

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Cover Letter:

GJ Davel
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Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Gerrie Davel and I am an MBA student in the Department of Business Management, at the University of Johannesburg. I aim to identify factors relating to the high failure rate of start-up SME's (small and medium enterprises) in South Africa. By establishing the correlation between Market Orientation and Business Performance in SME's within the Mining Communication Industry, we aim to contribute to the reduction of the failure rate. Presently I conduct a study in this regard through a research project in which I am assisted the by Mr HB Klopper from the Marketing Management Department of the University of Johannesburg. We assembled a questionnaire pertaining to the study and we would like you to participate by filling in the questionnaire.

Your willingness and time to complete the questionnaire will be much appreciated.

Please access the questionnaire by clicking on the following URL.....

Your identity shall in no way be connected with this study.

Summary results of this research will be published in the media and will be available on our website: www.?????????.com in November 2007.

Should you have any queries or comments regarding this survey, you are welcome to contact me telephonically at 082 824 3716 or e-mail me at gerrie@rubicab.co.za.

Yours sincerely

Gerrie Davel

Section A – Demographic Information

1. What is your age in completed years?

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2. Gender?

Male	
Female	

3. Ethnicity?

Black	
White	
Coloured	
Indian or Asian	

4. What is your highest educational qualification?

Grade 11 or lower (std 9 or lower)	
Grade 12 (Matric, std 10)	
Post-Matric Diploma or certificate	
Baccalaureate Degree(s)	
Post-Graduate Degree(s)	
Other, please specify	

5. In which discipline of the Mining Communication Supply Industry are you evolved?

Radio communication	
Telephone communication	
Data communication	
Video communication	
Control and Instrumentation	

6. How many completed years have the company been in business?

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7. How many people does the company employ?

Between 1 and 5 employees	
Between 6 and 10 employees	
Between 11 and 25 employees	
Between 26 and 50 employees	
51 or more employees	

8. In which province(s) are your business premises located. Please indicate the location of the head office (if any), all regional offices (if any), and if the company is operating from home. Mark all applicable.

	Head office	Regional offices	Working from home
Eastern Cape			
Free State			
Gauteng			
Kwazulu-Natal			
Limpopo			
Mpumalanga			
Northern Cape			
North West Province			
Western Province			
Other: (Neighboring states)			

9. How often do you do business in each of the following provinces?

	Never	Monthly	Quarterly	6 Monthly
Eastern Cape				
Free State				
Gauteng				
Kwazulu-Natal				
Limpopo				
Mpumalanga				
Northern Cape				
North West Province				
Western Province				
Other: (Neighbouring states)				

10. What position do you hold at the company?

I am the CEO or the MD of business (i.e. I am a Member of the holding Closed Corporation or I am a Director of the Company)	
I am the manager of the business (i. e. I am not a member of the Closed Corporation or I am not a Director of the Company)	
I am not the Manager or the CEO or the MD of the business.	

11. How many completed years have you been appointed in the position you presently hold at the company.

0 – 1 years	
2 – 3 years	
4 – 6 years	
7 years or longer	

12. Was the company home-based at start-up?

Yes	
No	

13. Why was the company started? Mark the one that is most applicable.

Early retirement gave the owner(s) the opportunity to start the business	
The owner(s) was unemployed at the time	
Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment policies left the owner(s) without prospects in the job market	
There was a opportunity in the market	
It was always a dream to start a business	
The owner(s) was from a family of entrepreneurs and it was inevitable that he/she would start a business	
Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment afforded the owner(s) the opportunity to start the business	
The owner(s) was employed at a company in the same industry and decided to start a similar business	
The owner(s) was never meant to work for a boss (i.e. a natural born entrepreneur)	
Other. Please specify	

14. How was start-up capital obtained? Mark all applicable.

Borrowed from a financial institutions (e.g. banks)	
Investment by a third party (i.e. Relative, Friend, Venture Capitalist)	
Shareholders private funds (i.e. Savings, 2 nd bonds, retirement packages)	
Other, Specify	

Section B – Market Orientation Assessment

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the question by choosing one of the rankings. Please indicate whether you 1. Strongly Agree, 2. Agree, 3. Neutral, 4. Disagree, or 5. Strongly disagree with the statement in the question.

Customer orientation:

1. Information about customer needs and requirements is collected quarterly.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

2. Levels of customer satisfaction assessed and action is taken to improve matters where necessary.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

3. We put effort into building stronger relationships with key customers and customer groups

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

4. We recognize the existence of distinct groups or segments in our markets with different needs and we adapt our offerings accordingly

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Competitor orientation:

5. We collect Information about competitor activities

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

6. We conduct bench markings against major competitor offerings

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

7. We respond to competitor actions

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

8. We implement strategies to differentiate ourselves from the competition on factors that is important to customers

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Long-term orientation:

9. We place greater priority on long-term market share gain than short-term profits

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

10. We put greater emphasis on improving our market performance than on improving internal efficiencies

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

11. Decisions are guided by long-term considerations rather than short-term expediency

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Inter-functional co-ordination:

12. Information about customers is circulated and communicated throughout the organization

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

13. The different departments (sections) in the organization work together to serve customer needs

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

14. Tensions and rivalries between departments (sections) are not allowed to get in the way of serving customers effectively.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

15. Our organization is flexible to enable opportunities to be seized effectively rather than hierarchically constrained

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Organizational culture:

16. All employees recognize their role in helping to create satisfied end customers

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

17. Reward structures are closely related to external market performance and customer satisfaction

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

18. Senior management in all functional areas give top importance to creating satisfied customers

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

19. Senior management meetings give high priority to discussing issues that affect customer satisfaction

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Business Performance Assessment

This section of the questionnaire relates to factors that affected the performance of the company during the start-up period.

Financial Perspective Assessments

1. To what extent did each of the following influence or impacted on the financial performance of the company during start-up? Please indicate your answer using the 5-point scale.

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Difficulty in obtaining finance/credit					
Increased interest rates					
Inflation					
R/\$ exchange rate					
Bad debts					
Over investment in inventory					
Heavy operating expenses					
Poor budgeting					
Lack of financial analyses					
Poor credit management					
Inadequate accounting skills					
Lack of accounting knowledge					
Inadequate accounting package/system					

Customer Perspective Assessments

2. To what extent did you accomplish each of the following **during** start-up?

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Established measurement systems to determine core customer outcomes such as customer satisfaction, loyalty, retention, acquisition, and profitability.					
Established measurement systems to determine performance related outcomes such as time, cost, quality, performance and service					
Satisfied customers needs and expectation with your products and services.					
Retain customers					
Acquire new customers.					

3. To what extent do the company accomplish each of the following **after** start-up?

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Retain customers					
Acquire new customers at a steady rate.					
We identified profitable customers.					

4. To what extent did the company met each of the following?

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Customer expectations in terms of being responsive to their needs.					
Customer expectations in terms of the costs of your products and services					
Customer expectations in terms of the quality of your products and services.					
Customer expectations in terms of your overall performance.					
Customer expectations in terms of your levels of service.					

5. To what extent was each of the following perceptions or preconceived ideas true to your company?

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
We underestimated the size of the market					
We underestimated the size and strengths of the competition in the market					
We underestimated the demand for our services or products					
The location of our business had a negative effect on our customers					

Internal Business Process Perspective Assessments

6. To what extent was the following aspects part of your daily routine at the company during the start-up period?

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Our company was constantly exploring the horizon for new markets and opportunities					
Our company was constantly designing, creating, sourcing, and innovating new products and services for new markets and opportunities.	.				
Our company endeavoured to improve our internal processes, products, and services					
The company welcomed creative inputs by employees regarding the design of new products and services, improving existing products and services, and improving processes					
The company participated in business networking.	.				
Constant upgrading of technology was a priority at our company					
The company made use of best of breed business and management practises.					
The company encouraged prompt delivery of products, and the prompt execution of services	.				
The company regarded Change as an integral part of running the business.					
The company set time apart to plan and prioritise activities					
The company regarded planning as a prerequisite for effectiveness.	.				

Innovation and Learning Perspective

7. To what extent did you accomplish each of the following **during** the start-up period?

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Create a working environment that is conducive to the creation of employee satisfaction.					
Our employees were motivated.					
Employees contributed in terms improvements on products, processes or services.					
Employees were aligned with the goals, mission and vision of the company.					
Employee training was a priority at the company.					
Skill sets were regularly recorded.					
Skill sets was improved through active training programmes.					
Employees were encouraged to improve their knowledge on the operating environment of the company.					