistent delivery of quality, customer value and financial performance. According to the findings of the study Company X is consistently improving financial performance. The study found that whilst Company X does consistently deliver value and a quality service to customers, they do have instances when customer value and quality of services are not consistently delivered.
- Rogers and Blenko (2006:136) also state that to achieve high performance in an organisation, customer focus is vital. The findings of the study indicated that for Company X, customer focus is vital. As Company X is in a competitive environment, it is essential for their survival that they retain current clients and obtain new clients.

5.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A limitation of the study resulted in a smaller sample size, and the following are the limitations:

- Availability of shareholders and senior managers.
- Availability of employees from the Western Cape region.
- Some of the interviewees were hesitant to answer all the questions in the interview.

5.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter comprises the findings of the research study, identifying the issues and interpretations of the findings of the study. The research provides a foundation for an action plan for Company X to develop higher performance for the company. The action plan for higher performance for Company X is based on high performance organisational characteristics derived from the literature review. It is believed that results of that the research project findings will assist Company X in the achievement of higher performance. The chapter then presents the link between the findings of the study and the literature cited in the literature review. The research study succeeded in exploring stakeholders' perceptions regarding the performance of Company X, and this will enable Company X to achieve higher performance. The chapter ends with a listing of the limitations that impacted the study.



CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter six presents a summary of the research objectives and major findings for the study conducted on Company X. The chapter then provides recommendations for Company X to achieve higher performance. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND MAJOR FINDINGS

The primary objective of the study was to understand how Company X, an enterprise architecture consulting company which is defined as a small-sized business, will need to transform itself into a higher performing company, in order to distinguish itself from its competition. The research found Company X is not performing ultimately as a high performance organisation, but demonstrates some of the characteristics of high performance organisations. These comprise the culture of the company, consistent financial improvement and effective leadership. The study identified that attention has to be paid to the development of its human resource practices, documentation and optimisation of the company's processes, increased collaboration and knowledge sharing, and documentation and communication of strategies and goals. Once Company X has improved on these characteristics they will be capable to transform itself into a high performance organisation.

The secondary objectives of the study were as follows:

- To investigate literature and establish the characteristics that defines high performance organisations. The review of literature found that the main elements that characterise high performance organisations are:
 - An articulated, clearly-defined vision and mission;
 - Clearly stated goals;
 - An attitude that displays value for customers;
 - Consistent financial performance;
 - A lean flat organisational structure; and
 - A process that supports the strategy of the company.
- To investigate if the values of Company X are demonstrated by the

employees. The research found that Company X's employees are demonstrating the values of the company. The findings also indicated that as a consulting company, the employees at client locations have begun to demonstrate the values of those clients as well.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of the action plan to transform Company X as a high performance organisation, the following are the recommendations:

- Development of a clearly-defined and articulated strategy.
- Establishment of communication methods to ensure greater transparency within Company X.
- Initiate a process optimisation drive within Company X to document and define the processes of the company.
- Optimise HR practises.
- Increase collaboration and knowledge sharing.

6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The researcher suggests the following aspects be included in future research.

- Determine if the establishment of a knowledge repository of past projects and outcomes will impact positively on an organisation's performance.
- Identify the core cultural elements that nurture high performance within organisations.
- Identify and develop employee development paths to nurture and create high performance leaders.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter is comprised of a brief summary of the research objectives and major findings linked to the literature review. The chapter further discusses recommendations for Company X and makes suggestions for future research. The research study succeeded in exploring stakeholders' perceptions regarding

the performance of Company X, and this will enable Company X to achieve higher performance.



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