LEARNING IN ACTION: DEVELOPMENTS IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION.

SANDRA TJOK-A-TAM

ABSTRACT

In the 1980s colleges of Further and Higher Education were subject to a variety of pressures to develop their provision of management education. These pressures are reviewed in their historical context as a prelude and background to an exploration of the then current challenges for such education. Interviews with representatives of Awarding Bodies and Colleges provide macro and micro-level perspectives on these challenges.

The process of APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning, now called by the Management Charter Initiative, the Crediting Competence Process) emerged as the potential means of facilitating flexible, work-based management education programmes. This view was reinforced by the results of telephone questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with Senior Human Resource and Line Managers.

The National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) initiatives (1988 - 1993) required such competence-based programmes so an investigation was instituted into the changes required in management education, training and development (METD) so that it might respond appropriately. The development of the roles of staff/learners, as they attempt to support the effective learning of manager/learners, became a specific focus using an iterative, ethnomethodological approach incorporating Kelly's (1955) constructivist techniques in a case study of a college undertaken immediately before and after the introduction of NVQ management programmes.

The thesis argues that, to enable transformative learning by manager/learners through a process of emancipatory education (Mezirow, 1990), a complementary parallel process of critical, active reflection must be established for staff/learners within innovative educational programmes. This process should engage both teachers and managers in action learning (Revans, 1980) to uncover the elements of reflection (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985) and to develop skills of reflection on reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983, 1987).

To promote such development a strategic approach to the management of change (Haffenden, 1990) is explored and elaborated to produce a model in which staff and organisational development interact through the 'learning company' process (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell, 1991) so that a college and its individual members may continuously transform in order to survive and prosper into the 21st Century.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My greatest thanks to Dr. Pamela Denicolo, my supervisor, without whose perfect balance of vigour, encouragement and support this thesis would not have been completed. Her energy and excitement towards the areas of research and learning have provided a constant source of inspiration - she has been both a supervisor and friend.

My thanks also to my friend and mentor, Gillian Anslow Principal of Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, who set me on the doctoral road and encouraged me to continue.

This research was made possible by the generous co-operation of all the participants representing colleges, universities, professional, lead-industry and awarding bodies, managers and their organisations. Thanks to all participants and especially those from the College, which formed a major part of this study, whose good grace and patience contributed to the research. Their trust, honesty and provision of time, during what was for them a very stressful period of learning and change, provided me with a rich source of contemporary information within the area of management education.

Finally, I am forever grateful to my husband, Tjok, and my son, Graeme, without whose love, understanding, patience and support (and numerous cups of tea) I could never have managed to finish this research. Your wife and mother has returned! My heartfelt thanks to my Father, who willingly undertook the proof reading of this thesis, and whose belief in my abilities was a continual source of encouragement. My thanks to the rest of my family and friends who have put up with me during a difficult period.
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<td>APEL</td>
<td>Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning</td>
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<td>AMBE</td>
<td>Association for Management and Business Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIM</td>
<td>British Institute of Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>Business and Technology Education Council (Formerly the: Business &amp; Technician Education Council. Formerly merged: Business Education Council (BEC) and Technician Education Council (TEC))</td>
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<tr>
<td>CATS</td>
<td>Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme</td>
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<td>CCPMO</td>
<td>Consultative Council for Professional Management Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Certificate in Management Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMED</td>
<td>Council for Management Education and Development (previously CMEAD)</td>
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<td>CM</td>
<td>Certificate in Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNAA</td>
<td>Council for National Academic Awards</td>
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<td>DES</td>
<td>Department of Education &amp; Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>DoE</td>
<td>Department of Employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>DMS</td>
<td>Diploma in Management Studies</td>
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<td>DM</td>
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<td>FE</td>
<td>Further Education</td>
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<td>FEFC</td>
<td>Further Education Funding Council</td>
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<td>FME</td>
<td>Foundation for Management Education</td>
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<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Institute of Management (Formerly the British Institute of Management (BIM) and the Institute of Industrial Managers (IIM))</td>
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<td>IPM</td>
<td>Institute of Personnel Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITD</td>
<td>Institute of Training and Development</td>
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<td>ITB</td>
<td>Industrial Training Board</td>
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<td>LASER</td>
<td>London &amp; South East Region Advisory Council for Education and Training</td>
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<td>MBA</td>
<td>Master of Business Administration</td>
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<td>MCI</td>
<td>Management Charter Initiative</td>
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<td>Management Education, Training &amp; Development</td>
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<td>Manpower Services Commission</td>
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<td>NFMED</td>
<td>National Forum for Management Education &amp; Development</td>
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<td>NATFHE</td>
<td>National Association of Teachers in Further &amp; Higher Education</td>
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<td>NEDO</td>
<td>National Economic Development Office</td>
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<td>NEDC</td>
<td>National Economic Development Council</td>
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<td>NIAM</td>
<td>New Initial Award in Management</td>
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<td>NTI</td>
<td>National Training Initiative</td>
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<td>NVQ</td>
<td>National Vocational Qualification</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCFC</td>
<td>Polytechnic &amp; Colleges Funding Council</td>
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<td>SCOTVEC</td>
<td>Scottish Vocational Education Council</td>
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<td>TA</td>
<td>Training Agency</td>
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<td>TDLB</td>
<td>Training and Development Lead Body</td>
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<td>TEC's</td>
<td>Training &amp; Enterprise Councils</td>
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<td>TEED</td>
<td>Training, Education and Enterprise Directorate</td>
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'Raison d'être' to this research in management development within an educational environment:

"To the real Jonathan Seagull who lives within us all." (Bach, 1972)

Being both a manager within an educational context and a trainer/educator of managers, I became aware, in the late 1980's, of forces which were accelerating changes in the technological, social and cultural environments of organisations. These forces included demographic changes, global competitiveness, legislation and the changing nature of employment itself (DOE, 1988).

Managers in all organisations were at the forefront of these changes, facing complex issues that not only required the vision, decisiveness and technical skills necessary to achieve the organisation's mission but also demanded integrity and adaptability to resolve the value conflicts which arose in shaping that mission (Kolb, Lublin, Spoth & Baker, 1986).

Vivid pictures are recalled of my early days in the educational sector when, as a Tutor for the Diploma in Management Studies (DMS) course, I questioned the dichotomy between the vision of the 'management students' and their employing organisations and the stale reality of management educational practice within the Further Education/Higher Education (FE/HE) sector.

One concern related to the status and role of the participants. These so-called 'management students' were competent, often highly successful, experienced managers who were eager to learn and develop themselves and their careers through the part-time study of a nationally recognised management course.
These ‘students’ were often experts in their own field, being for example, accountants, personnel managers, social workers and teachers. These experts, nevertheless, had to retain their role of ‘student’ whilst duplicating their learning through classroom activities and course assignments in their very specialism. Exemption and accreditation could not be awarded due to the perceived anachronistic mechanisms of the course curriculum, the college and the awarding bodies. These managers/students questioned the educational wisdom of allowing the perceived duplication (poor time management) but more importantly appeared to become increasingly frustrated and demotivated learners. This manifested itself in open anger towards the educational regime and especially towards the staff.

A second feature concerned the course entrance criteria which officially were: a minimum age of 24, a degree and/or 5 years management experience. In reality only a minority of DMS ‘students’ held 1st and higher level degrees, which were often totally unrelated to management, whilst the majority had no formal qualifications. Thirdly, these managers/students questioned the relevance and emphasis given to such subject areas as ‘work study’ and ‘manufacturing contexts’ within the DMS course, since the vast majority of managers/students were employed by the public and service sectors. DMS participants were demanding appropriate work-related learning that reflected the needs and attitudes of managers and organisations within a changing and complex societal context.

As Tutor, and subsequently as DMS Course Director in 1987, I held many discussions with DMS manager/students about these problems, advocating the use of self-help groups using the student/specialist as an additional resource. In becoming concerned about the deterioration in the educational climate between staff and students and providers and employers, I began to question the efficacy of the current management educational system and submitted a proposal to my organisation, an FE/HE College, to investigate and review the College
provision of management education. The main thrust of the proposal was the need for the College to reflect within its management education provision on the developments and changes in the technological, economic, social and cultural environments of organisations. I emphasised that the survival and prosperity of the College required a flexible response to that environment through a proactive approach to management education. Thus, when I embarked upon this 'detective story' in the Autumn of 1988 I was attempting to map the terrain and demography of the debate in management development.

However, as the work developed from these relatively small initial intentions, many further pathways were explored as problems emerged. These pathways will be elucidated upon once the background to the study has been described in the next section.

"I just want to know what I can do in the air and what I can't, that's all. I just want to know." (Bach, 1972).

1.2. Background to this research in management development within a complex environment:
Any organisation which hoped to survive and prosper within an increasingly complex and dynamic environment in the late 80's required an approach that could transcend its own inherent cultural aspects. An analysis that was found useful in the early stages of research was one provided by Mumford (1986) who suggested that organisations have to operate within three cultural levels:

i) Macro-culture which pertains to the wider/national contexts of dramas, rituals and routines (an anthropological notion).

ii) Micro-culture which pertains specifically to the organisation and its social position (a sociological notion).
iii) Meta-culture which pertains to the transcending of micro- and macro-culture around and within an organisation (an integrative notion).

Although not fully understanding the variances of these definitions, it was intuitively recognised that there was a need to commence research within the macro-culture by a broad diagnosis of the national management development scene. It was therefore proposed to move from this broad diagnosis and clarification of market needs to a more focused analysis of the micro-culture. It was hoped that this approach would provide a synthesis of the organisation’s micro-culture and the environment’s macro-culture. This was considered a possible route which would combine a need to value differences and to produce useful findings with which to manage the energies of apparently opposing forces into a workable whole (meta-culture).

Thus the original, and in retrospect naive, intention was to gather these strands of opposing forces to form a workable whole by designing a management course that would incorporate the skills needed to manage the meta-culture, reflecting the management educational needs of organisations and the environment. Managers within organisations frequently accepted that there were sociological aspects to the process of managing but were often untrained in the art of managing the boundaries between their inherently controllable organisations and the inherently uncontrollable and unpredictable external work environment. The skills needed to design and manage the meta-culture were in short supply in management (Mumford, 1986) and were largely ignored in management education.

A programme was required which would enable managers to learn the necessary process skills that could be used in different contexts, e.g. to tolerate ambiguity, cope with uncertainty, think creatively, manage cultural boundaries, determine policy, implement strategy and delegate effectively.
"From the perspective of management development we see increasingly that the organisation's ability to survive and thrive in a complex dynamic environment is constrained by the capabilities of managers who must learn to manage both this greater environmental complexity and the complex organisational forms developed to cope with the environment." (Kolb, Lublin, Spoth, & Baker, 1986).

In summary, it was necessary to recognise the critical linkages between a complex environment and organisational effectiveness by developing management development programmes linked to the organisation's strategic mission. In addition, an organisation's mission should be incorporated with a strategic projection of the organisation's future environment (Kolb, Lublin, Spoth & Baker, 1986). This perspective indicated the need, as a precursor, to examine critically the management abilities needed to ensure organisational effectiveness, so to expand the process role within management development programmes.

This approach, therefore, suggested the development of educational programmes that would help managers prepare for more complex responsibilities incorporating systematic career and development plans designed to grow the skilled human resources necessary to manage the organisation's future challenges.

1.3. Providers of Management Education within a Complex Environment

The late 80's had seen an increased awareness and demand for a flexible system of management education, training and development which could be integrated into the working environment at both the macro and micro cultural level. Thus academic institutions, such as Further and Higher Education Colleges, were required themselves to be flexible and responsive to the environment and to have the vision and leadership to survive and prosper in changing times. Ball, in his presidential address and in a personal communication (1990) emphasised two salient points: that Further Education is for everyone,
that being both its glory and its problem, and that leadership and vision would be required for the foreseeable future for success to be achieved.

This recognition led to consideration of changes both in delivery methods and curriculum design within the FE/HE sector. Further, external pressures, such as legislation, were moving FE/HE colleges to a greater state of independence. The Education Reform Act (DES, 1988) confirmed and continued this process. The training White Paper 'Employment for the 1990’s', heralded as the most radical overhaul of industrial training since the Industrial Training Boards were established in the early 60’s (HMSO, 1964), contained such innovations as the establishment of the new local Training and Enterprise Councils (TEC’s). However, the White Paper was primarily about employment creation and emphasis was placed upon training as a short-term route to employment thus ignoring the real long-term problem of skills shortages (Jones, 1989). It was the Government’s plan to devolve responsibility for training to local business executives, which was demonstrated by this statement:

"The Government’s aim is to promote, in a new partnership with employers, the establishment of such a training system - one which will be capable of contributing much more effectively to Britain’s international competitive success. The aim must be to facilitate access to relevant training and vocational education throughout working life for every member of the workforce, at every level from entry to top management"  (DOE 1988).

Jones (1989) questioned whether these aims would achieve the necessary improvement in the quality of training and education, particularly as the links between the two parallel systems were unclear. The two key planning bodies, the TEC’s and the LEA’s (Local Education Authorities), did not sit easily alongside each other. Yet this relationship was critical.
It was clear that a radical shake-up of the training infrastructure was underway which the White Paper dramatically extended. Parallel developments in the education world, particularly in the wake of the Education Reform Act (DES, 1988), conferred new powers on to the reconstituted governing bodies, not only in the areas of finance and use of premises but also in employment matters. On 1st April 1989, 29 polytechnics and 35 other major educational establishments were freed from the control of their local authorities and became independent higher education corporations (Palmer, 1989). The general trend was towards devolution of responsibility towards more local planning, management and delivery.

These pressures resulted in funding implications that threw the FE/HE sector into reviewing internal systems and procedures such as:

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- one section of the Department of Education and Science (DES) Circular 9/88 was devoted to the procedures to be adopted for setting college budgets in order that there would be an understanding of the overall framework of the process which was central to the new arrangements (National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) Journal, 1988).

- changes in Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC) funding emphasised the need to review budgetary procedures and constraints (Thomson & Parkes, 1988)

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Many of the findings and recommendations from the Handy (1987) and the Constable & McCormick (1987) reports had been used as a basis for major changes in attitudes and actions in management education, training and development in this country. One of these initiatives was the establishment, in late 1987, of the Council for Management Education and Development (CMED), which later became the National Forum for Management Education and Development (NFMED). The key objective of this body was to improve the quality and quantity of management education and development in the UK. Much of the
thinking about funding of management education was contained in a CMED report, “The Resourcing of Management Education - A Policy Framework”, April 1989. This Report demonstrated an approach which allowed market forces to have full effect on postgraduate and post-experience management education. This meant that business schools could:

-- determine which recognised qualifications could be offered
-- set their own fees
-- be free to recruit as many students as they wished.

In setting fees, institutions would have to generate surpluses sufficient to allow reinvestment and to fund product and staff development. Following an assessment of the viability of such a policy, CMED (1989) consider it unfeasible to move immediately to a free market approach. This report and its implications did, however, generate concern about funding amongst colleges offering a full range of management programmes.

Thus both legislative and funding forces pressured FE and HE institutions to manage more effectively. The language of business was brought into FE/HE establishments. Words such as efficiency, effectiveness and performance indicators were being incorporated into the everyday language of academia (Managing Colleges Efficiently, DES, 1987), while strategic planning and mission statements pervaded discussions of colleges' planning processes. This process was further reinforced by FE Colleges becoming Corporate Institutions, a continuation of the process undergone three years earlier by HE institutions. These changes were consolidated in The Further and Higher Education Act, 1992. This Act established the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), what might be considered to be a sister organisation to the Polytechnic & College Funding Council (PCFC).

Both the external pressures and the development and implementation
of the strategic planning process emphasised the need for FE/HE institutions to re-evaluate the changes necessary in order to grow and survive.

1.4. Personal Deductions:
As has been demonstrated, external forces of change heightened the need for FE/HE institutions to appraise critically their own strategic performance whilst employing organisations were recognising the need for the design and implementation of educational programmes that would help managers cope with an increasingly complex environment (Mumford, 1986). The national upsurge in interest (Deloitte, Haskins and Sells, 1989) in the whole area of management education, training and development highlighted the need for FE/HE to implement changes in curriculum content and to consider more flexible delivery methods. Legislation and funding implications forced a total review, by FE/HE institutions, of the internal strategic planning process.

From a macro-perspective there was an urgent need to widen the base of co-operation to counter the otherwise inevitable fragmentation of the education and training system. From a micro-perspective, potential growth could be lost in terms of quality and quantity of management education programmes if the provision of management education did not satisfy the needs of the clients. It was within this context that this research was commenced in the management education area. Firstly, the aim was to provide a proactive approach towards management education provision in order that my employing institution safeguarded its markets in the 90's. This stated aim implied that a marketing approach would offer a useful framework within which FE/HE colleges could operate to fulfil their overall roles and mission. This would involve market research to obtain a better understanding of the characteristics of the market place (Thomson & Parkes, 1988). Through market research, required changes could be
identified in management education and, by reviewing the subsequent implications and recommendations, my employing College would thus be able to respond swiftly to market needs.

Secondly, it was recognised by both senior management and lecturing staff within my institution that there was an increasing demand from employers and students for student-centred and work-based learning management programmes. It was considered essential, at that time, to move away from pure academic coverage of subject matter towards students' personal development integrated with the practice of management skills. This implied a new mixture of teaching methods and learning opportunities.

These two aims, of actively changing management programmes to satisfy the needs of organisations in the 90's and of devising new learning opportunities for both the organisation and their managers, provided the start of a trail to commence my investigation. My 'detective kit' consisted of twelve years practical personnel management experience, six years FE/HE experience and professional but no academic qualifications. Yet, like so many DMS students, I perceived myself to be an 'expert manager' - not an 'educationalist'. Through personal experience, I recognised that events were forcing changes in FE/HE that could put 'expert managers' at the leading edge of changes in education. Due to changes in legislation, funding and, more importantly, changes in attitudes towards the process of management development it was recognised that there was an opportunity to bring together the factions of management and education. Such changes within the educational system and my personal experience of them influenced and guided the research process. These changes and a personal perspective are amply described in Chapter 6.1.

These changes were perceived as an opportunity for me to develop both my educational and management skills through a process of self-
development. I passionately believed that the educational system could provide an equal learning opportunity for experienced managers, such as myself, to develop personally and to improve management skills while providing the necessary certificates and diplomas to enhance the individual's credibility and career.

With these points in mind I began undertaking research in management development under the auspices of the Educational Studies Department at Surrey University.

It is important for the reader to note at this stage that this thesis also charts my own development as a researcher so it includes deductions I made at each stage from the information I had to hand. These remain in the text, even if in retrospect they seem naive, so that an honest account is provided from which the reader can form their own judgements about its integrity as a perspective. Issues related to this are discussed in the final Chapter.

1.5. Structure of Research Study
The research study focuses upon the developments and initiatives within the management education, training and development area between 1988 and 1993 and falls into three main sections:

Part I Chapters 2 - 5
The Organisation within a Complex Environment - A Study of Developments and Initiatives in the METD area

Part II Chapters 6 - 8
A Potential Innovative Approach to METD Provision

Part III Chapters 9 - 12
The Management of Learning in Action

Each Part required its own methodology since the focus was different for each. However, the underlying philosophy and general approach.
was common to all but distinctive techniques were employed whereby the particular and general methods interrogated each with the other. The general methodological approach can be found in Chapter 3 and an exploration of each particular use of techniques can be found in Chapters 6 and 9. These two Chapters also provide a synopsis of how the research evolved further since its course was determined both by findings from previous stages and by on-going developments within the context which could not have been anticipated at earlier stages. See Table I for flow chart demonstrating the progressive focusing of research. Suffice it to say that the process of the research charted an historical interlude in management education in its own right.

The precursors to the current situation are explored and are included as a brief historical review in the next Chapter to provide the background against which the next part of the research, summarised in Chapter 3.1., was set.
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PART I

The Organisation within a Complex Environment

Chapters 2 - 5
Chapter 2 - 'Milestones of the Debate in the Management Education, Training and Development Area'

2.1. An Historical Perspective on Management Education, Training & Development

The initial supposition was that findings derived from the literature review could indicate recurring patterns that had not been fully addressed by educationalists offering management courses. There was, at that time, universal agreement that management education, training and development (METD) was receiving more attention in the UK than ever before (The Times, 30th March, 1988, p 21, & 11th April, 1988, p 26). However, earlier evidence about the changes and developments within the area of management education, training and development needed to be outlined in order to reach a clearer understanding of the current state of METD in practice.

It is emphasised that this Chapter should not be viewed as a definitive historical study of management development in the UK but merely a description of the writer’s perception of important topics of interest within the management development field.

"First of all, you need to pick an area and a specific group to talk with. Then you should do a review of the literature to learn what other research has already been done". (Agar, 1980, p 21)

However, this literature review and initial findings (See Chapter 4) were presented and disseminated to senior management within the employing college as part of an early evaluation of the national debate in METD, and later incorporated in an internal College report entitled "A Collaborative Approach to Management Development" (1989). Those issues discussed in the report were subsequently verified by the Deloitte, Haskins & Sells Report, "Management Challenge for the 1990's" published in July, 1989.

Throughout this document the phrase management education, training and development (METD) is used. A practical and meaningful definition was provided by Deloitte, Haskins & Sells (1989, p 3) in their aforementioned report:

...
Management Training is defined as the process by which managers acquire the knowledge and skills related to their work requirements by formal, structured or guided means.

Management Education is the structured, formal learning process which often takes place in an institutional framework.

Management Development is the broader concept concerned with developing the individual rather than emphasising the learning of narrowly defined skills; it is a process involving the contribution of formal and informal work experience.

2.2. Upsurge of Interest in Management Education, Training & Development and Higher Education - Post-War Years

Before World War II there was little formal management education, training and development. The evidence suggests that in the post-war years there was a gradual increase in the number of organisations attempting to train and develop their managers as the post-war drive for productivity commenced. Similarly, the gradual expansion of higher education meant more graduate recruits for industry which also led to the growth of graduate training schemes and in-company courses. Two post-war initiatives which particularly encouraged the development of management training and education were:

i) The British Institute of Management (following its formation in 1947) introduced a certificate and diploma. These courses, taught in technical colleges in the early 1960’s, led to the Diploma in Management Studies (Constable & McCormick, 1987).

and

ii) The growth of independent management centres which were devoted to the development of middle and senior managers. In 1946 the Administrative Staff College (now the Management College) at Henley was founded, and in 1959 Ashridge Management College was established (Constable & McCormick, 1987).
In 1960 the Foundation for Management Education (FME) was established to promote management education and funds were raised from industry to assist this objective (Constable & McCormick, 1987).

2.3. Initiatives for Promoting Growth in Management, Education, Training & Development and Higher Education - the 1960's

By the early 1960's management education and training was beginning to be accepted in some sectors of industry - mostly in larger organisations - as playing an important part in the development of experienced managers. Further impetus was given by the industrial training boards established by the 1964 Industrial Training Act which subsidised systematic management development through a levy/grant scheme (Constable & McCormick, 1987).

In 1963 the Robins Report on higher education recommended that two postgraduate management schools should be built in addition to the developments already taking place within the universities (Constable & McCormick, 1987). Later that year recommendations arising from the report "British Business Schools" (Franks, 1963) led to the establishment of the London and Manchester Business Schools in 1965.

2.4. Indications of Lack of Growth in the Management Development Area

Two later reports made it possible to assess the impact of the previous twenty years of activity. The first report "The experienced manager - a major resource" (Mant, 1969) indicated that:

i) only 7-8% of British Managers attended courses lasting one week or more.

ii) little attention was paid to the transfer of learning to the workplace.

iii) no coherent theory existed of what experienced managers actually do or how they learned as the basis for course design or evaluation.

Mant emphasised that training was more successful when closely linked to the job (usually in the form of a work-based project). The
most successful examples of training arose from collaborative efforts between companies and external institutions. Mant's findings still have some relevance today, as we shall see later in Chapter 4.

The second significant report "Business school programmes - the requirement of British manufacturing industry" (Owen, 1970) gave evidence of widely different attitudes to business graduates. The report was generally critical of the business schools and expressed a concern that expansion in numbers was needed less urgently than improvements in quality. Again, this is another recommendation that has validity today.

2.5. Possible Reasons for Lack of Growth in the METD Area
The demise of the Industrial Training Boards and more significantly the severe recessions of 1974-5 and 1980-2 had adverse effects upon management development activity. Deloitte, etal (1989) suggested that when the economy ran into difficulty, tight control of expenditure by employers resulted in the contraction of training budgets, including those for management education, training and development, because this area was often perceived as a cost and not as an investment.

2.6. Deficiencies in the UK's METD Strategy in the early 1980's
During the first half of the 1980's two further reports exposed the deficiencies in Britain's training strategy.

i) In 1984 the Institute of Manpower Studies, on behalf of the National Economic Development Office (NEDO) and the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), produced a report entitled "Competence and Competition". The report was a major investigation of vocational education and training in the three nations which were then Britain's primary competitors in world markets, ie West Germany, the USA and Japan. This report indicated that these three countries saw a link between investment in training and education and competitive success - a perception that was absent in the UK (Sadler & Barham, 1988, pp 48 - 51). Importantly, the other countries were concerned with developing effective performance at work in its widest sense, as opposed to solely
concentrating on narrow skills development. The report called for Government and industry to take action to improve the situation in the UK.

ii) In 1985 consultants Coopers and Lybrand were commissioned by the National Economic Development Office (NEDO) and the MSC, to investigate the state of training within British industry. Their report "A Challenge to Complacency" indicated that there was little knowledge among senior management about their company's training performance in comparison with their competitors or the scale of resources devoted to company training. As with the 1984 report, training was not seen by employers as a contributor to competitiveness or profitability but as an overhead to be cut when profits were under pressure.

Both reports raised important issues about the state of education and training in Britain. It was no surprise, therefore, that in 1986 a report produced by Mangham and Silver, University of Bath, confirmed that over half of all UK companies made no formal provision for management training, irrespective of type of industry although small companies were found to be more prone to lack of training. Of those who did make provision for management training the median expenditure was less than £600 per year for each manager; of Companies employing more than 1,000 (some of the largest in the UK), one fifth made no provision for training their managers in 1985.

These key reports charted the growth of interest in management education, training and developed and helped to focus the national debate at all levels and in a wider context. These findings provided a backdrop of change which resulted in major initiatives and implications for this whole area in the UK. Two further significant reports, those of Handy (1987) and Constable & McCormick (1987), rapidly followed and were instrumental in major changes in British attitudes towards METD.
2.7. The UK Approach to METD - the late 1980's

Handy investigated the approaches to management education, training and development of the USA, Germany, France and Japan in his report "The Making of Managers" in 1987. The key conclusion of this report was that the UK, with some notable exceptions among the larger companies, continued to take the preparation and development of managers less seriously than other countries.

In the UK, Handy's report suggested, there was no well-signposted and generally accepted route into business and management which was an important reason why fewer of the most able young men and women entered business and management careers. Handy argued that there was a need to establish a clear pattern of preparation for managers in the UK as management groups in overseas countries had been educated to a higher level and were more likely to have benefited from formal and systematic policies for continuing education and development.

He recommended that a ten point plan should be implemented that drew on best practices in other countries whilst emphasising the need to blend these practices with UK culture and traditions. The report suggested a straightforward way to rationalise the present plethora of business education and experience which would lead to a two-part qualification. This would include periods of early study leading to a preliminary qualification, followed by work-experience interleaved with study leading to a full qualification. This two-part qualification would need to be tied closely to work experience and would be the joint responsibility of organisations and individuals. A further recommendation was that this outcome could be achieved by creating a Development Charter setting out a code of good practice, including both a corporate development plan and a personal development plan for every manager which would include a system of experienced based learning or integrated development.

The report warned, however, against the wholesale importation of ideas on management education from the USA, Japan or any other country. Rather, the established way that the UK trains its professions should be studied.
A complementary report "The Making of British Managers" (Constable and McCormick, 1987) was commissioned to provide a comprehensive review of management education and training in the UK. Four working parties were established to consider:


ii) Individuals' views of the demand for management education and training (Stoddart Working Party, 1987)

iii) The provision of non-qualification programmes by private colleges and organisations, management consultants, professional institutes and universities, polytechnics and colleges (Osbaldeston Working Party, 1987)


The findings of these reports complemented each other and show a high degree of consistency.

The Constable and McCormick (1987) report made twenty three 'hard-hitting' recommendations of which the first two were the most pertinent and relevant to the research purpose. These were as follows:

"Management development should be seen as a career-long process involving in-company training and external education and training. Effective provision requires collaborative actions from employers, government, individual managers, professional institutes and academic institutions." (p 4 - paragraphs 157-163 & Page 31)

and

"Major efforts should be made to increase the scale of continuing management training and development. Best practice should be publicised more widely. Management development should be an integral part of strategic plans and, where appropriate, development activities should be associated with the implementation of strategic changes." (p 4 - paragraph 93 & page 22)
2.8. Impetus for Changing Attitudes and Actions in METD

Many of the findings and recommendations from both the Handy and Constable & McCormick reports have been used as a basis for major change in attitudes and actions in management education, training and development in this country. These reports provided an effective weapon, for industry and management educationalists, that triggered agreement on the vital importance of expanding the quantity and quality of such provision.

It became, in the late 1980's, generally accepted by employing organisations and management educationalists that it was essential to ensure that UK managers were appropriately prepared and developed to meet the challenges that they and their organisations faced in the future. This observation was supported by the frequency of related articles appearing in professional journals, eg Personnel Management, Sadler & Barham, May 1988, pp 48 - 51 and the national press, eg The Times, 11th April, 1988, p 26. It was against this backcloth of national interest in the METD field that the research began.
Chapter 3 - "The Research Strategy & Methodology Used in the Study of Initiatives & Opportunities in the METD Area"

3.1. Rationale of Research Strategy

The literature review indicated a need to widen the base of cooperation within the education and training system in order to develop the transfer of learning to the workplace and to design management education provision based upon what experienced managers actually do (Mant, 1969). It also indicated a need for expansion in the quality as well as the quantity of management education programmes to satisfy the needs of organisational and individual clients (Owen, 1970). The design of such programmes would also require the inclusion of a system of experience-based learning or integrated development that drew on the best practices from other countries which could be blended within the practices of UK culture and traditions (Handy; Constable & McCormick, 1987).

In order to develop a research strategy and to commence the investigation it was necessary to find a methodological approach that would enable the original aims of the research project to be fulfilled (see Chapter 1). The outcomes from this research project could then ultimately be used to manage the energies of the environment's macro-culture and the employing organisation's micro-culture into a workable whole i.e meta-culture (Mumford, 1986). A research approach was required, therefore, that could accommodate an attempt to integrate the results of the investigation into the working environment at both the macro and micro cultural level, thus providing a synthesis of apparently opposing forces. This prompted the proposed utilisation of a strategy that could describe the macro-culture through a broad diagnosis of the national management development scene and move to a more focused analysis of the micro-culture through a descriptive account of the employing college's management education provision system.

Initial conclusions drawn from the literature review (see Chapter 2) also formed the basis for focusing upon specific issues and challenges
within the research area. It was, however, essential to consider an appropriate research strategy that could provide a basic direction for the study and which could provide guidance in the selection of particular techniques or methodological practices for specific settings (Patton, 1990, p 36). After deliberation, it was decided that the apparent changing and complex area of study under review necessitated a research strategy founded in the qualitative paradigm. It was also indicated that naturalistic enquiry through the perspective of phenomenology was a possible way to achieve a better understanding of the essence of people’s experience of the structure of management development and of the writer’s employing academic institution. This choice of methodological process is more fully supported within the next section of this Chapter (see Section 3.2.).

A particular feature of this initial phase of fieldwork was the use of in-depth interviews to ascertain goals and assumptions from representatives of Awarding Bodies, Professional Institutes and academics. A full description of and rationale for the interview techniques used during the exploratory phase at national and local level is fully described within Section 3.3. of this Chapter.

The rationale and fieldwork plan is demonstrated in Section 3.4. of this Chapter. This is followed by a description of the results from the first phase of research at macro-level which forms an overview of national initiatives in the management development field (See Chapter 4.1.; 4.2. & 4.3.). The results from this broad overview of national initiatives during 1988 and 1989 led to the second phase which was a study at micro-level of College developments in management education (See Chapter 4.4. and 4.5.). It was hoped that a comparison (See Chapter 4.6.; between the national and local study would indicate a 'gap' (4.6.) in the market that focused research would then bridge to achieve the initial aim.

As indicated above, it was proposed that the initial research strategy would be broad-based in format and would gradually narrow through progressive refocusing. The resulting research plan is an example of:
"... a 'funnel' approach, with breadth and humanity at the beginning of the funnel and then, within the context of that beginning, depth, problem-focus, science at the narrow end" (Agar, 1980, p 13)

This two-phased approach to the first six months fieldwork would, it was considered, present a broad-base and a framework upon which further research could subsequently be built. Further, by beginning fieldwork within broad boundaries it was considered that progressive re-focusing would be enabled on topics of interest and particular relevance (Agar, 1980). Thus the design of the first six months fieldwork followed an interactive reflexive pattern in that the results derived at each stage suggested the focus for the next.

"having carried out a piece of research, collected the data, taken action, etc., there is a changed situation or an improved situation which might then be the focus of further research, further action and so on." (Bennett & Oliver, 1988 p 8)

The initial research strategy did not include a detailed hypothesis and few research questions. Initially, three simple research questions were posited: "where have we been?"; "where are we now?" and "where are we going?" in the management education, training and development area.

Using the good detective novel as an analogy, a description of past events (literature review, Chapter 2) would suffice 'to set the scene', followed by a process of 'deductive inquiry' (Chapter 3.2.) and 'investigative interviews' (Chapter 3.3.). The rationale and fieldwork plan is shown in Chapter 3.4. The resulting outcomes described the 'scene of the crime' at both the macro (Chapter 4.2. & 4.3.) and micro level (Chapter 4.4.; 4.5.). A comparison between the 'stories' (Chapter 4.6.) at macro and micro level would, it was hoped, eventually lead to a detailed description of 'the modus operandi'. The interpretation of this combined data in comparison with known theories within adult education (Chapter 5.1. & 5.2.) would illuminate the potential strands for further investigation (Chapter 5.2.). By gathering up all the 'forensic
evidence' and 'clues' dropped by the participating interviewees a more refined forage into the world of management education, training and development (Chapter 6) could then be achieved.

3.2. General Methodological Approach to Initial Research Study
A pre-emptive decision had not been made early in the research about which paradigm, qualitative or quantitative, would be appropriate at particular stages in the study. Indeed, as Zubir & Pope (1984) suggested, a rigid division between these two approaches was quite unnecessary since each approach should aim at the desirable objective of producing data that can lend credibility to the findings of the study but which also provides a sound interpretative base. Thus a multifaceted approach to research methodology was used in considering the appropriate methods and research tools at this early stage of the study. The issue became one of not uniformly adhering to the prescribed tenets of either paradigm but to make a judgement as to the appropriateness of methods, given the purpose of the study, the questions being investigated, and the resources available (Patton, 1990, p 39). However, after deliberation and a refinement of focus following the 'clues' provided by the literature review (Chapter 2) the methodology or 'method of operations' veered towards a naturalistic approach, using ethnographic methods as a relevant means of describing the context of management education, training and development within which subsequent research was to be undertaken.

The Reasons for Utilising Qualitative and Naturalistic Inquiry in the Research Study:
Guba (1978), in his extensive review of naturalistic inquiry, defined "naturalistic inquiry" as a "discovery orientated" approach that minimises investigator manipulation of the study setting and places no prior constraints on what the outcomes of the research will be. By contrast, such interventions and methods utilising a quantitative approach, emphasise the results and outcomes of a study. Within this mode, the investigator ideally attempts to control conditions of the study by manipulating, changing, or holding constant external influences and in which a very limited set of outcome variables are measured (Patton, 1990, p 41).
The only perceived advantage of utilising the quantitative mode was that it would be possible to provide a measure, derived from the responses of a large number of people to a limited set of questions or events, which would provide a broad, generalizable set of findings. However, utilisation of this mode would require the necessary controlled research study conditions which were unavailable within the METD area at that time. In contrast qualitative inquiry, which aims to describe and confirm specific manifestations or presumed general patterns of actions and thoughts (Patton, 1990, p 86), was considered to be more conducive to the purpose and aims of this research study. Thus the quantitative approach was discarded because a qualitative approach, incorporating naturalistic inquiry could produce a wealth of detailed information about smaller numbers of people and situations thus increasing understanding (Patton, 1990, p 14).

Naturalistic inquiry methods, which describe and evaluate the actions and methods undertaken by a small and generally representative sample of people responsible for changes and initiatives in the METD field, would elucidate and promote understanding of the internal dynamics of the situation or relationships. This was considered to be a relevant approach with which to study the changing and complex world of management education, training and development, since it would involve:

"Studying real-world situations as they unfold naturally; non-manipulative, unobtrusive, and non-controlling; openness to whatever merges - lack of predetermined constraints on outcomes." (Patton, 1990, p 40)

In order to study real-world situations as they unfolded, ethnomethodological techniques of research were utilised, eg interviews, observation and participant experiences. This was intended to allow a way of seeing and understanding the human situation within the management education, training and development area. It was also envisaged that an ethnographic stance would promote the development of the writer's self-awareness and that of the writer's peer group (Agar, 1980, p ix).
Such an ethnomethodological approach requires the researcher to develop a long-term and professionally different association with both external representatives and internal staff who were involved in management education provision:

"It always involves long-term association with some group, to some extent in their own territory, with the purpose of learning from them their ways of doing things and viewing reality". (Agar, 1980 p 6).

It was recognised that this new relationship would, perhaps, lead to a different work role but could also lead to the researcher's marginalisation and isolation within the College. It was envisaged, however, that the investigation would lead to a long-term and more constructive association with management students whereby their needs and those of their employers would emerge and hence could be reviewed and integrated with the employing College's policies and procedures on management education provision.

However, the purpose of this phase was to attempt to identify the key issues involved in this particular educational area rather than just to experience them. To do so it was necessary for the researcher to regard the familiar as unfamiliar for it is within such events that the themes and issues are embedded (Griffiths, 1985, p 198).

The reasons for people being attracted to ethnomethodology are varied. Some people prefer it because it justifies their detachment from what others consider important whilst others prefer it because it justifies an interest in exploring different lifeways (Agar, 1980 p 3). For this research, at that time, this approach offered an opportunity to gather descriptive data about an area of education which was going through complex changes whilst at the same time making provision for flexibility in consequent approaches eg a change to quantitative methods if appropriate.

The purpose of ethnomethodology in an educational study is to provide rich, descriptive data about contexts, activities and beliefs of all the participants in educational settings. It can be used for evaluation,
descriptive research or theoretical enquiry. Here, the approach was utilised as a means of focusing upon understanding how people know and interpret their world, a fundamental essence and 'raison d'être' of this research study, since the perceived attributes of education are embedded in the social structure, national and world views, language and different environmental views of people.

The systematic process of observing, detailing, describing, documenting and analysing the patterns of actions and verbal interactions of people deeply involved and committed to management education would provide a holistic and detailed account of the people and their sub-culture and predict many of the recurrent dimensions, general patterns, values and themes of that sub-culture.

It was considered that the use of ethnographic methods, such as in-depth interviews and direct participant experiences, would enable the discovery of partially known and new phenomena, the acquisition of detailed and in-depth accounts of some particular phenomena or experience and the gaining of particular insights about an area of activity. Thus the information gathered, over an extended time period, could be utilised in order to document change. The task was to discover and conceptualise the essence of complex interactional processes from which a model would emerge providing a new way of understanding growth and change within management education and development. Ultimately, it was proposed that this approach would develop meaningful and detailed data which would provide a far richer exposure to the world of management education and development than the rather sterile, and potentially meaningless, facts and figures of a statistical survey:

"Emanating from the changing directions in the sociology of education during the 1970s, new approaches in educational research moved away from statistical survey-based methods to research frameworks which focused upon the details of school life - an approach which has concentrated on the interactions between teachers and between teachers and pupils" (Griffiths, 1985, p 197).
The study of the world of management education from the point of view of both an insider (an emic viewpoint) and an outsider or stranger's viewpoint (etic) was intended to provide possible ways of identifying both common and different aspects of lifeways and meanings which would add clarity and depth to the research. This initial exploration at macro and micro level arose from the acceptance of one proposition: that ethnographic methods of investigation might be the most suitable to use because they help to create more detailed pictures of what has actually happened or is happening.

It was anticipated that such pictures would shed light upon the changes and developments within the management development area at both macro and micro level. These findings could support, then, an 'illuminative evaluation' a study holistic in outlook and far-ranging, concerned with the entire network of inter-relationships and correlations between individual "variables". (Parlett, 1978). Within this initial exploratory stage the purpose was to obtain a breadth of view that would enable the later production of re-focused, in depth data in a few select areas which, nevertheless, would provide evidence that would be convincing to those sceptics in education.

Finch (1985) made a point:

"I would argue that ethnographic and other qualitative work is capable of producing accounts of 'what happens' which enable us to understand as well as describe it, because they are theory-led." (Finch, 1985, p114)

At this stage it was considered that a tightly predetermined hypothesis was inappropriate but that a range of participants in the management education context could provide perspectives and ideas which, combined, would elaborate or refine current theory.

This has some commonality with the Glaser and Strauss (1967) description of the grounded theory approach, during which relevant theory emerges from fieldwork experiences. It was considered that the use of interviews, observations and direct participant experiences
would provide more valid interpretations and explanations than the use of current theories alone.

However, it was recognised that high quality empirical work consists of a continuing dialogue between theory and evidence where each is continually interrogated by the other as well as being tested for its internal consistency and coherence (Hargreaves, 1985, p 28).

Since ethnography is rooted in phenomenology, recommended procedures (Patton 1990, p 85) from that approach for clarifying and accounting for biases and predispositions during fieldwork and analysis were used. The next section includes descriptions of how these were operated in practice in this initial fieldwork.

3.3. Rationale for Utilising Interviews:
The context and the appropriate selection of a representative group of people responsible for pursuing and actioning initiatives and changes in the management education, training and development area at both macro and micro level was given consideration.

The participating organisations and individuals were selected, for the macro study, on the basis of their authority and expertise within the METD field; national commitment to developments and a reputation for being active in the national debate were priority criteria. It was perceived that the selected seven senior representatives would be willing to engage in a single interview situation as opposed to a lengthy observational exercise which could occupy more of their time and attention. The purpose, therefore, of conducting in-depth interviews with representatives from these bodies was to gather adequate information and an overview of national initiatives within the perceived limited time resources (Patton, 1990, p 214) and geographical limits available to the participants and researcher.

The complementary study at micro level was undertaken with seven staff responsible for the policy and decision making processes of management course provision within the employing college of Further and Higher Education. For similar reasons to those provided for the macro study, interviews, as opposed to observations, were
conducted due to the limited time resources available to these staff. Most importantly, however, the staff had recently undergone a series of major organisational changes resulting in a perceived climate of distrust (Patton, 1990, p 251) which was not conducive to an observational exercise. The researcher’s position as a Course Director within this college would, though, enable the description of subsequent participative experience if deemed appropriate and advantageous.

Due to the organisational climate and the impossibility of retaining anonymity it was necessary not only to negotiate with the participants about the nature of the fieldwork but also to gain entry in the role of researcher to the setting in order to collect data. The interview plan was designed to allow the participant freedom to engage in a semi-structured approach or a more open and in-depth mode in order to establish rapport and trust. It was considered that peer group staff would react far more positively to an open and voluntary approach to the structure, timings and venue of the interview, thus encouraging them to demonstrate developments and expertise within their particular subject area. This is elucidated more fully in section 3.4. of this Chapter.

The utilisation of interviews at both macro and micro level, as opposed to observation or direct experience, engaged participants in less time and effort in this initial broad-based study. The design of the fieldwork plan, therefore, was a ‘trade off’ (Patton, 1990, p 165) between depth and breadth in consideration of the limited resource available.

Rationale for the Use of Informal Conversational Interviews:
It was considered that informal conversational interviews (Patton, 1990 p 281) would enable the collection of in-depth accounts, gaining particular insights about changes and developments within the management education, training and development field.

Conversational mode interviews leave control or regulation of direction and pace to the participants whilst the researcher attempts to maintain a listening and observing role. Since the interview participants (Chapter 4.2 & 4.3.) were senior personnel both within...
their organisation and field of expertise, it was likely that their preference would be to manage and control the interview within previously established guidelines and time limits. Similarly, within peer group interviews shown in Chapter 4.4., a researcher controlled or managed approach may also have proven inappropriate, since, as previously explained, this was perceived to be a complex and hostile situation which necessitated greater sensitivity on the researcher's part. It was considered that the interviewer, when conducting conversational interviews with a peer group, no longer had the perceived advantage of possessing superior knowledge of techniques. A disadvantage is that assumptions are made by the participant that certain things do not need to be explained and therefore gaps could appear in the data (Burgess, 1985, p 186).

An interview can be considered as a conversation with a purpose and is a mode of communication between two individuals and falls between conversation (undirected, very informal, open rambling) and interrogation (highly structured, information producing, control vested in the hands of the interrogator) (Parlett, 1978):

"There is no degree of structure which is correct, in an absolute sense, without careful regard to the nature of the study and what kinds of information and degree of detail are required from this portion of the investigation."
(Parlett, 1978, p 4 - 9).

Questioning Techniques used during the Interviews:
Throughout all the interviews an open-ended and probe questioning approach was maintained, designed to explore in depth the elements or issues raised from the initial key questions. An attempt was made at all times not to use leading or multiple questions. The use of such probe words as: what, why, when and how, were often all that were necessary to encourage the participants to talk.

The main consideration, when using informal interview techniques, was to judge the appropriateness of questions, behaviour and the context within which the interview was being conducted. The decision, therefore, to conduct informal conversational interviews was made
each time at the point of contact. A series of key questions had been prepared for use if judged to be appropriate. This pattern allowed a focus on individual differences and provided an opportunity for wide-ranging discussions in unpredictable directions.

These planned key questions established rapport with the participant but allowed flexibility to be maintained throughout all interviews. In this way the participants were allowed to regulate the interview and given space to provide the quantity and quality of information with which they felt comfortable.

The capacity to listen genuinely is of fundamental importance for successful interviewing. Concentration on the subject at hand with the ability to maintain appropriate body language, eg eye-to-eye contact, and positive gestures, eg head nods, is essential. The faculty to disregard the competitive urge either to speak or to formulate the next question is of significant importance as the level of 'contact' at a physical and mental level can be easily broken.

Description of Interaction Contract within an Interview:
This format was advocated by Parlett (1978) who suggested that, at the beginning of any two-way transaction, an 'interaction contract' should be established. Initially, two individuals usually unconsciously form implicit judgements and make a series of decisions about the appropriateness of certain kinds of disclosure and behaviour. The formation of interaction contracts are extremely subtle and complex and are dependent upon the social circumstances of the interview eg a panel or one-to-one interview. It was essential, therefore, to plan and develop the initial rapport stage, or interaction contract, to ensure a successful outcome from these research interviews.

This fits with Parlett's (1978) view that interviewing is not a technique that can be 'administered' in a technical fashion because any interview is a human interaction in which the personalities of the participants are critically significant.
Note-taking versus Tape-recording during an Interview:
The use of a mini-tape recorder was considered in order to facilitate the researcher's observation and record of non-verbal cues. A mini tape-recorder was, therefore, used during the first interview in this study, during which it was observed that the use of such a device inhibited the interaction and appeared to withdraw control of the interview from the participant to the researcher. Fortunately detailed notes of non-verbal signals were taken which were then compared with the tape-recording when writing the interview report:

"... I argued strongly that there were advantages in learning to be a fast, accurate and relatively complete note-taker during interviews, whether or not they are being recorded on tape." (Parlett, 1978, p 4 - 9)

No further attempt, therefore, was made to use the mini-recorder or an audio-recording within this study phase. When interviewing a peer group the organisational climate at the time was perceived to be one of distrust and it was felt that participants might be nervous of having their views on tape. This view is supported by Burgess (1985) in her research with a peer group:

"Indeed, having been given permission by individual teachers to tape record their interviews, some became concerned after discussion with each other as to where the tapes were going and who was going to listen to them. I think in some cases my research was regarded with suspicion from the comments made to me during my time there." (Burgess, H. 1985 p 187)

The dangers of note-taking, eg writing selectively thereby providing behavioural cues to the interviewee, were also considered. Thus, an attempt was made to maintain an active listening stance whilst summarising and checking my perception of important issues with the participant to alleviate interview bias. Letters were later received from interviewees after they had received transcripts which verified accuracy in recording the salient events of the interview.
The Importance of the Interview Context:
The room layout can assist or negate a co-operative atmosphere, especially the proximity of chairs and desks which can act as supports or barriers. The pre-planning of a comfortable and relaxed ambience was not possible because all interviews took place in a venue chosen by the interviewees and at their convenience. However, care was taken to orientate seating appropriately.

The Process of Engendering Trust during an Interview:
In an ethnomethodology study including in-depth interviewing, the researcher is very much in a position of trust in being allowed access to information that is usually private or invisible (Finch, 1985, p 116). To ensure that such privileged access and trust was not betrayed, careful and systematic planning and coding of materials immediately after the interview was necessary. Assurances of anonymity and confidentiality were provided (which invoked a positive response from all participants) to the effect that the information provided was not to be of a personal nature but was to reflect the views of the participant's position within a particular organisation and could, therefore, be disseminated. Members from the researcher's peer group considered that the data collected could act as a stimulus to change and enhance the infrastructure of management education provision within the employing college. These comments were noted in case of bias to the outcomes of the study. Nevertheless, the opportunity was provided to each participant to amend interview notes and to provide further information about their role. This opportunity was offered after the interviews and prior to inclusion of the data within the project in order to confirm participants' acquiescence to publication.

3.4. Fieldwork Plan
There are three identifiable stages in the design of a fieldwork plan which are most often promulgated in qualitative research literature. Patton (1990, p 250) provides a most lucid account of "the entry stage, the basic data-gathering period of fieldwork, and the closing stage". The entry stage to this study was given considerable attention and consisted of negotiation, with selected representatives of organisations who were active and responsible for developments in the METD field, plus the actual physical entry into the field situation. It was imperative,
therefore, that the presentation of the study purpose and the researcher's credibility and integrity were represented clearly to potential participants.

The Entry Stage to Fieldwork:
Firstly, a list of known organisations which were a major influential force in the development of management education in the UK, was composed. These organisations were instrumental in the awarding mechanisms of management and related professional qualifications or were academic bodies whose prime purpose was the active development of management and business education and colleges, including the employing college. All were known to be innovators in the METD field. This list was perceived to cover the spectrum of sectors involved within the METD field but was, nevertheless, subsequently reviewed, with suitable additions made, by a senior manager at the researcher's employing college.

A number of techniques were used to gain access to the relevant representative. Firstly, the researcher "networked in" (Agar, 1980, p 27) through personal affiliations with local professional bodies. Secondly, 'colleague connections' (Agar, 1980, p 30) were utilised to gather 'informants' from the listed organisations. Thirdly, the use of sponsorship (Agar, 1980, p 29) by an eminent contact was helpful during the latter part of the study.

It was critical that the purpose of the study and the researcher's credibility was presented in a careful way, in the initial contact, to gain entry and to preserve the integrity of the study. Therefore, using all three entry techniques of affiliation, colleague connections and sponsorship necessitated a mode of introduction which is described as follows.

At the macro level, all participants were sent letters explaining: firstly, the purpose of both the research study and the potential interview; secondly, the researcher's credentials and lastly, requesting an opportunity to conduct an 'informal interview' at a mutually convenient time. This letter was followed by a telephone call arranging the interview. Within each letter a specific interview framework was
identified for each participant dependent upon the individual's expertise and context. For example, a letter to an Awarding Body responsible for validating a nationally recognised course in Management Studies contained the following paragraph:

"I am most grateful for the opportunity to have an informal interview with you at .... p.m. on.... April, 1989, to establish where the (name of course) is placed nationally. Not only would I like specific information about this course, but also your thoughts about the future of management education in the UK."

All interviews were followed by a letter thanking the participant and requesting that the transcripts of notes taken at the time of interview should be checked and amended for any inaccuracy in interpretation (See Appendix I). The participants amended or verified the contents by letter or telephone. A sample paragraph from this follow-up letter is as follows:

"For the purposes of writing my thesis it is important that I verify information obtained from interviews. I would be most grateful, therefore, if you could check the transcript of notes taken at our meeting on the ... April, 1989 and return to me with any comments. I would also appreciate a brief description of your role and that of (name of Awarding Body) as it is important for me to describe the context within which interviews take place."

A similar format was utilised with College staff at micro level to that used at macro level. A list was devised consisting of names of staff responsible for the policy, operation and delivery of management courses in the Management Division of a large faculty in a southern College of Further and Higher Education. Only minor amendments were made to the earlier interview procedure for this micro study (See Chapter 3.3.). These amendments consisted of distributing a 'tear-off' appointment slip with an interview outline to a group of Lecturers, responsible for management education provision, in a faculty in the employing college. For example:
"The information I would like to gather for each course would be, for example:

- student numbers (approx)
- numbers of student groups (approx)
- exam pass rates
- course format
- modes of delivery
- changes in submission
- present developments
- future developments/new courses


In practical terms, these headings were only used as an 'aide-memoire' and participants were assured that complete accuracy with regard to numbers etc was not important. All interview transcript contents were confirmed as valid, verbally or in writing, by all participants subsequent to the conduct of interviews.

This detailed attention to the method of initial contact proved valuable in practice in gaining co-operation (Patton, 1990, p 251).

The Data Gathering Stage to Fieldwork
Interview Context:
These interviews were conducted in widely differing contexts: a participant's dining room with 16 year old daughter completing homework; a busy, noisy and dirty College staff canteen; an air-conditioned Director's penthouse suite. These varying conditions, therefore, necessitated greater sensitivity on the one hand to the needs of the individual interviewee, and on the other hand, to the methodological requirements of the interview situation which had to be adhered to.

It became apparent through feedback from certain participants after the course of the interviews, that, whilst considerable attention had been given to the researcher's behaviour in the study settings, it was also observed that participants were deciding how to behave toward the observer. It was accepted, however, that mutual trust, respect and cooperation were dependent on an "reciprocity model" (Patton, 1990, p
especially in the micro study interview situation. It was noted that the information given to the researcher during the course of the interview could be utilised to enhance the provision of the participant's particular course or area or to improve the position of the interviewee. As has been indicated in Section 3.3 of this Chapter, this bias was noted for potential distortion within the analysis and interpretation section (Patton, 1990, p 264).

Identification with Participants:
During the second stage of fieldwork the researcher, having established her role and purpose, neglected the emergence of a strong identity with the people being interviewed. Due to the researcher's work role she was not immune to the political dynamics of the settings being observed. The METD situation included sub-groups such as one Awarding Body which was perceived to be in conflict with another Awarding Body, both Bodies being essential to the successful performance of the researcher's work role. This led to the development of a calculated and strong separation at the interpretation stage in order to retain the integrity of the study's outcomes:

"Recognising this, the observer will be faced with ongoing decisions about personal relationships, group involvement, and how to manage differential associations without losing perspective on what the experience is like for those with whom the evaluator is less directly involved" (Patton, 1990, p 262).

A Personal Perspective during the Data Gathering Stage:
As demonstrated the entry stage was carefully designed within the fieldwork plan. However it should be explained that the data collection stage was not only a time of exhilaration but also a time of rapid new learning. The researcher experienced new stimuli and it was a period of testing one's social, intellectual, emotional and physical capabilities which provided an opportunity to re-constitute the original contact list. This is demonstrated by gaining information about further 'informants' from an early interview and thereby conducting a further two and, in retrospect, significant interviews during the later part of the study.
The Closing Stage of Fieldwork:
It was difficult to predict the length of the initial fieldwork stage. Four interviews were conducted at macro level, during the Autumn of 1988, from which two further 'informants' plus one other interviewee, who was unavailable during the Autumn period, were interviewed during the Spring and Summer of 1989. The micro interviews, with peer group members in the employing college, were conducted during the Spring Term of 1989.

It was observed that, as the data collection increased, more time was devoted to the confirmation of observed patterns of actions and thoughts. It was recognised that there was no definite point at which data collection stops and analysis begins (Patton, 1990, p 265).

During the closing stage of the study, the interview notes were transcribed (see the next Chapter 4.1. and 4.2. for a more detailed description) during which a consistent use of key words and themes within this material was noted. Subsequently, to aid understanding and provide clarity, these words and themes were rearranged into larger categories which demonstrated converging areas of innovation and interest in management education, training and development. Finally, a comparison was made of the key words and themes within the emerging categories to ensure that they were mutually exclusive and covered the behavioural variations.

As this phase of fieldwork drew to a close the researcher sought to verify the collected data. This was in part achieved through the 'follow-up' letter to participants requesting verification and amendment to the interview notes. In addition, a short presentation was given to a group of colleague research students, which demonstrated these common key words and themes (Scott, 1985, p 73). In order to aid understanding and give the presentation greater clarity it was suggested, by the audience, that over-arching categories should be used e.g. delivery and assessment methods, national qualifications. A subsequent presentation incorporating these ideas was also given to the employing college's senior management and colleagues from which further feedback was received and noted. This formative feedback enabled the researcher's confidence to be developed whilst avoiding
imposing pre-ordinate conceptual categories on the data. The feedback obtained from presentation audiences assisted and ensured the verification of categorisation from the data collected, thus leading to the subsequent iterative design of fieldwork.

The categorising of the key words and themes was far simpler than first envisaged because the commonality of themes from all sources was surprisingly consistent. The ultimate outcome that emerged from this analysis and interpretative process was not anticipated at the outset. It was the original intention to reproduce these common themes and demonstrate recurring patterns from which a design or a structure would emerge, for an innovative management course that would combine academic knowledge with practical work experience. A structure was considered that did amalgamate these recurring patterns but this was not a basis for the design of a management course per se but demonstrated instead the need for a flexible and innovative process for management education provision.

The next chapter presents an overview of the results of this first stage of the research which firstly led to a review of Continuing Adult Education (Chapter 5) in order then to produce the rationale for the next stage, described in Chapter 6.
Chapter 4 - "A Macro & Micro Study of Initiatives & Opportunities in the Management Education, Training & Development Area"

4.1. Introduction to the Interview Study

It had become increasingly evident, in the latter part of the 1980's, that at a macro-level the economic growth, development and well-being of the British economy would suffer as a result of poor management. If Britain was to overcome the ever increasing economic competition which was threatening it on a world-wide front, it was essential to increase and improve the stock of management skills available in the country.

The previous sections demonstrate that it had been recognised, by Government, employers, managers and academic institutions, that there was a need to change management education, training and development in the UK. The publication of the Handy and Constable & McCormick reports in April 1987 had once again focused attention on the unsatisfactory ways in which managers are trained, educated and developed in the UK.

The time was right for concerted national, organisational and individual action to consider a more flexible system of management education and training. A flexible system that would be appropriate to different stages of managers' career development and would be integrated into working activities to the maximum extent was proposed (Constable & McCormick, 1987). It was also anticipated, by these authors, that there would be considerable growth in demand for management education and training within the following five to ten year period, especially if the proposed management education format were directly related to organisational needs.

From the same report, findings indicated that there were likely to be major deficiencies in the supply of management education and training relative to this anticipated growth in demand. These issues instigated this part of the research study which included interviews, the purpose of which was outlined in Section 3.3, i.e. to collect
information that would provide an overview of provision at the national (macro) and at the college (micro) level in order to refine current theory (Section 3.2.).

Structure of Chapter and Link to the Succeeding One:
A detailed breakdown of findings and quotations gained from macro and micro interviews, wherein the words, or key themes, used frequently in interviews have been aligned under each super-ordinate theme, is given in sections 4.2. and 4.4. of this Chapter. These sections are followed by a description and discussion of interview findings from a macro perspective (Section 4.3.) and from a micro perspective (4.5.) A full transcript of a macro and micro interview (eg A i & D ) can be seen in Appendix I & II. In section 4.6. of this Chapter a comparative summary has been made between findings from interviews at both levels. This is followed by a descriptive perspective of the wider field of Adult Education which is shown in Chapter 5.1. A dialogue is then pursued, in Chapter 5.2., between the perspective of Adult Education and research findings.

4.2. A Detailed Breakdown of Key Themes, Key Words and Quotations from Interviews conducted at Macro Level between October 1988 - May 1989:
During the Autumn of 1988 and Spring of 1989 seven interviews were conducted at national level with participants representing Professional Institutes, Awarding Bodies and Academic Institutions ie a Polytechnic and an HE/FE College. The following demonstrates the findings obtained from these interviews and have subsequently been coded to indicate the source ie:

A  Awarding Bodies
B  Professional Institutes
C  Academic Institutions

This has been further coded to indicate the interview number ie:

A  i  ii
B  i  ii  iii
C  i  ii

As has been noted in section 3.3. & 3.4. of the previous chapter participants confirmed verbally and/or in writing the validity of
interview contents, that the information provided during the interviews was not of a personal nature and was reflective of the views of the participant's position within a specific organisation. If, on the infrequent occasion, it was perceived or indicated that the information could be interpreted as a personal understanding of institutional views or were wholly personal viewpoints, then this was clarified at the time of interview and noted eg see interview transcript Appendix I.

Note that C ii (interviewee) was also Chairperson for a national association for business and management education organisations in the public and education sector, indicating, therefore, that the findings can not be considered as solely representative of initiatives and opinions held by academic institutional representatives at that time.

The words, or key themes, used frequently in interviews are noted below under each super-ordinate theme, being highlighted to demonstrate commonality of findings from interviews:

I Organisational Structure required for Developing Opportunities in METD:
The three representatives from Professional Institutes, B i; ii; and iii, explained that their organisations were members of the Consultative Council for Professional Management Organisations (CCPMO) which favoured an amalgamation of the early stages of Professional courses. A joint foundation pilot programme was being considered for the IPM/ICSA/IP5/IAM courses.

All the representatives from Professional Institutes were in favour of accreditation through the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) in preference to a Royal Charter or Chartered Manager approach as advocated by the Council for Management Education and Development (CMED) (although B i and B iii were actively involved, at national level, in the CMED/MCI initiative).

The Awarding Bodies and academic institution representatives were all involved with CMED and MCI Steering or Working Parties ie A i; ii; and C i; ii.
The Awarding Bodies and academic institution representatives were all involved, to some degree, with the CNAA pilot foundation course, New Initial Award in Management (NIAM).

"This is an initial award in management practice, based on the competence approach, which was developed from the findings of a market research questionnaire." (C i)

II Structure of Nationally Recognised Management Qualifications:
All interviewees expected that a competence approach would be utilised within any new management course structure.

"This innovation would demand high quality manpower in the delivery of a competence based programme." (C ii)

B ii; A i, and C ii provided a detailed model of a three-part management qualification structure.

Bi and A i, A ii foresaw the growth of national accreditation of in-house programmes.

A i; ii; C i and C ii, identified that management qualifications would be linked to broader organisational management development programmes based upon the competence framework.

"CMED aims to define business need through the classification of managerial competences, which are the knowledge, skills and qualities of effective managers/leaders" (C ii).

III Innovative Delivery & Assessment Mechanisms for Management Education Provision:
"the issue of content versus delivery forms the basis of the present debate in management education, the mode of delivery influences the content." (A ii).
All Interviewees, with the exception of B ii, referred to the Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme (CATS) as a mechanism to accredit short courses or modular programmes and individual capability.

"The implementation of CATS will require an institutional support structure and control mechanisms plus the need to consider the long-term effects upon the total learning environment." (A ii)

B iii; A i; A ii; C i and C ii, suggested that management programmes designed in the competence and modular format would allow greater flexibility.

"This move should encourage a modular approach to management course provision, alongside which, there will be a need to consider a credit accumulation transfer scheme (CATS)". (C ii)

B i and B ii, A i; A ii; C i, encouraged the use of open and distance learning modes of delivery for management programmes.

B ii, B iii and A ii considered the need to base a management programme on a model of continuous development.

C i, A i and ii, considered that appropriate assessment of an individual's work-based experience, competence and personal effectiveness must be devised. A process, such as the Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) should be considered (Ci & Ai & Aii).

"How can work-based learning be accredited? It is worrying that employers might be intimately involved in assessment and that such assessment will be made against business targets and against individual competence." (A i)

A i commented that Certificate level courses were being developed and implemented that would incorporate an action learning approach and a personnel management skills package.
"the utilisation of an action learning approach should be considered whereby a programme could be unitised, given exemptions and given credits". (A i)

IV The Development of a Collaborative and Marketing Approach:
All Interviewees recommended that a collaborative approach for the provision of management education should be implemented.
NB The term "collaboration" is here defined as "developing a working relationship between two organisation"
  eg Employing Organisations and Awarding Bodies
  eg Employers and Colleges
  eg Colleges and Awarding Bodies

"The way ahead is through a process of collaboration between Colleges and Employers, who would be able to produce a management package that would have a real impact upon the labour force." (A ii)

C ii; A i and A ii suggested that local and national networks, between employers and educational providers, should be utilised to enable collaboration and responsiveness to business needs.

"A system of networks would provide a focus for assessment centres, however, this would imply the need to consider cost factors." (A i)

C i; C ii; A ii; and B iii considered that a marketing approach or market research should be implemented in order to relate management education provision to organisational needs.

V Individual Responsibility for Learning & Development:
C i; A i and A ii all believed that the design of a personal development or whole life development should be an integral part of programme design.

"I strongly support whole life development and believe that it is not just what you learn but how you learn that is important to attitude change and personal development." (A ii)
B ii; A i; A ii; C i and C ii agreed that management programme delivery would move away from the 'traditional' or 'taught' mode to a delivery mode whereby participants would gain ownership of learning through the use of learning contracts, mentoring and personal development journals.

A i; A ii; C i believed it essential, to the successful implementation of management programmes and to overcome resistance to changes in management education, to establish an audit mechanism, learning contracts and mentoring scheme between the management student, the company mentor and college tutor.

C i believed that individual learning styles should be considered. B ii. believed that "learning difficulties appear to occur over the age of 35/40."

VI Funding of Management Education, Training & Development:

B ii; A i; A ii; C i and C ii, believed that funding or the cost factor would be of critical importance to the future stability of METD.

"Within three years, there will be a possibility that little or no Government funding will be allocated for management courses. Colleges will, therefore, have to look to large organisations to fund or to sponsor such courses." (C i).

NB A synopsis of the full interview (of A i) can be seen in Appendix I as an example of the richness of data obtained.

4.3. Description of the Macro Perspective drawn from the Interviews with Representatives of national bodies and academic institutions:

The following is an account of the macro perspective derived from seven interviews. As has been noted in Chapter 3.4. the subsequent categorising of the key words and themes was far simpler than first envisaged because the commonality of themes from all sources was surprisingly consistent.
I Organisational Structure required for Developing Opportunities in METD:

All interviewees demonstrated unanimous agreement for the implementation of a national structure and organisation in order to develop opportunities within the METD area. All the Professional Institutes were found to be members of The Consultative Council for Professional Management Organisations (CCPMO) which favoured an amalgamation of the early stages of Professional courses. A joint foundation pilot programme was being considered in order to implement an amalgamation.

The Professional Institutes were also in favour of their members gaining accreditation through the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) in preference to the Chartered Manager approach advocated by the Council for Management Education and Development (CMED), now the National Forum for Management Education and Development (NFMED). However, two Professional Institute representatives were actively involved at national level in the CMED, Management Charter Initiative (MCI). All the remaining interviewees representing Awarding Bodies and academic institution representatives were involved with CMED/MCI national Steering or Working Party groups. These representatives were all involved, to some degree, with the CNAA pilot foundation course, New Initial Award in Management (NIAM).

These findings and acronyms were confusing to the researcher, and most probably to the reader. It was deemed useful, therefore, to rework this information into a diagram in order to provide clarification to the 'method of operation' and to the language of a more general community.

The chart shown on the following page demonstrates the writer's perception of the inter-relationships and developments between the main areas and was drawn, initially, from findings from the first four interviews with senior representatives from national bodies,
Figure I

CHART DEMONSTRATING THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATIONAL BODIES CONCERNED WITH THE GROWTH OF MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT (June 1989)

Key:
- - - - indicates newly established communication channels
indicates existing communication channels
conducted between October and December 1988. This initial draft was subsequently revised in June 1989 to incorporate subsequent interview findings.

This chart, which is by no means complete, demonstrates a national plethora of committees, research and reports which relate to the present state and future initiatives in management development.

This scene was, and still could be, described as follows:

"The usually torpid management education scene in the UK currently presents a scene of extraordinary activity. It begins to look remarkably like a circus. All round the Big Top, in the aisles and entrances, teachers of management are calling attention to their latest tricks like so many jugglers - if they will forgive the analogy. Yet what most catches the eye at the moment is the performance in the ring, where a couple of hundred captains of industry are endeavouring to raise an enormous pyramid on the backs of a team of cantering ponies. This particular feat has never before been attempted, even on a more stable platform, and its success is by no means assured. Failure will do more than bring a few reputations crashing to the ground. It could jeopardise the whole future of the circus business in Britain" (Foster, 1988 pp 72 - 76).

The next section focuses on the 'pyramid' of qualifications produced by the frenetic activity.

II Structure of Nationally Recognised Management Qualifications:
All seven representatives recognised or inferred that a competence approach would be integrated within any new management course structure. An interviewee from each of the sectors represented provided a detailed model of a three-part management qualification structure, all three similar models are shown on the following pages:
This model illustrates a three-tier management qualification structure related to a hierarchy of management skills required for the business environment. The three-tier management qualification structure eg Certificate; Diploma and Masters level qualifications are also reflected in the following two diagrams.
Figure III

A detailed model of the three-tier management qualification structure as perceived by an Awarding Body Representative (AB i)

CMED

Certificate

CBA

Diploma

MBA

BTEC

CMS

Diploma

DMS

CNAAN

MBA

NIAM

This model represents a three-tier management qualification structure related to the two major awarding Bodies eg CNAAN and BTEC and the newly established CMED.
Figure IV  A detailed model of the three-tier management qualification structure as perceived by a Professional Body Representative (Pii)

day to day management  tactical management  strategic management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BTEC</th>
<th>HND - Business Studies</th>
<th>DMS</th>
<th>MBA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CNAA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEBMS/CMS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Body Diploma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB Shaded area denote overlap with higher level courses

This model incorporates the previous two models which depicts a three-tier management qualification structure; the two major awarding bodies; the business environment and their relationship with a Professional qualification.

There was, however, less agreement concerning the growth of national accreditation of in-house programmes. One Professional Institute and the two Awarding Body representatives foresaw this growth but it was not, significantly, foreseen from a national level perspective by the Polytechnic and College representatives. This dissension will be fully discussed later in Section 4.6. of this Chapter.
III Innovative Delivery & Assessment Mechanisms for Management Education Provision:

With the exception of one representative from a Professional Institute, all interviewees referred to the Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme (CATS) as a mechanism to accredit short courses or modular programmes and individual capability.

All interviewees, excepting two from Professional Institutes, suggested that management programmes designed in the competence and modular format would provide greater flexibility. The majority (5) of interviewees at national level, two Professional Institutes, two Awarding Bodies and one academic institution, encouraged the use of open and distance learning modes of delivery for management programmes. Three of these interviewees considered that assessment of an individual's work-based experience, competence and personal effectiveness must be devised.

Only two Professional Institute and one Awarding Body representatives considered the need to base a management programme on a model of continuous development. Similarly only three representatives suggested that a process of Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) should be considered as a possible mechanism to effect this.

Only one Awarding Body representative commented that certificate level management courses were being developed and implemented that would incorporate an action learning approach and a personnel management skills package. It was only at a later stage in the research (Chapter 10) that the notion of 'action learning approach' took on some significance.

IV The Development of a Collaborative and Marketing Approach:

All interviewees at national level recommended that a collaborative approach in management education should be implemented. Only one academic institution representative and both Awarding Body representatives suggested that local and national networks, between employers and educational providers, should be utilised to enable collaboration and responsiveness to business needs. Four
representatives considered that a marketing approach or market research should be implemented in order to relate management education provision to organisational needs. Thus there were alternative conceptions about the mechanisms of provision.

V Individual Responsibility for Learning & Development:
Generally interviewees (five in total) agreed that management programme delivery would move away from the 'traditional' or 'taught' mode to a delivery mode whereby participants would gain ownership of learning through the use of learning contracts, mentoring and personal development journals. Both Awarding Body representatives and one academic institution interviewee, believed these delivery modes essential to the successful implementation of management programmes and to overcome resistance to changes in management education. One academic institution representative believed that individual learning styles should be considered, and one interviewee from a Professional Institute noted a belief that older people experienced learning difficulties.

Thus at the macro level some credence was being given to the value of individualised learning provision but, again, there was no consensus about how this might be achieved.

VI Funding of Management Education, Training & Development:
The majority of interviewees (five in total), representing the three sectors, believed that funding or the cost factor would be of critical importance to the future stability of management education, training and development. However, no further details were obtained from the interviewees about the future funding structure nor was it considered appropriate to pursue this point within this research phase. However this issue is discussed briefly in Chapter 6.5.

4.4. A detailed breakdown of Key Themes and Key Words obtained from interviews conducted at Micro Level:
During the early Spring of 1989 a complementary study, to that undertaken at macro level, was carried out with seven staff responsible for the policy and decision making processes of management course provision within a southern college of Further and Higher Education.
It is necessary to note here that great care had to be exercised in this part of the research particularly to suspend preconceptions developed through familiarity with the context. This necessarily more objective stance allowed issues to emerge to the writer-as-a-researcher which had been obscured by the often frustrating daily bustle in which the writer-as-a-worker had been involved.

Care was taken to be alert to potential distortions caused by participants' attempts to market either their courses or themselves. Such distortions were frequently indicated by the amount of emphasis on factual detail given about the participant's course e.g. student numbers; positive growth and exam pass rates. As the interview methodology was based within the 'informal conversational mode' (See Chapter 3.3.), the researcher allowed this factual digression, rather than severing the flow of conversation, in the expectation that the open-ended nature of the interview structure would provide the interviewee with the opportunity of engaging in-depth with the topics.

Due to the perceived general climate of distrust it was not considered appropriate either to request permission for or to note direct quotations from interviewees, thus, the subsequent comparative low degree of richness of data collected is reflected within the following detailed breakdown of interview findings.

What follows is a detailed breakdown of words or key themes used frequently during interviews and organised under four super-ordinate themes. The words or key themes have also been highlighted to demonstrate commonality of findings from interviews. The findings have been coded to indicate the area of responsibility of the interviewee i.e.

- **A** personnel management
- **B** diploma level marketing course
- **C** certificate level marketing course
  - **C ii** 'business' marketing course
D certificate level management course
E diploma level management course
F supervisory level management course
G purchasing and supply course

(Note that 'C' was responsible for two courses and provided information appertaining to both programmes thus the coding 'C' and 'C ii'.)

As has been previously noted (Section 3.4.) subsequent to the interview, participants confirmed verbally and/or in writing the contents of the interview transcripts.

A detailed breakdown of Interview findings from staff responsible for management education provision undertaken in the Spring Term, 1989:

I Organisation and Structure of Nationally Recognised Qualifications within Management Education Provision:
It was demonstrated by interviewees A; B; Cii and G that there had been a steady growth in demand for 'professional' courses which were exam orientated. Participants D and E considered that there was an increase in demand for nationally recognised management qualifications. Participant F noted a decrease in applicants for a supervisory level management course.

It was also recognised by two interviewees (A and G), that there was a need for an amalgamated foundation course. This proposed amalgamation of content and delivery methods, during the early stages of these professional and management qualifications, were considered necessary to alleviate the strain on staff and room resources. An amalgamated foundation course, it was considered, would avoid duplication of content for those students who graduated from one course to another eg from the post-graduate personnel management course to the diploma level management course.
II Innovative Delivery & Assessment Mechanisms for Management Course Provision:

It was unanimously considered that there was a need to provide flexible delivery, in terms of time periods and delivery methods, of management courses in order to satisfy individual and organisational needs. Interviewees C and F provided an example of how open learning within the supervisory, purchasing and supply courses could provide a flexible delivery mechanism.

Four interviewees (A; B; C and G) noted that their courses were traditionally exam orientated. It was indicated by interviewee E that orientation to examinations was being replaced by a process of continuous assessment within a new submission.

Such a process of continuous assessment was being encouraged by five participants (A; C/Cii; D; E; F) in order to place less emphasis upon exam pass rates. One participant (A) indicated that new course proposals included more continuous assessment based upon both written assignments and skills work, with assessment based upon competencies needed for performance skills. However, this participant believed that, since no developed "set of competency standards" had been objectively established, skills should not be assessed to a level of performance.

A team-based approach towards delivery of management courses was considered to be more effective and desirable for management students (D & E). Three members of staff (B; E & F) were at various stages in the process of incorporating a modular approach within their courses.

III The Development of a Collaborative Approach in Recognition of Organisational and Individual Needs:

Consideration of organisational needs was demonstrated by three interviewees (B; C/Cii & D) by implementing a flexible approach to the yearly timings of course provision. Organisations (eg the retail trade) found it preferable to adjust their staff development programmes to complement their seasonal business activities. Course timings were, therefore, adapted to suit these employers.
A greater emphasis was being placed upon skills development within management courses by four of the participants (A; C; D & E) in recognition of the needs of individuals and organisations.

Four interviewees (C/Cii; D; E & G) were increasing the integration of course-work with work-based activities within course assignments, projects and college-based work. Also mentoring was being considered by two interviewees (C/Cii & D) as a means of integrating the needs of the individual, the employing organisation and course aims.

Recognition of organisational needs was reflected in the growth of college validated or delivered in-company programmes (C; D & F). Two participants (C & D) were implementing sector-specific courses.

IV Individual Responsibility for Learning and Development:
There were two cases where learning contracts (D & E) were being negotiated between student and course tutors in order that students be responsible for their own learning. A personal log or self development programme was being encouraged by two members of staff in order to create an improved self-awareness of the learning experience (D & E).

Tutorials, incorporated in the course design, were used by three participants (C/Cii; D & E) as periods of reflection and diagnosis.

Three members of staff (D; E & F) indicated an increasing incorporation of student-centred learning strategies within course design.

NB A synopsis of the full interview (of D) can be seen in Appendix II as an example of the data obtained.

4.5. Description of the Micro Perspective drawn from the Interviews with Representatives of a southern college of Further and Higher Education:
The following is an account of the micro perspective derived from seven interviews. As has been previously noted in Chapter 3.4. and in section 4.3. of this Chapter there was a surprising consistency of common themes from all sources.
I  Organisation and Structure of Nationally Recognised Qualifications within Management Education Provision:

Six of the interviewees held the view that both professional and management courses had increased by growth in student numbers. However, one interviewee had experienced a sharp decline in numbers of student applicants for a supervisory level course. This decline was caused, so he believed, by an increase in organisational in-company programmes for this level of management.

The three 'professional' courses, which were validated and externally examined by the relevant professional Institutes, were members of the CCPMO. This was not mentioned, nor was the CMED/MCI organisation, by any of the participants interviewed. However, the lack of emphasis placed upon the existence of national bodies by micro participants may indicate either the low significance accorded to these bodies or may have reflected the lack of information disseminated to the interviewees.

II  Innovative Delivery & Assessment Mechanisms for Management Course Provision:

It was unanimously considered that there was a need to provide flexible delivery, in terms of time periods and delivery methods. This would, it was postulated, satisfy both individual and organisational needs. Open learning was a mechanism, suggested by two participants, which could assist with flexible delivery.

Four members of staff, three of whom were responsible for 'professional' and Institute awarding programmes, noted the exam orientation of their courses although this orientation was understood to be on the decline with management courses.

Five staff members encouraged a process of continuous assessment within their programmes in order to place less emphasis upon exam passes. However, only one interviewee noted the need for an objectively established set of 'competency standards' but emphasised that skills should not be assessed to a subjective level of performance. (words in italics denote the writer's understanding of the comment).
Two interviewees considered a team based approach was effective and desirable for management students. However, when a request was made to the participants to clarify this statement, they responded by adding the word "staff" ie staff team based approach as opposed to student team based approach. Three interviewees had or were in the process of incorporating a modular approach within their courses.

It was with surprise that it was noted that innovations and changes, such as the concept of competence standards, had not filtered down to the people who wished to use them.

The majority of interviewees (five in total) valued and recognised the need to promote the growth of continuous assessment and modularisation of courses. It was perceived by participants that Professional Institutes could retain their exam orientation whilst courses validated by Awarding Bodies could allow the college staff and curriculum to be more flexible in their approach to examinations and assessment.

III The Development of a Collaborative Approach in Recognition of Organisational and Individual Needs:

Three participants had changed the yearly timings of courses from the traditional academic year provision to integrate with the needs of the organisation and sector. In addition four staff members placed emphasis upon skills development in order to recognise the needs of individual students and organisations.

Four courses had been, or were in the process of being, developed to incorporate the integration of work-based activities within course assignments, projects and college-based work. To a lesser extent, two participants considered mentoring as a means of integrating the needs of the individual, employer and course aims. Three interviewees had noted the growth of college courses delivered 'in-company.' Thus, at the micro level some action was in the process of being effected to fit the design of courses to the needs of the users (students and their employers) by the use of a more collaborative approach.
IV Individual Responsibility for Learning and Development:
A smaller number (three) of staff indicating an increasing use of student-centred learning strategies. Such mechanisms as learning contracts, tutorials, personal logs and self-development programmes were being utilised by a few in order to encourage students to be responsible for their own learning, to improve self-awareness or for periods of reflection and diagnosis.

4.6. A Summary of Key Issues arising from the Macro and Micro Perspective:
The following account provides a summary of key issues arising from interview findings conducted at the macro and micro level. The main aim of this section is to outline the key issues of agreement or dissension arising from this phase of the investigation in order to provide a firm foundation and direction for future areas of research. The different emphasis of findings emerging from the two groups is not surprising since the participants' work foci were at different levels and each participant group was likely to interpret the purpose of the interview accordingly. Therefore any comparisons made between the macro and micro perspective serves merely to illuminate the areas designated for future investigation.

It was notable that the emphasis in interviews at macro level was in the organisation and structure required at national level to promote the development of initiatives and opportunities in the METD area. In contrast, information about these national developments had either not descended to the local/micro level or this information had not been seen to be relevant to micro representatives. As was noted (See Category I, Section 4.4.) not one micro interviewee indicated any knowledge about the CCPMO nor about CMED and MCI whilst national interview findings provided a large quantity of information about these organisations (See Chapters 6 & 8 about MCI initiatives).

A similar conclusion was drawn about the competence debate. All macro representatives recognised or inferred that a competence approach would be integrated within any new or three-part management qualification structure while only one local interviewee mentioned "competency standards" (See Category II, Section 4.4.). In
addition, none of the micro representatives mentioned the new CNAA pilot foundation course, New Initial Award in Management (NIAM), which was competence-based and was being established at macro level.

Similarly, at the macro level, two Awarding Body and one Professional Institute representative foresaw the growth of national accreditation of in-house management qualification programmes (See Chapter 7). The growth of validated college or delivered in-company programmes was recognised, by three local interviewees, but separate Awarding Body accreditation and delivery by employing organisations was not mentioned (See Category III, Chapter 4.4.).

In addition, at macro level, interviewees suggested that management qualifications designed within the competence framework could be linked to organisational management development programmes (See Chapter 7). This was in contrast to four micro participants who placed greater emphasis upon skills development in recognition of the needs of individuals and organisations (See Category III, Chapter 4.4.).

The majority of interviewees at micro level (See Category I, Section 4.4.) demonstrated a steady growth or an increase in demand for 'professional' and for nationally recognised management qualifications. However, it was implicit from macro interview findings that this growth in demand would only occur with an innovative and flexible approach to management course design which, in turn, would incorporate the needs of organisations and managers (See Chapter 7).

Three Professional Institute representatives, at macro level, favoured an amalgamation of the early stages of Professional courses and a joint foundation pilot programme was being considered. This finding is similarly reflected, from the micro perspective, by two interviewees who were responsible for 'professional' courses, who suggested that the mooted amalgamation would enable the improvement of resource allocation and the avoidance of duplication of learning by students.

The great majority of all participants, at both levels, held the view that there was a need to provide flexible delivery methods for management
programmes. However, there was a different emphasis placed by the participating parties in order to achieve this objective. At macro level, it was suggested that management programmes designed in the competence and modular format would allow greater flexibility, whilst, at micro level, the time periods and delivery methods were seen to be a mechanism to achieve flexible delivery. Three members of staff, at micro level (See Category II, Section 4.4), were beginning to or had incorporated a modular approach within their courses.

Five participants at micro level encouraged a process of continuous assessment in order to place less emphasis upon exam pass rates. Five participants at macro level considered the need to base a management programme on a model of continuous development with a continuous assessment mechanism. Three of these participants considered that the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) would provide a potential mechanism that would promote continuous assessment of work-based experience, competence and personal effectiveness. The APEL process was not mentioned at micro level. Chapters 6 and 7 provides further details about these issues.

At macro level the emphasis of findings was placed on a skills-based or action learning provision for students. In contrast the findings at micro level focused upon a team based approach for staff. Action learning, however, formed an integral part of staff development activities in later research (See Chapters 10 and 12).

A significant difference, between the macro and micro findings, was the approach to collaboration with other bodies ie employing organisations; awarding bodies. All macro representatives focused upon a general level of increased collaboration in the provision of management education. This is indicated by three macro representatives who suggested that local and national networks be established to enable collaboration and to increase providers' responsiveness to business needs. This was in contrast to micro level participants who considered the practical and particular responses to satisfy particular organisational and individual development needs eg the adjustment
of yearly timings of courses, skills development and the integration of courses with work-based activities.

This difference in the level of approach to improving collaboration can be seen from the findings from four macro interviewees who considered a marketing approach should be implemented in order to relate management education provision to organisational needs. However, these issues were incorporated within a later research phase (See Chapter 7 for further details). However, the term 'marketing' was not mentioned by micro representatives. This last point can be reflected in the difference in terminology within the super-ordinate theme of 'collaboration' shown in the headings for Category IV, Section 4.2. at macro level and Category III, Section 4.4. at micro level.

Both groups mentioned, though without a great deal of emphasis, the design of personal development and self development programmes. At macro level, personal or whole life development was seen as part of an integrated programme design whereas at micro level, a self development programme was being encouraged to create an improved self-awareness of the learning experience (See Chapters 7 & 10). The researcher considered that the reference to personal or self development programmes held similar connotations for both parties.

A majority of participants at macro level agreed that participants would gain ownership of learning through the use of learning contracts, mentoring and personal development journals. These issues are discussed more fully in a later phase of research (See Chapter 10). On the other hand, only a minority of micro interviewees suggested that learning contracts would enable the student to be responsible for learning. Personal logs were seen to improve the creation of self-awareness of the learning experience or in the case of mentoring, to integrate the needs of the individual and employing organisation with the course aims (See Category III, Chapter 4.4.)

Three micro interviewees used tutorials as a period of reflection and diagnosis; the use of tutorials was not noted at macro level. It was not unexpected that details of methods of implementation were not noted at the macro level as this finding related to the general focus of each
group as noted earlier. Chapters 9, 10 and 11 provide further details about the importance of the reflective process within METD activities.

Five macro participants recognised that management programmes would move towards a delivery focus, whereby programme participants would gain ownership of learning. This concurred with findings from three micro participants who indicated an increasing use of student-centred learning strategies (See Chapters 7 & 10 for further details).

The majority of macro representatives believed that funding or the cost factor would be of critical importance to the future stability of management education provision. It was noted, by the researcher, that funding or costings were not mentioned by micro interview participants which may be indicative of the lack of emphasis placed upon funding issues by participants at that time. However this issue is discussed briefly in Chapter 6.5.

Since many of these issues relate to general theories of adult learning these are viewed in the next Chapter in order to consider how developments in the METD field accords with them.
Chapter 5 - "A Review of Continuing Adult Education Theory & Practice"

5.1. Definition of Adult Education Theory & Practice:
The findings from macro and micro interviewees (See Chapter 4) demonstrated general agreement regarding the need to improve innovative delivery and assessment mechanisms with the aim of increasing responsibility for management students' own learning. The need to develop collaboration between educational providers, Awarding Bodies and organisations and their managers was also identified. In order to develop a relevant strategy for further research, it was considered essential to reflect upon a management education framework within an adult educational context.

This section (5.1.) summarises the researcher's understanding of adult education from a sociological, educational, institutional and management perspective. This is followed by section 5.2, which attempts to compare the practical implications of findings gained from interviews at the macro and micro level (see Chapter 4) with that theoretical perspective. It was considered that this comparison would enable the identification and clarification of an appropriate strategy for future research. This section, therefore, identifies a potential way forward for subsequent research stages.

Since this section, however, is centrally concerned with the notion of understanding the framework of management education within an adult education perspective, it will be assumed that a possible practical definition can be found which does not necessarily contradict the use of theoretical knowledge. Bright (1989, p 9) suggests that whether a theoretical or practical definition of adult education is adopted this entails the inevitable use of theoretical discipline-based knowledge and the epistemological responsibilities thereof.

A lucid description of the subject of adult education is contained in Bright's book, "Theory and Practice in the Study of Adult Education" (1989). This book focused upon the study of adult education as a subject in which university postgraduate degrees are awarded and, as such,
deserved some attention from the researcher. According to Bright, adult education in this sense must not be confused with extra-mural adult education, which comprises day and evening courses for the general public in a variety of social sciences, humanities, and natural science subjects (Bright, 1989, p. 7).

For the purposes of achieving clarity within this section, an apposite and pragmatic definition of 'Adult Education' has been gleaned from the illuminating book "The Modern Practice of Adult Education" (Knowles, 1980), and is as follows:

"What is an Adult? -
..a person is adult to the extent that that individual is performing social roles typically assigned by our culture to those it considers to be adults....
...a person is adult to the extent that that individual perceives herself or himself to be essentially responsible for her or his own life.." (Knowles, 1980, p. 24).

"What is Adult Education? -
In its broadest sense, the term describes a process - the process of adults learning. In this sense it encompasses practically all experiences of mature men and women by which they acquire new knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, interests, or values.

and

In its more technical meaning, "adult education" describes a set of organized activities carried on by a wide variety of institutions for the accomplishment of specific educational objectives.

and

A third meaning combines all these processes and activities into the idea of a movement or field of social practice", (Knowles, 1980, p. 25).

What is the Adult Educator's Mission? -
"In fact, this mission can best be described in relation to satisfying three distinct sets of needs and goals: 1) the needs and goals of individuals, 2) the needs and goals of institutions, and 3) the needs and goals of society. (Knowles, 1980, p. 27).
These three distinct sets of needs and goals are further discussed from an individual, institutional and sociological perspective within the context of continuing adult education and the curriculum issues of the 'two educations' (Jarvis, 1985, p 49). Taking the three foci of Knowles' mission statement, but in reverse order, relevant and permanent viewpoints from adult educators are also considered in terms of their consequence for METD.

A Sociological Viewpoint
Jarvis's (1985, p 14) analysis of sociological schools of thought and ideologies has been used extensively within this Chapter in order to demonstrate that no single sociological perspective actually exists but that various branches focus upon specific facets of social life eg continuing adult education. As education is also a social phenomenon it is open to analysis from different perspectives and, indeed, as education is an element within the wider society, it may itself be viewed from the same dual perspective as society itself. There are, then, two sociologies: a sociology of the social system or structure and a sociology of social action.

Therefore, for the purposes of this research study, continuing adult education provision should be viewed from the holistic perspective of the wider society of business and management. Jarvis further argued that, because the structures of the education of adults have not been so clearly demarcated as in the past, greater emphasis has been placed upon the process of learning than has occurred in some other branches of education ie there is greater emphasis on action than upon structure (Jarvis, 1985, p 15). Therefore, the teaching and learning processes contained within management programmes can be viewed from a social action perspective. The institutional and business environments, within which these programmes take place, can be located within the structures of the wider society because:

"Modern learning theories have seen the engagement of the individual with the environment in a holistic sense - the total environment, not just the social environment" (Rogers, 1993, p 55).
Thus the total environment, which includes the physical world, the mental world as well as the social environment, are all elements with which individuals are bound in perpetual engagement and with the potential for conflict and the need for conflict resolution (Rogers, 1993, p 55).

Oldcorn, (1982, pp 79-80) suggested that an organisation eg an academic institution should adapt to "six different environments (including natural phenomena like the weather)"; which includes: the political; economic; technological; competitive; social and the natural environments. Although this is a convenient way of classifying the world around an organisation it does, nevertheless, create a more complex and differentiated picture for academic institutions within an educational and business context.

As society has become more differentiated and complex so education has done likewise. The concept of adult education and learning in relation to the whole environment is a difficult process because the teaching-learner encounter is part of the wider struggle of the individual and the total environment (Rogers, 1993, p 56). Thus the growth and change of education reflects societal change in terms of its structures and in terms of the concept of education itself. Hence the definition of education itself is one which has changed with social evolution:

"it has necessarily become more abstract, less functional and applicable to a wider variety of educational situations" (Jarvis, 1985, p 25).

Thus, education can be located within a theoretical context of social change where some areas of education have evolved into lifelong engagement with learning in an industrial society.

The Changing Concept of Education - Continuing Adult Education: Continuing Adult Education is concerned with transmitting to the workers that knowledge or skill which should enable them to become more effective workers in modern technological society. Thus, it may
be seen that there are broadly two sociologies' which relate to structure and action and which need to encompass the development of the kind of adults that are required for different societies:

"Every society has used adult-education processes to continue the development of the kind of citizens visualized to be required for the maintenance and progress of that society; and the perception of the kind of adult required is different for each society" (Knowles, 1980, p 36).

It should be noted that firstly, education is probably more likely to be affected by social forces than it is to be a force for change and secondly, that change is the norm in society (Jarvis, 1985, p 17). Therefore, the two sociologies can be:

"....correlated to the two educations, each having similar sets of presuppositions of man in society. Each sees man either as the product of society or society as the product of man" (Jarvis, 1985, p 30).

What emerges from Jarvis's discussion is that there are major curriculum issues that revolve around two broad types of education, which may be classified as "education from above" and "education of equals".

The Two Educations:
The two educations are models of education having entirely different ideological perspectives and are demonstrated by the model shown below (Jarvis, 1985, p 49):
Table 2: The Two Educations as Curricular Models:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Education from Above</th>
<th>Education of Equals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual should be initiated or maintained in the social system and its culture.</td>
<td>Individual should be encouraged to achieve his human potential.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System needs must be met</td>
<td>Individual needs should be met</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Specific and behavioural objectives utilised</td>
<td>Expressive objectives employed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Selected from culture of the social group by those delegated by society.</td>
<td>Selected from culture of the social group(s) by learners, often in negotiation with teachers, according to interests and relevance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initiates individuals into publicly accepted knowledge, its forms and structure.</td>
<td>Problem based on knowledge integrated rather than structured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Didactic</td>
<td>Facilitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socratic, when directed towards specific learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Socratic, when seeking to stimulate learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher seeks to control learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Teacher seeks no control over the learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher's role clearly demarcated and regarded as essential to learning</td>
<td>Teacher's role less clearly demarcated and not regarded as essential to learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Public examination, competitive.</td>
<td>Self assessment by learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher set tests</td>
<td>Peer assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emphasis upon standards</td>
<td>Emphasis upon learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 'two educations' as curricular models within society appear to be diametrically opposed; the emphasis of 'education from above' is placed upon the social system and the individual is prepared in order to fit into it; in the 'education of equals' the emphasis is placed upon the individual and her/his ability to achieve her/his potential so that she/he can act as an agent in society (Jarvis, 1985, p 49 & 50).

The didactic approach to education, or 'education from above', relates to a pedagogical ideology or system of beliefs. This is in contrast to 'education of equals' which is akin to Knowles' (1980) andragogical assumptions.

**Pedagogy versus Andragogy:**

The methods and content elements of the 'education of equals' has been espoused by such adult educators as Rogers (1983) and Knowles (1980). Knowles' (1980) discussion of andragogy reflected this perspective and it has been embraced by many adult educators as a valid theory of adult education. However, Jarvis (1985, p 50) noted that theorists mistakenly discussed Knowles' analysis of andragogy apart from his description of pedagogy. He suggested that it is only when the two are discussed together that it can be seen that Knowles was formulating a particular curriculum theory for adult education:

"So it is no longer functional to define education as a process of transmitting what is known; it must now be defined as a lifelong process of continuing inquiry. And so the most important learning of all - for both children and adults - is learning how to learn" (Knowles, 1980, p 41).

Knowles (1980, p 43) went on to enlarge upon the pedagogical versus andragogical debate by explaining the need to consider that whenever a pedagogical assumption is the realistic one, then pedagogical strategies are appropriate, regardless of the age of the learner - and vice versa but makes one caveat: an ideological pedagogue is described thus:
"One who has a deep loyalty and commitment of the pedagogical model - may be tempted to underrate the extent to which an andragogical assumption may be realistic and may, for example, want to keep a learner dependent long after the learner has become able to be self-directing" *(Knowles, 1980, p 43)*

However, pedagogy assumes the existence of an 'institution' in contrast to andragogical assumptions which are based upon the development of life long and continuous learning of the adult which is not necessarily confined to a formal academic institution. Thus educational institutions need to fit in with the whole world of the adult learner at work in today's society.

Society is perceived to have become largely equated to business or the corporate world *(Hart, 1992, p 59)* so that:

"the university and society were once one and the same, business and society are now one and the same, with universities unable to meet the expectation of business, hence those of society as well" *(Dole, 1980, p 334)*.

Dole (1980) considers this new 'organic fit' between industry and the modern world as the major reason behind the establishment of higher education programmes offered by industry itself. The increasing calls for greater partnership, joint venture, or collaboration between business and colleges or universities can be interpreted as a solution to a growing competition between traditional institutions of higher education and industrial educational programmes. These alliances between colleges and industries raise a fundamental question concerning the meaning of education *(Hart, 1992, p 59)*. The notion of adjusting colleges and universities to changed social and economic environmental circumstances has re-structured the meaning of continuing adult education from the perspective of managers in the business world and of lecturing or teaching staff in the educational world. However, the process of marketing and selling vocational education by higher educational institutions is appealing to a growing number of non-traditional adult students *(Hart, 1992, p 60)* and to employing organisations.
This view of applying business and management techniques to an academic institution or to an educational context may not coincide with Knowles' (1980) view of the adult educator's mission. Knowles argues that the needs and goals of society, the institution and of the individual should be satisfied. Thus, in terms of satisfying the individual goals through career orientated or vocational courses eg management programmes which are based on a philosophy of personal knowledge, as opposed to absolute knowledge, within an institutional setting is an interesting one. Burgoyne (1983, p 71) offered a broad definition of the term 'knowledge' and refers 'to all that which is learnt'. He elucidated further upon the terms 'absolute knowledge' and 'personal knowledge':

"Absolute Knowledge - in which knowledge is assumed to be an incontrovertible accumulation of fact passed on from 'experts' to 'novices'.

Personal Knowledge - in which each person is seen as developing a personal and idiosyncratic understanding of his situation."

However, Burgoyne (1983, p 72) noted that specific courses could be run and taught on either of these sets of assumptions, or a compromise between them. The institutions within which these courses are located can have procedures, rules, practices, norms etc that are compatible with one or other or both of these sets of assumptions. Further, a common belief amongst adult educators who wish to run or who run courses based on a "personal knowledge" philosophy is that the institutional setting for these courses is based on the "absolute knowledge" set of assumptions and are, therefore, incompatible with the course. Thus, a dichotomy exists between management courses based upon the philosophy of "personal knowledge" within an institutional setting based upon "absolute knowledge". Such a dichotomy may lead to potential conflict situations between the teacher and student; institution or even teacher and employer.

This epistemological conflict, in practical and professional terms, can prove problematical in an continuing adult education context. Bright, in demonstrating the epistemological conflict between adult education and its source disciplines, recognised that:
"epistemology itself is eclectic and contains many views and definitions of knowledge and their consequent definitions of education and adult education" (Bright, 1989, p 5).

Therefore, within management education provision or continuing adult education, the world of educational and management theory must be used as basis for management development and training programmes. More importantly, the philosophical assumptions and theories of education should be seen by the management participants to be integrated within a holistic provision of management education. Thus, if continuing adult education is to satisfy the needs and goals of society, the institution and of the individual a theoretical field of knowledge must also embrace a practical field of knowledge, yet:

"One of the most frequently offered criticisms of programs of professional preparation by graduates who subsequently inhabit the "real world" of practice is that such programs are strong on theory but weak on practical application' (Brookfield, 1986, p 201).

The bridging of the gap between theory and practice does not mean making theory 'simpler' so that practitioners can more readily understand it, since no amount of simplification will make it more readily relatable or applicable to practice. A similar notion applies to attempts to make the content of teaching more directly relevant to practice:

"The difficulty of bridging the gap lies in the perceived existence of the gap itself, which is really a problem about the way that both theory and practice have been conceptualized" (Bright, 1989, p 71).

Thus, the difficulties lie in the underlying assumptions within which professional or career orientated adult education is delivered (this theme is further explored in Chapter 10). From an andragogical perspective, Knowles premises four crucial assumptions (1980, pp 42 - 45) about the characteristics of learners. He demonstrates that, as individuals mature,
1. their self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality towards being a self-directed human being;
2. they accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning;
3. their readiness to learn becomes orientated increasingly to the developmental tasks of their social roles; and
4. their time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly, their orientation towards learning shifts from one of subject-centredness to one of performance centredness

Taking Bright's advice of 'bridging the gap' between educational theory and management theory, these assumptions about learning by adults can be compared with McGregor's original work about assumptions on human nature and behaviour at work. These propounded assumptions, contained in Theory X and Theory Y, (cf. McGregor, 1960) are that:

Theory X represents the assumptions on which traditional organisations are based, and are that:
* the average person is lazy and has an inherent dislike of work;
* most people must be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened with punishment if the organisation is to achieve its objectives; and
* the average person avoids responsibility, prefers to be directed, lacks ambition and values security most of all.

Theory Y represents the assumptions of integration of individual and organisational goals and are:
* that work is as natural as play or rest;
* people will exercise self-direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which they are committed;
* commitment to objectives is a function of rewards associated with their achievement;
* given the right conditions, the average worker can learn to accept and to seek responsibility;
* the capacity for creativity in solving organisational problems is distributed widely in the population; and
* the intellectual potential of the average person is only partially utilised
If one is to acknowledge Knowles' four basic assumptions of learning combined with the underlying assumptions contained within McGregor's Theory Y then consideration should be given to the practical implications of facilitating self-directed learning by managers in an adult education context. Self-directed learning can be defined as adults being assisted to free themselves from externally imposed direction in their learning and being encouraged to become proactive, initiating individuals in reshaping their personal, work, political, and recreational lives (Brookfield, 1986, p 60).

In order, therefore, for adult educators to assist adults to free themselves and to encourage them to become proactive individuals in reshaping their whole lives their experiences should be given credence. From the perspective of adult learners, adults define themselves largely by their experience, since they have a deep investment in its value therefore:

"...when they find themselves in situations in which their experience is not being used, or its worth is minimized, it is not just their experience that is being rejected - they feel rejected as persons" (Knowles, 1980, p 50).

As adults are themselves rich resources for learning then greater emphasis can be placed on techniques that utilise the experience of the adult learners.

Experiential Learning:
Adult education can provide these rich learning experiences only through enabling the individual learner to recognise and actualise the educative potential contained in such an experience, and to organise these experiences in such a way that they are or can become educative (Hart, 1992, p 191). Skilful adult educators can emphasise the practical application of management theories, not only by drawing from learners' life experiences but by utilising the experiences of adult learners through such techniques as group discussion, case studies and simulation exercises. But:
"numerous recent studies on the transfer of learning and the maintenance of behavioral change indicate the desirability of going even further, and actually building into the design of learning experiences provision for the learners to plan - and even rehearse - how they are going to apply their learnings to their day-to-day lives" (Knowles, 1980, p 50).

Thus, management programmes should incorporate such rehearsals of real life experiences within the design of learning provision. Experience is a significant element for many theorists of adult education (Jarvis, 1985, p 79) and an educational programme which includes a combination of theory and practice, with each informing the other, can provide a continuing development opportunity for both the tutor and the learner.

Kolb & Fry's (1975) experiential learning cycle, shown below, is an effective developmental model for both the tutor and the learner:

Figure V The Experiential Learning Cycle

(Kolb & Fry, 1975, pp 33-37)
The capacity for experience therefore indicates a practical and critically reflective involvement in social reality from the centre of one's own subjectivity. The latter has to be reflected upon and understood in a process of critical and creative engagement with one's own nature (Hart, 1992, p 191). Thus, it is necessary to create the required process of informed reflection on concrete experience which is essential to the learning process, within an educational experience for managers (this notion is explored further within Chapter 10).

In order to facilitate the practical implications of embedding experiential learning methods for managers against the forces of social and institutional constraints requires developing a thoughtful rationale to guide such practice. Without such a rationale it is likely that most adult educators will fall unthinkingly into actions:

"that support structures of organizational convenience and confirm learners' patterns of dependency learned in the school classroom but have little to do with assisting adults to create, and re-create, their personal, occupational, and political worlds" (Brookfield, 1986, p 297).

5.2. A Review of the Practical Perspective at Macro and Micro level in terms of the Adult Education Theoretical Perspective Described:

The previous summaries of findings at each level, macro and micro, show the emergence of clear, common super-ordinate themes and mutually agreed areas of innovation and interest in management education training and development. Emerging from these themes were a clear subset of ideas, innovations and models demonstrating the interviewees' views about present and future events. A review of Adult Education theory and practice (Chapter 5.1.) structured from a sociological; educational; institutional and an individual perspective gives a cultural context to the themes emerging from the interviews.

The need to reflect changes in society through provision of a flexible and innovative management qualification structure was considered to be of paramount importance to the researcher and to subsequent stages of research. Thus, the following section identifies the main issues of agreement and conflict between the interview perspectives and
theories drawn from the adult educational perspective. Thus, what follows is a personal interpretation of the combined findings leading to recommendations for subsequent research focus.

I Acknowledgement of a structure and organisation required for developing opportunities in management education, training and development:

From a holistic perspective, the management education and qualification framework can be located within the wider structure of society while the actual process of teaching and learning may be viewed from the social action perspective. Therefore, this notion of the 'two sociologies' (Jarvis, 1985, pp 14-15) can be exemplified by the changes in the qualification structure at the macro level which in turn initiates specific actions and innovations within management education provision.

This perspective was shared by those representatives at macro level who advocated a national structure in order to promote the development of initiatives, changes and opportunities in the management education, training and development area. Similarly, those same interviewees recognised or inferred that a competence approach would be integrated within any new or three-part national qualification structure.

The need for a national structure promoting action was not, however, reflected in the micro interview findings. This may be perceived to be confirmation of Jarvis's prediction that the future adult educational system may emphasise that changes are placed upon structure as opposed to changes being placed upon the need for action (Jarvis, 1985, p 15). The increasing differentiation and complexity of society did not appear to be complemented (Jarvis, 1985, p 20) within academic institutions, whose representatives were either not informed, or were not heeding actions from dynamic external elements of society eg political, economic, social and technical. National initiatives established by industry-led bodies such as the CMED and CCPMO had sadly passed unnoticed by micro representatives.
The Council for Management Education and Development (CMED) now the National Forum for Management Education and Development (NFMED) which had established an operational arm for activities, the Management Charter Initiative (MCI), was regarded by the researcher as a potential organisation which could provide a focus for the development of management education, training and development in the UK. This perception could be justified by the fact that the MCI had initial financial backing and staff resources from such external forces as the Government, the Training Agency and industrial employers. The MCI also appeared to be approaching the development of METD in a more pragmatic way than its competitor organisation the Consultative Council for Professional and Management Organisations (CCPMO). These theoretical and practical factors confirmed the view that changes in qualification structures and initiatives should have a subsequent and deep effect upon the teaching and learning activities at provider level. However, these changes in the qualification structure and the proposed design of innovative and flexible management programmes at macro level could not be seen to be reflected in micro interview findings.

It was considered by the researcher appropriate to investigate further, innovative activities, organised and managed by the MCI.

II The changing structure of nationally recognised management qualifications for the future:

The introduction of a two-tier management qualification system representing the different levels of management activity, was initially advocated in a report by Handy in 1987 (See Chapter 2). Handy's report and a complementary report by Constable & McCormick (1987) was considered to be a prime motivator (Deloitte, Haskins & Sells, 1989) in the introduction of national changes in management education, training and development provision. As can be seen in Chapter 4 there was general agreement, from both macro and micro parties, to continue to provide nationally recognised management and professional qualifications. However, interview findings, from macro representatives, demonstrated that emphasis was being placed upon the introduction of a three-tier, competence-based process interleaved with work experience. In contrast, the increasing differentiation and
complexity of management education provision at macro level did not appear to be evolving within academic institutions at micro level (Jarvis, 1985, p 20).

The proposed introduction of the educational framework for management qualifications could be regarded as a response or reaction to the changing social context (Jarvis, 1985, p 29). Also, some areas, such as management education, could be seen to be evolving into a continuing process of engagement with learning. Although these key factors had not been identified from micro level interviewees, they had perceived that the processes of continuous development and assessment were important within the realms of the course but did not see this as a process of lifelong learning in social terms.

A different emphasis was placed, by macro and micro interviewees, upon the proposed amalgamation of professional courses. At the micro level, this amalgamation was seen to improve resource allocation and to avoid duplication of learning by students whereas at macro level, it was implicit that the proposed amalgamation was part of a national qualification restructuring process.

The major reason behind the establishment of higher education programmes offered by industry could be viewed as an attempt to find an 'organic fit' between industry and the modern world (Hart, 1992, p 59). This attempt to find an 'organic fit' may indicate a possible reason for the increase in educational programmes being offered by organisations and industrial sectors. Interview findings at macro level registered this increase and representatives also foresaw the growth of national accreditation of in-house management qualification programmes. It was suggested that in-house management qualification courses could be linked to broader organisational management programmes. However, micro interview participants did not mention separate Awarding Body accreditation to employing organisations. This omission may be indicative of a number of factors such as a lack of knowledge about market and social forces, or indeed a lack of awareness for the need for education to change.
Thus, a process of lifelong learning and the proposed three-tier management qualification utilising a competence-based and modular approach was considered to be worthy of further research.

III The need for innovative delivery and assessment mechanisms for management education provision:
It was generally agreed, at macro and micro level, that a flexible approach to management education provision should be implemented. It was recognised that the needs and goals of organisations and of individual managers would need to be accommodated in order to satisfy the demands of the market place.

These demands could be seen to be in terms of accreditation of in-house management programmes and provision of college programmes that would be flexible and work-based. However, in order to achieve flexible delivery, macro representatives advocated the design of programmes that utilised a competence and modular format in contrast to micro participants who advocated the changing of time periods and modular delivery. Thus, the three term academic year was considered not to reflect the staff development needs of the employer eg the retail sector who were discouraged in using FE/HE management provision because the academic year, September to July, was constraining. For a truly flexible approach to be implemented within management education provision, the researcher considered that academic institutions would need to review internal administrative systems in order to meet the needs of the present day market place. The lack of planning for competence-based provision and the lack of consideration of an over-arching structure at micro level, responding to the needs of employers and managers, was considered to be worthy of attention. These factors suggested a need for further investigation.

The wider concept of lifelong or continuing education, which is concerned with the transmitting to workers of the skills and knowledge which would enable them to become more effective workers in modern society (Jarvis, 1985, p 29), was reflected within the following findings. It was noted that some micro participants were producing their own packages to fulfil their customers' needs. The design and organisation of open and distance learning packages was
seen, by micro interviewees, to be an essential ingredient towards developing a flexible approach in management education.

The need to relate the concept of continuing education and classroom-based learning with work-based activities was reflected within research results. Work-based activities such as course assignments, projects and college-based work were seen by micro participants as a process of continuous assessment. At macro level, four representatives considered that a continuous assessment mechanism must be devised to assess an individual's work-based experience, competence and personal effectiveness. These findings correlate closely with Knowles' (1980, p 50) suggestion that provision must be made for the learners to apply their learnings to their day-to-day lives. Thus, the recognition and utilisation of managers' experiences through work-based activities should be seen to be part of a process of continuous assessment.

The difficulty of transfer of learning (Knowles, 1980, p 50) from classroom activities to the work context was seen, by the researcher, to be a potential major block in the growth and development of management education. The term 'work-based' is used to denote "at work and on-the-job". Classroom activities that incorporate work or the organisational context within its aims eg case studies, were not considered to be 'work-based' in this context. In addition, 'work-based projects' that were designed to fulfil the needs of curriculum criteria or were in practice a tenuous link with work were not considered to be 'work-based' in this sense.

It was considered, by the researcher, that one way to encourage individuals and organisations to consider management development more seriously would be to develop a process of continuous assessment integrated with work-based activities. Such a continuous process of management development could also incorporate the philosophy of 'education of equals' (Jarvis, 1985, pp 49 - 50). It was, therefore, decided to investigate other means for managers to gain qualifications and lifelong learning through different assessment routes, eg APEL.
The Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) was advocated, by three macro participants, as a means of promoting a process of continuous assessment. The APEL process was based upon the experiential learning cycle model (Kolb & Fry, 1975, pp 33 - 37) and could provide a continuing developmental opportunity for both the tutor and the learner (Jarvis, 1985, p 79). As systems, such as Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme (CATS) and APEL existed in other spheres of education assisting in the assessment, accreditation and access of students to higher level courses it was intended to test their fruitfulness in the management education, training and development area. It was perceived that a practical system was needed that would enable managers to gain nationally recognised qualifications, which were both flexible and work-based. Thus, it was decided that assessment and accreditation processes, such as CATS and APEL, could provide a potential flexible route to national qualifications related to work-based activities.

Thus, a flexible and practical approach to lifelong learning; experiential learning delivery modes; continuous assessment of work-based activities and accreditation were considered by the researcher to be an essential component within a further research study.

IV The need for the development of a collaborative and marketing approach.

The 'two educations': education from above and education of equals (Jarvis, 1985, p 29), were reflected within the findings at macro and micro level. Whilst there was a unanimous agreement at macro level and some agreement at micro level to the recommendation of a collaborative approach, there was a significant difference in the essence of approach. Macro representatives perceived the need to utilise such methods as local and national networks and market research to enable collaboration and responsiveness to business needs. These methods were not recognised by micro representatives who considered that organisational and individual needs should be recognised through the adjustment of yearly timings of courses; skills development and the integration of course with work-based activities.
This lack of recognition of the need for market research from micro interview findings was considered by the researcher to be in direct contrast to Hart's reference to selling education as appealing to a growing number of non-traditional adult students. The reference to the increasing calls for greater partnership, joint venture, or collaboration between business and colleges or universities could also be interpreted as a solution to a growing competition between traditional institutions of higher education and industry (Hart, 1992, p 59).

As can be demonstrated by the model of the 'two educations' shown in the previous section (5.1.), the micro interviewees' attitudes and behaviour fall mainly within the 'education from above' category. However, it should be noted that a minority of micro participants had suggested that learning contracts or mentoring could integrate the needs of the individual and employing organisation with the course aims. Collaborative activities such as mentoring and the negotiation of learning contracts were seen as meaningful learning processes that could link college activities with work activities. Although no clear definition was offered by the participants (nor requested) of the term 'mentoring', this process was seen as a possible process that would enable the manager to integrate career and learning needs with the objectives of the employing organisation and with college courses.

It was considered that further investigation was required of mechanisms that would enhance collaboration between colleges and external bodies and would develop a marketing approach.

V The need for the process of individual responsibility for learning and development.

It was suggested by Burgoyne (1983, p 72), that courses based upon a philosophy of personal knowledge, as opposed to "absolute knowledge" could be run and taught. Career orientated or vocational programmes could preferably be designed and based upon the philosophy of personal knowledge or, as an interim measure, develop a compromise between the two sets of assumptions. However, a common belief held amongst adult educators, who wished to run courses based on a "personal knowledge" philosophy, was that the
institutional setting for these courses were based on the "absolute knowledge" set of assumptions. This disparity between the philosophy of the institution was therefore incompatible with the philosophy of the course (Burgoyne, 1983, p 72). Only a minority of participants at macro and micro level identified the need to design personal development and self development programmes which may, however, be perceived to be reflective of the assumptions held by the organisations within which the interviewees served. The opposing philosophy of 'absolute knowledge' (Burgoyne, 1983, p 72) directed the researcher to consider an appropriate academic institutional infrastructure that would incorporate andragogical assumptions of education (Knowles, 1980, p 42 - 45) and the Theory Y management assumptions towards human behaviour at work (cf. McGregor's seminal work 1960) within management education provision.

The issue of linking source disciplines, such as management theories, with those of adult education can prove problematical within the design of management programmes. The epistemological conflict (Bright, 1989, p 5) between educational and management assumptions (Knowles, 1980, pp 42 - 45 & McGregor, 1960) and theories could be linked to the interview findings. At macro level, the majority of representatives recognised that management programmes should move towards a delivery mode of increasing ownership of learning using such processes as the negotiation of learning contracts and mentoring. The completion of personal development journals would also assist in this aim. However, only a minority of micro interviewees indicated an increasing use of student-centred strategies such as learning contracts and personal logs.

Mentoring was identified by a minority of micro representatives as a means of integrating the needs of the individual, employer and course aims and not as part of the process of developing ownership of learning. However, the utilisation of the mentoring process could be regarded as 'bridging the gap between theory and practice" thus ensuring the relevance of the course content to work-day practice (Brookfield, 1986, p 201).
Ownership of learning could be held to be based upon andragogical assumptions posited by Knowles (1980, p 42-45) and McGregor's (cf. 1960) seminal work on the assumptions towards human nature and behaviour at work. Certainly, self-directed learning as advocated by Brookfield (1986, p 60) could assist adults with developing ownership of learning. Three micro interviewees utilised tutorials as periods of reflection and diagnosis. This tutorial process could be a means of giving credence to managers' life experiences (Knowles, 1980, p 50) through a practical and critical involvement within a reflective process (Hart, 1992, p 191). This critical process of reflection was not noted at macro level.

It was therefore considered that an investigation was needed of mechanisms or activities that would encourage a student-centred and experiential approach to management programme delivery.

VI Consideration of funding arrangements for management education, training and development.

The majority of macro representatives believed that funding or the cost factor would be of critical importance to the future stability of management education provision. Although this point was not enlarged upon by the interviewees, the notion of adjusting colleges and universities to changed social and economic circumstances (Hart, 1992, p 60) could be seen as an opportunity to re-structure the funding framework of management education (See Chapter 6.5.3. for further details).

The researcher considered it essential, in future research, to identify strategies that would satisfy market needs in order for management education provision within the FE/HE sector to survive.

The Way Forward:
The review of continuing adult education theory (5.1.) and the subsequent comparison with macro and micro findings appeared to provide a firm foundation upon which to build a relevant research strategy and focus for the next stage of study. It was, therefore, decided to focus and investigate innovative delivery, assessment and accreditation methods that would incorporate the philosophy of
education of equals (Jarvis, 1985). This stance would appear to correlate with interview findings and would enable the incorporation of continuing adult education and management theories such as andragogy and Theory Y propounded by Knowles and McGregor. It was also decided to investigate the world of management education, training and development by focusing upon the proposed competence standards and work-based management programmes.

The primary aim of the next stage of study was to consider innovative delivery and assessment mechanisms that would allow managers to gain ownership of their own learning. A secondary aim was to discover a mechanism that would develop collaboration between academic institutions and external agencies which would thus enhance the flexibility and relevance of future management programmes.
PART II

A Potential Innovative Approach to Management Education, Training & Development Provision

Chapters 6 - 8
Chapter 6 - "A Potential Innovative Approach to Management Education Provision"

6.1. A Process Orientated Approach to Management Education Provision:
When initially embarking upon this research study it was considered by the researcher that a product or commodity, such as a new management course, could be produced to 'fill the gap' in the general management education market. It was then considered that the various options open to providers of management courses suggested in the report 'The Future Role of the Diploma in Management Studies in Management Education' (Bennett & Russell, 1987) could be integrated within future management course provision. During the latter part of the initial research study (Chapter 4), the researcher came to the conclusion that a product or new course for managers would not reflect the needs of employer organisations or management students. This conclusion was confirmed by initial findings from interviews at macro and micro level and the subsequent perusal of adult educational theories.

These findings indicated that the main areas of change and development in management education provision were connected to aspects of delivery and not to aspects of content, verified by the following quotation from an Awarding Body representative:

"the issue of content versus delivery forms the basis of the present debate in management education, the mode of delivery influences the content" (Representative Aii, see Chapter 4.2.).

It was also considered by those interviewed at macro level that the increase in demand for management courses and the proposed changes in funding outlined in the Osbaldeston Report in 1987, must now be firmly based in a societal culture, structure and administrative system that can maintain the present demand for management courses and survive in the medium and long term, as indicated below:
"A distinction must be drawn between the need for management education and training within the UK and the actual demand. Demand may fall well short of the level needed to ensure a continued supply of able managers". (Constable & McCormick, 1987 point 16, p 9).

The high degree of consistency within the emerging super-ordinate themes, shown in Chapter 4, demonstrated the need for management education provision to reflect both the demand and training needs of organisations and individuals. The following statement elaborates the conflicting needs:

"What is demanded by employers and what is demanded by individuals may differ markedly. In broad terms, employers are interested in managers obtaining skills; qualifications are, at best of secondary importance. Indeed some employers are opposed to qualifications since they make individual managers potentially more mobile within the managerial labour market. Conversely, individual employees, while interested in obtaining skills, also wish to acquire qualifications which increase their opportunities within that market". (Constable & McCormick, 1987 point 17, p 9).

During the Spring of 1989 this debate, so aptly described in the above quotation, was of concern to the researcher. Thus, whilst collecting data from both macro and micro representatives, the researcher attended a small regional business and management conference. What follows is a personal account of the processes involved, during this period, which confirmed the direction within which the next stage of study should take place.

A Personal Perspective:
Attendance at this conference proved to be propitious and one of the major influences on the relationship developed with MCI representatives and upon the researcher’s understanding of the research process. The recognition and understanding of the meaning of "serendipity":

"the faculty of making fortunate discoveries by accident" (Collins, 1989, p 1184)
became clear, as opportunity, fortuitous meetings and experiences guided the entry and data collection stage of this research study.

Three key presentations were provided at this conference. The first was given by the Chief Executive of CMED who provided a fast moving presentation on the current situation of CMED's organisation ie MCI the new three tier management qualification structure, the establishment of competence standards and the proposed introduction of local networks to encourage implementation of CMED led initiatives.

The researcher was acutely aware of the upsurge of developments within the management education, training and development field which prompted the posing of the following question: "How can you ensure that a manager assessed as competent in London will be at the same standard as a manager in Yorkshire? Firstly, this question, though briefly answered at the time, helped form a research perspective during the next stage of study. Secondly, it instigated an appointment with CMED's Chief Executive to discuss these initiatives as part of the research fieldwork process.

The second presentation outlined the consultative procedure for the proposed Certificate in Management, which was to be competence-based in design, and described the possible implications of this within a management education context. The third presentation, entitled "The Market for Management Education", was given by a representative from a well-known Consultancy Group. Much of the information contained within this last presentation was published in July 1989, providing subsequent reference data for this thesis. These presentations verified findings contained in the Literature Review (Chapter 2) and the subsequent data derived in Chapter 4.

During this period relevant published articles and employing college documents associated with MCI and APEL had been collected. These later proved invaluable resources for this stage of the fieldwork. Thus, this conference and collected literature confirmed the direction within which to undertake the next stage of fieldwork, which describes
national developments in the management education field and specific processes such as the Accreditation of Prior Learning.

The Rationale for Examining MCI and the Processes of APEL & CATS:
From similar experiences as that described above, it was found that the Management Charter Initiative (MCI) and the Training Agency were establishing national standards of management competencies. It also demonstrated that MCI could provide a new national pattern of awards in management education, as described in a Consultative Paper (CMED, 1989). MCI were also actively examining an APEL process with the intention of piloting this model for the proposed certificate level qualification in training institutions. This assessment model, together with the CNAA Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme, was a noted key theme from the initial study, and it was considered that each was worthy of further study.

Definition of APEL:
At the time this study was undertaken there was a dearth of published literature about the process of APEL. During the latter part of this research it was recognised that APEL, or Crediting Competence as it is now called, became an issue of growing interest for many sectors within the management education area. This resulted in a variety of acronyms, each representing slightly different meanings, being proliferated. Thus, a definition, which is shown below, indicates how the researcher construed this term at that time. Evans (1987, p 4) describes, for the purposes of a Handbook, that experiential learning means:
"... the knowledge and skills acquired through life experience generally, paid and unpaid work, and study which may or may not be formally certificated,"

and prior learning means:
"the knowledge and skills which students bring with them when they start a course or programme. This prior learning may have been gained from taking other courses or as part of in-service training at work. It may also have come from more general life experiences, for example, doing a job, bringing up children, pursuing a hobby or voluntary activity."
A study published by the CNAA entitled "The Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning" (Evans, 1988) intended to demonstrate the varied processes and instruments that twelve colleges had used to assess students. From this study it was shown that in order to implement APEL it was found necessary to assist a student in the production of a portfolio of evidence of prior learning. This was considered to be an integral part of the whole process of career and life planning. It was essential to negotiate a learning contract between the training provider, student and employing organisation which would enable the student to develop a successful personal development programme and to gain credit for prior experiential learning in order to gain access or progression onto a management course. It was recognised by the researcher that the basic concept of APEL had been based upon the experiential learning cycle (Kolb & Fry, 1975) whereby learning can be the result of formal education and training activities and can be acquired unintentionally through life experiences. Simosko, in her book, aptly describes the term APL and related acronyms as follows:

"in the USA, where much of the early work originated, the process is usually called 'prior learning assessment (PLA)'; in Australia, where the concept is just taking hold, the term most often used is the 'recognition of prior learning (RPL)'; and in the UK the words include not only 'accreditation of prior learning (APL)' but also 'accreditation of prior achievement (APA)' and 'assessment of prior experiential learning (APEL)' (Simosko, 1991). Crediting Competence is the term used by the Management Charter Initiative (MCI) in order to express the need for accreditation of present or future competence through the medium of a portfolio as opposed to accreditation of past or prior learning. (Simosko, 1991 p 10)

The Way Forward:
It was decided that the next step would be to examine the proposed MCI three-tier competence-based modular management qualification and a flexible, work-based assessment and accreditation system such as the processes of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and the Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme (CATS). These structures and mechanisms were perceived, by the researcher, to be a
potential assessment and accreditation vehicle which may enable the improvement and implementation of a collaborative and student-centred strategy in management education provision.

The Structure of the Chapter:
The rationale of the research strategy and methodology, utilising in-depth interviews to ascertain the goals, initiatives and mechanisms from MCI representatives and reputed experts in the field of APEL, are shown within this Chapter (Section 6.2.). The fieldwork plan and its rationale are demonstrated in Section 6.3. This is followed by a descriptive summary, and digest of results, which forms an overview of MCI and APEL initiatives in Section 6.4. Subsequent to this section is a comparison of findings from an overview of MCI and APEL initiatives in Section 6.5.1. The results from this overview of initiatives, obtained during the Summer of 1989, led to a Seminar being given to representatives concerned with management education, training and development, from employer organisations, academic institutions and management student groups in November, 1989, which is also contained in digest in Section 6.5.2. of this Chapter.

It was envisaged that a comparison and elucidation (Section 6.5.3.) would indicate the direction within which further focused research could be undertaken to achieve the original aim of this research study.

6.2.1. Rationale of Research Strategy
A Sociological Viewpoint:
Until the mid 1970s onwards, the sociology of education could be broadly divided into small-scale empirical studies of teacher-pupil interaction and pupil sub-cultures, or ambitious, speculative, theoretical explanations of the relationship between schooling and society (Hargreaves, 1985, p 22). However, the effects of societal changes upon the educational system and upon the educators themselves, had become even more pronounced in the late 1980s and were seen to be having a deepening effect upon the educational context:
"Organised education is a highly political affair. It shapes and channels life opportunities, it opens up and blocks off careers for those who work within it, it draws heavily on scarce resources from the state budgets, and it is subject to a range of competitive pressure from all sectors of society", (Hargreaves, 1985, p 21).

Therefore, it was considered that small scale studies need to be viewed within the context of the larger society.

A Macro and Micro Perspective:
The utilisation of such a macro and micro approach was a major consideration when devising an appropriate research strategy for the various stages within the whole research process. As has already been demonstrated in Chapter 3.1., a research strategy was required that could accommodate an attempt to integrate the results of the investigation into the working environment at both the macro and micro level thereby producing a synthesis or an integration of those parts of the discipline which had hitherto been separate.

A research strategy that viewed the management educational world from a purely micro-perspective may have only described the finer detail of college and classroom life without incorporating a holistic viewpoint. Conversely, a macro-study may have had little contact with the 'real world' of teaching and learning in the management educational system. Therefore, a strategy that would forge the necessary links:

"between different levels of reality, between patterns of educational structure and the texture of daily life" (Hargreaves, 1985, p 23).

was devised which would form a bridge between the different levels of reality at macro and micro level. This dual perspective also suggested another kind of connection ie the link between theory and evidence.

Thus a micro-macro perspective was utilised, involving the subsumption of ethnomethodological techniques, in order to
reproduce a more articulated version of common-sense. This task, though formidable at the outset, forced the development of an imaginative and coping strategy which would enable the bridging of theoretical concepts and evidence because:

"It would be a mistake to infer from this, however, that evidence is necessarily 'micro' and provides a testing ground for theory which is necessarily 'macro'" (Hargreaves, 1985, p 36).

It was, therefore, considered that only a continuing dialogue between theory and evidence, appertaining to the macro-micro management educational system, would ensure a valid understanding of the educational world. Maintaining a dialogue between theory and evidence therefore demanded both theoretical creativity and rigorous methodological checking in order to avoid distortion due to selectivity of evidence.

Selectivity of Data:
Selected evidence may not be neutral and self-evident but produced for a particular audience and purpose. Within ethnographic studies it must be recognised, therefore, that there is the potential of failure to note differences between what participants state to the researcher during a brief interview and what is said between participants or from what the researcher thinks (Hargreaves, 1985, p 28). Such potential selectivity within data collection and analysis has been addressed in Section 6.3. of this Chapter. There exists a case, therefore, for a careful rapprochement between a micro-macro perspective and a dialogue between the theoretical concepts and evidence. This requires a consistent and pragmatic approach to research strategy.

A Pragmatic Approach:
If an ideal world existed, with unlimited resources of money, time and energy to undertake research, then the subsequent choices and decisions to be made between competing theories and evidence would be a comparatively easy one. However, in practice these choices and decisions regarding research strategy and methods must be based upon pragmatic grounds (Hargreaves, 1985, p 32). In attempting to undertake research from both the macro and micro perspective it would prove
impossible to note and interpret every behavioural aspect that passed between participants. Even if sophisticated techniques were used, such as video recorders, the amount of data collected would be increased but this, in its turn would magnify the problem of selectivity and subsequent interpretation of data. Thus it is essential, in this type of research, to maintain a deep awareness for the reasons for selecting and interpreting data in a particular way while preserving the necessary pragmatism. It was considered expedient to make 'cut off' points in order to organise the data into a coherent and intelligible form. Thus, a detailed investigation of the emergent key themes of 'marketing' and 'funding' were excluded within this research stage and treated as separate, but nevertheless pertinent, issues within Section 6.5. of this Chapter.

The challenge of the awesome task of integrating the macro-micro perspectives and interrogating theory and evidence within the management education field necessitated the pursuance of a research strategy which was focused but would produce a rich and descriptive picture of the emerging delivery, assessment and accreditation processes within management education provision:

"The growth of linked micro studies could be one of the most significant future developments in the sociology of education, not only for micro-macro integration as an interesting if esoteric theoretical projects, but also for the much needed attempt to understand the schooling process in the context of policy changes, economic pressures and so on, and not in isolation from them" (Hargreaves, 1985, p 43).

It was considered, therefore, that this strategy could provide more than an aggregate of individual themes and issues by transcending the particular settings. Thus the research programme could provide a well grounded understanding of the complicated mechanisms by which economic, political and social constraints on teaching and learning are filtered down to management education providers.

The Research Strategy:

In the light of the review of the study data collected and information gleaned from the conference and literature, further investigation was
warranted to consider the key themes which had emerged from the previous study. As the scope of consistent and converging key themes and key words (Chapter 4) was broad and dialectal, it was decided to narrow the focus and to concentrate upon aspects of delivery; assessment; accreditation of competence-based management education; and student centred learning through a collaborative approach.

The Purpose of Examining MCI Initiatives & the Processes of APL & CATS:
From preliminary investigations, it was found that CMED's operating arm MCI were linking with the CNAA and Training Agency in a joint project. This project was designed to pilot a certificate level course for graduates' initial training at supervisory level. The "New Initial Award in Management" (NIAM) was established as a result of market research by colleges identifying the training and delivery needs of employers (See Chapter 4). This factor coincided with the research aim of examining the proposed three-tier competence based modular management qualification system from both a macro and micro perspective.

It was also understood from published literature that the MCI management competence standards were intended to be published in 1989. MCI considered that once these standards were defined and agreed, management courses could then be 'translated' or written in outcome terms. It was noted that MCI viewed the prospect of individualised learner-led programmes adhering to a standard output or competence level as achievable. It was, nevertheless, considered by other bodies that the:

"... output level at which this assessment takes place is not entirely clear and thought needs to be given to how an agreed, common standard can be achieved" (CNAA/Training Agency Project, April, 1989, p 9).

This debate concerning the process of assessment against an agreed set of standards warranted further examination of MCI methods and procedures. Also worthy of review was the established CNAA, CATS system of accreditation. MCI were also actively examining an APEL
model with the intention of piloting it for the proposed certificate level qualification in training institutions. It was noted that an examination of the APEL process, designed for management and business courses, had already been introduced by the Training Agency and MCI in individual training institutions e.g. a West Country Polytechnic. It was, therefore, judged necessary to investigate and review these MCI initiatives and developments and the APEL and CATS processes at a macro and micro level.

From May to September 1989, therefore, the investigation focused upon MCI and the processes of APEL and CATS as a potential vehicle for implementing a collaborative approach which would encompass changes in delivery and assessment methods necessary to satisfy the market need.

6.2.2. General Methodological Approach
As has already been observed the aim of this research stage was to strive to understand a phenomenon at macro and micro level in order to identify a holistic and dynamic approach that would encompass changes in management education provision:

"This holistic approach assumes that the whole is understood as a complex system that is greater than the sum of its parts. It also assumes that a description and understanding of a person's social environment or an organization's political context is essential for overall understanding of what is observed" (Patton, 1990, p 49).

Such complex conditions called for a dynamic and holistic approach, such as naturalistic inquiry, which assumes an ever-changing world.

A Holistic Approach:
The emphasis on holistic understanding in qualitative methods can be contrasted to the logic and procedures of much evaluation conducted in a quantitative-experimental tradition. A quantitative approach requires operationalisation of independent and dependent variables that can be analysed statistically. Outcomes would have had to be identified and measured as specific variables e.g. student achievement
test scores. Or the variables can be measured as indicators of a large construct eg organisational climate is a general construct that may be measured by such indicators as, labour turnover rates, sickness rates, stability rates. These variables can be statistically interpreted to test hypotheses and draw inferences about the relationships among separate indicators or about significant statistical differentials between the measured levels of the variables for the different groups. The relevant arguments for not using this approach have been outlined in Chapter 3.2. and are still pertinent at this stage of research.

A holistic strategy would gather data on multiple aspects of a potential innovative approach to management education in order to assemble a comprehensive and complete picture of the social dynamics within this situation. The prime interest of utilising a qualitative and naturalistic approach was to enable a description and understanding of these dynamics and their holistic effects on participants in order to provide information for the improvement of management educational programmes:

"The qualitative-naturalistic-formative approach is especially appropriate for developing, innovative, or changing programs where the focus is on program improvement, facilitating more effective implementation, and exploring a variety of effects on participants. This can be particularly important early in the life of a program or at major points of transition" (Patton, 1990, p 53 - researcher's emphasis).

Thus it was considered necessary to utilise a dynamic approach that was process orientated, capable of capturing and monitoring the essence and results of anticipated outcomes and unanticipated consequences. Such a process study would aim to elucidate and understand the internal dynamics of how an APEL programme, the organisation eg MCI or a College, and intrinsic relationships would operate. It was considered that through a process orientated approach a variety of perspectives could be sought from people with dissimilar relationships in the APEL field. This could, then, permit judgements to be made about the operation of an APEL programme, the programme's strengths and weaknesses and possible future consequences of such a programme. Thus it was considered necessary
that this research stage should focus on the process of how APEL programmes operate rather than on the outcomes or results obtained.

Thus the rationale for illuminating fundamental assumptions about the nature of reality at a macro-micro level enabled concrete methods decisions to be made at a pragmatic level. Therefore, the strategic choice of methods were prescribed not only by the research strategy but by the very practical side to qualitative methodology:

"...there is a very practical side to qualitative methods that simply involves asking open-ended questions of people and observing matters of interest in real-world settings in order to solve problems" (Patton, 1990, p 89).

Thus, it was considered that the practical application of qualitative methods would offer a powerful case for observation, an openness to what the world of management education had to offer and inductive analysis which would make sense of what was found. It was, therefore, identified that this study required the appropriate utilisation of methodological techniques that would permit attentive observation; an openness to what is heard and seen and a rigorous documentation system that would enable future application to what is found in management education provision.

Unplanned Activities & Informal Interactions:
It was found to be impossible to anticipate the kinds of situations and activities that emerge during a research study of this kind. Descriptive information about what people did and said through the medium of direct quotations and interview transcriptions continued to be gathered without a priori interpretation. However, quotations and pieces of information were given a shorthand notation to indicate participant emphasis at the time of interview. It was found, however, that it was during informal periods, e.g. refreshment breaks, that the researcher had the greatest opportunity to observe and learn about the nature of the APEL process and programmes. This illustrated the importance of the researcher remaining open to potential data, the participants and the situation. It was during these unstructured activities that the researcher could not only pause to reflect upon APEL
activities with the participant, thus gathering much information about the essence of APEL activities (See Section 6.3. of this Chapter), but also to use these periods of time alone for reflection and to check quality of tape-recording and note-taking.

Thus such time was used in order to assimilate what occurred within the planned formal interview programme:

"If evaluation observers put away their seeing and observing selves as soon as a planned, formal program activity ends, they will miss a great deal of data" (Patton, 1990, p 224).

However, it should be noted that it had been agreed with interviewees, prior to these informal observations (See Section 6.3. of this Chapter), that such data should not be recorded within the interview transcript but could only be used for the researcher to gain greater understanding of and empathy with the potential benefits and concerns related to the APEL process. Therefore, only transcripts of those notes and tape-recordings made during the formal interview situation have been presented.

In retrospect, any lack of openness to the collection of data through unplanned and sometimes rather irksome activities, would have seriously curtailed the usefulness of information gathered from the seminar held in November, 1989 and from contact with key MCI representatives. By remaining open and positive to such opportunities as this, the researcher was enabled to collect responses from key groups of people in order to validate other data collected formally and to progress the research to the next stage.

Collaborative Approaches:
Collaborative research is particularly facilitated by such an approach as the following description of process illustrates. A continuing dialogue with MCI representatives was maintained during the Spring and Summer of 1989. Firstly, two interviews were arranged with Interviewee A who was actively involved in the consultation process with Employers, Awarding Bodies and Educational Institutions concerning the proposed national framework for management awards
and Interviewee B who was investigating the area of assessment of competences and abilities of experienced managers.

It was agreed between the researcher and Interviewee B that, since their interests overlapped, there could be mutual benefits gained by developing collaboration between the two. These interviews were followed by the researcher's attendance at meetings, in the role of co-researcher, with Interviewee B, thus:

"A sense of connectedness develops between researcher and research participants in their mutual efforts to elucidate the nature, meaning, and essence of a significant human experience" (Patton, 1990, p 72).

It was therefore agreed that Interviewee B would concentrate upon developing her role and the APEL project at national level whilst the researcher studied the macro and micro perspective of APEL from an educational perspective. It was further agreed that information, contacts and literature within the area of APEL would be shared. It was also emphasised that confidentiality and trust was an essential and intrinsic part of this collaborative relationship.

Action Research:
Thus, a collaborative process of data collection was required that could identify the real problems or issues, the opportunities, possible solutions and actions to meet the goals and objectives of this study. This process was identified as containing the essential elements of an action research project (Bennett & Oliver, 1988, p 9).

The relationship between research and action, between theory and practice can be viewed as the emerging methodological paradigm within this phase of research. This emerging paradigm recognises the dialectical relationship between theory and practice (Zuber-Skerritt, 1991, p 11) thus action research was considered to form a useful foundation to this stage of educational research. The process of action research was first conceptualised by Lewin (1951) and further developed by Kolb (1984) and others. It is a spiral of cycles of action and research consisting of four major elements: plan, act, observe and reflect:
"The plan includes problem analysis and a strategic plan; action refers to the implementation of the strategic plan; observation includes an evaluation of the action by appropriate methods and techniques; and reflection means reflecting on the results of the evaluation and on the whole action and research process, which may lead to the identification of a new problem or problems and hence a new cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting" (Zuber-Skerritt, 1991, p 11)

As such it was considered that the action research process, utilising ethnomethodological techniques, could generate useful, meaningful and valid action to improve performance within the management education provision field.

6.2.3. Description of Interview Methodology:
Utilising ethnographic methods such as informal interviews were found, within the initial stages of this research study, (See Sections 3.2. & 3.3.) to have provided rich and descriptive data about the management education scene. Similarly, it was recognised that they would serve the purposes outlined in the previous two sections equally well.

Informal Open Interviews:
The use of informal interviews as a central form of data collection, supplemented by an observation role, requires a systematic approach to the interview situation and to the subsequent rigorous documentation system. Firstly, within an informal interview situation there is no requirement for a written list of questions. Instead, a repertoire of question-asking strategies is required from which the researcher draws, as appropriate to the context, the timing and to the participant (Agar, 1980, p 90). Secondly, in an informal interview the researcher does not take a formal role of interrogator thus allowing the participant or 'informant' to take the lead. The subject of 'interview control' has been fully discussed in Chapter 3.3. Finally, an informal interview may be conducted in a variety of situations besides a one-to-one isolated talk. Informal questions may be asked during a social conversation or during a meeting. Therefore, informal interview strategies, if used with tact and empathy, can add to a descriptive account whilst doing
minimal harm to the natural flow of events into which the questions intrude (Agar, 1980, p 90).

Questioning Techniques:
The formulation of any questions asked necessitated a degree of preplanning, as questions could be posed either at a general level or specific questions could be given in direct response to a participant's statements. Therefore, an informal ethnographic interview could be viewed as a 'conversation with a purpose'. Readers may like to refer to Agar (1980 pp 93 -102) which contains an amusing and descriptive analysis of the kind of questioning techniques that were employed during the informal interview situation.

As shown in Chapter 3.3. open-ended and probe questions, designed to explore in depth the issues raised, were used throughout. Such questioning techniques as 'leading questions' or those questions described by Agar (1980, p 93) as 'baits' whereby:

"a statement made by the informant, especially when it fits his idea of what is going on in the community, and then does everything possible to get the informant to modify, contradict, or weaken the statement."

were not used as it was considered that they could potentially falsify emergent conclusions in an informal interview situation.

Another strategy was also used which could be described as a distribution check (Agar, 1980, pp 94 - 95). When such terms as: "none", "a few", "some", "many", "all", were mentioned further questioning ensued in order for the participant to clarify these quantifiable statements. These 'distribution checks'; eg on student numbers, made during the course of the informal interview, were facilitated by the fact that the APEL process was still in its infancy and the participant could, therefore, readily access records or, in one case, her memory.

Another useful strategy which was used during the course of these informal interviews was the linguistic strategy of 'contrast' (Agar, 1980 pp 95 - 99). When questioning the purpose of the APEL process it
became apparent that the interviewee and researcher were using the same acronym, ie APEL, for a variety of purposes. Therefore the use of contrasting notions of access and of accreditation led to a clarification of definition and purpose of the term APEL. Any potential ambiguity of terms employed could also be clarified by a strategy of 'frames' (Agar, 1980, p 99 - 100), whereby an unfinished statement or a statement with an opening, allowed the interviewee to insert the appropriate word/s to clarify the meaning of terms used.

Using a range of such linguistic strategies provided a wealth of suggestions and information additional to that obtained from a simple questioning strategy such as expressing an interest and reflecting back the participant's statements of events. These additional details were used to confirm or reject concepts, processes or mechanisms obtained from other accounts during the analysis stage of fieldwork, and also provided depth and richness to the data collected.

Direct Quotations:
Such richness of detail can be achieved through documenting direct quotations made by individual interviewees, and are:

"..... a basic source of raw data in qualitative inquiry that can reveal respondents' depth of emotion, the ways they have organized their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions" (Patton, 1990, p 24).

The researcher's task, therefore, was to provide a framework within which participants could respond in such a way that represented accurately their points of view about the world, or the purpose of the particular field for which the interview had taken place eg APEL. Description and quotations are essential ingredients to qualitative inquiry (Patton, 1990, p 430) and much of this information and detail could well have been lost had not the observations, dates, times and feelings been recorded within a diary.
Research Diary as a means of Documentation:
Although maintaining a diary was found to be a difficult skill to incorporate at the start of the research study, it proved of immediate benefit in terms of acting as a check against targeted activities. As such it maintained the momentum of the research, especially during the exhausting period of Spring 1989 when all three fieldwork stages were being conducted. As shown in Chapter 3.4. the initial macro and micro interviews were at the closing stage, whilst this stage of research was at the entry and data collection stage (See Section 6.4.).

The first difficulty was accuracy of memory, for, although the diary was maintained on a daily basis, small details were lost (Burgess, 1985, p 181). However, memory was improved, and the recording of pertinent points were found to become less arduous, with practice. Such observations as the weather, the journey and current emotional state would cue memory further for details obtained from informal or social conversations with participants.

This diary, therefore, focused upon the reactions of the researcher to the field setting and to the participants and recorded the general sense of how the research was developing and the feelings of detachment and involvement (Agar, 1980, p 113). Certainly this material assisted with accounts from a personal perspective and with learning experiences that were not perceived to be part of the research process at the time but in retrospect have proved invaluable to the course of the whole research study, especially in terms of gaining sensitive information from 'key informants' representing Government Agencies.

Tape-recorders as a means of Documentation:
As this stage was becoming more focused upon one area in the field of management education ie APEL, it was found that a mini tape-recorder assisted in the collection of direct quotations and accuracy of data (Patton, 1990, p 348).

A tape-recorder enabled the researcher to be more attentive to the interviewee and assisted with the proposed questioning strategies by allowing time for appropriately responding to the interviewee needs.
and cues. Any attempt to write down every quotation and relevant detail would, it was considered, have curtailed the pace of the interview thus making it non-conversational.

The use of a mini-recorder was found to be unobtrusive and eliminated the need for detailed note taking. The tape-recorder was not intended to be used to produce verbatim transcripts but was merely used as a technical aid to facilitate attention on the participant during an informal and conversational interview (Patton, 1990, p 349). Due to the collaborative and ongoing nature of inquiry with the MCI representative (Interviewee B) it was considered inappropriate to utilise a tape-recorder as a method of documentation per se. However, short notes were taken which facilitated later analysis, including locating important quotations from the tape itself. These notes consisted primarily of key phrases, lists of major points made by the respondent, and key terms or words shown in quotation marks that captured the interviewee's own language. Some useful shorthand conventions were also introduced within these notes eg asterisks, ringed words, quotation marks and capital letters indicating key words.

After the Interview:
The period after the interview was used as a time for guaranteeing the quality of the data. The tape recording was checked for quality and notes were reviewed in order to ensure that they made sense and that areas of ambiguity or uncertainty were clarified. Fortunately no areas of vagueness were found within the interview notes, therefore no additional immediate contact with the interviewee was required in order to clarify vague situations.

Observations such as time, date, how the interviewee reacted, and the interviewer's own role and emotional state were recorded in the Research Diary. It was considered essential that this discipline, although exhausting, was maintained since it gave the necessary time for reflection and elaboration enabling the collection of valid data. Whilst the situation and data were still recent, insights occurred that aided later analysis, interpretations and subsequent ideas.
6.3. Fieldwork Plan:
The following section follows a similar format ie Entry Stage; Data Collection Stage and Closing Stage, to that shown in a previous Chapter (Section 3.4.). However, the procedures involved in the entry stage and data collection stage differed from those shown in Chapter 3. Thus the initial contact list and subsequent interview findings demonstrated in Sections 6.4.1. & 6.4.2. were an integral part of the fieldwork plan. In contrast the Seminar (See Section 6.5.2.) offered a presentation of perceived innovative and radical issues and processes within management education (See Chapter 4 and Chapter 6.4.1. & 6.4.2.) and provided an opportunity to verify earlier findings and their practical exigency.

The Entry Stage to Fieldwork:
As has been previously noted in 6.1. 'A Personal Perspective' the described events facilitated entry to MCI. Thus, interviews with MCI representatives were of an ongoing and collaborative nature during the Summer and Autumn of 1989. It should be noted that the resulting collection of rich data (Section 6.4.) during this period formed the subsequent direction of later stages of fieldwork found in Chapter 7.

The introduction to an MCI consultant, whose expertise lay in the field of APEL and the MCI representative responsible for the APEL project, provided two fieldwork contacts who were APEL practitioners. Two contacts were obtained from an internal source in the employing college; three contacts were recommended by University peer-group students; two contacts from MCI representatives and one was through a previous research contact ('Cii' a representative at national level). All these 'informants', therefore were collected from "colleague connections" (Agar, 1980, p 30).

A list of eight participants (excluding the MCI representatives), seven of whom were reputed to be APEL 'experts' and practitioners and one representative managing the CATS scheme, was devised in May 1989. This list comprised of representatives responsible for: the Training Agency APEL developments; the CNAA, CATS system; the joint TA/MCI, APEL project at a West Country Polytechnic and educational-
based APEL practitioners. From this group of eight it was found practically possible to interview five - see table below for details of interview implementation;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Base or Responsibility</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A &amp; B</td>
<td>MCI</td>
<td>February-May, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Southern University</td>
<td>September, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Training Agency</td>
<td>May, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CNAA, CATS</td>
<td>May, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Southern Polytechnic</td>
<td>May, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>West Country, Polytechnic</td>
<td>September, 1989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All interviews were followed by a letter thanking the participant and requesting that the transcripts of interviews were verified for accuracy. Four participants confirmed the transcript’s accuracy in writing; the remaining participant confirmed accuracy by telephone.

The Data Gathering Stage:
The Interview Context:
As with the interviews found in the initial study (Chapter 4), these interviews were conducted in widely differing contexts and geographical locations: a stark Government office; a noisy Polytechnic staff room; a small dark office; a light and airy office and a very large staff canteen situated at the bottom of a stairway. These varying conditions necessitated sensitivity towards the needs of the interviewee.

However, any distraction to the interview that was caused by the context was perceived by the researcher to be more than compensated for by the excitement and enthusiasm shown by interviewees towards APEL as a concept.

Socialising with Interviewees:
The geographical locations and the heat of the summer necessitated, from each party’s perspective, the need to take refreshments. During these periods the interviewer clarified with the participant that the research interview had been completed and notes ceased to be taken.
However, it was observed by the interviewer that this social time provided a great deal of 'flesh on the bones' of APEL methodology and practice, since during these social periods the interviewees talked enthusiastically about the implementation of APEL.

This atmosphere was in contrast to the stark, often factual, account contained within the interview transcripts and as such is worthy of note. It was during these refreshment breaks that the perceived practical problems of implementing the process of APEL often emerged. These perceived problems were not (with the exception of a small section contained in Interview 5 transcript) recorded due to the researcher's promise of confidentiality and the ethical stance taken during these social periods. Only that information contained within the permissible interview transcripts was therefore included.

Within the research documents confidential personal perspectives and interpretations were not recorded, therefore, since they may incorporate locally-derived distortions and bias which could provide an inaccurate overall picture.

Confidentiality within a Collaborative Relationship:
The process of developing trust and confidentiality was vitally important during the collaborative relationship with the MCI representative, Interviewee B. Data was collected during these interviews which was considered, by Interviewee B, to be of a sensitive nature. It was considered that early publicity of such information could seriously endanger the progress and potential funding of the APEL research project. Thus, a process of renewing the psychological contract was employed prior to each interview which allowed mutual disclosure and sharing of ideas during the course of the meeting.

It was also mutually agreed that any documents deriving from meetings concerned with the development and implementation of APEL could be used for discussion purposes but not for publication. It was considered that any such disclosure could seriously jeopardise the collaborative relationship and the potential involvement with a national APEL project. Such issues no longer apply but nevertheless
only selected evidence has been provided here in order to preserve confidentiality.

The Closing Stage of Fieldwork:
Due to the richness of data collected from the previous study (Chapter 4), it was decided that the emerging key words and themes arising from interview findings would be classified in an equivalent fashion. However, unlike the previous study, the information collected was of a more concentrated nature and so that classification focused upon such issues as the definition of the purpose of APEL; the practical assessment techniques and the practical processes for implementation.

Finally, a comparison was made of the key words and themes within the emerging classification to ensure that they were mutually exclusive and comprised the main recurring issues and processes.

The resultant emerging superordinate issues and processes were perceived by the researcher to be innovative and radical, in educational terms, thus requiring some verification as to their practical exigency. Fortuitously a practical exercise was included in a seminar which yielded information from the thirty participants which verified and elaborated the conclusions drawn from the earlier interviews and assisted the researcher in the direction of the next stage of research. This confirms Patton's statement:

"I simply want to recognise the fact that there is no definite point at which data collection stops and analysis beings" (Patton, 1990, p 265).

The seminar plan was designed to provide a short, 45 minute presentation of research findings followed by a 30 minute participative exercise and a fifteen minute question and answer session.

The thirty seminar members were requested to sub-divide into three groups representing, as far as possible, their organisational affiliations i.e. employers, management students and academic staff responsible for management courses. Having divided, each sub-group was then asked to prepare a presentation in answer to the following question:
"HOW would YOU as Employer/Management Student/Management Education Provider develop collaboration (between the three groupings) to improve management development programmes?"

Each sub-group was given this question on different coloured paper.

It was observed that some of the findings were naturally biased, due to the presentation content, towards APEL as a potential mechanism for developing collaboration between parties. However, it was noted that this seminar provided an opportunity for participants to 'air' other issues, problems and concerns within the management education field. The informal context presented an opportunity for open discussion and frank interchange of ideas about management education provision.

During the question and answer session, it was noted from one employer/participant that "this is the first time we've been asked to give our opinion about management education". This cry was echoed by many of the group and was identified as a theme, and subsequently actioned upon by the researcher as a potential strategy for further research.

This illustrates the benefits which can be derived from such interactive action research process which both provides high quality information and generates commitment and support for solving real problems, as Bennet & Oliver, 1988, (p 6) noted:

"... the commitment and support for solving real problems in a real time frame. Action research can, and does, achieve all these things".

Analysis of Data
The previous section (6.2.) of this Chapter demonstrated the utilisation of combining different approaches to data collection and analysis. The next section (6.4.1.) utilised collaborative inquiry methods such as informal interviews, observation and involvement with critical meetings at macro level. Section 6.4.2., on the other hand, made use of informal and open interviews in order to gain information about the APEL process and initiatives at micro level. Data obtained from the
Seminar participants (Section 6.5.2.) verified findings shown in Chapter 4 and confirmed the notion that the APEL process could be used to develop collaboration between the main stakeholders within management education provision i.e. employers, management students and management education providers. This verification, in its turn, indicated a potential methodological approach and aims for subsequent research study (Chapter 7). This iterative approach is an essential component of action research methodology which offers a feedback process in order to test collected data, to discuss or to generate proposed actions and to assist with implementation (Bennet & Oliver, 1988, p 10).

Thus, the utilisation of a combination of different methods and approaches within the research strategy can build on the strengths of each type of data collection while minimising the weaknesses of any single approach. Therefore it was considered that a multi-method, triangulation approach to fieldwork increased both the validity and reliability of data (Patton, 1990, p 245).

Triangulation:
The use of multiple and independent measures is known as triangulation, a term borrowed from navigation and surveying, where a minimum of three reference points are taken to check an object's location:

"It is possible to achieve triangulation within a qualitative inquiry strategy by combining different kinds of qualitative methods, mixing purposeful samples, and including multiple perspectives." (Patton, 1990, p 188).

There are four categories of triangulation: theoretical, data, investigator and methodological (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991, p 133). The category used within this Chapter was that of data triangulation which refers to research where data is collected over different time frames or from different sources.

The high degree of correlation between findings collected from MCI representatives and individual interviews with APEL practitioners is further described in section 6.5.1. of this Chapter, by aligning points
under a ten-point structure, demonstrating commonality of key themes, drawn from interview findings at both macro and micro level. This ten-point structure was also used within the Seminar presentation. Thus, what follows is a comparison and elucidation of findings which verified data and also indicated a subsequent research strategy (See Chapters 7 & 8).

6.4. APEL Developments in the METD area.
This research stage was concerned with studying, utilising an action research process, real issues of concern to the researcher's employing organisation, the management education field and to the researcher. Thus the aim of this phase of study was to elucidate initiatives and changes, such as the APEL process, within the management education, training and development area at macro and micro levels. It was considered that by focusing on the APEL process and clarifying the goals and assumptions formed by APEL experts and practitioners the data obtained could generate real options to improve the performance of management education provision.

What follows are digests of findings obtained during the Spring and Summer of 1989:

Section 6.4.1.) demonstrates the findings derived from seven interviews/meetings with representatives from the MCI concerned with the development and implementation of a national framework of management awards and the APEL process. This is a general description of common issues which have been aligned under each super-ordinate theme. Appendix III shows an example of notes taken at one meeting held on the 4th April, 1989. This example was selected to demonstrate the richness of the data obtained in any one interview. This particular interview also shows the range of issues found in all the other interviews.

Section 6.4.2.) show the findings obtained from five interviews with national and educational representatives concerned with the development and implementation of the APEL process. This is an analysis of common words, key themes and quotations gained from interviews which have been separated into constituent parts.
Appendix IV shows an example of an interview held on the 10th May, 1989, with a senior representative (Interviewee 1) responsible for the implementation of the APEL process at a Southern University. This transcript was selected due to the clarity of structure of interview findings, the richness of the data and its commonality of content with other interviews.

6.4.1. Digest of findings from seven Interviews and Meetings with Representatives from the MCI concerned with the development and implementation of a national framework of Management Awards and the APEL process, February - May 1989.

The words or key themes used frequently in interviews/meetings have been aligned under each constituent part to demonstrate commonality of findings from interviews. In order to demonstrate the essence of findings arising from interviews/meetings, direct quotations have been supplied and coded to indicate source and date. Interviewee A completed her secondment with MCI early in the research study and was replaced by Interviewee B who subsequently became the manager responsible for implementing the Training Agency/MCI APEL project. Therefore due to the collaborative and continuing nature of inquiry (See 6.2.2.) the majority of quotations were made by Interviewee B.

I The Organisation and Structure of the MCI:
The Council of Management Education and Development (CMEAD), was launched in 1988 to promote inter alia competence-based management awards. The acronym CMEAD was changed to CMED and subsequently the title of this Committee was amended in May 1989 to the National Forum of Management Education and Development (NFMED). Through NFMED's operating arm, the Management Charter Initiative (MCI), a committee structure was formed consisting of an Educational Forum and Working Party to consider national standards of management competence, the validity of a proposed certificate in management and the APEL process for experienced managers.
The MCI had joined with the Training Agency to publish and verify competence standards at certificate level. MCI's aim was to agree industry-led standards at national level through the National Council of Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) framework and to focus upon the validation of certificate level standards during 1989.

Interviewee "A" explained that MCI was:
"Investigating the area of accreditation and evaluating the present provision of assessment of standards nationally" (28th February, 1989).

Interviewee 'B' described her new role at MCI as:
"Focusing my work into investigating the area of assessment of competencies and abilities of experienced managers" (28th February, 1989).

II The National Framework for the Assessment and Accreditation of Competence Standards:
Assessment and accreditation of industry-led competence standards were considered to be a major innovation within the proposed national management award framework. It was considered that competence standards should be linked with the present Awarding Bodies national qualification structure. This innovation therefore necessitated a rigorous and consistent procedure for the assessment of competences. It was considered that assessment and accreditation could potentially be conducted through different routes which could involve both employing organisations and educational providers.

Interviewee 'B' explained that the Training Agency were looking at vocational criteria and noting the emergence of the NCVQ she envisaged:
"a network of Assessment Centres, possibly run by an Awarding Body, or that these centres could be franchised" (28th February, 1989).

Interviewee 'B' outlined the major outcome from a proposed national Training Agency/MCI APEL project as:
"A standardised rigorous and credible process for the assessment and accreditation of prior learning for experienced managers to national standards, which can be implemented nation-wide" (24th April, 1989).
III The National Implementation of the APEL Process:
Representatives from the Training Agency and MCI were collaborating in order to provide a practical and national approach to assessment and accreditation of prior experience and learning for managers. The Training Agency and MCI were also considering the implementation of a national pilot scheme to assess 'mature' managers' competency and achievement through a portfolio of evidence. This pilot project could be utilised to verify the APEL process.

It was proposed that a committee or consortium consisting of representatives from education and validating bodies should be established in order to verify the emerging standards, the assessment process and the types of evidence. It was considered that the certificate level standards could provide a useful level from which to assess 'mature' managers' competence through the proposed Training Agency/MCI APEL pilot project.

Interviewee 'B's main objective was:
"to provide a practical and national approach to assessment and accreditation of prior experience and learning for managers" (7th March, 1989)

Interviewee 'B' was also seeking an assessment instrument:
"that can be applied nationally and is cheap!" (28th February, 1989).

IV The APEL Process:
An outline APEL model was defined demonstrating a process of self-assessment and presentation of a portfolio of evidence (See Section 6.5.1, p 136b of this Chapter). The portfolio would enable managers to produce both primary and secondary evidence for assessment purposes. It was considered that an accreditation scheme, such as the CNAA Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS), could be utilised to enable managers, without qualifications, to gain credits and access to higher level educational courses.

Interviewee 'B' emphasised that a portfolio would be presented by managers that:
"would have to produce both primary and secondary evidence". and stressed that:
APEL is an educational process in itself" (7th March, 1989).

V Future Issues to be Considered:

It was considered that a network of colleges and organisations should be established which could assist in the implementation of the MCI Code of Practice and assessment process. It was also considered that few people had the requisite management and education skills thus it was considered that the training of people in APEL methods and instruments should be organised and validated. It was also considered necessary to have a standardised, rigorous and credible APL process that would be cost-effective, therefore, the proposed Training Agency/MCI project would incorporate the need to verify a cost-effective process for APEL for experienced managers.

NB: The term 'mature' managers used during the early part of interview transcripts was subsequently changed to 'experienced' managers in April, 1989.

Interviewee 'B' outlined the outcomes of the proposed pilot APEL project which would develop:
"A Network of committed institutions including awarding bodies, professional bodies, employers and education providers" (24th April, 1989).

and

"A core of trained APL counsellors and assessors in a number of centres, and techniques for further staff development in place" (24th April, 1989).

She queried the purpose of the APEL process during an interview held on 22nd May, 1989:
"Is APEL for Access or Accreditation purposes?" as she believed it essential to define the purpose of APEL due to the possible repercussions upon the "generic counselling process, in-company provision and college courses".
6.4.2. Digest of Findings from five Interviews conducted with Representatives from National Bodies and Educational Institutions concerned with the development and implementation of APEL (Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning) which were undertaken May - September 1989.

The words or key themes used in interviews and meetings have been highlighted and aligned under each constituent part to demonstrate commonality of findings from interviews. Only such words or key themes used by the majority (i.e. four or five) of interviewees, indicating a high degree of commonality, have been exhibited. Words or key themes noted as an issue by a minority of participants have been identified as such.

In order to demonstrate the essence of the findings, direct quotations have been supplied and coded to indicate source:

Interviewee 1 responsible for implementing APEL within continuing and community education provision - Southern University

Interviewee 2 responsible for the national implementation of APEL - Training Agency

Interviewee 3 responsible for the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme - CNAA

Interviewee 4 responsible for implementing APEL and continuing education provision - Southern Polytechnic

Interviewee 5 responsible for implementing APEL within a Business Degree Course - West Country Polytechnic

I The Various Purposes of the APEL Process:
All Interviewees considered it to be essential to define the purpose when implementing the APEL process. The purpose of much of the original APEL work was centred upon providing a direct entry route for non-traditional students to certificated courses i.e. Access or exemption for parts of the course. The purpose had now broadened to incorporate accreditation of prior learning experiences in order to obtain credits towards a certificate or qualification. The majority of Interviewees agreed that the Credit Accumulation Scheme could
provide a system of 'logging' and transfer of credits towards a qualification. Three Interviewees (1; 2 & 4) considered that portfolio presentation was an alternative arrangement to qualification certificates which could be used for career progression interviews. Two interviewees (1 & 4) suggested that other purposes could include confidence building to enable students to value themselves and to encourage the valid learner.

Interviewee 2 stated that:
"The early work in APEL concentrated upon assessment of prior learning for access to education and specifically looked at matching past experience to course requirements for entry or course descriptions for exemptions and advanced standing. This early work was very different from current projects which are looking at people who are able to be assessed and be awarded a certificate on a unit basis".

Interviewee 3 provided an example of accreditation:
"A person could register centrally at the CNAA and have their workplace learning and in-company course experience assessed in order to accredit towards a DMS".

II The APEL Process:
It was found that the APEL process varied only slightly in detail between institutions while all APEL processes were based upon portfolio preparation. All Interviewees agreed that the APEL process was based upon the experiential learning process which enabled students to produce evidence of work-based learning and informal learning experiences. This evidence could then be compared with:

--- course outcomes if the purpose was for accreditation
or
--- with entry requirements if the purpose was for access
or
--- with training needs if the purpose was for career development.

Interviewee 1 commented upon an early APEL programme:
"This course was based upon experiential learning techniques. Through a process of reflection participants could then produce a portfolio that would document their learning experiences and which would also make sense to an employer or to an HE Institution. The purpose of this process was to enable participants to use their portfolios as an alternative form to qualifications".

Interviewee 1 had also analysed where significant learning took place and was:
"staggered by the extent of learning that had taken place within category iv - informal experiential learning".

III Objectivity of Evidence:
It was emphasised that valid, reliable, and quantifiable standards had to be established in order to assess sufficient evidence objectively. Much of the work of national bodies such as the Training Agency, MCI and NCVQ emphasised the prerequisite of evidence collection and four Interviewees (2; 3; 4 & 5) emphasised the need for the assessment against a level or standard of competence in order to demonstrate the outcomes of prior learning.

Interviewee 3 considered that previous work experience and/or previous course involvement could be used as a means to accredit towards the final certificate:
"Assessment of past experience would entail the need to submit evidence to prove competence in a given area".

Interviewee 2 stated that:
"Clear standards must be established in order to award a certificate for demonstrable competencies not to show, for example, that a person has an ability to learn or can be exempt from this part of the course".

Interviewee 4 believed that:
"difficulties exist with quantifying learning experiences for portfolio preparation. It is essential to demonstrate that learning has been achieved".
IV Assessment Techniques used within the APEL Process:

Various techniques were considered useful in the preparation and assessment of portfolios of evidence of prior experiential learning. These included:

- one-to-one interviews
- counselling interviews
- critical incident interviews
- behavioural event interviews
- work-projects
- reference collection
- self-assessment tests/questionnaires
- APEL Kit
- self-assessment work-book
- personal development journals

The majority of Interviewees recommended the use of interviews as an essential part of the assessment process as demonstrated by the following quotation from Interviewee 3:

"The individual must provide a portfolio of material including, for example, references from the line manager, project reports. The individual must also be willing to submit this material/evidence to a panel of external assessors. (This panel) not only assesses the individual portfolio but can request the applicant to submit 'fresh work' - which may be in the form of an exam - and to undertake a structured interview".

Interviewee 5 considered that the APEL approach required a re-evaluation of assessment methods:

"Instead of taking people with prior experiential learning and fitting them to a programme - assessing their competence - we are now designing a programme in which there is going to be guided experiential learning. An internship plus mechanisms for assessing that guided experiential learning in outcome terms and certification at national level".

He also suggested the use of a personal development journal or personal log as a: "longitudinal method of assessment".
Three Interviewees (1; 2 & 3) recommended the development of a package of materials to provide guidance with the APEL process.

Interviewee 3 was attempting to design a standard APEL Kit:

"This Kit will contain useful exercises for students by giving guidance about the preparation of a portfolio. Plus a Kit that will give guidance to assessors in terms of the required staff development needed in order to undertake assessment".

Three Interviewees (2; 3 & 4) suggested that a central comprehensive assessment service should be established for individuals and organisations in order to identify the purpose of APEL and to define training needs. This suggestion is demonstrated by Interviewee 4 who had established a central 'shop' which provided guidance and counselling to adult learners:

"The 'shop' provides the role of 'broker' and is a 'front door' for non-traditional adult students. Through the process of counselling and guidance (the shop) can locate portfolio courses, course programmes that incorporate APEL to enable the adult student to reach the required admissions standard".

V The Staff Development Process:

The staff development process was considered by the majority of Interviewees to be a key issue for the successful implementation of the APEL process. It was suggested that problems were encountered in early APEL work due to an incorrect assumption that course tutors or people with an academic background would be experts in assessment of prior experiential learning. It was suggested by two Interviewees (2 & 4) that there had been a subsequent move away from 'subject experts' being involved with portfolio preparation and assessment to one designated person acting as a broker or counsellor. The designated person could thus provide advice and guidance to a student in portfolio preparation and a different person could act as gatekeeper or admissions tutor to assess the student's portfolio of evidence.

All Interviewees agreed that staff development had to be approached far more strictly in order for APEL to attain credibility. Acceptable evidence had to be sufficient and authentic and could be tested for
validity and reliability. Counsellors and Assessors would, therefore, need to be trained to clearly defined standards in order for them to help provide or to assess "acceptable evidence".

Interviewee 2 considered that the staff development issue had not been given a high priority:
"With the award of credits staff development becomes a key issue in terms of training of counsellors and links with awarding bodies when discussing requirements and acceptable evidence for accreditation".

Interviewee 4 also stated that:
"Staff development is an essential prerequisite for implementing the APEL process. It is necessary to spend time on staff development to ensure 'good practice'."

VI APEL as an Individual Process:
The majority of Interviewees considered that APEL was an individual process and could provide a positive educational experience to the student. Two interviewees (3 & 5) suggested that an individual learning contract could be negotiated between the student, course provider (and in some cases the employer). One Interviewee (5) was engaged in further work in the area of mentoring, whereby a learning contract was negotiated and agreed between the student, the course mentor and an organisational mentor. Interviewee 5 stated:

"As part of this workshop the participants are helped to understand the constituents of a negotiated learning contract and their role within that contract. On the first day of the workshop the first learning contract will be completed between the tutor, the mentor and the participants. This helps the staff team to overcome problems of validity and reliability".

A minority of Interviewees (1; 2 & 5) considered that individual learning styles and level of motivation were an important factor within an APEL process. One Interviewee (1) considered that programme membership should be based upon a self-selecting process. Interviewee 1 had studied participants' individual learning styles within an APEL research project and discovered:
"That the way people learn informally is the same as by more formal means".

VII Curriculum Designed in Outcome Terms:
The majority of Interviewees perceived a move by colleges, validating institutions and national bodies to design the curriculum in outcome terms. It was considered by the majority of Interviewees that the course content and assessment methods needed to be designed around the achievement of outcomes or standards of competence. Once those outcomes and units were in place credit could then be awarded. Courses delivered on a unit basis, designed to achieve clearly defined outcomes for each unit, would enable the counselling and assessment process to take place.

The majority of Interviewees considered that restructuring of delivery systems, possibly incorporating distance learning packages, were needed to achieve greater flexibility in programmes. Three Interviewees (1; 2 & 3) suggested that an APEL package of materials could help achieve greater flexibility in programme delivery.

Interviewee 2 emphasised that within the area of accreditation of prior learning:
"Criterion reference standards are themselves outcomes of training or experience in a work role. Awarding bodies could then recognise competence in occupational roles through acceptable evidence of past experiences".

Interviewee 4 suggested that a designated person act as a 'broker' to a student:
"In order to prepare that student to be interviewed - by the Admissions Tutor - and in order to match that student's past learning experiences with course outcomes, the experience, therefore, had to be measurable and could be used as a benchmark".
VIII The Importance of Collaboration:
All Interviewees considered that initiatives were necessary which included the design and implementation of courses through a programme of collaboration between providers and employers. The majority of participants perceived that a collaborative process would be a valid response to employers' needs and three Interviewees (1, 2 & 3) considered that work-related learning needed to be increased.

All Interviewees considered that validating bodies were becoming increasingly involved within a collaborative process of access and accreditation. The majority considered that validating bodies would need to identify rules, procedures and guidelines to incorporate the APEL process within programme design and delivery. Three Interviewees (1, 3 & 5) considered that validation and national certificated accreditation of in-company courses were increasing.

Interviewee 3 stated that the Validating Body:
"is setting up a similar process to validating courses in academic institutions whereby (the Validating Body) would give a general credit rating to companies providing in-company courses".

Interviewee 5 stated that:
"Our hope is that the collaboration between the Institution and the Company provides a common perspective about standards".

Interviewee 1 believed that the reasoning behind an APEL initiative: was in order to respond to what employers and individuals actually needed in terms of management education. This reasoning was opposed to what the college had traditionally thought was needed - for example interpersonal skills courses - without any real consideration of the needs of the individual and the organisation".

IX The Appropriate Organisational Context:
It was recognised by one Interviewee (2) that the APEL process acted as an agent for change in other delivery areas. However, the majority of Interviewees agreed that APEL could not be viewed as an isolated programme. There were a number of models being tested but it was considered, by four Interviewees (2, 3, 4 & 5), important to review the
organisational structure and culture in order to overcome 'barriers' to the introduction of APEL. It was considered by the majority of participants that every area engaged with educational provision would be affected e.g. admissions; delivery systems; development of materials; open and distance learning; use of academic staff on a consultancy basis; training of assessors and counsellors. It was suggested that educational providers had to re-plan in order to embed APEL into the curriculum. It was considered, by the majority of Interviewees, necessary to design a parallel developmental process in order to integrate the APEL process within the admissions system, curriculum, and Validating Body procedures.

Interviewee 2 stated that:
"Once work is started in the APEL area it is found that the whole system of education and training will be affected. In order to operate a successful system the supporting organisational infra-structure has to be developed and changed".

Interviewee 4 considered that there must be a parallel developmental process in order to integrate APEL within the admissions system, with the curriculum and with course module and the CNAA CATS scheme:
"Heads of School have had to re-think in order to produce submissions incorporating APEL and CATS and to link with flexible methods of learning - open and distance learning".

X The Funding, Costing and Pricing Issue:
The funding, costing and pricing issue was a cause for concern with all those interviewed and was regarded as a priority issue for the development and successful implementation of the APEL process (See 6.5 Present and Future Funding of Management Courses). Interviewee 5 considered that "full-cost recovery" had become a necessary feature of APEL programmes.

Interviewee 3 considered that there would be problems:
"in the launching of a product at a price that the market can't bear"
Interviewee 2 stated that the Training Agency:
"was funding the development of APEL as a contribution to the whole change of approach in education and training".

Interviewee 3 also commented about assessment of an individual portfolio through a structured interview:
"This process is very costly in terms of the assessor’s time and places the onus of responsibility upon the individual".

Interviewee 1 emphasised that:
"Homespun learning is often applied in a formal way at work therefore greater value should be placed upon this informal learning especially as no formal training nor fees were incurred".

6.5.1. A Comparison of Findings obtained from MCI Representatives and APEL Practitioners

What follows is a summary and comparison of findings demonstrated previously in sections 6.4.1. and 6.4.2. Subsequent to this, in section 6.5.2., a summary is shown of notes taken at a local education and training Seminar entitled "Towards a Collaborative Strategy in Management Development" held on Monday, 6th November, 1992.

I The Variety of Purposes of the APEL Process:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* define the purpose of the APEL process
* include access to and exemption for parts of higher level courses; accreditation of prior experiences and achievements and the identification of training needs for career development
* have a national/central system such as CATS if APEL was to be used for accreditation and access purposes

The common ideas particular to macro level interviewees indicated the need to:
* define the purpose of an APEL mechanism due to potential repercussions upon the counselling and assessment process, in-company provision and college courses.
II The APEL Process:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* prepare and submit a portfolio of primary and secondary evidence through a counselling and assessment process
* utilise the APEL process model (See model at end of this section 6.5.1.)
The common ideas particular to macro level interviewees indicated the need to:
* emphasise the provision of a national standardised process for the assessment and accreditation of prior learning against industry-led standards
* verify and implement national standards of competence within the National Council of Vocational Qualification (NCVQ) framework

The common ideas particular to micro level interviewees indicated the need to:
* demonstrate that the APEL process had been implemented with non-management groups as a means of gaining access to qualification courses, for career development and confidence building purposes.
* provide a reflective experiential learning process enabling students to produce evidence of work-based and informal learning experiences.

III Objectivity of Evidence:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* measure and assess primary and secondary evidence contained within a portfolio against a common national standard recognised by Awarding Bodies, NCVQ and educational providers

The common ideas particular to macro level interviewees indicated the need to:
* establish valid, reliable and quantifiable standards in order to assess sufficient evidence objectively
* develop and implement, through the MCI, industry-led standards of competence within the NCVQ framework
The common ideas particular to micro level interviewees indicated the need to:
* develop an assessment and accreditation process which can be compared against a level or standard of competence such as that advocated by the Training Agency, MCI and the NCVQ

IV Assessment Techniques used within the APEL process:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* use interviews as an essential part of the assessment process
The common ideas particular to micro level interviewees indicated the need to:
* design and validate a package of materials or APEL Kit which was perceived to be a prerequisite for the establishment of such an APEL assessment service
* establish a central comprehensive assessment services for individuals and organisations

V The Staff Development Process:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* consider staff development as a key issue for the successful implementation of the APEL process as:
  -- few people had the requisite subject expertise and assessment expertise in order to manage the APEL process effectively;
  -- the training of people in APEL methods and instruments should be organised and validated in order to attain credibility;
  -- student's portfolios of evidence had to be sufficient, authentic and testable for validity and reliability;
  -- trained Counsellors and Assessors, to clearly defined standards, were needed in order to achieve these aims.

VI APEL as an Individual Process:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* provide an individual and positive educational experience. To achieve these aims such tools as:
  learning contracts;
personal development journals; 
mentoring 
could be utilised.
* attend to such important factors as:
  individual learning styles 
  motivational aspects of adult learners within the 
  individual learning process.

VII  Curriculum Designed in Outcome Terms:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* design the curriculum in outcome terms which necessitated a 
  rigorous and consistent assessment procedure 
The common ideas particular to macro level interviewees indicated 
the need to:
* link the national competence standards with the national 
  Awarding Bodies qualification structure 
The common ideas particular to micro level interviewees indicated the 
need to:
* motivate educational establishments and validating institutions 
  to design the curriculum in outcome terms 
* design the course content and assessment methods to include 
  the achievement of outcomes or standards of competence in 
  order to award transferable credits. 
* change curriculum design, assessment, accreditation and 
  qualification structures in order to provide greater flexibility 
  within management educational programmes

VIII  The Importance of Collaboration:
The common ideas expressed by the participants indicated the need to:
* design, implement and accredit courses that would involve 
  increased collaboration between educational and industrial 
  sectors and national bodies such as the Training Agency, 
  NCVQ and Awarding Bodies 
The common ideas particular to macro level interviewees indicated 
that:
* the MCI and the Training Agency were collaborating in a pilot 
  project to provide a practical and national approach to the
assessment and accreditation of prior experience and learning for managers
* a network of colleges and organisations, which could assist in the implementation of the MCI Code of Practice and assessment process, was being established

The common ideas particular to micro level interviewees indicated that:
* rules, procedures and guidelines were needed to incorporate the APEL process within programme design and delivery
* validation and national certificated accreditation of in-company courses were increasing

IX The Appropriate Organisational Culture and Structure:

The common ideas particular to macro level interviewees indicated that:
* the purpose of APEL being used as an accreditation device would have repercussions upon the counselling process, in-company provision and college courses

The common ideas particular to micro level interviewees indicated that:
* a review of the organisational structure and culture was required in order to overcome barriers to the introduction of the APEL process
* consideration of the affect upon every area engaged within educational provision such as:
  admissions;
  delivery systems;
  development of materials;
  open and distance learning;
  use of academic staff on a consultancy basis;
  training of counsellors and assessors.
* educational providers had to re-plan in order to embed the APEL process into the curriculum and to design a parallel developmental process in order to integrate the APEL process within present educational structures and administrative systems
The Funding, Costing and Pricing Issue:
The common ideas particular to macro level interviewees indicated that:
* a standardised, rigorous and credible APEL process should be cost-effective
* this aim needed to be incorporated within the proposed national pilot project
The common ideas particular to micro level interviewees indicated that:
* the funding, costing and pricing issue was a priority concern upon which participants placed a different emphasis:
  -- Interviewee 3 perceived the APEL process to be costly in terms of assessment time;
  -- Interviewee 5 considered that "full-cost recovery" had become a necessary feature of APEL programmes;
  -- Interviewee 2 stated that the Training Agency was funding the development of APEL in order to contribute to the change of approach in education and training;
  -- Interviewee 3 was concerned about launching the APEL product at a marketable price.

The APEL Process (as perceived by the writer from information obtained from MCI and NCVQ documents in June, 1989) is shown in Figure VI on the following page.


What follows is a summary of key issues obtained from a Seminar entitled, "Towards a Collaborative Strategy in Management Development" held on the 6th November, 1989, with representatives from employer organisations, education providers and management student groups. This provides documented notes that were circulated to all participants who were involved in the Seminar and was written from 'flip-chart' summaries obtained from Seminar members. It was distributed by the Education and Training Group's Chairperson so that
Figure VI The APEL Process
(As perceived by the writer from information obtained from MCI and NCVQ documents in June, 1989)

- Management student assigned to counsellor
- Workshop counselling session to explain APEL process
- Candidates complete self assessment test
- Assessment contract generated between candidate and counsellor (how assessment will take place)
- Portfolio of acceptable evidence prepared by manager to support self-assessment through a combination of the following methods
  - PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE: e.g. natural observation in the workplace; extracted examples within the workplace; simulations (competency test, skills test); proficiency test, projects, assignments
  - EVIDENCE FROM PRIOR ACHIEVEMENTS: eg. reports, designs, computer programmes, certificates
  - SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE: e.g. oral questioning; open written answers; multiple choice tests
- Assessment of presented evidence
- Assessment of required competence
- Training needs identified (Possible accreditation)
- Development of action plan/learning contract
it could be checked for accuracy. The Seminar members considered it to be reflective of the main issues discussed.

A brief presentation was given to thirty participants at a local education and training Seminar. This presentation provided an overview of super-ordinate categories arising from initial research study findings (See Chapter 4) and a detailed resume of findings arising from interviews with APEL practitioners as shown in section 6.4. & 6.5.1. of this Chapter.

This presentation was followed by a participative exercise whereby Seminar members were requested to sub-divide into three groups representing, as far as possible, their affiliations ie employer organisations, management student groups and academic staff responsible for management courses. Each sub-group was then asked to prepare a five minute presentation in answer to the following question:

"How would you as an: Employer/Management Student/Management Education Provider develop collaboration (between the three groups) to improve management development programmes?"

All members of each sub-group were given this question on different coloured paper.

The education and training group's Chairperson undertook the task of reporting and disseminating the three sub-group's findings. These findings, drawn from the original document, are demonstrated by the following list indicating the breakdown of topics between each of the three sub-groups and was considered to be reflective of the topics under discussion at the Seminar.

Employers:

* Sponsorship of students to attend formal courses. These would be either college based or open learning including the open university and open college.
* Sponsorship of research through chairs at Universities and College.
* Develop better tailored formal courses to match individuals needs.
* To use part courses to meet specific needs, i.e. modular training.
* To fund projects for students of formal courses which would be identified as relevant to the businesses needs and resourced accordingly.
* Secondments.
* Job swapping between individuals either inside or outside the enterprise.
* Adopt a college - use a senior manager as a bridge by election to the education 'shapers' of the college to vet and develop courses relevant to business needs.
* Mentoring as a deliberate exercise.
* Cascade training both internal and external. Using presentations, peer group training and communications as well as the use of subordinate training.
* Developing individuals as assessors inside and outside the organisation.
* Identifying and recognising self-development opportunities. It was recognised that these would be individualistic.
* Courses and seminars for those women wishing to return to work after a career break.
* Shadowing.
* Schemes developed outside the organisation should be actively sought out by both employer and employees.
* Educational institutes should market their services better to allow employers to make realistic choices easier.
* Managers should pre-brief and debrief whenever employees attend formal courses of any sort.
* Networking.
* Outward bound training should be used more extensively.

Students:
* Students should have more involvement in the options available, the design and structure of formal courses.
* Students want to own their own development.
* The student is the consumer and should be treated as such.
* The link between courses, the individuals development and the job were not exploited fully.
Meetings should be used to view the overall perspective to the parties involved.

The benefits should be better emphasised to employers as should the drawbacks. It was important that the relevance to the job be realised.

Shared ownership of education would keep it relevant to the needs of the students and employers.

Involvement in the professional body eg IPM was essential.

Trainers:

The essential nature of a good appraisal and feedback system was paramount.

There should be a negotiated development plan agreed between all three parties ie education providers, employers and students.

Formal courses should not be seen as exclusive. Wider options should form part of a whole approach. This should include secondment, job rotation, mentoring, and working parties.

The objective was to establish the needs of the individual.

Each individual should have a set development plan.

Educationalists and trainers should be heavily involved with course design.

6.5.3. An Elucidation of Findings obtained at Macro and Micro level (Sections 6.4.1, 6.4.2 & 6.5.1.) with those of Seminar Participants (6.5.2.)

An attempt has been made to align each of the issues, identified by the interviewees (Sections 6.4.1. and 6.4.2. and summarised in 6.5.1.) and Seminar participants (Section 6.5.2.), under four general category headings:

I The purpose and process of APEL

II The need to develop management education provision that would satisfy the needs of the individual and of the employer

III Collaborative approaches to management development provision

IV The funding and marketing issues

Some of these categories bear some similarity to identified superordinate themes shown in Chapter 4. An elucidation is made of key
and common issues raised by participant interviewees at macro and micro level. However, the Seminar findings constituted a list of identified topics that were perceived by each sub-group to develop collaboration and to improve management development it was considered by the researcher inappropriate to elucidate further or to form judgements. However, these individual topics were converted to outcome terms to aid clarity and analysis. Some of these common issues and individual topics will be raised again during subsequent stages of research and these will be noted accordingly.

The purpose of this elucidation of key issues, derived from research findings contained in the Chapter, was to narrow the focus of this research study in order to provide a potential framework within which to undertake further research.

I The purpose and process of APEL:

It can be seen, in Sections 6.4.2. & 6.5.1., categories I - V, that the findings demonstrated the need to define the purpose and the ensuing APEL process in order to clarify the distinction between the mechanisms and outcomes of an APEL process at macro level from that at micro level. The model shown in 6.5.1. (page 136b) was the researcher's perception of the APEL process drawn from an amalgamation of information gained from the MCI and NCVQ.

The notion that the APEL process was based upon Kolb's (1984) experiential learning process was not made explicit within findings from MCI interviews and meetings. It had been considered by the researcher that the experiential learning concept was held implicitly within the 'label' Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). However it was interesting to note that the 'E', representing 'experiential' was removed by MCI, from the acronym APEL, during the Autumn of 1989. Thus, all later references to the process will be shown by the acronym APL. This omission was later perceived by the researcher to be significant and proved a cause for further focus upon the reflective segment within the experiential learning cycle within Chapter 10 of this thesis.
It was considered by the researcher that the variety and usage of assessment techniques depended upon the perceived purpose of the APEL process and the limitations imposed by staff and funding resources. Clearly, if APEL were to be used for accreditation purposes there would be a need to provide a credible, rigorous and standardised assessment service whereby 'credits' could be transferable nationally. Chapter 8 provides details of the accreditation process and national standards. The researcher considered that if the APEL process was to be successfully implemented then full support had to be given to the design and delivery of staff development programmes. This issue provided a cause for further focus within this research study, the details of which can be seen in Chapters 10, 11 and 12 of this thesis.

It was also considered by the researcher that such an APEL assessment service could provide guidance and counselling, to individual learners and their organisations, in order to identify training needs and provide career development as well as providing assessment and accreditation of portfolios towards a national vocational qualification. These issues provided a focus for subsequent research which can be seen in Chapters 7 & 8.

The following individual topics were raised by employers, during the Seminar (6.5.2), and were perceived to provide innovative approaches to management development:

* Sponsorship of research through Universities and Colleges
* Secondments
* Internal and external job swapping
* Courses and seminars for women returners
* Shadowing
* Outward Bound courses

However, participants confirmed and verified that the topic presented by the researcher earlier in the Seminar, ie APEL, was considered to be an innovative approach in itself.
II  The need to develop management education provision that would satisfy the needs of the individual and of the employer:

As can be seen in 6.4.2. and 6.5.1. interview participants generally considered that management programmes needed to be designed to provide the individual with a positive educational experience that would take into account such factors as individual motivating factors and learning styles. This view was also verified by Seminar participants (6.5.2) who considered that management development programmes were required that met the needs of the individual and of the employer. Similarly, these views can be compared to emergent themes demonstrated in category V Chapter 4.2. and category IV Chapter 4.4.

The following individual topics provided by the Seminar sub-groups confirmed the notion that management development programmes needed to:

Employer Sub-group:
* sponsor students on formal college or open learning courses
* tailor formal courses to match individual needs
* use 'part' courses to meet specific needs ie modular training
* fund projects, on formal courses, identified as relevant to business needs
* develop educational course related to business needs
* initiate individual self development

Student Sub-group:
* allow ownership of students own development
* exploit the link between courses, individual development and the job
* emphasise to employers the benefits and relevance to the job as well as the drawbacks of courses

Trainer Sub-group:
* establish the needs of the individual
* set an individual development plan

These viewpoints emphasised the need to consider the effectiveness of learning strategies within management education provision. These views, from all participants, provided an interesting focus in subsequent research which can be seen in Chapters 9, 10 and 11.
III The Importance of Collaboration between employers; awarding bodies; education providers and management students:

A collaborative strategy was considered by the researcher to offer an opportunity, to established education providers, for developing management programmes with employing organisations and awarding bodies in order to develop new markets. These outcomes can be compared with the emergent categories shown in III; IV and V in Chapter 4.2. and categories II; III and IV shown in 4.4. These desired outcomes can also be compared with the advantages of the APEL process as demonstrated in Chapter 6.4. The following key points from Seminar participants also verify the importance of collaboration between interested parties in order to:

Employer Sub-group:
* develop mentoring as a deliberate exercise
* cascade training internally and externally
* develop internal and external assessors
* actively seek external schemes - by employer and employees
* develop networking

Student Sub-group:
* develop involvement in the design, structure and options of formal courses
* use joint meetings to provide an overall perspective
* share ownership of education in order to maintain relevance to the needs of students and employers
* involve the relevant professional body eg IPM

Trainer Sub-group:
* negotiate a collaborative development plan
* develop a wider approach to formal course provision including secondments, job rotation, mentoring and working parties
* involve educationalists and trainers in course design

The APEL process as outlined in Sections 6.4.2. and 6.5.1. could be shown to satisfy the needs of providing internal and external assessment; mentoring; involvement of professional bodies and to incorporate relevant employer and individual needs.
It is immediately apparent from an observation of the list of findings shown in Section 6.5.2. of this Chapter that the 'Employers' sub-group yielded a greater number of desired strategies that could develop collaboration in order to improve management development programmes. It was considered by the researcher that this did not detract from the validity of Seminar findings but instead identified a need to investigate further the needs and concerns of employing organisations. This subsequent investigation is described in Chapter 7.

IV The funding and marketing issues:

The findings from interview participants (See 6.4.1., 6.4.2. and 6.5.1.) indicated an essential need for consideration of the whole issue of funding, costing and pricing. Therefore, the researcher decided to investigate this issue in order to ascertain the possible implications upon the development and implementation of a proactive and innovative approach, such as the APEL process, within management education provision. What follows is an outline of a cursory investigation of documents published by national bodies concerned with management education funding.

The participants' views and concerns about the funding of management education were confirmed in a CMED Report, entitled "The Resourcing of Management Education - A Policy Framework, (April, 1989). This report advocated changes in funding of management education within the medium (5-7 year) term. The report, within its recommendations, considered it an imperative that when the Training and Enterprise Councils (TEC's) (DOE, 1988) became fully operational, a totally different funding framework would need to be constituted.

It was also recognised that colleges would have to investigate the quality and delivery methods of management courses to warrant the introduction of a full-cost fee. It was estimated that the future course fee could be between £2,000 - £2,500 for a certificate level course:
"The focus of the programmes on individually negotiated learning contracts and competence based assessment make them costly when compared with existing, mainly taught and examined management courses. Most of the programmes are offered on a full-cost basis of between £2,000-£2,500. This fee level has dampened interest even amongst those employees who were initially very excited by the programme* (CNAA/Training Agency Project, April, 1989, p 22).

These documents were perceived by the researcher to confirm the concerns expressed by APEL practitioners (See 6.4.2. of this Chapter) and those interviewees at macro level shown in an earlier Chapter (Chapter 4.2.).

Views gained from Seminar participants indicated that a marketing approach towards management education provision was required in order to:

**Employer Sub-group:**
* improve the marketing of educational institutes
* pre-brief and de-brief course participants

**Student Sub-group:**
* treat the student as the consumer

**Trainer Sub-group:**
* develop an appraisal and feedback system

Similarly, the need to improve the marketing facility of educational institutes has already been identified in category IV Chapter 4.2.

Thus, following this Seminar the researcher considered that a 'marketing' approach, defined as "the provision of goods or services to meet consumer needs" (Collins, 1989, p 783), could offer the framework and systems that would satisfy those needs identified by employer, student and training sub-groups. The implementation of a marketing strategy and systems within management education provision was, therefore, identified as a means of improving the level of collaboration between colleges and employing organisations. A marketing approach could also provide information upon which to base decisions about: curriculum; staff development; resource
allocation; college administrative systems; courses and other services. A more efficient flow of information between colleges and potential clients could initiate and establish joint management development plans to satisfy the supply and demand of organisations and individual managers and so realise the MCI goal of "development duality" (Hornby & Thomas, 1989).

However, it was recognised that funding provision for new management development initiatives was critical in terms of cost to the consumer and thus to the balance of supply and demand.

As can be seen from the following quotation, MCI's aim was to develop a collaborative approach which could be interpreted as indicative of the future national approach towards management education, training and development.

"Development duality - The Management Charter Initiative is concerned with the development of management in general, starting at the level of the organisation and then identifying the needs of each individual. Such an approach should involve the preparation of both the overall plan or programme for an organisation, in accordance with the code of practice, and the identification of the needs of individuals. An assessment of individual needs may involve both an employing organisation and any educational provider expected to be involved in an individual's development" (Hornby & Thomas, 1989)

As suggested above, if the proposed MCI principle of jointly involving the employer and educational sector with the implementation of an organisational and individual management development plan were to succeed, then the issues of marketing and funding were of fundamental importance.

At this stage of the research it was recognised that, due to the scope of consistent emerging super-ordinate themes emerging from the initial study shown in Chapter 4, it was necessary to narrow the focus and concentrate upon aspects of delivery, assessment, student centred learning. The APEL process was thus identified in Chapter 6 as an innovative and collaborative approach to management development
provision which could potentially satisfy market needs. The uniformity of findings obtained from the Seminar and the sub-groupings of Seminar members, eg employer, management student and academic staff, indicated a potential framework within which to undertake further research.

In conclusion, it was considered that emerging main themes such as the APEL process related to National Vocational Qualifications (See Chapter 8) seemed most amenable to further research within the scale of this project. Again, fortuitously, an opportunity was presented in the form of an MCI and Training Agency project, the aims of which coincided with this project's research aims. Therefore the next stage of research was in the form of an exploration of the needs and wants of experienced managers and attitudes of employing organisations in relation to management development. The concept of APL was also introduced and evaluated as an innovative approach to management development in the 1990's.
Chapter 7 - "The Forgotten Manager - Motivations, Needs and Wants of the Experienced Manager"

7.1. The Rationale for the Study
The previous Section (6.5.3.1.) aligned the key issues arising from the research investigation under four general category headings:

* The purpose and process of APL.
* The need to develop management education provision that would satisfy the needs of the individual and of the employer.
* Collaborative approaches to management development provision.
* Funding and marketing issues.

Although the issue of funding and marketing was recognised to be of importance it was considered inappropriate, by the researcher, to investigate this issue further at that time because the finalised version of the funding structure was still under review. A brief overview of some of the related key issues and the possible effect upon management education provision was given in the previous section (6.5.3.). (Since that time funding and marketing issues have become critical areas of importance for the FE/HE sector (The Further and Higher Education Act, 1992) and so would be worthy of further investigation in another study).

It was decided, therefore, to focus upon the three remaining issues arising from previous research stages. Thus, an investigation of the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) process related to the needs of experienced managers and employing organisations, and of collaborative approaches to management education, training and development (METD) provision was undertaken in 1990.

MCI was established to provide a focus for the growing national interest in METD and to promote relevant, competence-based management programmes leading to national qualifications. It was, therefore, considered appropriate to utilise any available resources
that the MCI could offer in order to explore the needs and wants of managers and attitudes of employing organisations in relation to management development. As sixty percent of the UK's 2.4 million managers were over 35 and did not have a management qualification (Deloitte, Haskins & Sells, 1989) it was recognised that the older or experienced manager would provide an interesting focus for the next research phase. Therefore, this next phase of study contributed to a major MCI initiative in developing Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) for experienced managers against national standards of competence leading to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's).

This research was commissioned primarily to focus on the motivations, needs and wants of the experienced manager and attitudes of employing organisations in relation to management development and the process of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). The project was sponsored by the Training Agency and was undertaken by the writer, between January to July 1990, and formed a joint project between the MCI and the employing College. A copy of the MCI proposal to the Training Agency is shown in Appendix V.

It was with a backcloth of complex environmental changes: demographic and future skills shortages; an ageing population and the ultimate need to improve the whole process of management development for experienced managers, that this study was undertaken (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991, pp 11 - 14). The review of relevant literature, at that time, raised some critical questions:

* Are experienced managers un-energetic and resistant to change?
* Do mature managers believe they are too old for further development?
* Do organisations focus upon and value their mature managers?
* Are experienced managers' skills so out of date that nothing can be done to utilise or transfer years of valuable experience?
* How are experienced managers' development needs identified, and how can they be met?
This research interest of the writer coincided with a national interest so it was possible to gain support from further exploratory work combining in the enquiry area of the study the questions derived from the previous research and those to which a funding agency was seeking answers. Therefore, this research was undertaken to explore these questions in depth and to support those issues which were already arising from the MCI's Experienced Manager Project which was developing Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) against the national standards of management competence. Included in this thesis are details and aspects which were not required for the MCI report. Similarly parts of that report have been omitted since their relevance is marginal.

The Structure of the Chapter
The rationale of the research strategy and the general approach to methodology, utilising telephone questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, are shown with Section 7.2. of this Chapter. The fieldwork plan and its rationale are demonstrated in Section 7.3. This is followed by the analysis and interpretation of findings from senior employer representatives in Section 7.4. and from experienced managers in Section 7.5. The final part of this Chapter, Section 7.6., reviews the main conclusions and implications drawn from research findings and offers a potential way forward to improve management education, training and development.

7.2. The General Methodological Approach
Much has been debated and written about management education, training and development (Mangham and Silver, 1986; Handy, 1987; Constable & McCormick, 1987;) within the context of the UK's economic climate. A description of relevant key reports is shown in Chapter 2, however, the debate has been concisely summarised in "Management Challenge in the 1990's" (Deloitte, Haskins and Sells, July 1989). Yet, despite all this activity, very little had been directed at the development of 'older' or 'mature' managers. This apparent omission led to the focus of this research study being placed on the middle or experienced manager. The term 'experienced manager' was loosely defined as those managers at all levels of the organisation.
with five or more years experience and who are likely to be aged 35 or over.

It was decided, therefore, to undertake this study in order to bring together the views of both employers and experienced managers on their needs and motivations related to management education, training and development. A key focus was to gain information about the reactions to the concept of APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) and to obtain qualitative market information to support the implementation of APL. Thus the overall purpose of this project for the thesis was:

* To explore the motivations, needs and wants of experienced managers in relation to management development.
* To develop experienced managers' profiles.
* To explore the attitudes of employers to experienced managers and their development needs.
* To explore current practice in management development for experienced managers.
* To introduce the concept of APL and to evaluate the reaction of the study's participants.

(The MCI project proposal was written to incorporate these aims).

The rationale and the methodological approach was situated within a qualitative and phenomenological paradigm as described in previous Chapters 3 and 6. However, some of the detail of the research method was subject to Training Agency Project constraints, so that the final version was the result of a negotiated agreement between the writer, the MCI Project Manager and the representative of the Training Agency responsible for APL projects. The Training Agency wanted the main focus of methodology to provide statistical information with the qualitative data used to illustrate the findings whereas for PhD research qualitative data was used to provide the main focus with the statistical data providing the background. Thus, an agreement was finally reached between the three parties that an initial target group of between forty and fifty employers would be contacted for completion of a telephone questionnaire. This would be followed by an in-depth exploration of arising issues. The balance of emphasis on qualitative or
quantitative information was different for the contractual parties so the final methods used satisfied each party’s need.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty senior staff responsible for management development in employing organisations. To satisfy the Training Agency desire for a more quantitative approach it was agreed that the MCI Project Manager would subsequently present further proposals to the Training Agency for a broader-scale (quantitative) project in order to validate the findings from this qualitative research study. A more detailed explanation of the research stages is contained within the Project Proposal, agreed between the parties, and is exhibited in Appendix V.

7.2.1. Sampling Requirements

It was agreed that this particular research project would combine a variety of research techniques. The study was limited by time, six months, and involved one researcher, the writer. Thus the research design was limited to gaining access to a sample of a small number of organisations across all employment sectors eg public; financial; manufacturing; retail and service. Such cross-sectional designs usually involve selecting different organisations, or units in different contexts, and investigating how factors vary across these units (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991, p 34). Thus in order to investigate current management development practice a selection of a sample of organisations which were known to represent a range of levels in management development investment were required. It was not considered necessary, nor within the scope of the research project, to contact all organisations involved with management development. The main aim of sampling was to construct a sub-set of the population which would fully represent the main areas of interest (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991, p 122).

An initial problem was in deciding the size of the sample of organisations in order to provide an adequately representative sample. However, as the purpose was to gain qualitative market information, in order to support the application of APL, it was agreed that a representative sample would include a range of contacts across all organisational sectors. Those organisations who were known to be
involved with management development either through membership of the MCI or affiliated to such professional bodies as the Institute of Personnel Management were contacted on a random basis. Just over 50% of those organisations contacted were MCI members. The remaining contacts were made with senior staff affiliated to professional bodies eg IPM.

An analysis of organisations by sector that were contacted by telephone is contained in the questionnaire in Appendix VI. The second stage of the project led to interviews being conducted with representatives from different sizes of organisations and different sectors of employment. This analysis is in Appendix VII.

### 7.2.2. Telephone Questionnaires

Due to the time constraints imposed by the Project Proposal (See Appendix V), it was decided to undertake a telephone questionnaire as opposed to distributing a questionnaire for written completion. It was considered that this mode of operation would save time and gain a higher level of response.

The main initial purposes of the telephone questionnaire were:

1. To explore the attitudes and current practice of employers towards experienced managers and their development needs.
2. To explore the attitudes of employers towards management qualifications.

However a subsidiary purpose of the questionnaire was to make contact with senior representatives from those organisations who were willing to become involved in the subsequent interview stage. It was made known to all respondents early in the telephone conversation that answers should be framed so that they would represent the views and practices of employer organisations.

The main decisions that were made in the process of questionnaire design related to the type of questions to be included and the overall format of the questionnaire (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991, p 119). It was considered that in order to gain a high level of response a prime aim of the questionnaire design should be to minimise the time burden for the organisational respondent. Also, it was important that
the design format would allow the gathering of accurate information and the development of rapport between the researcher and the respondent. It was considered essential that the questionnaire should be designed to enable quick and accurate completion within an approximate time limit of between 10 - 15 minutes. Therefore, the nature and structure of each question was of vital importance within the questionnaire design.

Firstly, questions of fact and questions of opinion were distinguished (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991, p 119). Questions of fact were placed early in the questionnaire followed by questions of opinion. This was done primarily to give the respondent some degree of choice as to the amount of material that could be provided in a limited time. For instance, the earlier questions of fact could be answered by the respondent in a few minutes. This was in contrast to the later questions of opinion in response to which the participant could either answer adequately within a five to ten minute period or take a longer period if so desired.

Secondly, a distinction was made between 'open choice' and 'closed' questions. Open choice questions were constructed which would provide some structure to the answers in contrast to closed questions which would provide only a "Yes/No" response. A more detailed explanation of question design can be seen in the next Section of this Chapter, Section 7.3.

Thirdly, it was an important consideration that the questionnaire was designed to be easy to complete using the medium of the telephone, thereby imposing less on participants' time:

"...the benefits of completing the questionnaire should outweigh the costs measured by time or inconvenience. Unfortunately managers seem to be increasingly busy nowadays, so their time is becoming more and more valuable" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991, p 12).

A fourth major consideration was the ease of analysis of responses. A standardised approach was necessary which would allow the key features to be drawn from the collected data, whilst at the same time
allowing the richness of some of the material to remain for illustration purposes for the funded project and for further investigation related to the thesis. Thus the questionnaire was structured in design and included a number of 'closed' questions which would allow ease of analysis (See Question 4 - Appendix VI.) However, the questionnaire included successively more complex and 'open choice' questions some of these permitted the researcher to ascertain whether the respondents would be amenable to further participation in the later interview programme.

7.2.3. Semi-Structured Interviews

The interviews were carried out with senior staff responsible for management education, training and development and with experienced managers in the same organisation. It was emphasised, to human resource specialists, that answers should be representative of the views and practices of their employing organisations. More personalised views of management development practices were obtained from interviews with experienced managers. The initial contact was made through the telephone questionnaire. Due to the budgetary and time constraints of the Project all organisations involved in the interview programme were from all sectors of employment but were based mainly in the south east of England. Three quarters of the experienced managers interviewed were male. The sample cannot, therefore, be viewed as representative of the population particularly since respondents were gained on a volunteer and convenience basis. Although this sample group was not representative of the population as a whole the interviewees represented organisations from all industrial sectors and did provide a hitherto neglected perspective from an important group of managers.

The purposes of interviews with human resource specialists representing employer organisations were as follows:

1. To develop profiles of types of experienced managers by such indicators as age, qualifications, career ranks, industry, size of organisation, public/private sector.

2. To explore the attitudes of employers to experienced managers and their development needs.
3. To explore current practice in management development for experienced managers.
4. To introduce the concept of APL and gauge reaction.

The purposes for conducting interviews with experienced managers were as follows:
1. To develop profiles of types of experienced managers by such indicators as age, qualification, career ranks, industry, size of organisation, public/private sector.
2. To explore the motivations, needs and wants of experienced managers in relation to management development.
3. To introduce the concept of APL and gauge reaction.

A script and semi-structured guideline approach were used for all face-to-face interviews. The main purpose for using a semi-structured or guided interview approach was to ensure that:

"...basically the same information is obtained from a number of people by covering the same material (Patton, 1990, p 283).

It was considered that such a guided or semi-structured approach would provide topics or subject areas within which the interviewer would be free to explore, probe, and ask questions that would elucidate and illuminate a particular subject eg APL. This approach would not preclude the ability of the interviewer:

"...to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style - but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined" (Patton, 1990, p 283).

in order to build a conversation within a particular subject area. The main advantage of utilising a guided or semi-structured interview was that it ensured that the interviewer made the most effective use of the limited time available in the interview situation. This approach also assisted with interviewing a number of different people in a more systematic and comprehensive way by limiting the issues to be explored in advance. It was the researcher's experience that data obtained from informal conversational interviews, such as those
shown in Chapter 4 and 6 of this thesis, were also difficult to categorise and analyse. (A full description of the use of 'conversational' or 'open' interviews is shown in Chapter 3.3, pp 15 - 20). This difficulty was due to the amount of time the researcher spent sifting through responses to find emerging patterns at different points in different interviews with different people (Patton, 1990, p 282). Therefore, the decision was made to facilitate analysis of responses and to limit the interview time by using the more systematised and standardised semi-structured interview approach which included the use of both 'open choice' and 'closed' questions. The use of 'closed' questions would provide less flexibility but would be 'traded-off' (Patton, 1990, p 161) against the use of 'open choice' questions allowing the collection of more sensitive data.

All interviewees were given the same information both prior to and during the interviews. A semi-structured interview format was conducted with all the individual interviewees. However, questions posed to human resource specialists were designed to gather information about organisational practice in the management education, training and development area. Different questions were asked of managers that were more relevant to the managers' personal experiences within the management education, training and development area.

A similar balance was achieved for all interviewees in terms of the interview structure. The 'closed' questions, eg Appendix VII Questions 1 & 2, formed the early part of the interview and were aimed to gain background information and to establish rapport with the interviewee. The remainder of the interview consisted of posing questions that required answers either to a prepared list of possible responses that were matters of opinion eg Appendix VII Question 5, or questions which included both 'closed' and 'open choice' aspects eg Appendix VII Questions 10; 11; and 12. The more 'open choice' questions eg Appendix VIII Question 12, dealt with more sensitive or confidential matters. These 'open choice' questions were used throughout the interview at appropriate points in an attempt to gain more sensitive or confidential information in a conversational way.
The concept of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) was also introduced during these interviews. As this was a new and little understood area both 'closed' and 'open choice' questions were posed about this subject during the final part of the interview. These questions were designed to be similar in nature for both groups of interviewees (See Appendix VII Questions 10, 11, 12 & 13, and Appendix VIII Questions 20, 21, 22 & 23). The 'closed' questions were given to check understanding of the concept of APL with the interviewee prior to posing more 'open choice' questions. It was anticipated that the utilisation of both types of question would engender a useful amount of information and richness of data. It is emphasised at this point that the aim was to obtain qualitative data; it was not intended to provide large scale statistical data.

7.2.4. Confidentiality and Anonymity
The use of qualitative methods, such as interviews, can provide the researcher with more control about what information is gathered, how it is recorded and how it is interpreted (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991, p 65). A key ethical question for the researcher is how much information can be recorded and published without betraying the trust of any particular respondent. In each individual case assurances were given for data to remain confidential and anonymous. A letter (See Appendix IX) was sent to all participating organisations requesting written authorisation if they wished to be included in the 'List of Contributors' within the published report (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991). Likewise, individual experienced managers whose biographical details were included as Case Studies (See Appendix X) were also amended to preserve confidentiality and anonymity. It was considered crucial, therefore, that the researcher exercised due ethical responsibility by not publishing any information that was likely to harm the interests of individual respondents. A more detailed discussion about the ethical considerations of research can be found in Chapter 3.3.

7.2.5. Analysis of Data
Responses from 'closed' questions provided the percentage figures used in the analysis (See Appendix VII & VIII). These percentage figures were derived from the number of responses to questions that would elicit a simple "Yes/No" answer (See Question 7 in Appendix
VII) or where a list of multiple answers had been provided (See Question 5 in Appendix VII). A content or key-word analysis was used to analyse responses from 'open choice' questions. Main themes or terms used by the interviewees were subsequently prioritised in terms of commonality and frequency (See Section 7.3, p 13). Therefore, each main theme or terms used were listed and then counted in terms of frequency. It was found that, in the main, most themes and terms were of a super ordinate nature which required little further breakdown. Exceptionally, some themes were expressed that could be construed to have similar or related meanings eg "an increase in motivation for managers" or "an incentive for managers". Such exceptionality was construed by the researcher to denote similar meanings and were categorised and counted accordingly (See Section 7.4.).

The interview format was so designed in order to obtain general views from human resource specialists about their employing organisations management development practices. It was anticipated that this information would be dissimilar to the more personalised views and experiences of management development practice obtained from managers. Thus an intra-group comparison of findings was undertaken. This analysis and interpretation can be seen in Section 7.4, which represents human resource specialists' views and Section 7.5, which demonstrates the views of managers. However, the design of the semi-structured interview format did allow an inter-group comparison in two subject areas: career planning and career progression and the response to the APL process because the same questions were asked of both groups. This inter-group comparison can be found in Section 7.6. of this Chapter.

7.3. Fieldwork Plan
The research was conducted between January and July, 1990. The findings relevant to the funded project were presented to the MCI Working Party in July, 1990 and the final report was published by MCI in February 1991. During this period a close relationship of trust and collaboration was developed between the writer, the MCI Project Manager and the Training Agency representative responsible for APL, which contributed to the PhD work by generating a network of access and information resources.
7.3.1. First Stage - Telephone Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire and script (See Appendix VI & IX respectively) were designed and utilised for telephone interviews. A number of draft questionnaires were designed and were later amended after conducting a small pilot survey with five senior representatives who were responsible for management development.

A total of 227 telephone calls were made, over a period of two months, in an attempt to complete the agreed number of fifty (50) questionnaires. However the final number of telephone questionnaires completed was forty (40). This number was finally agreed by the three parties as suitable within the time limits of the project. This was also supported by the perception that the original forty questionnaire respondents were yielding similar data.

Factual questions were asked, in order to provide essential background information, during the initial part of the telephone questionnaire (See Appendix VI) eg name and address and the numbers of people employed. It was, nevertheless, surprising that a number of organisational respondents did not have readily available or even available at all the answer to Question 2:

a) "How many managers employed?"

and

b) "What is the percentage of managers aged 35+?"

Therefore, an approximate figure was accepted for question 2a) though a more precise figure was requested for question 2b). A total of 10% of respondents did not know how many managers were employed and 52.5.% did not know how many managers were aged over 35.

It was considered that in most cases accurate answers would be given to the rest of the initial 'closed' questions. An example of a 'closed' question directed to human resource specialists was Question 3:

"Does your organisation have management development activities?"

(expected response was either "Yes" or "No"). An example of an 'open' question posed to the same group of respondents was Question 5:
"Would you see value in focusing specifically on the older/experienced managers development needs?" and "In what way?"

to which the initial answer may either be "Yes" or "No" followed by a narrative statement. Open questions were also constructed which provided some structure to the answers. For example, Question 4:

"Does your organisation see value in nationally recognised management qualifications?"

to which the initial answer may either be "Yes" or "No" followed by a list being given of courses that may have been used. Due to imposed time limits it was decided not to include 'closed' questions that would allow greater discrimination in the responses, eg the Likert scale. Therefore a straight "Yes/No" choice was provided to all study respondents.

The final question was designed to gain the respondent's co-operation with the subsequent interview programme:

"Would you be willing to participate in the interview programme further?"

7.3.2. Second Stage - Face-to Face Interviews
A letter confirming the date and times of the interviews, accompanied by information about the process of APL, was sent to all senior organisational representatives who had agreed to participate in the interview programme (See Appendix IX).

It had been the intention to conduct two interviews at the same organisation ie one with the human resource specialist and the other with an experienced manager. In practice, this was not achieved as three experienced manager interviewees were not available and one organisation offered two managers for interview. Thus, there was a difference in the number of interviews conducted with each organisation. This differential is represented by the charts
demonstrating the analysis of respondents by sector and size of organisation (See Appendix VII and VIII).

A total of forty four face-to-face interviews were undertaken with representatives of twenty three organisations. Twenty three interviews were conducted with senior human resource specialists and twenty one interviews with experienced managers.

A semi-structured interview format was designed for both human resources specialists and experienced managers. In order to establish early rapport, between the researcher and human resource specialists, 'closed' questions were posed. For example:

Question 3:
"Do you undertake any management training?"
"Do you have a structured management development programme?"

Question 4:
"Does your management development programme include career planning?"

For similar reasons, 'closed' questions were posed to experienced managers. For example:

Question 6:
"How many years have you been at management level?"

Question 7:
"How many years have you been in your present post?"

Question 9:
"What is your age?"

Responses from 'closed' questions provided the percentage figures used in the analysis. The questions and analysis of responses to 'closed' questions posed to employer representatives and to experienced managers can be seen in Appendix VII and VIII respectively. The middle part of the interview consisted of asking questions that required answers from a prepared list of possible responses that were 'matters of opinion'. For example Question 5 posed to human resource specialists:

"How are organisational and individual needs identified?"
The prepared list consisted of the following possible responses which required a simple tick in the appropriate box:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Corporate Plan
2. Performance Appraisal
3. Assessment Centres
4. Individual Requests

The more 'open' questions dealt with more sensitive or confidential matters and were included throughout the interview conversation. For example, Question 15 posed to experienced managers:

"Do you remember any management courses that were particularly useful/useless?" and "Why?"

Such questions elicited, in some cases, a negative and emotional response which required a neutral reaction on the part of the researcher.

Similarly, Questions 3; 4; 8 and 9 addressed to human resource specialists (See Appendix VII) were designed with an 'open' aspect which would generate discussion about management development issues. It was decided not to structure these 'open' aspects too rigidly in order to maintain the conversational flow of the interview (See Section 7.2.).

7.3.3. Third Stage - Analysis of Questionnaires and Interviews

A content or key-word analysis was used to analyse responses from 'open' questions. These were subsequently prioritised in terms of frequency and commonality (See Section 7.2.5.) A full analysis and interpretation of responses to 'open' questions are demonstrated in Section 7.4 & 7.5. of this Chapter. A simple percentage breakdown was undertaken for 'closed' questions which required a "Yes/No" response. Similarly, for those 'closed' questions that required answers to a prepared list, a percentage breakdown of responses was conducted (See also Appendix VII and VIII).

The responses from both the telephone and face-to-face interviews, with human resources specialists, were later divided into five main...
categories. These categories corresponded approximately to the order in which the questions were posed to the interviewees. These categories were:

Findings from Employers - Human Resource Specialists
* The Experienced Manager within Management Development and Training Programmes (See Section 7.4.1.).
* In-Company Management Training and Development Programmes (See Section 7.4.2.).
* The Career Planning and Performance Appraisal Process (See Section 7.4.3.).
* Views about Management Qualifications (See Section 7.4.4.).
* The Response to the APL Process (See Section 7.4.5.).

Similarly, the responses gained from interviews with experienced managers were categorised and approximately corresponded to the order in which the questions were posed to the interviewees.

Findings from Experienced Managers
* The Experienced Manager Profile (See Section 7.5.1.).
* Management Education, Training and Development (See Section 7.5.2.).
* Career Planning and Career Progression (See Section 7.5.3.).
* Learning and Development Needs (See Section 7.5.4.).
* The Response to the APL Process (See Section 7.5.5.).

The following sections (Section 7.4. & Section 7.5.) provide a detailed analysis and interpretation of findings obtained from the telephone questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews with both respondent groups. As has been mentioned (Section 7.2.) the following two sections demonstrate the results of an inter-group comparison of findings. An intra-group comparison could only be made with two subject areas: career planning and progression and the response to the APL process. This inter-group comparison can be found in Section 7.6. of this Chapter.
7.4. A Detailed Breakdown of Findings from Telephone Questionnaires

An amalgamation of findings from both the telephone and face-to-face interviews fall into five main categories, as demonstrated by the following sub-sections:

7.4.1. The Experienced Manager within METD programmes
7.4.2. In-Company METD programmes
7.4.3. The Career Planning and Performance Appraisal Process
7.4.4. Views about Management Qualifications
7.4.5. The Response to the APL process

7.4.1. The Experienced Manager within METD Programmes from the Perspective of Human Resource Specialists

It was found that the responses to Question 3 demonstrated that the vast majority of organisations carried out management training. However, a smaller proportion invested in structured management development programmes. Some organisations had difficulty in differentiating between management development and management training. The term METD has been clarified in Chapter 2.1.

The following is a table identifying management groups that were targeted for 'specific action' and was in response to interview Question 6: "Do you identify different groups of managers that require specific action for development?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Entrants</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Fliers</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Minority</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plateaued</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>91.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen, management schemes designed specifically for groups that include "Graduate Entrants" and "High Fliers", were by far the largest groups of managers identified for specific action. Often the interviewees combined these two groups in terms of meaning ie the graduate entrants were also identified as the 'high flier' group.

It was noted that the group labelled "Women" were identified as a group designated for specific action and attention. Many of the
respondents reported that they regarded this initiative as demonstrating their organisation's responsive approach to demographic trends and equal opportunity provision. Any substantial overlap between this group and 'older' managers was negated by the face-to-face interview responses - see final paragraph of this section.

It was discovered, however, that little consideration was given to management development for "Ethnic Minority" groups and even less consideration was paid to the "Older" manager. Bottom of the list was the "Plateaued" manager. In order to present a clearer picture of groupings and due to the possible ambiguity of terms - "Older" and "Plateaued" - the percentage of positive responses for the two groups were added (21.7%). Even so, the cumulative percentage figure still represented the lowest group identified for specific action for development. Therefore, the "Older" or "Plateaued" manager could be regarded as being the "Forgotten Manager". This finding was in contrast to figures gained from telephone interviews which showed that the 35+ age group of managers represented the largest proportion of the management work-force (See Appendix VI Question 2). This startling paradox caused the report to be entitled "The Forgotten Manager" (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991).

Responses to Question 5 in the telephone questionnaire:
"Would you see value in focusing specifically on the older/experienced managers development needs?"

and

Question 7 in the face-to-face interview:
"Would you consider specific management development programme for experienced managers?"

suggest that a change of attitude and future practice regarding management development for the older or experienced manager may be being considered because nearly two-thirds of telephone respondents and the majority (82.6.%) of human resource specialists indicated a positive response to these two questions. The interview study, however, produced no examples of current policies or action specifically designed for the older or experienced management group.
It should be noted that the location and timing of Question 7, which followed a discussion about action for specific management groups, may have introduced some bias within the answers given by human resource specialists to this question. However, any interviewee bias caused by an imbalance in the interview structure design may have been counteracted by a well-based concern about equal opportunity issues. It was expressed, during face-to-face interviews, that a specific focus upon this older group of managers could generate discriminatory practices for access to management development programmes. This group of managers, under discussion, was considered to be predominantly white and male. Thus it was considered that equal opportunity issues may arise from management development programmes being centred on the older management group. It was considered by the writer that this area would provide rich ground for further research and debate.

7.4.2. In-Company Management Training and Development Programmes

During the ensuing discussion arising from the 'open' aspects of Questions 3; 8 and 9 (See Appendix VII) many organisations were found to have linked their management development programmes to a competence framework. As for example, a comment made by a senior personnel specialist:

"Our management development programme starts from a competence framework and works backwards to courses".

Organisations, some of which were MCI members, were initiating and implementing their own organisational or functional management competence standards. The MCI's management standards of competence were launched in October 1990, after the end of this project part of the research study. A full explanation of the management standards of competence and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) framework can be found in the following Chapter (8).

It was found from interview data that management training and development programmes were often directed towards the senior or junior levels of management. Skills-based programmes were favoured, especially those modules developing interpersonal, team-building and
technical skills. There also appeared to be an increasing interest in self-development/self-awareness programmes and work-based learning programmes. One Management Development Manager said: "We believe in developing a holistic approach to attitudes and management skills related to the job environment".

7.4.3. The Career Planning and Performance Appraisal Process
In response to Questions 4 and 5 it was found that over two-thirds of organisational management development programmes included career planning. This was often linked to succession planning and performance appraisal schemes. Few organisations included an identified career planning module within their management development schemes.

Virtually all the organisations used performance appraisal schemes to identify development needs (See quantitative data in Appendix VII). However, only just over half of the respondents actually related performance appraisal to the corporate plan or business needs, although some of the organisations used business-linked performance appraisal schemes as a corner-stone of their management development programmes. The following quotation from one organisational guide demonstrates one example of 'good practice':

"The appraisal process starts in October and is based upon the business plan for the company's next financial year. In this way, employee, job and development expectations can be linked to and regularly reviewed in line with business goals".

A growing use of Assessment Centres and techniques for identifying training and development needs, rather than tools for recruitment or promotion, was also identified.

7.4.4. Views about Management Qualifications
Responses to the 'open' Question 8: "What is your organisation's attitude to management qualifications?", elicited a great deal of information plus some cynicism. The following is the result of a content analysis and prioritisation of the responses:

* Positive - if related specifically to the job and organisation
* Selectively encouraged
* Positive - if towards professional or academic qualifications
* Positive - if for promotion purposes
* Not generally encouraged or discouraged
* Not encouraged

The following provides a more detailed narrative of the above responses:

i) A positive response was given only if a particular qualification course could be directly related to the job and to the organisation. This justification was overwhelmingly the most common response to the question.

ii) The term "selectively encouraged" was used by the respondents when a particular group of managers was identified with having a training need that could be satisfied by a selected qualification eg junior or senior management levels. This term was also used when organisations recommended or encouraged selected qualifications eg MBA. It was emphasised that organisations rarely gave 'blanket' approval for management qualifications. It was apparent that managers were required to present 'a case' for sponsorship, thereby ensuring that the selected qualification was related to business needs. The term "persuasion" was also used.

iii) Respondent organisations would sponsor candidates if the qualification was perceived to have "status" or be "academic" (eg MBA or ACIB). (See Glossary of Terms).

iv) Organisations sponsored management qualifications if they were perceived to enhance a manager's promotional opportunities or to assist in the retention of key managers.

v) Gaining management qualifications was not generally encouraged nor discouraged. In other words, a 'laissez-faire' attitude to this subject was encountered by the researcher.

vi) Due to the limited resources of the organisation (e.g. time and money), examples were given of a method of sponsoring managers only after they had obtained a qualification. A 'Qualification Award' was just one example which demonstrated that organisations were willing to pay costs but would not or could not allow 'time off' work to attend qualification courses.
Prioritised key responses to the open Question 9 (See Appendix VII) about attitudes to management qualifications for different groups of managers (e.g. experienced managers) are shown below:

i) The majority response was that there was little difference in the organisation's attitude towards providing assistance with management qualifications for different groups of managers eg experienced managers. Although no policies or specific action for the older or experienced management group were mentioned it was perceived by the researcher that these attitudes could vary at local or divisional levels of the organisation.

ii) Less prevalent were organisations who favoured positive action towards qualifications for the junior/younger or senior levels of management.

iii) It was suggested by a few of the respondents that age or management level should not be used as criteria for sponsorship selection. It was considered more important to focus on skill shortages such as personnel skills or technical skills.

7.4.5. The Response to the APL Process
The idea of APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) against competence standards was introduced during the latter part of the interview. There was a markedly positive response towards the process of APL. Over three-quarters of the respondents believed that APL would be helpful in improving managers effectiveness. Nearly three-quarters of human resource specialists would consider using APL within a management development programme. Responses about credits helping in the development of experienced managers proved less clear. However:

61% said 'Yes, credits would help',
26% said 'No' and
13% said 'Don't Know'.

Although the questions about APL provoked exciting and encouraging responses, certain concerns about the process were expressed. Given below are the results of a content analysis indicating key themes or reasons for the positive response followed by a prioritised list of key concerns. These key themes have been prioritised in order of frequency.
Positive Key Reasons for Introducing APL:
It was believed by human resource specialists that APL could provide:
* credibility for competent management experience and work-based learning
* accreditation of in-house training programmes
* an increase in motivation and an incentive for managers
* a mechanism to identify training needs and a developmental tool
* benefit to those individuals with no qualifications
* career development and develop self-confidence
* assistance in the transfer of learning
* recognition of different learning styles
* help for manager's mobility and job security
* enhanced self-awareness and self-assessment
* work-shops which would link with other organisations
* help for managers to be responsible for own learning
* personal development which could be job and organisational related
* help with transferability of credits.

Less frequently mentioned comments were:
- would help to recognise the European influence
- would provide a formal and safe analysis process for 'top-up' development
- would help in the process of reflection
- would aid flexibility
- would develop portfolio building
- would help access to higher education

Key Concerns about the Implementation of APL:
Human resource specialists considered that the successful implementation of the APL process required:
* improved marketing. Organisations required more details about the process and possible benefits. "Needs convincing . . ., too new", said one human resource manager.
* monitoring and control mechanisms for quality assurance purposes
* to be linked to the needs of the business
* clearly defined cost and time elements
organisational attitude change and commitment
* the consideration of the learner's expectations
* an evaluation of the improved effectiveness of managers
* consideration of other human resource policies and procedures.

Less frequently mentioned comments were:
- to be employer/trainer driven
- APL would be of little help to organisations
- management qualifications were unnecessary, therefore APL would be of little benefit.

As can be seen from the findings gained from interviews with human resources specialists that the overall response towards the APL process was very positive but was tempered with some degree of pragmatism.

7.5. Findings from Interviews with Experienced Managers
The following provides a detailed account of findings gained from interviews with experienced managers who were asked to participate in the interview programme. A detailed list of questions and a breakdown of responses to 'closed' questions can be found in Appendix VIII. Findings from the semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with managers fell into five main categories:

7.5.1. The Experienced Manager Profile
7.5.2. Management Education, Training and Development
7.5.3. Career Planning and Career Progression
7.5.4. Learning and Development Needs
7.5.5. The Response to the APL Process

7.5.1. The Experienced Manager Profile
As can be seen from Appendix VIII Section Two, Questions 6; 7 & 9 produced the following information:
* the majority (85%) of managers interviewed had more than 5 years general management experience
* 60% had more than 10 years experience at first-line management level and above
* the majority (85%) had held their present posts for under 5 years
* the age range was between 25 and 54
the majority (80%) were over 35 years old.

The following responses and comments, therefore, derived from those managers who fall into the MCI interpretation of the 'experienced manager' category.

7.5.2. Management Education, Training and Development
In answer to Question 8, over two-thirds of managers interviewed held professional qualifications. A very high proportion (90%) of interviewees did not have management qualifications (eg CMS, DMS). Of the remaining 10%, BTEC General was considered to be the highest level obtained in a related business qualification.

In answer to Question 11, 40% of respondents obtained their professional qualifications whilst employed by their present organisation. However, only 20% had received financial help towards professional qualifications. The lack of achievement of management qualifications may have been more indicative of the perceived low status afforded to a management qualification, as opposed to the perceived higher status of a professional qualification. There can be numerous interpretations of these responses, but this discrepancy in itself indicated a possible need for further research in this area.

All the managers had undertaken in-house management training. This finding might be considered unusual and was probably due to the nature and size of the organisations contacted. These were, in the main, medium to large sized companies who volunteered to participate and may not be representative of the investment in management development by employer organisations as a whole.

The most common in-house management training (or perhaps the most remembered programmes) were:
* developing people
* introduction to management
* interviewing skills
These subject areas were followed, in terms of frequency mentioned, by:
* appraisal skills
Over two-thirds of managers had attended external short courses, the most common or most remembered being:
* self-development/self-awareness programmes
* presentation skills

All managers received financial backing from their employers for internal training. Seventy percent had received financial backing for external short courses.

7.5.3. Career Planning and Career Progression
A surprising two thirds of interviewees were found not to have career plans. This question, No. 10, invoked a considerable amount of comment and discussion. Those managers without a career plan indicated that the process of developing a plan would be a useful exercise, especially if the activity were linked to the organisational promotional ladder. It was considered that a career plan would be useful in the identification of individual development needs. Those managers who had a career plan had either a clearly laid down organisational career path or the plan was part of a performance appraisal scheme. It was also found that career objectives and targets were often incorporated as an integral part of a self-development process within a performance appraisal scheme.

Questions 13 and 14:
"Do you think a management qualification would enhance your career progress?"

and

"Do you think a lack of management qualifications would inhibit your progression?"

were so placed in the interview format in order to distinguish the responses from the earlier question (No. 10) about career planning. These 'open' questions were also related to the achievement of management qualifications as a means of enhancing or inhibiting career progression. Answers to both questions, 13 and 14, produced
both eloquent and vocal replies as the topic 'management qualifications' appeared to be close to the heart of experienced managers!

The majority of managers qualified their answers in two ways. They either answered as an employee in their present organisation, followed by a comparison of attitudes and practices with other external organisations or they compared their career progression with the age or status of other managers within their employing organisation. However:

* Three-quarters of managers believed that a management qualification would enhance their career progression with external organisations.
* Over two-thirds believed that a qualification would not enhance career progress with present employers.

The results of a content analysis from the ensuing discussion showed that:

* Half the managers believed that a management qualification would enhance credibility, especially with external organisations, and make them less vulnerable internally.
* Just under half believed that it was their employer's view that age and status had some bearing on the need to gain a qualification i.e. "it is the young high-flyer who gets the chance".
* Just under half of managers believed that they were (and should be) judged on experience and effective job performance rather than "bits of paper".
* A minority of managers believed that the process of acquiring a qualification would develop greater self-awareness and self-discipline.
* A minority felt that knowledge of organisational culture and the business environment was more important than a qualification.
* A small number of managers mentioned that the process of assessment for promotion was subjective and that the qualified contenders may be viewed more sympathetically by senior line managers.
There was no relationship between the age and management status of interviewees who believed that there was a recognised need to gain a management qualification.

As can be seen, there were many comments and opinions arising from this section of the interview. The subject of 'management qualifications' really did appear to touch the very core of those experienced managers who did not have a qualification. The following quotation from one of the interviewees summarises a similar view to that held by many of the respondents:

"Experience plus qualifications enhances credibility!"

7.5.4. Learning and Development Needs

An interesting finding to Question 12, "Do you remember any management courses that were particularly useful?", indicated that 60% found some courses 'useful' and 30% found all courses 'useful' for the following (prioritised) reasons:
* personal growth
* networking with other people and other sectors
* when work-related
* if courses/programmes were practical

This finding was substantiated by 40% of managers believing that management courses were useless if (which have been prioritised in terms of frequency used):
* they were not work-related
* had too much theoretical input
* did not provide feedback

During the interviews the above reasons were often repeated and certainly indicated some useful points for education and training providers to note!

All of the managers interviewed held very clear views about their development needs. The most common subject areas that were
suggested by these managers in response to Question 15 (and which have been prioritised) for future development activities were:

* general management subjects
* interpersonal/behavioural aspects, for example:
  * motivational skills
  * assertion skills
  * leadership skills
  * communication skills
followed by:
* finance for non-financial managers
* general personnel techniques
* team-building (with a European flavour)
* self-awareness raising.

Surprisingly, Information Technology was not mentioned and very few people mentioned the need to develop skills for the European Market.

It was found, in reply to Question 16, that less than half of employing organisations provided the required/needed courses. However it was noted, from answers to Question 19, that the majority of the respondents believed that they would be financially subsidised by their organisations to attend desired courses. It was considered that if time had to be taken away from the work-place, in order to complete the learning programme, this factor would be the crucial and deciding factor for subsidised attendance on future programmes. In response to Question 18, just over two-thirds of the interviewees would be given adequate time to attend, but the majority of respondents believed that they would still have to undertake the same work-load in less time to compensate for any course attendance. This fact was considered to be a potential de-motivating factor by the majority of respondents. Thus, in order for managers to complete a course of study and to achieve the same work performance, time would have to be taken from personal and family life. Bearing in mind the age group of these managers, many of whom are likely to have young families, the added stress of studying plus the erosion of personal lives was certainly a disincentive to further study.
7.5.5. The Response to the APL Process

The overwhelming response of managers towards Questions 20; 21 & 22 relating to the APL process was very positive. The resultant breakdown of responses to 'closed' questions can be seen by the following:

* 90% of managers interviewed, believed that APL would be helpful in improving performance.
* 80% believed that gaining credits towards a nationally recognised management qualification would help their career progression.
* 90% believed that the APL process and gaining credits would encourage further self-development by providing an incentive to future study.

These questions about APL gained extremely positive responses and provoked great excitement and curiosity about the whole APL process. This excitement was tinged with a little sadness by those managers who were older and who felt that "they had missed the boat" in relation to this new approach. Other managers raised concerns about the APL process, both at an organisational level and at an individual level.

The following shows the prioritised key reasons and key concerns about the APL process:

Positive Key Reasons to Implement APL:
The experienced manager considered that APL would:

* provide credibility for sound experience
* provide a relevant learning plan
* enhance greater self-knowledge
* identify training needs
* build confidence
* enhance motivation
* relate development to the job, organisational structure and culture
* provide a structured, continuous development programme
* enable accreditation which would encourage further self-development.

The respondents also considered that APL would:

* provide credibility for experience
* provide a relevant learning plan and identify training needs
* enhance greater self-knowledge and self-development
* build confidence and enhance motivation

Key Concerns about the Implementation of APL:
However, the respondents expressed some concerns about the effective introduction of APL:
The individual manager:
* was worried about the lack of time available to pursue an APL programme
* was worried about age i.e. being "too old"
* was concerned about geographical location i.e. the APL centre must be easily accessible
* needs more information about the practical implications of the APL process
* was concerned that the achievement of qualifications was dependent upon the individual's ability to pay
* was concerned about assessment methods and standards of performance

The managers were also concerned about the organisational context and the organisation's response to the APL process. The managers considered that the successful implementation of APL was dependent upon:
* meaningful organisational commitment e.g. time/cost allowance
* effective marketing
* change in society's and organisations' attitude to the value of performance and qualifications
* credible qualification structure
* positive attitude of senior management towards the value of APL
* credibility of the scheme e.g. no dilution of assessment standards
* linkage to other personnel policies e.g. Early Retirement Schemes

As can be seen by the above comments, the response to the APL process by experienced managers match very closely to those comments received from human resource specialists. Therefore, there was
common ground upon which the successful implementation of APL could be based.

The following quotations demonstrate the strength of feeling that experienced managers had, in 1990, about the whole process of management education, training and development and towards the APL process:

About management qualifications:
"Something has to be done!"

About the APL process:
"It's knowing what you don't know!"

And, finally, a comment about management education in general and the APL process:
"I'm 'switched off' by schools and colleges and formal training routes, but 'switched on' by flexible and relevant training!"

For a more detailed picture of experienced managers' views Appendix X provides three cases studies illuminating different interviewees' experiences and views.

7.6 Conclusions and Discussion
The following conclusions and discussion (7.6.1.) bring together the key findings from both groups of study participants. A description of two comparable areas of findings: career planning and progress and the response to the APL process is shown presented from the organisational and manager perspective. (7.6.2.) Finally, the APL process is presented (7.6.3.) which brings all the key areas of findings into harmony and which indicates a potential way forward for future areas of research.

7.6.1. The Conclusions
The following amalgamates the key findings from both groups of study participants and are contained within five main categories:

i) The Experienced Manager within Management Development
It was demonstrated that organisations had not perceived the need to target management development programmes specifically to the older
or experienced manager, although it was common practice to focus upon other management groups' development needs. However organisations did see the value, in the future, for focusing upon experienced managers' development needs. This was due to the envisioned skill shortages and demographic changes in the management population.

ii) Management Education, Training and Development
It was found that there were established good quality and relevant in-company management training and development programmes. In a minority of these cases such programmes were related to the competence standard framework. Self-development and work-based learning programmes were found to be the most effective and desired management programmes. However, work-based learning represented a smaller proportion of management development activity.

iii) Management Qualifications
A key finding was that management qualifications needed to be related to the job and to the organisational environment. It was considered that qualifications would enhance a manager's career mobility and security. However, organisations 'selectively encouraged' managers to gain qualifications when there was an identified shortage of skills or level of expertise. It was perceived that greater value was placed upon the achievement of professional qualifications than upon the achievement of management qualifications.

iv) Career Planning and Performance Appraisal Process
Organisations utilised performance appraisal schemes to identify management development needs. There were indications of a growing use of Assessment Centre and related techniques as a means of identifying training and development needs. Career planning was seen by organisations as an important management development activity although few managers perceived that they had career plans.

v) The APL Process
There was overall a very positive response towards the APL process as a means of improving management performance. Organisations would consider using APL within management development
programmes. It was considered that APL would provide credibility for competent management experience and work-based learning and would jointly benefit the organisation and the individual manager by accrediting in-company management programmes which were directly related to a national qualification system. It was proposed that APL would provide a useful mechanism in order to identify training needs and to provide a developmental tool. Such a mechanism would ultimately enhance the motivation and confidence of managers. It was believed that APL would help in the implementation of a self-development and flexible learning plan.

For APL to be successfully implemented would require an improved marketing strategy and the establishment of quality assurance mechanisms. For APL to be successfully embedded within a management development programme, the outcomes must be linked to the needs of the business with clearly defined cost and time parameters.

7.6.2. A Comparison of Inter-group Findings

i) Career Planning and Career Progression:
It was interesting to note that findings from the human resource specialist group indicated that two-thirds of organisational management development programmes included career planning. This figure was compared with the responses obtained from a similar question given to experienced managers of whom the majority were employed by the same organisation. Responses from the experienced manager group showed that only one-third had career plans. It was considered that there had been a mismatch in communication and perception within organisations about the meanings and objectives of career planning. This mismatch could be poor communication about the aims of performance appraisal systems or management development programmes, or it could be due to the manager's perception of what constitutes a career plan. However, this finding does beg the question: "What is a career plan?".
ii) The Response to the APL Process:
Against this discrepancy there was marked agreement, between the two interviewee groups, about the benefits that APL could bring to the organisation and to the individual manager. There was also a similar agreement between the two groups about the potentiality for mistakes being made in the implementation of APL. The following summarises these benefits and concerns from the perspective of the organisation and the experienced manager.

It was strongly indicated that the process of APL could be useful for those organisations that wish to grow and become more effective and efficient through the improved utilisation of their experienced managers. It was considered that APL would be a practical mechanism to identify training needs and to provide a developmental tool. The positive outcomes from engaging in the APL process would be to increase the motivation and to enhance realistic career development for experienced managers. An organisational benefit would be the ability to accredit in-house training as an integral part of management development programmes within a national qualification system.

The major finding from this study was that APL would be particularly useful for those experienced managers who wished to gain credibility for their competent experience through the achievement of a management qualification. It was considered that as APL was a reflective process, this experience could assist managers gain the confidence, motivation and self-awareness in order to develop their own individual learning plan. It was also believed that APL would highlight development needs and help integrate tailored work-based learning with flexible competence-based management qualifications. It was indicated that the development of a portfolio of evidence through APL could aid career guidance and revise career goals for the plateaued or older manager.

7.6.3. The Way Forward - A Combined Approach
This study highlighted many concerns and issues concerning the education, training and development of the experienced manager. Specifically, it noted the needs and wants of experienced managers, as identified by the group studied. This was contrasted to the employers'
human resource practices and the current provision of management education and training programmes. This resulted in the consideration of the APL process being utilised as a unifying vehicle in order to bring all the key areas of management education, training and development into harmony. Therefore, a possible approach would be for organisational human resource specialists and management educational providers to introduce or develop the following key areas of activity.

Continuous Management Development
The principle should be established within organisations that management development is a continuous process and not one that should be restricted to newly recruited graduates or 'high fliers'. The provision of equitable developmental opportunities for the experienced management group could provide a potential cost benefit by improving motivation and effective performance. This would be enhanced further through the development of skills through a process of APL which would fully utilise the experience of the older manager.

Self-development and Work-related Management Programmes
Self-development programmes designed to run in conjunction with practical, work-related management programmes could be offered through the medium of APL. Such programmes would take into account existing expertise and tailor work-based learning to individual needs.

Competence-based Management Programmes
A number of employing organisations were already initiating and implementing their own organisational competence-based management programmes. There appeared to be a need, therefore, to ascertain whether these programmes would be superseded by the introduction of the MCI Management Standards and new National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's). This study was completed prior to the MCI Competence Standards launch in October, 1990 and before the major launch of NVQ programmes. It was, therefore, considered that a study should be made of the framework of the new National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) and related MCI management standards. The results of this literature review can be seen in the next
chapter (Chapter 8) and establishes the relationship between employer organisations and the MCI Management Standards within the NVQ framework.

Flexible and Relevant Management Qualifications
In order to ensure that qualification programmes remain relevant to the needs of the organisation, a collaborative partnership between employers and management education providers should be established. Such a collaborative partnership between employers and providers would ensure that management qualification programmes remain flexible and relevant to the needs of the organisation. The provision of flexible, work-related programmes, through the mechanism of APL, would ensure that organisations encourage a broader range of managers gaining qualifications.

The Accreditation of Prior Learning Process (APL)
The APL process was eagerly accepted by both employer and management groups. However, if APL was to be successfully embedded as one way of providing a cost effective continuous management development system, then the specific doubts voiced in this study must be taken into account.

The first and most vocal criticism was that APL must be seen to have clear cost and time benefits for both employers and managers. It was envisaged that APL would enable those experienced managers with the motivation and appropriate learning style to gather evidence for assessment and accreditation towards a nationally recognised management qualification. It was emphasised within the published report (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991) that the APL process should not be considered 'in place of' traditional management programmes but should be considered as 'part of' or 'in conjunction' with a process of continuous management development. It was envisaged that the APL process would be linked to the management standards within a national framework of management qualifications. A review of these aspects forms the basis for the next Chapter within this thesis (Chapter 8).
For APL to be successfully established, the benefits and practical implications needed to be marketed to all those concerned with management education, training and development. More information needed to be given to employing organisations if meaningful commitment to the process of APL is to be achieved. Educational providers required greater guidance on how APL and effective 'top-up' learning programmes could be implemented through competence-based management programmes. This formed the subject for later research, the results of which can be found in Chapter 9 of this thesis.

Quality assurance and control mechanisms needed to be established in recognised APL Centres to ensure that the qualifications gained through the APL route were neither 'diluted' nor regarded as 'second-class' qualifications. The validation framework and quality assurance and control mechanisms for the APL process were already being established at that time by Awarding Bodies eg BTEC. However, it was considered that many providers were not aware of the practical implications of these quality assurance and validation mechanisms. This subject forms the basis of Chapter 11 which indicates a need to provide relevant staff development activities when introducing innovative practices such as APL into the world of management education, training and development.

At that time the outlook for the successful implementation of the APL process looked optimistic, that is, if the criticisms and concerns expressed in this project were addressed appropriately. Therefore, at the conclusion of this part of the study in the early Spring of 1991, it was considered that the APL process offered an excellent opportunity to improve the effectiveness of the organisation through improving the effectiveness and learning of managers.
Chapter 8 - "National Vocational Qualifications in Management within the FE/HE sector"

8.1. The Rationale for Exploring the Background to National Vocational Qualifications

As can be seen from the previous Chapter (Chapter 7) the MCI working party commissioned a small scale survey, a synopsis of the relevant findings of which were published by MCI as "The Forgotten Manager" (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991). Thus, the previous research phase explored organisational practice and the development needs and motivations of experienced managers in relation to management development and the APL process. This research study:

"influenced the way the main project was carried out, particularly in terms of marketing the service and also tailoring the process to meet employer needs. During the course of the main project, the Forgotten Manager report was published and was quoted in the press and formed the basis of several presentations at public platforms. This undoubtedly helped to raise awareness of the issue of experienced managers amongst employers and training providers and helped make Crediting Competence a success at its launch" (Hall, 1992, pp 11 & 13).

Chapter 6 investigated the APL process as a means of enabling the assessment and accreditation of work-based experience towards National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's). The direction that these research phases took initially arose from the findings of interviews conducted at macro and micro level and contained in Chapter 4. The results of the previous phases of research highlighted the importance of creating innovative and flexible learning opportunities, such as the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), which were relevant to the development needs of the organisation and of their 'forgotten' experienced managers.

At this juncture it should also not be 'forgotten' that the initial purpose of this whole research study was to identify a proactive
approach to management education provision in order for a mixed economy Further Education and Higher Education College to survive and prosper in the present decade. Such a College:

"sits, often uneasily and uncertainly, between full time schooling for children and full time Higher Education for an adult elite. It is often part of the transition process from one status and experience to the other. Further Education has also been seen as a compensation for one and an apology for the other" (Edey, 1992, p 72).

From previous experience, this rather cynical picture of this particular sector of education has also been painted by employers, and other educational establishments. Many management students (manager/learners) view FE colleges as a 'second chance' for educational achievement (eg BTEC HND/HNC programmes) or as a 'first chance' for access to courses leading to academic and professional qualifications at post-graduate level.

Such a picture reveals a view of FE Colleges acting as a repository for unresolved problems and deficiencies in other parts of the education system (Edey, 1992, p 72) and was often 'forgotten' until there was a crisis in the supply of a specific portion of education provision eg management education (See Chapter 2). Certainly, since the Handy and Constable & McCormick reports in 1987, those providers who have related their management education provision to other parts of the social, economic and political system have been 'courted' by Industry Lead Bodies, Higher Education Institutions, Awarding Bodies and Employers in the rush to compete with NVQ developments and associated services such as the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

A detailed study of further education is beyond the scope of this study. However, this chapter will explore the background to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) and the resultant implications for the management education qualification system and for the Further Education sector.
8.2.1. The General Background to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) and the Management Standards

A variety of national initiatives and developments had taken place throughout the 1980's to improve and extend vocational education and training (VET) in the UK (Jessup, 1989, p 65). The foundations of a new model of VET, which was adopted by the Government and promoted through a variety of agencies and programmes, were laid within 'A New Training Initiative (NTI): An Agenda for Action' published by the Department of Employment, in 1981. The New Training Initiative (NTI) outlined the objectives to be achieved if the UK was to meet its training needs in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex economic environment. A key feature of this document was the introduction to the concept of 'standards'.

Subsequent Government White Papers clarified some of the issues that were implicit in the NTI. Specifically, the development of a system of accessible training for all, based upon agreed standards of competence. In 'Training for Jobs' (DoE & DES, 1984) it was stated that "training" must be firmly work-orientated (DoE & DES, 1984, para 2) and that outdated practices of time-serving, age limited training must be abandoned in favour of training "to agreed standards of skill appropriate to the jobs available" (DoE & DES, 1984, para 26). Decisions about "who is trained, when and in what skills are best taken by employers (DoE & DES, 1984, para 8). Thus whilst employers would be leading the way in training, it was also essential for training to be viewed as an investment and to find "cost-effective methods of giving and assessing competence" (DoE & DES, 1984, para 9).

Following the White Paper 'Working Together - Education & Training' (DoE/DES, 1986) the then MSC was asked to foster the development of employment related standards to be embedded in National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) by 1991. The 'standards model' was also clarified by the Review of Vocational Qualifications in England and Wales (MSC & DES, 1985) and more recently in the operationalisation of this report's recommendations by the National Council of Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ). Thus the recommended (MSC & DES, 1985) national framework of vocational qualifications
would:

- be relevant to the needs of people with wide range of abilities
- be comprehensible to users
- recognise competence and capability in the application of knowledge and skill
- provide opportunity for progression, including progression to higher education and professional qualifications
- allow for the certification of education, training and work experience within an integral programme

Therefore, the NCVQ was established in 1986 to create a new framework of National Vocational Qualifications. Criteria had been set (NCVQ, 1988), which the new qualifications would be required to meet, and such criteria were to be incorporated within a national framework of qualifications. Thus the new 'standards' advocated in the NII (DoE, 1981) were being put into effect through the introduction of NVQ's. The Government's Training Agency, within the Employment Department was also formally established in December 1988 and adopted the many roles of its predecessors (the Training Commission previously known as the Manpower Services Commission (MSC)). The Government White Paper, 'Employment for the 1990's' (DoE, 1988) not only clarified the functions and operations of the Training Agency but emphasised the importance attached to the work of NVQ's (Debling, 1989, pp 77 & 78).

Thus a National Council for Vocational Qualifications had been established:

1) to secure standards of occupational competence and ensure that vocational qualifications are based on this;
2) to design and implement a new national framework for vocational qualifications;
3) to approve bodies making accredited awards;
4) to obtain comprehensive coverage of all occupational sectors;
7) to establish a national data-base for vocational qualifications;
8) to undertake, or arrange to be undertaken, research and development to discharge these functions;
9) to promote vocational education, training and qualifications" (Burke, 1989, p 3).

A timetable for achieving these aims had been established with the requirement that the system should be in place by 1991.

Figure VII The NVQ Framework

This arrangement of qualifications (See Figure VII) within a national system was introduced to overcome the confusion created by numerous awarding bodies competing in the same occupational arena (Jessop, 1989, p 67) with qualifications at different levels, with various structures and spanning various periods of time. This lack of coherence had been confusing to many employers and employees, creating problems in career progression and with mobility of learners within the VET provision. The old qualification system had presented
too many barriers and constraints in gaining qualifications eg age limits, specified periods of training or experience, specified modes of learning at specified institutions. Thus, in many occupations it had been often impossible to gain access to employment if an individual had missed entry to a particular qualification at a particular age or if they could not gain formal recognition of their competence through a traditional qualification route (Jessup, 1989, p 67). Many managers had some formal qualifications in professional areas or at craft and technician level but very few had qualifications reflecting what they did as managers (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991).

Improved access to qualifications gained further impetus when the NCVQ was invited by the Government White Paper 'Education and Training for the 21st century' (DES & DoE, 1991) to extend its qualification framework (See Figure VII) to include qualifications at 'professional' levels. Thus the Government had instructed the NCVQ:

"...to have a comprehensive framework of NVQ's in place by the end of 1992. These will cover 80 per cent of the working population at Levels 1 to 4 in the NVQ framework, and all the major sectors of employment" (DES & DoE, 1991, para 3.4, p 17).

and

"Once that aim has been achieved, we must secure permanent arrangements to keep NVQ's up to date, and to develop them for the remaining 20 per cent of employment, including professional levels" (DES & DoE, 1991, para 3.5. page 17).

8.2.2. The NVQ Structure

The key feature of NVQ's was that each was based on an explicit 'statement of competence'. The basic concept of statements of competence or standards of competence (management) could be seen to be based upon Boyatzis' book 'The Competent Manager' (1982) and triggered the popularity of the term 'competency':
"This fresh start was instantly lost when Boyatzis bequeathed on competencies all the confusion that surrounded traits, motives etc by noting that competencies could be defined in terms of these variables. Perhaps Boyatzis assumed too much psychological knowledge on behalf of his readers when he gave his definition. It led many away from the fact that, although the competency might be a trait, at heart it is still only a convenient summary label for people's behaviour" (Woodruffe, 1991, pp 30 - 33).

Jacobs, in his critique of the MCI standards of competence, noted that "a competency in this case is an observable skill or ability to complete a managerial task successfully" (Jacobs, 1989, pp 32 - 37). Burgoyne enlarged upon this theme and suggested that the term competence is a broader concept than skill and encompasses knowledge, skill, understanding and will (Burgoyne, 1989, pp 56 - 61). However, the NCVQ limited the term competence to demonstrate behavioural outcomes and advocated that statements of competence should include the criteria by which performance could be assessed in order that candidates gain an NVQ. Another feature of NVQ's, which had major implications for the way in which education and training was provided, was that the qualifications would consist of a number of units of competence (Jessup, 1989, p 68). Each unit was further fragmented into a number of elements each with its own performance criteria (See Figure VIII).
Figure VIII The Emerging Framework of Standards of Competence

- Unit 1
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria

- Unit 2
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria

- NVQ Title (including level)
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria

- Unit 3
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria

- Unit 4
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria
  - element + performance criteria

(Jessop, 1989, p69)
These statements of competence were shown in outcome terms and set clear goals for education and training programmes but, by their very nature, attracted many different interpretations. Thus, to facilitate a common understanding, a definition evolved which may still undergo further refinement in the light of experience:

"Competence pertains to the ability to perform the activities within a function or an occupational area to the levels of performance expected in employment. It is a broad concept which embodies the ability to transfer skills and knowledge to new situations within the occupational area.
It encompasses organization and planning of work, innovation and coping with non-routine activities.
It includes those qualities of personal effectiveness that are required in the workplace to deal with co-workers, managers and customers.
A competent individual can:
perform a particular function or satisfy a particular role in a diversity of settings, over an extended period of time; and respond effectively to irregular occurrences in environments having different characteristics"
(Debling, 1989, p 80).

In the White Paper, 'Employment for the 1990s' (DoE, 1988), described the framework for training and vocational education and was explicit about the nature of competence standards and about who should identify the standards:

"These standards must be identified by employers and they must be nationally recognised. Thus we need a system of employer-led organizations to identify and establish standards and secure recognition of them, sector by sector, or occupational group by occupational group"
(DoE, 1988).

Thus the high profile of NVQ's derives from two inter-related sources: political pressures and employer demand. The White Paper (DoE, 1988) also expressed the expectation that the standards setting organisations should provide the lead in establishing arrangements for assessing and accrediting learning achievements and should have the ability to influence a significant part of the sector, eg management. They would
also liaise with Government on training and vocational education issues. These standard setting organisations are now known as 'Lead Bodies' or 'Industry Lead Bodies' (ILBs). The Management Charter Initiative (MCI) was one of the first Lead Bodies to be established.

8.2.3. The Industry Lead Bodies
To address these issues and to foster a sense of ownership amongst employers the following strategy was adopted:

- "a lead body is identified;
- it oversees an analysis process directed at defining/elucidating the competence based standards;
- as part of this process, the substance and level of the standards are tested by consulting with an as large as possible representative sample of users (employers), and assessment to the standards is piloted to ensure that assessors can interpret them with adequate consistency;
- it then promulgates the adoption of the standards as a focus for education and training and seeks the incorporation of the standards into vocational qualifications as relevant"

(Debling, 1989, p 81).

It should be emphasised at this point that, to avoid confusion and to support the national framework of vocational qualifications, no more than one set of standards were required with respect to any one occupation or activity. Some occupations are common to a diversity of employment contexts eg management, so that the Training Agency helped to establish Lead Industry Bodies which were representative of diverse employment situations. As can be seen in Chapter 4.3. the Council for Management Education and Development (CMED), now the National Forum for Management Education and Development (NFMED), (its operational arm being the Management Charter Initiative (MCI)) became the Lead Industry Body for management in 1988 and was heavily involved in the Standards Programme.

8.2.4. The Standards Programme
The Standards Programme was concerned with obtaining a definition of 'good practice' within an occupation and the way that learning or achievement was expressed. Thus the Standards Programme fostered:
"standards, which as far as is possible, serve both the immediate and long -term needs of industry, commerce and the public sector; standards which have currency nationally both within and across occupations and industries; standards which are recognised through the award of certificates fostering in the learners a sense of achievement and confidence in the ability to learn; standards and associated certification which is valued by all users and in particular employers; certification which recognises partial achievement and facilitates credit accumulation, where certification of the individual parts (units) makes sense to, and is valued, by, users" (Debling, 1989, p 79).

The MCI defined, within the Management Standards, "what a manager should be able to do" (MCI, Implementation Pack, 1990) and described the results and outcomes a competent manager should be able to produce. The MCI took care never to use the work 'competency' in dealing with the standards, in order to maintain the distinction between aspects of the person and aspects of the job, and differentiates between 'the standards of competent performance' and 'the personal competence model'.

The MCI Management Standards are set out in a hierarchy of:

- Key Roles
- Unit of Competence
- Elements of Competence
- Performance Criteria
- Range Statements
- Personal Competence Model

Thus the basic concept of standards of management competence was not new. As with previous competence-based initiatives, however, the term 'competency' often included personal characteristics (Boyatzis, 1982) or the performance criteria had been absent or competencies had been limited to particular courses and programmes. These previous initiatives were in contrast to the MCI statements of competence. These were derived, not from an analysis of education and training programmes, but from an analysis of employment requirements - hence the term 'employment-led standards' (Jessup, 1989, pp 69 & 70).
National standards of competence derived through this process included performance criteria and were independent of any course or programme of learning. As a consequence of this separation from specific learning provision, an NVQ can be gained through any mode of learning. Therefore NVQ's opened the way to recognition of vocational competence achieved through other modes of learning eg experiential learning, workplace learning and distance learning. Assessed achievements to national standards of competence, through an Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) process, could be placed upon an equal basis to more formal education programmes.

8.2.5. The Accreditation of Prior Learning

Educational programmes such as NVQ's could, therefore, incorporate: "......learning through experience, the most common route to APL is just as legitimate as formal programmes of education and training" (Jessup, 1990, p 2).

The distinctive feature of the accreditation of prior learning (APL) was that it was based upon the assessment of evidence drawn from recent or past achievements. It differed from past educational practice in two ways: it is not tied to specific courses or programmes and it can be retrospective.

"First, it allows assessment and certification of competence without candidates undergoing a particular course or programme of learning. This is a characteristic of NVQ's, but it has not been common feature of vocational qualifications as they have normally been linked to particular course or programmes, in colleges or training centres. In the NVQ model of qualifications this feature would be described as allowing 'open access to assessment'....

Second, APL not only incorporates open access to current assessment but also allows assessment based on evidence of past achievements. Thus the award of a qualification, or a unit, can be made if a candidate can present evidence that he or she has performed to the standards required in the past......"

(Jessup, 1990, p 3)
(This report, Accreditation of Prior Learning in the context of National Vocational Qualifications (Jessup, 1990), provided the impetus for conducting the previous phase of research (See Chapter 7) under the auspices of the MCI and the Training Agency). NVQ's were, however, developed to obviate the problems noted by parties in that research but information had not pervaded to employers or to individual managers at that time (1990).

Thus by 1991, after a great deal of attention by the Government, a national qualification framework was in place. The NVQ system of qualifications was based on individualism and voluntarism with the main impetus coming from a reform of the qualification and assessment (APL) system which was intended to address the problems of management education and training in the UK. It is to the management qualification system that we now turn.

8.3. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) in Management

By the time the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) was firmly established, in 1991, there were already various national examining bodies who had for some time validated qualifications which they perceived to be industry related and based on skills and competence. It should be clarified, at this point, that the NCVQ was established by the Government to provide a quality assurance system for qualifications which meet the needs of employment, and to provide an understandable framework of awards. NCVQ is not, however, an awarding body.

8.3.1. Awarding Bodies

NCVQ decided to give provisional accreditation to the Lead Bodies for two years in order to give the LIB's time to verify their occupational standards. NCVQ identified four criteria for conditional accreditation.

*Proposed arrangements must, as a minimum:
- test performance - not merely knowledge and understanding
- be endorsed as best current practice by an appropriate body in the sector (typically but not necessarily an LIB)
- provide for valid and reliable assessment methods
- ensure adequate quality assurance systems and resources"

(FEU 1989, p 4).
Therefore, if the existing examining and validating bodies could show that they conformed to these criteria, then their qualifications could become part of the new national framework of vocational qualifications. Thus the NCVQ accredits awarding bodies which meet its criteria; the Awarding Bodies offer qualifications based on standards established by the Industry Lead Bodies (CNAA, 1992, p 13).

The MCI produced draft Management Standards of Competence during 1989 and 1990. However, it was not until August 1991 that the MCI received accreditation from the NCVQ for the Management Standards at Levels 4 and 5, and for Level 3 in July 1992. NCVQ had originally accredited only a small number of Awarding Bodies nationally: BTEC; the newly constituted Institute of Management (IM) and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) to assess NVQ's in management (CNAA, 1992, p 13). At the time of writing, however, the number of Awarding Bodies that have been accredited to award management NVQ's at Level 4 are fifteen.

There was an attempt by the Government to relate vocational and professional, management and technician qualifications to academic and school-level qualifications in 'Education and Training for the 21st Century' (DES/DoE, 1991, para 3.7, p 18). However, as has previously been demonstrated in Chapters 4 & 7:

"In management education there was a lack of clarity about different qualifications, levels and correspondences. This was due to the existence of previous qualifications (not always consistently named) and the introduction of new names and qualifications" (CNAA, 1992, p 7).

The main problem appeared to lie in the lack of correspondence between familiar national certificates and diplomas and NVQ's. There were two nationally recognised certificates validated by the:

Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) - Certificate in Management

and

Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) - Certificate in Management Studies (CMS)
which were different in content and perhaps level. The latter BTEC qualification changed in 1991 to a Certificate in Management, NVQ level 4. It was interesting to note that BTEC was the largest examining and validating body in Further Education in this country. BTEC had changed its title to reflect its development from a technician orientated awarding body (the Business Education Council (BEC) and Technician Education Council (TEC)) to a title that was more in keeping with the needs of the business community and education in the 1990's.

Within the former CNAA institutions there was a recognised relationship between the Certificate and the Diploma in Management Studies (DMS); the Certificate was equivalent to half a DMS (CNAA, 1992, p 7). The DMS also provided exemption from part of an MBA or provided advanced entry into it.

The provision was complicated by the complex terms used at different levels. However NVQ qualifications have no title beyond 'NVQ Level 4 in Management' and so on. The real difficulty lay in equating NVQ's with the more academic CNAA and institutional qualifications.

Before the introduction of NVQ's, awarding bodies validation procedures for management programmes were geared towards a non competence-based course provision in colleges. However, the MCI sought to change these procedures for both colleges and non-academic centres eg consultancies and employers, by encouraging awarding bodies to help non-academic institutions to seek validation. BTEC was the foremost awarding body to change their validation procedures to incorporate NVQ's and to award non-academic centres validation for NVQ's in management.

The position of BTEC was especially interesting because, in the 1986 statement of assessment philosophy, BTEC stated:

"A policy of criteria-based continuous assessment is promoted to strengthen the link between the assessment and taught curriculum, the aim being to increase the validity of the assessment in relation to the aims and objectives of the course...."(FEU, 1986, p 20/1).
This statement hardly reflected an "outcomes led" or "standards led" approach. By 1992 there was a rapid change with the introduction of their Guidelines for NVQ Level 4 in Management:

"Outcomes
The required outcomes for the qualification, the statement of competence for the NVQ, are contained in the Occupational Standards for Managers (MI) developed by the National Forum for Management Education and Training, known as the Management Charter Initiative (MCI). This is the recognised Industry Lead Body for Management, which is developing and testing a series of occupational standards for the varying levels of supervision and management. The statement of competence is widely recognised as an authoritative definition of the generic competences applicable across a wide range of specific industries and applications for first line managers...." (BTEC Certificate in Management, NVQ at Level 4 in Management, Part 1: Guidelines 1992, p 1).

8.3.2. The Accreditation of Prior Learning for Experienced Managers
The Management Charter Initiative (MCI), was established in 1988 to improve the quantity, quality, relevance and accessibility of management education and development (See Chapter 4.3.). The MCI had identified experienced managers as a priority group, and had set up a working party to address their development needs. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) was identified as a technique which could be applied to managers and which would build on the work undertaken by NCVQ to provide a national framework of qualifications. Thus a project to "develop and pilot test a process for the accreditation of prior learning (APL) for experienced managers" (Hall, 1992), managed by the MCI and funded by the Employment Department, commenced in September 1989 and concluded in April 1991. Thirteen centres, including colleges, employers, consultancies, MCI networks and the British Institute of Management (BIM) were involved in this project.

A number of key issues were identified during the project (Hall, 1992) which are given briefly as follows:
* awarding body procedures based on courses run in colleges were inappropriate to APL using occupational standards, particularly when applied to non-academic centres;
* the organisation of some of the centre was not geared to the flexibility required to run APL, or in the case of non-academic centres was not geared to working with awarding bodies, and this caused some problems of adjustment;
* the national standards for managers were still in draft form as centres started working with the candidates. The standards had changed considerably by they time they were finalised;
* the project broke new ground in developing evidence and using the standards for assessment;
* the complexity of the standards (and managers' jobs) meant that evidence collection was complex, took longer than anticipated to collect, had to be explained and often had to be cross-referenced across several elements or even units;
* ambitious timescales and the problems associated with the academic year meant that delays occurred in getting candidates to the point of assessment. The project was extended as a result;
* very little was known about MCI, NCVQ, the standards or APL by employers and potential candidates (Hall, 1992, pp 2 & 3).

The last point reinforces the findings of the project detailed in Chapter 7. The report (1992) detailed the findings from the project in terms of the experience of the centres in working with the MCI model of APL. A brief summary of some of the major findings is given below.

"APL as a technique is not just retrospective" (Hall, 1992, p 3).

The use of statements of competence of "best practice", contained within the occupational standards for managers and the use of the MCI model of APL, indicated that the majority of managers had to reflect on their current performance in order to produce evidence against the occupational standards performance criteria. By applying the management standards in their daily work, in order to obtain assessable evidence, it was found that managers could improve their work performance "thus a considerable amount of development took place" (Hall, 1992, p 3). It was also found that the APL process was individualised, self-managed and required a degree of self-reliance (See
It was also considered that some candidates may have had more suitable 'learning styles' (Honey & Mumford, 1982) for a more structured learning programme (See Chapter 10).

The technique of portfolio development could be applied to all managers, not just those with a large amount of experience. Portfolio development was a "highly appropriate assessment technique for the MCI standards" (Hall, 1992, p 3) and could be integrated with formal or modular learning programmes as well as within an APL process.

The complex nature of a manager's role indicated the need to provide some form of explanation and a prescriptive approach to the presentation of the portfolio. At the time of writing, this task was achieved through the use of a Personal Narrative and a detailed cross-referencing system. It was found that the development of a portfolio of evidence involved a time-consuming and rigorous process but the value came from the learning and development acquired by each participant.

There was a need for heavy involvement by awarding bodies, to develop policies and procedures, in order to verify participant's portfolios of evidence to an NVQ management level qualification. This would subsequently involve the training of APL centre staff and the provision of appropriate guidance materials for both staff and candidates (See Chapter 6.5.1.):

"Centres - both colleges and non-academic centres - need help to implement this new technique. This means staff development, good quality materials for use both by the centre and candidates and marketing and technical support from awarding bodies/Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and/or MCI is required" (Hall, 1992, p 5).

It was also considered that the introduction of the management standards through the APL process often invoked other developmental activities eg performance appraisal (See Chapter 7.4.). Therefore it was essential that managers should be supported by their employer and line manager within the APL process and with related developmental activities.
The results from the project (Hall, 1992) also confirmed the notion that managers learn more effectively when working in groups and was beneficial both in terms of reduced cost, gaining help from other candidates and in team building:

"Groups can also be set up as action learning sets and take up on-the-job development activities to improve performance and produce evidence" (Hall, 1992, p 4).

Learning contracts would also assist in the effectiveness of groups and would provide a structure for what would otherwise be an individualised process.

MCI recommended a "good practice" (See Figure IX) model for centres offering APL/portfolio development techniques directly resulting from the findings contained in the MCI project report (Hall, 1992, p 5). The final result of this project was an MCI initiative which promoted the APL technique nationally through a network of licenced centres, and which offered portfolio development for managers under the brand name Crediting Competence.
Thus by the time the Accreditation of Prior Learning for Experienced Managers (Hall, 1992) project was completed in 1991 there had been enormous and confusing changes within the national framework of management education and the qualification system. These changes had a profound effect upon the FE sector of education and upon the staff involved in delivering APL and NVQ management qualification programmes.
8.4. The Practical Implications of NVQ's in Management within the Further Education sector

8.4.1. The Implications of Operational Changes within the FE Sector
As the publicly funded providers of vocational education and training, such as management education, it could be expected that the LEA Colleges would be a central reference point in the changes to the national framework of management qualifications. However, as was demonstrated in the MCI project report (Hall, 1992) more non-academic centres were being involved with national changes and initiatives eg Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. Historically FE Colleges had been the main source by which working managers could develop their managerial expertise or explore education and personal development for its own sake. What was obvious was how such Colleges were being marginalised in the whole competence and occupational standards debate. Colleges of FE were referred to favourably in the New Training Initiative for their efforts to adjust to the changing requirements of employers (DoE, 1981, para 19). However, those involved in the debate observed that the implications of the new NVQ's and APL/Crediting Competence services would sit uncomfortably within the more traditional portfolio of management courses:

"If one reads the NTI document carefully it is apparent that FE does not necessarily mean colleges of further education. There will be tremendous competition from other sources which may be more flexible and cheaper" (Edey, 1992).

The publication of "Managing Colleges Efficiently" (DES, 1987), following a study by the Audit Commission on Further and Higher Education in 1985, indicated the pressures being put on LEAs and the colleges to be seen to be giving good value for public money. Indeed commercial activities by Colleges had been actively encouraged by the 1985 Further Education Act: 'Commercial Activities in FE'. College managers and staff, who were proactive in the field of educational change, recognised a very different climate that existed for LEA funded colleges.
The position of Further Education Colleges as providers, amongst many other alternative providers, was made even clearer in "Employment for the 1990's" (DoE, 1988). This envisaged that the new role of the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), would ensure that local training providers meet the criteria for award of Approved Training Organisation status if they were to deliver publicly funded programmes (See also Chapter 1.3.). The central issue for FE institutes was the kind of action that could be taken to help assure both the quality of the system and an effective role for FE colleges (FEU, 1989, Introduction). Thus by the end of the 1980s colleges were forcibly being made aware that the national changes to the framework of education, hinted at in the NTI, were well under way with the introduction of NVQs.

The Education Reform Act (DES, 1988) imposed a new planning scheme on Local Education Authorities which intended to indicate how college provision was to be planned, budgeted and controlled by delegation to Governing Bodies (Kedney & Parkes, FEU, 1988, p 13). The intentions of the Act (DES, 1988) placed day-to-day responsibility "in the hands of those close to the activity being managed" and gave them substantial discretion over resources:

"The provisions of the Act do this and create more independent governing bodies which are closer to the customers of the service" (Kedney & Parkes, FEU, p 13).

These intentions gained further impetus from the White Paper "Education and Training for the 21st century (DES/DoE, 1991):

"Our intention is that from 1 April 1993 the colleges will be funded directly by the Government, through new Councils appointed by and responsible to the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales"


Also, Colleges would work closely with the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) who:
already have specific responsibilities for work related further education. These links will be reinforced by involving TECs with the Councils, and on governing bodies of colleges. Both TECs and the colleges have much to gain from close co-operation" (DES/DoE, 1991, para 9.7, p 59).

So by the beginning of the 1990s it was possible to see how the implications of the NTI have had an effect on the FE Colleges in terms of their place amongst other providers within a national system of Vocational Education and Training.

The key to the LEA's role in planning and co-ordination appeared to lie with further education institutions instigating a strategic planning process in order to keep provision abreast of the needs of students and employers, and to eliminate gaps and wasteful duplication" (Kedney & Parkes, FEU, 1988, p 13). The role of the college governing body would be complementary to that of the LEA and would contribute to the planning process. However, once the broad allocations were set, the governing body of colleges would be responsible for the exact pattern of provision and would in turn delegate authority for day-to-day matters to college principals (Kedney & Parkes, FEU, 1988, p 15).

Thus, these major changes to the management and funding of FE colleges were intended to have an enormous impact upon the curriculum and staff development and, therefore consequentially upon the ability of colleges to survive and thrive in the field of management education provision.

8.4.2. The Effect of NVQ and APL Initiatives upon the Curriculum and Staff Development Programmes

The previous sections within this Chapter have attempted to explain the educational context within which NVQ's and APL were being implemented during the 1980's and early 1990's:

"The general usefulness, as well as the success or failure, of all educational initiatives is related to the educational context in which they are set up"

(FEU, 1992, p 13).
During the 1980's, as adults became increasingly important clients in further and higher education, the process of APL gained its reputation as a valuable component of non-standard provision for adult returners (FEU, 1992, p 13). The requirements arising from new legislation were pressurising Further Education Colleges to become more learner centred with such parallel developments as flexible access to services; encouragement for open access and assessment were all developments that were favourable to the growth of APL. Therefore flexible learning was being introduced into mainstream FE provision (FEU, 1989, p 1) in the early 1990's which provided FE Colleges an opportunity to develop NVQ's in management and associated APL/Crediting Competence services.

APL had, until the early 1990's, remained marginalised to the mainstream Further Education curriculum and its potential as a multi-purpose assessment service was limited by the technical difficulties of using APL for formal credit towards traditional qualifications. However, with the advent of NVQ's, this initiative provided an impetus to utilise APL for accreditation purposes within flexible mainstream assessment (FEU, 1992, p 13). Thus the time was right for colleges to develop APL as part of a new range of customer-centred learner services (See Chapter 7):

"Nevertheless, the various changes now underway, and the context in which they are occurring, provide a window of opportunity for reviving and developing FE on an exciting new basis" (Shackleton, 1989, p 103).

However, introducing such changes as NVQ's and APL would necessarily have a direct impact upon the culture, the curriculum and staff within an educational organisation. Not only would this programme for change:

"require careful planning to ensure that the staff resources and expertise are available, and that the new actions for change will influence company operations only in a positive sense" (Fletcher, 1991, p 120).

but it would also require:
"the involvement of many different kinds of people who bring to the process a wide range of professional skills and knowledge. It also requires that people work effectively not just as isolated individuals but as a team" (Simosko, 1991, p 28).

Thus a proactive involvement of staff at all levels of the hierarchy were crucial to effect such changes within the national qualifications system, the institution, the curriculum and the staff development programmes and support services.

It had been noted that the successful implementation of such changes as NVQ's and APL within the curriculum had proved difficult for some individuals who were having to adapt to new methods of assessment (Burke, 1989, p 125). There was speculation that such new qualifications and modes of assessment would shift delivery from a teacher-centred, didactic approach to a more flexible learner-centred and facilitative approach. Such changes in delivery modes (as have been previously discussed in Chapter 5) and adaptation of a teacher's behaviour can best be described by comparing a model of a traditional learning programme, Figure X, with a model appropriate for competence-based learning programmes, Figure XI, (Stanton, 1989, pp 98 - 99).
Figure X  Model of a traditional learning programme:

Job or Occupation

Analysis into areas of learning

Theory

Topics or (more recently objectives)

Text or extent of understanding

Pass/Fail (Dependent upon % coverage achieved)

Practice

Skills or Activity areas

Measurement of time spent in each

(Stanton, 1989, p98)
Thus it could be identified that with competence-based learning programmes the modes and standards of assessment have to be considered prior to the development of the learning programme. Further:

"...if assessment shows that the definition of component performance can already be matched, no 'course' is required before a certificate may be awarded. If the performance falls short of what is required, the process becomes a diagnostic one, and the professional skills of the tutor are required in order to identify what learning experiences are most likely to bring about an improvement" (Stanton, 1989, pp 98 - 99).

Thus the quality of the curriculum, within APL provision, depended partly on the expert diagnosis of learning needs, whereas the quality of
a qualification depended upon the quality of assessment of the attainment of competence:

"The changes in role and form of assessment required for NVQs has been touched upon - qualifications defined by workplace outcomes have to be viewed as distinct from learning processes, courses or training programmes. This has major and immediate implications for both FE colleges and examining and validating bodies (EVBs)" (FEU, 1989, Introduction).

These APL features, learning processes and quality of assessment, have also been discussed within Chapter 6 of this thesis.

Thus the role of professionals, delivering APL leading to an NVQ in management, would drastically change to include amendments to the system of curriculum delivery and assessment. FE College staff would have to adapt from the role of 'teacher' in the delivery of courses to the role of 'adviser' and 'assessor' in the delivery of APL and NVQ management programmes. Both the roles of adviser and assessor were crucial to the successful implementation of these new initiatives:

"The role of the advisor in APL is primarily one of supporting and mentoring candidates through the APL process. To do this effectively, it is necessary for the advisor to demonstrate a range of skills. They need to be able to work with candidates rather than for candidates in helping them reflect on their skills and accomplishments" (Simosko, 1991, p 74).

"APL assessors must adhere to a range of principles of good practice. These include making sure the evidence submitted and/or generated by candidates is valid, reliable, sufficient, authentic and recent enough to be of value to the assessment" (Simosko, 1991, p 122).

Simosko (1991, p 33) also included other changes within the many broad functions of APL delivery:
* Marketing
* Informing
* Advising
* Setting standards
As the basic APL process contained six stages, which were not necessarily discrete, each one of the stages required a number of people with different skills to undertake the wide range of functions shown above. Thus the emphasis placed upon the diagnostic and counselling role of the Adviser and the quality control aspects within the role of Assessor forced a reappraisal of the professional role and expertise of those teachers/lecturers who were in the forefront of implementing changes within the management qualification system.

Thus implementing APL services required flexibility in all aspects of a college's operations by adopting a progressive action plan which would build on existing guidance, assessment and learning arrangements. Action plans were required which would:

"...take full account of the resourcing (especially staffing) implications of APL including top-up learning, where APL is geared to accreditation" (FEU, 1992, p 7).

The experience drawn from an FEU project 'The Assessment of Prior Learning and Learner Services' (1992, p 8) suggested that there was a role for generalists in providing marketing, information, initial guidance and screening services, but that detailed guidance about suitable evidence as well as assessment should be provided by specialists with relevant subject-based knowledge and expertise.

Thus the introduction, in the early 1990s, of APL or Crediting Competence and NVQ's into management qualification programmes into mainstream FE provision had combined the worlds of education, industry and commerce. Therefore, a broader perspective was adopted, within this research study, to include the views of staff engaged in the provision of new NVQ management and APL programmes within a proactive FE/HE College. Those staff, who were in the process of learning and adapting to these innovative practices in 1991, had already
perceived that there would be substantial changes made to the curriculum, the organisational context, their professional role and ultimately upon the learning programme for management students. Thus the merging of educational practice with the management occupational standards forced a reappraisal of the process by which managers learn and the next chapter attempts to understand staff/learners' behaviour within this context of complex environmental and organisational change.
PART III

The Management of Learning in Action

Chapters 9 - 12
Chapter 9 - The Management of Learning in Management Education - an exploration of reactions to new initiatives

9.1. Rationale for the Research Study
The last Chapter (Chapter 8) has described the development and implementation of such initiatives as APL, or Crediting Competence as it is now called, and NVQ programmes for managers. These new management qualification programmes entered the mainstream of Further Education provision and combined the worlds of education, industry and commerce through the utilisation of the MCI Management Standards and the NVQ framework.

The results of research findings contained in Chapter 7 indicated that older, experienced managers were demanding increased self-development and work-based management learning programmes that reflected their development needs. Employers were also demanding that management programmes were related to immediate business needs as opposed to longer term educational strategies. Both employers and their managers were requiring that providers met their needs at times and venues best suited to the business environment (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991).

Earlier chapters within this thesis (Chapters 4 and 6) have already indicated that within the educational context flexible, work-related management programmes were being designed that incorporated the modular and competence approach. This approach reflected the needs of 'non-traditional' students and the managers of today. Therefore:

"Administrators, course leaders and academic staff generally have been faced with new imperatives - changes in financing and planning procedures, forecasts of declining numbers of 'traditional' students, and therefore pressure towards wider opportunities for more 'non-traditional' students (CNAA, The Modular Option, 1990, p 6).
Thus, the earlier stages of this research provided a foundation that highlighted some general benefits and constraints imposed by changes to the management education curriculum. Importantly, these earlier research results demonstrated the need for colleges of further education to change in order to develop the curriculum to satisfy the needs of the organisation and of the manager.

Thus, Further and Higher Education lecturers, within the management education field, were attempting to make sense of these numerous educational initiatives and demands placed upon them by Industry Lead Bodies e.g. MCI, Examining and Validating Bodies BTEC and employers and students. The merging of educational practice with the management occupational standards within the NVQ framework forced a re-appraisal of the process by which managers learn. This led to a more focused study using repertory grids (Bannister & Fransella, 1986) as a means of elucidating one group of lecturers' perceptions of managing the learning process amidst these complex changes within the education field.

The participants in this research study were:

i) Lecturer/Managers (some of whom also acted as managers of a course programme) whose professional role was the teaching of fellow adult managers

and

ii) Lecturer/Learners who were involved as 'students' within an internal college management development programme and whose professional role was the teaching of adults.

To avoid confusion, from this point the term "staff" will be employed throughout the remainder of this thesis to include all those college staff who were employed either as Lecturers or Managers. The term "learner" has been used to denote all those people employed by the college who were involved in the process of learning about new initiatives in management education. The term "Lecturer/Learner" was discarded as being ambiguous in that it may be construed by the reader as meaning "a person who was learning to become a Lecturer". Thus, the term 'staff/learner' has been used in a consistent fashion and
denotes those professionals whose prime focus was the facilitation of learning because:

"We have finally really begun to absorb into our culture the ancient insight that the heart of education is learning, not teaching, and so our focus has started to shift from what the teacher does to what happens to the learners" (Knowles, 1978, p 52).

Many of the innovations in adult learning, such as APL, have shifted the focus away from the traditional belief that learning and teaching is a process of transmission of knowledge towards a process of 'managing the independent learner'. These aspects have been fully discussed in Chapters 5 and 10 of this thesis. Fundamental to this study, therefore, was a challenge to the limiting assumptions of those who did not yet see learning as a personal creative act and the teacher's role as one which helps the learner to learn independently (Pope and Denicolo, 1991).

This case study was conducted within a college, to be called Pathway College, which was considered to be pro-active generally in the field of education and more specifically so with the introduction of new initiatives as APL and NVQ programmes. This study was not intended to be representative of all colleges and their staff but to illuminate the kinds of issues which were arising at the time. The choice of Pathway College made it likely that similar issues would be prevalent in other colleges. Thus, this study set out to explore the basic assumptions and attitudes that Lecturers as staff/learners have, towards the process by which managers learn during a time of complex external and internal change.

The Structure of the Chapter
The general approach to the methodology, utilising individual repertory grid interviews (Kelly, 1955), is shown in Section 9.2. of this Chapter. The fieldwork plan is shown in the next Section, 9.3. This is followed by a descriptive summary of results in Sections 9.4. A comparison of results obtained from the two participant groups can be seen in Section 9.5. followed by the conclusions and suggestions for further areas of research (Section 9.6).
9.2. The General Methodological Approach
Kelly's Personal Construct Psychology (1955) proposes that people have their own view of the world, their own expectations of what would happen in a given situation, and that their behaviour is a continuous experimental process of checking constructs against experience (Bannister and Fransella, 1986). This approach proposes that the world is perceived through a personal pair of goggles with each individual bringing his/her own unique history and experiences to situations, which affects the way these are viewed and how they are dealt with (Denicolo and Pope, 1990).

Kelly's stance as a therapist and an educator was to encourage clients/learners to articulate their world views and to recognise these views as current hypotheses potentially open to invalidation (Pope & Denicolo, 1989, p 4). In this way he hoped the client/learner would be placed in the position of opening their minds to potential alternatives which might serve his/her cause better. When applied to an educational context,

"Kelly's constructivist view of knowledge lends support to teachers and researchers who are concerned with the investigation of learners' views, who seek to incorporate these views within the teaching dialogue and to see the importance of encouraging learners to reflect upon, and make known, their construction of some aspect of reality" (Pope & Denicolo, 1989, p 5).

Kelly (1955) saw each person as a scientist (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 4), capable of creating a unique interpretation of experience which is used to anticipate future events. Kelly's writings, therefore, provide a supportive nexus of ideas which have informed the practice of learners, teachers and educational researchers and provides support for the notion of 'person as a scientist'. It was for these reasons that the research process was designed to incorporate the use of the repertory grid as a tool to help the study participants to reflect on present and future practice.
The repertory grid was devised by Kelly as a means of looking at people's construct systems, as:

"... a tool which can be used to explore a person's repertoire of constructs within a particular domain of enquiry" (Pope & Denicolo, 1993, p 3).

The underlying purpose of the repertory grid study was to explore the attitudes that staff/learners had towards effective means of enabling experienced managers to learn and to provoke an elucidation of staff/learners' perceptions of their role in managing the learning process. The explicit and prime purpose of this study was to investigate and identify effective means of enabling experienced managers to learn. A secondary subsidiary purpose was to use the repertory grid mechanism as a means of evaluating a module of an internal college management development programme (Group ii).

The mechanisms for general grid elicitation can be found Dalton & Dunnett, 1992 and Pope and Denicolo, 1993. Further details are provided later in Section 9.3. of this Chapter of how the grid was used in this study.

The repertory grid was undertaken with two disparate groups of participants all of whom were experienced lecturers and/or managers in Pathway College. The first group (i) consisted of staff/learners who have had previous practical experience within their respective profession or specialism and were, in 1991, lecturers or managers. Participants were drawn from a large cohort of management, business and professional staff in a newly established Business School. This group (i) of participants were responsible for the delivery of management programmes and, it was anticipated by the writer, would be specifically responsible for the design and delivery of future NVQ management programmes.

The second group (ii) consisted of academic staff, who were experienced Lecturers or managers of courses, and were participants in an internal college management training and development programme. This
management programme was designed as part of a staff development activity for managers within an educational context. It was based upon experiential learning techniques, maintaining as a core concept "the management of self". The development of knowledge of individual learning styles (Honey and Mumford, 1982) and the use of a Personal Development Journal (PDJ) were key elements within an introductory residential week-end. In addition, a work-based project formed an integral and ongoing part of the participant's learning process.

The articulated philosophy upon which the programme was based is shown below:

"Management self-development is a term used for those approaches to management training and development which seek to increase the ability and willingness of the manager to take responsibility for him or herself, particularly for her or his own learning" (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1988).

Repertory grids were also used as part of an evaluation exercise for a module of this management programme. However, the prime purpose of this study remained the same for both groups of participants. The procedure followed a similar pattern for both groups in that, following an explanation and rationale of the grid process, each participant completed a grid form as part of an individual interview.

These volunteers participated in a series of individual grid interviews, derived in terms of practical procedures and implementation from the Stewart and Stewart (1981 pp 11 - 19) approach. This involved eliciting constructs* through a 'triadic procedure'* with individual staff/learners. It was anticipated that these constructs would be unique to the individual and it would be unlikely that other staff/learners within this study group would use precisely the same terms or words. The following description of techniques used in this study is provided.

Footnote: Explanations of constructs, elements, 'triadic procedure', laddering, and an example of a Display, FOCUS and PrinCom analysis can be found in Appendix XI.
Description of Techniques Used:
Initially, an element* list had to be devised of learning methods that would encompass three important factors. Firstly, the elements had to be within the range of convenience of the constructs to be used as:

"Constructs are discriminations we make between people or events or things but each applies only to a limited number of people, events or things" (Fransella and Bannister, 1977, p 13).

Secondly, the elements had to be representative of the pool of staff/learners' experiences and activities. It was necessary, therefore, that the learning methods that appeared as elements in the study were sufficiently representative of all the methods that participants could relate to within their self-construed role (Fransella and Bannister, 1977, p 13). Lastly, the elements had to be specific and precisely worded as:

"An imprecise element, struck against another imprecise element or two to produce a construct, will not produce much clarity of contrast and therefore will not produce good clear constructs" (Stewart & Stewart, 1981. p 29).

Pilot study interviews with participants were undertaken to gather 'common' learning methods used when conducting management programmes. These 'common' methods were supplied as elements in subsequent interviews with allowance for the participant to provide further 'elements' if desired.

Following agreement, with each participant, of the range of elements to be used constructs were then elicited. A number of ways of eliciting constructs using the triadic method can be found in Fransella & Bannister, 1977, pp 14 - 15. The triadic method used within this study consisted of each participant being presented with three of the nine elements. Each individual was then asked to specify some important way in which two of them were alike and thereby different from the third. The reply was recorded followed by a request to identify the way the third element differed from the other two elements. The answer to
the question concerning the difference is referred to as the 'contrast pole'.

The elements were then rated, by the participant, on a scale of 1 - 5 along the construct pole range. Thus, at the end of the construct elicitation process a raw grid was drawn that depicted each participant's view of the effectiveness of the nine learning methods or elements (See Appendix XI for a Display analysis). The actual process of eliciting and elaborating upon a grid in this way generates a conversation of great value (Stewart & Stewart, 1981, p 68).

The number of triads of learning methods or elements that were presented to each participant depended upon the interview time available and upon the ease with which the participant found the elicitation process. The importance of listening to the ease or difficulty the participant experiences when generating answers to the questions posed can provide useful leads later on in the interview process. Listening is especially important when the participant is asked to rate an element on a construct when s/he has never made such judgements overtly before. The participant may show reluctance or surprise during this process, therefore, the body language is a very clear indicator of attitude as:

"The process of the Grid interview is usually so absorbing for the interviewee that he finds it difficult to control his body language, so you can use it as a valuable guide to feelings."
(Stewart & Stewart, 1981, p 68).

Therefore, a written note was made on the raw grid matrix to indicate such non-verbal expressions of feelings.

The use of 'laddering' (Stewart & Stewart, 1981, pp 20 - 28) was not undertaken in the interviews. This was due to the total size of the group of participants, in Group (i) thirteen interviewees and in Group

Footnote: Explanations of constructs, elements, 'triadic procedure', laddering, and an example of a Display, FOCUS and PrinCom analysis can be found in Appendix XI.
(ii) eight interviewees, and the fact that time allowed for these interviews to be conducted was at a premium. However, staff/learners were asked, within the repertory grid conversation, to clarify issues and to provide examples that related to a particular construct. Thus, within the discussion of results (9.5.), there will be shown an elucidation of constructs rather than a description that strictly conforms to the 'laddering' principle.

The results were analysed, using the Centre of Person Computer Studies software programme (Shaw, 1990) producing a Display, FOCUS and PrinCom print-out*. It was anticipated that the 'triadic elicitation procedure', used in a repertory grid interview, would yield a matrix that would embody valuable information about how the respondents viewed their role and the effectiveness of management education programmes. Such construct dimensions would be generated independently and would produce a hierarchical cluster analysis (FOCUS) and principal components (PrinCom) analysis (Shaw, 1990):

"The idea of revealing the meanings in a Grid by re-sorting it so as to place like elements together and like constructs together is carried further by various computer programs which use a variation of the cluster-analysis technique" (Stewart & Stewart, 1981, p 56).

In this study the FOCUS programme (Shaw, 1990) was utilised and operates in a similar way to that of a manual analysis. However, the use of a computer analysis such as the FOCUS programme enabled a more sensitive interpretation of the raw grid data (Stewart & Stewart, 1981, p 57). This programme firstly examines the raw grid and identifies the correlations between the different elements by searching for the two elements that are most highly correlated. This searching technique is repeated until all the elements in the grid are re-sorted and the complete element 'tree' is then depicted in a picture of pairs, linkages and clusters with the inter-correlations shown on the scale. The same procedure occurs with constructs, with the programme primed to reverse any construct necessary to enable the interpreter to annotate the grid accordingly (Stewart & Stewart, 1981, p 58). The final output is a re-sorted grid with a 'tree' of elements and a 'tree' of constructs ready for interpretation.
These 'trees' were unique to the individual participant but may have indicated commonalities or differences in perceptions and meanings. Therefore, the constructs used by participant staff/learners could produce distinctions in terms and meanings within a repertory grid interview. As constructs are unique and idiosyncratic it was considered unlikely that other staff/learners would use precisely the same words to refer to the underlying meaning or qualities.

Interpretation and analysis was offered to all individual participants as part of a feedback interview. A similar process of repertory grid interviews and analysis was conducted in a later study and is described in Chapter 11.2.

9.3. Fieldwork Plan
The following demonstrates the three stages of the fieldwork plan: entry; data collection and the closing activities with participant staff/learners at Pathway College.

9.3.1. Entry Stage
The first activity within this stage was to contact the Principal of Pathway College, the Head of Faculty responsible for management education provision and the Director of Education and Development responsible for the management development programme. The aims of the correspondence were three-fold. Firstly, to inform the recipient of the writer's involvement in research activities and the overall aim of the whole research study. Secondly, to state the specific purpose of this phase of research and thirdly to alert the recipient of a potential benefit either to the College, to the Faculty or to the staff development programme. With each letter a short description outlining the methodology and the reasons for undertaking this study was attached.

A copy of one of these three letters and the attached description, sent on the 15th May, 1991, can be seen in Appendix XII. In each case both a formal reply was received, an example of which, can also be viewed in Appendix XII.
Following receipt of formal permission to undertake this phase of research a letter was sent to all potential participants. These participants were Lecturers or Managers of course programmes within the Faculty responsible for professional, management and business programmes and Lecturers involved in an internal management development programme. A letter was sent to all staff in the Faculty and to all staff involved in the internal management programme on the 20th May, 1991 (See Appendix XII). This letter explained the reasons for conducting the research, the approximate length of time (45 minutes) the repertory grid interview would take and that feedback and interpretation of the print-out would be given within a personal interview. Enclosed with this letter was a sheet with times and dates and a paper outlining the methodology and purpose of the interview. A further letter was subsequently sent, dated the 28th May, 1991, confirming the respondent's interview date, time and venue.

9.3.2. Data Collection Stage
A small pilot study was undertaken with three respondents. The purpose of this pilot study was to elicit common learning methods used when conducting management programmes. Finally, nine elements, derived from this pilot study, to ensure that the elements were not only specific, concrete and homogeneous but also they could be construed by each interviewee were supplied to participants in the main study. A list of all the elements elicited during the three pilot interviews can be seen in Appendix XIII. Participants in the main study could also provide further 'elements' if desired.

Prior to each interview a note was sent to each participant giving the purpose:
"To investigate and identify effective means of enabling experienced managers to learn"
At the same time three suggested activities, that were considered to be helpful for grid completion, were also given:
* think about times that you have learnt in a work situation
* think about what led to that learning
* think about what helps managers to learn
These points were provided in order to help participants to focus on effective learning methods during the repertory grid interview. Within the same note nine suggested elements (from the pilot study) were provided:

- E1 Listening to Speakers
- E2 Systematic Reflection
- E3 Selected Reading to Gather Information
- E4 Observing a Role Model
- E5 Undertaking a Work-based Project
- E6 Writing to Express Ideas
- E7 Discussing issues with another/s
- E8 Practising a Skill
- E9 Presenting and Explaining Ideas to Others

Each participant was also given the opportunity to select a further three elements of their choice. It was agreed with participants in Group ii) that two extra Elements should be added ie 'E10 Role Playing' and 'E11 Problem solving through Case Studies'.

An allowance of 45 minutes was allocated for each interview. It was recognised that this time may not allow for 'laddering' of constructs, however, participants were asked to clarify or to provide practical examples of why specific constructs were considered important. In the majority of cases this was achieved.

At the beginning of each interview it was emphasised to each participant that the data would be coded and kept confidential. It was also agreed that a session providing feedback of the repertory grid data and a written interpretation of the FOCUS computer print-out would be arranged for the end of the Summer Term.

9.3.3. Closing Activities
The analysis and interpretation of each repertory grid, was undertaken by utilising the Centre of Person Computer Studies (Shaw, 1990) software programme. This computer programme produced a FOCUS and PrinCom print-out (See Appendix XI).
The total number of staff/learners interviewed was 21. The repertory grid interviews were conducted during the last week of May and first week of June, 1991. The analysis and written interpretation of each repertory grid was undertaken during June. At the same time an individual written interpretation of each print-out was produced. All participants were contacted at the end of the Summer Term in order to provide verbal and written feedback. This feedback was informal and confidential and participants were asked if they desired a copy of the print-out and written interpretation. It was also re-affirmed that the data had been coded in order to maintain confidentiality. Permission was again requested for the data to be used within this research study.

9.4. Analysis and Interpretation of Results

The purpose of utilising repertory grid interviews was to explore the perceptions and behaviour of staff/learners at Pathway College in order to investigate and identify effective means of enabling experienced managers to learn. Thus, repertory grid interviews were undertaken prior to the introduction of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes at Pathway College. The participants within this study therefore had a degree of conceptual understanding of the theory underpinning NVQ programmes but they did not have detailed knowledge and practical experience of implementation.

A detailed breakdown of the main themes emerging from an analysis of grids from two groups is presented in 9.4.1. and 9.4.2. Group i) represents staff/learners delivering management programmes and Group ii) represent staff/learners participating in an internal college management development programme. The breakdown of main similarities and differences emerging will be shown under two major components of repertory grid: Element Cluster Analysis and Construct Cluster Analysis. Also within this section (9.4.) an elaboration of emerging main themes are provided through the use of participant statements. A discussion of the implications, emerging from the results of two groups of participant staff/learners, form a descriptive summary and is shown in 9.5.
A detailed interpretation corresponding to examples of the FOCUS (Shaw, 1990) analysis of three grids from Group i): CBS 3; 6 and 8 will be shown in Appendix XIV. These participant examples of repertory grids will also be referred to in Chapter 11 and are given in order to provide some continuity for the reader. An example, MTD 1, of a repertory grid from Group ii) is also shown in Appendix XIV.

What follows is an outline of those learning methods that were found to be effective. This is followed by a detailed elaboration of main themes or constructs that were perceived by staff/learners to be essential pre-requisites for effective learning.

9.4.1. The Main Themes Emerging from the Element and Construct Cluster Analysis

Element Cluster Analysis (Group i)

It was demonstrated from the analysis of all the repertory grids from this group, that a high degree of commonality existed between two learning methods. These methods were perceived by the majority of participants to be effective:

E2 Systematic Reflection

and

E5 Undertaking a Work-based Project

Therefore, one of the major and common themes that emerged from this study was the critical importance of a process of systematic reflection related to a work-based activity as an integral part of effective learning for managers. This is clearly demonstrated by analysis of CBS 1's grid (See details of clusters on page 9/16) which indicated that systematic reflection may be a less conscious form of learning and would therefore require a more structured learning/work experience eg undertaking a work-based project. This perception was also verified by CBS 14 who considered that a work-based project provided an important linkage between all learning methods. However, it can be seen from the sample grid shown in Appendix XIV that CBS 8 construed 'systematic reflection' as being linked to all learning methods and acted as a core strategy for effective learning.
The critical importance of systematic reflection being related to work issues was borne out by some of the statements made during the interviews:

CBS 4
"There are some circumstances where individuals effort, reflection and analysis is crucial to aid understanding."

CBS 7
"Learning must be efficient and transferable. Management development is always ongoing and therefore needs to be transferred to the workplace immediately in order to experiment and possibly to change strategies and behaviours."

CBS 3
"Managers need hands on experience and have an opportunity to question."

To a slightly lesser extent, other learning methods that were perceived to be effective by staff/learners were:

- E7 Discussing Issues with Another/s
- E8 Practising a Skill
- E9 Presenting and Explaining Ideas to Others

There was clear agreement from participants that, in order for effective learning to take place, methods needed to include a practical and skills-based approach that involved other people. As will be seen shortly, these five methods were generally construed as active; practical; work related and provided a process of inter-action with others.

The perception that staff/learners needed to utilise learning methods that required manager/learners to develop skills that would improve practice at work was verified by CBS 8:
"Our role is to broaden people's awareness which is transferred to a work setting. It is about the development of transferable management skills which can be used in a variety of management roles."

Therefore, methods such as:

- E6 Writing to Express Ideas
- E3 Selected Reading to Gather Information
- E4 Observing a Role Model
may have been perceived to be unrelated to work and therefore be slightly less effective learning methods. These methods were, however, considered to be an essential part of the overall learning strategy. There was general agreement that these methods involved the manager/learner in solitary activities. Therefore, staff/learners needed to construct some way of making more obviously meaningful these solitary activities for their manager/learners in order to provide an effective learning strategy.

It is noteworthy that the method 'E1 Listening to Speakers' was consistently viewed to be an ineffective learning method by this group. Yet, at the time this study was undertaken, lecturing or speaking to a group of manager/learners provided a common form of activity within management programmes.

An outline of the learning process which was perceived to be effective for experienced managers can be seen to be divided into two parts. Those methods that relate to staff/learners' expert inputs as a classroom activity: supervising work-based projects; developing presentation and writing skills and those that relate to work-based activities. This is demonstrated by an interpretation of the pilot grid CBS 1 shown below:

Cluster 1 Constructs
active; with others; more conscious of learning;
requires less structure in learning experience
(constructs related to expert input)

Cluster 2 reflective; alone; less conscious of learning;
requires more structure in learning experience.
(constructs related to work related learning).

Construct Cluster Analysis (Group i)
A second pronounced theme arising from the analysis and interpretation of repertory grids was the need for managers to be active (as opposed to passive) to enable their effective learning. In general, this construct was used in a way which conforms to the stereotypical image of a manager 'doing things', completing a task as opposed to 'thinking' and 'reflecting'. However, a more holistic and complete
view of a manager's role is illustrated by the following statement from CBS 10:
"Any kinds of activity, where managers learn effectively, are where managers are doing things; taking part; listening and expressing ideas and are moving forward and growing as a manager. A manager's role is a very active role and they therefore need to be interactive; thinking; doing things; changing and thinking ahead; planning as well as out manoeuvring people by assessing situations and looking at and evaluating the consequences".

CBS 8's grid (See Appendix XIV) provides an admirable example of effective learning being construed as active and experiential. As can be seen from this grid the construct: "realistic active process - experiential learning" has been closely paired with: "more value to the student". This construct pair was also closely related to constructs "active" and "challenging for me" (the staff/learner). The following construct cluster formation includes the opposing poles for each of these constructs and is given to provide a better picture of CBS 8's thinking at the time of the interview:

Construct Cluster 1 (CBS 8):
Construct 1: "more value to the student/
not a useful device for learning"
Construct 2: "realistic active process - experiential learning/
not as relevant to work"
Construct 4: "active/passive"
Construct 8: "challenging for me/not challenging for me"

The paramount importance of learning being an active process is well illustrated by CBS 8:
"Learning must be an active process which can enable development".

Another common theme derived from the interpretation of staff/learners' constructs, was the importance of ownership and/or control of learning. It was found from this study that those very methods that allowed ownership and control of learning also may be those methods that were construed as threatening to the learner. CBS 6's grid (Appendix XIV) provides an excellent example of this and shows that: E2 'systematic reflection'; E 3 'selected reading' and E8 '
practising a skill' were perceived to be more effective methods of learning but were construed to be more threatening to the learner. This was in contrast to learning methods: E7 'discussing issues with another/s; E1 'listening to speakers; E4 'observing a role model' which were considered by CBS 6 to be related to work activities and were within an individual's control. Thus methods that were related to work and were within the learner's control were perceived to be less threatening and more effective.

A further example of the construct 'control of learning', as an integral part of effective learning, can be seen in CBS 3's grid shown in Appendix XIV. The label:
Construct 2: "I would have no control over activity/
I would be making a choice about HOW I operated"
is paired very closely with the label:
Construct 1: "I would be reactive/something I would be active in"
this construct pair is linked closely with:
Construct 5: "not an effective learning method/I'd be a lot happier"
Thus, this grid indicates that effective learning can be achieved by those methods where CBS 3 is happier; active and where she can choose how she operates. The links for the alternative poles of the constructs indicate that ineffective methods are those that involve reaction and little choice and thereby reduces learner control.

Methods that involve other people were also perceived as effective but the corollary is that effectiveness is therefore dependent upon the willingness of those others to engage in the process. These propositions are illustrated by the following quotations from participants used as a representative sample:

CBS 4:
*People are responsible for their learning; people need to have a vested interest in their own learning - so does society!*

and

*"Individual learning takes place either through individual or groups. The rationale of group learning is the enhancement of individual learning through the group."*
The two themes control of learning and involves other people is again amply illustrated by CBS 8's grid (See Appendix XIV) As can be seen the construct cluster 1 already outlined on page 20, is loosely linked to the construct pair below:

Construct 3: "self-contained activity/
involves inter-action with other people"
and

Construct 5: "within your control/react to outside control"

This grid provides an example of these two major themes. However, this grid also demonstrates a paradox: alone/control of learning - in a group/not in control of learning which is further explored in Section 9.5. of this Chapter.

Clearly, findings from participant's repertory grids in this group (i) have demonstrated a high degree of commonality in the emerging main themes. The repertory grid interview process also provided an opportunity for staff/learners to consider the effectiveness of learning methods. The provision of time for staff/learners to reflect upon habitual patterns of behaviour, provided a rich source of data. It was also considered that such reflective activities were essential components within an effective learning strategy as illustrated by CBS 7:

"By carrying out certain learning activities experienced managers can challenge their traditional thoughts and practices."

What follows is a similar discussion of findings obtained from Group (ii) who were participants in an internal management development programme.

9.4.2. Element Cluster Analysis (Group ii)
It will be seen that the following findings demonstrate a similar pattern to those findings illustrated above (Group i). Therefore, it was considered unnecessary to provide a more detailed account of the analysis and findings from this group of participants. However, any major similarities or differences found between the two groups will be fully illustrated within the next section (9.5.).

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It was demonstrated, from analysis of the repertory grids, that there was majority agreement between the participants that two learning methods were construed to be more effective than others. These were:

E5 Undertaking a Work-based Project  
E7 Discussing Issues with Another/s

To a slightly lesser extent the following methods were found to be effective on an equal basis:

E2 Systematic Reflection  
E8 Practising a Skill  
E3 Selected Reading to Gather Information  
E6 Writing to Express Ideas  
E10 Role Playing

The participants perceived that the following elements were less effective methods:

E9 Presenting and Explaining Ideas to Others  
E11 Problem Solving through Case Studies

However, least effective methods were:

E4 Observing a Role Model

and lastly:

E1 Listening to Speakers

Construct Cluster Analysis (Group ii)  
The analysis of construct clusters showed a similar high degree of commonality between participant grids. Those constructs that were perceived to enable effective learning were 'active' (as opposed to passive) and were 'practical' (as opposed to theoretical). An example of a repertory grid (MTD 1) obtained from this group can be seen in Appendix XIV. This grid clearly illustrates other common constructs that emerged from this group of participants.

A further common theme emerged which demonstrated that effective learning was dependent upon those methods that 'involve others (as opposed to 'doesn't necessarily involve others' or 'working alone'). A similar degree of agreement was found in those constructs that illustrated the amount of control that an individual had in a learning situation. For example, MTD 1 (See Appendix XIV) showed that the:
Construct 6: "value depends on me/
value not entirely under my control"
were very closely linked with:
Construct 2: "active/passive"
and
Construct 3: "doesn't necessarily involve others/involves others"

This close relationship of similar constructs may also indicate the problem that learners have in understanding that different learning activities work better in different circumstances, favourite ones (those that have been effective in the past) being adhered to despite changing contexts!

There were a variety of other construct labels that indicated a small degree of agreement between participants eg:
"I like most/I like less" (MTD 1)
or
"I enjoy/I don't enjoy" (MTD 2);
*time consuming/time efficient (MTD 5)
or
"would like more time for/would like less time for" (MTD 1).
Although E5 'Undertaking a Work-based Project' and E2 'Systematic Reflection' were perceived to be effective methods of learning they were also perceived to be actively "disliked", "difficult" and participants wanted "less time for". It may be perceived that staff who were placed in the position of learners as in Group (ii) found it difficult to relate to or understand those very methods that were construed to be more effective. In other words, gaining such understanding is part of learning to learn.

An interesting interpretation of the analysis of repertory grids obtained from this group can be seen from MTD 5's grid. This shows that learning was construed as having two aspects eg construct clusters:
Cluster 1 Constructs
practical; work related; practising a skill; inter-action
with others; short-term activities; active.
Cluster 2: reflective; alone; time consuming; more conscious of learning

This structuring of constructs was very similar to that of CBS 1's illustration shown in 9.4.1. Group (i). The following section (9.5.) will demonstrate further similarities and differences between the two staff/learner groups. This section will also attempt to outline the implications that the study findings may have upon the provision of effective learning for managers.

9.5.1. Comparison of Results

Following the analysis and interpretation of individual grids an overview analysis of all the grids was undertaken between Groups i) and ii). Agreement on which elements (learning methods) were construed as effective was high, and the similarity of constructs was notable.

Firstly, the learning method 'Work-based Project' was seen by both groups to be the most effective learning method. Similarly, 'Systematic Reflection' was seen by Group i) to be very effective and Group ii) perceived this method to be only marginally less effective. However, at a later feedback discussion with Group ii) it was revealed that the participants had interpreted the label differently as an activity. In fact, this group reached agreement that "reviewing past events" and "evaluating past experiences" were valuable learning processes. These phrases were apparently more meaningful to them than "Systematic Reflection", a term they described as "academic jargon". This supports Bannister and Fransella's (1986, p 102) caveat that:

"if we literally speak the same language and use this as the basis of our attempts to communicate, it is all too easy to assume that the words used mean the same for each of us".

So it may be that there was even more agreement on the method "Systematic Reflection" than there at first appeared.

Similarly, it may appear that there was a difference in emphasis between the two groups construing of the element (learning method) "Discussing Issues with Another/s" as effective/non effective.
However, it should be noted that the differential scale was relatively small. Thus, both groups construed effective methods of learning as being:

- Undertaking a Work-Based Project
- Systematic Reflection
- Discussing Issues with Another/s
- Practising a Skill

There was a similar ranking, by both the groups, of the remaining methods of learning - with one exception. The method - "Presenting and Explaining Ideas to Others" - was ranked lower in effectiveness by Group ii). There did not appear to be any common reason for this difference in ranking. However, the remaining methods showed a remarkable degree of commonality in ranking along a effective/non effective spectrum. The majority of participants from both groups agreed that:

- Observing a Role Model
- Listening to Speakers

were the most *ineffective* methods of learning.

Similarly, there was a surprising consensus agreement in the use of constructs or labels denoting effective learning activities between the two groups. The major common theme 'active' was pronounced in both groups. A small number of Group i) participants used the term 'experiential' (eg CBS 8) and was interpreted as being synonymous with the term 'active' (eg MTD 1 and CBS 1). The meaning of this term was clarified by the researcher during the interview and was interpreted as meaning "relating to an action or an experience".

Group ii) participants were more inclined to use the term "practical" (eg MTD 1) as opposed to "theoretical" in contrast to Group i) participants who used the term "work-based" (eg CBS 7) or "workplace" (eg CBS 6). However, both groups clearly perceived that effective learning was achieved if the learning activity was both practical and could relate to the work environment.

It was demonstrated from the analysis of the grids that the construct "ownership and/or control of learning" - was common within both...
groups eg "I'm in control/other person has the control" (MTD 2). This was seen, by all participants, as a crucial issue for enabling effective learning of manager/learners and for staff/learners who were managing the learning situation. The constructs: "value depends on me/value not entirely under my control (eg MTD 1) and "I would be making a choice about HOW I operated/I would have no control over activity (eg CBS 3) indicates the similarity of theme. However, there were variations on this theme as can be seen by the use of the label "choice" within the construct description (eg CBS 3). This variation on a theme demonstrates Kelly's "choice corollary" or how an individual elaborates upon their construct system and takes the form of definition:

"confirming in ever greater detail aspects of experience which have already been fairly actively construed"
(Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 13).

The theme 'ownership and/or control of learning' related strongly to the remaining common major theme 'learning with others/learning alone'. The number and variety of the following randomly selected construct labels, with the same or similar meaning, indicates some of the difficulty that both staff/learners and manager/learners have in dealing with the learning situation:

"involves others/doesn't necessarily involve others" - MTD 1
"working with others/working alone" - MTD 3
"individual/group" - MTD 4
"working with others/working alone" - MTD 5
"individual approach/group discussion and activity" - MTD 6
"involves others/not necessarily involves others" - CBS 4
"you can do on your own/needs a third party" - CBS 6
"necessarily involves others/does not necessarily involve others" - CBS 7
"involves inter-action with other people/
self-contained activity" - CBS 8
"dealing with a variety of people/solitary occupation" - CBS 10

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Both methods that 'involve other people' and those that were an 'individual activity' were perceived as effective activities by the two groups. However, the participants considered that a learner 'alone' would have greater 'control of learning' than a learner in a group.

9.5.2. Discussion and Implications

These findings have interesting implications because the interviewees had different ranges of experiences and were responsible for different programmes across the whole range of Business School activities and indeed across Pathway College. Kelly's individuality corollary (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 10) is supported by the uniqueness of each participant's grid, while his commonality corollary (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 17) finds its illustration in the fact that different experiences of teaching and learning result in similar interpretations about what is effective.

What was of further significance during the interviews was not only the 'commonality' of many of the constructs but that lecturing staff readily placed themselves in the position of Learner because:

"Some teachers may have difficulty seeing themselves as learners. Through the process of social stereotyping they may have come to see themselves either as all-knowing or as people who ought to be all-knowing. It can be difficult to shed this mantle, though immensely liberating to do so". (FEU, 1990, p 4).

This was considered, by the writer, to be significant, related to the current and potential changes to their working role, and in fact led to the use of the labels 'staff/learner' and 'manager/learner' in the remainder of the thesis. The reasons for using these particular labels have been explained in Section 9.1. of this Chapter.

Even though the 'purpose' of the grid, ie to explore learning methods from their manager/learners (students) viewpoints, was reiterated and confirmed during the interview, consciously or sub-consciously staff/learners construed the learning methods in terms of their own personal learning perspective and not just from the perspective of the
experienced manager as learner. Perhaps they were emulating Honey’s (1986) approach:

"I want to illustrate how I personally have made use of a knowledge of my own learning style preferences to become a more effective trainer. I do this not in any boastful way but as a means of trying to encourage readers to develop their own learning skills and thus become better at helping other people to learn" (Honey, 1986, p 117).

As a metacommentary, in evaluating the research process, participants found a repertory grid interview unlike a traditional interview and described the experience with emotional words as "revealing", "confrontational" and almost always "reflective" and "tiring". This accords with previous findings with other groups of teachers:

"The Psychology of personal constructs invited a sweeping reappraisal of traditional assumptions about order and change in human experience. As Kelly knew all too well, such a sweeping change of core constructs is seldom fast, simple or painless" (Pope & Denicolo, 1991, p 96).

While there was no intention in these grid interviews to attempt to change core constructs the interviews did, however, provide the time and opportunity for staff/learners to ponder and reflect upon their past experiences and future expectations of their "teaching" or "managers of learning" role. The value of this was articulated by the staff/learners when they were given the opportunity of a interpretation and feedback session. These sessions also provided valuable additional data for the research.

This is best illustrated through the feedback session with CBS 3 (See Appendix XIV). She was very clear about those methods that were effective (ie work-based project; writing; reading; discussing issues with others and presenting and explaining ideas to others). These methods were construed as active, allowing ownership and control of learning and as motivating. CBS 3 demonstrated very clearly, from grid analysis, that a core issue for her is that manager/learners must have ownership of learning. However, this belief was "out of step" with her
present work situation. The feedback session assisted in clarifying for her the cause of a work problem. CBS 3 was experiencing cognitive dissonance whereby her present professional actions (generally using traditional teaching methods) were out of balance with her core values. The feedback session enabled her to clarify for herself future actions which could bring her beliefs and actions into harmony. Unfortunately, as will be seen in Chapter 11.4. CBS 3 never resolved this dissonance within her work role.

This highlights the opportunity afforded by such techniques as repertory grid in terms of providing valuable 'space' for reflection in today's frenetic world of Higher and Further Education:

"But it does remind us that all our present perceptions are open to question and reconsideration and it does broadly suggest that even the most obvious occurrences of everyday life might appear utterly transformed if we were inventive enough to construe them differently"  
(Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 5).

but does emphasise the point made in the quotation prior to that (Pope & Denicolo, 1991) which suggests that the process is seldom painless.

9.6. Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Research

9.6.1. Elements that Describe Effective Learning Methods

In summary, a process of systematic reflection and practical activities that could be directly related to work eg work-based project were deemed by the participants to be effective methods of learning. Yet the term "Systematic Reflection" in itself requires careful definition if it is to be used within management programmes. Even experienced staff/learners construed the term differently and if a reflective process is to be utilised, as an effective learning method, then some agreement should be reached with participants about the use of descriptions of activities that are more meaningful to them.

The ramifications of this, though, go beyond the dissection of semantic niceties because interestingly, both the tutors (staff/learners) and the
participants (manager/learners) involved in the college management development programme were "psychologically not talking to each other" (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 103). Nor was it recognised by either party that formal support and time was needed for reflective processes. Thus, one recommendation deriving from this exercise is that time and formal support should in future be devoted to a recognisable bridge (e.g., personal development journal for manager/learners) between their formal learning activities and their work-place learning. This indeed, should prove a valuable contribution to a holistic approach to management development in which ownership of learning is a fundamental premise.

Similarly, "Undertaking Work-based Projects" were construed as one of the more effective methods of learning and aided the transfer of formal learning to the place of work. Yet, this method demands that staff/learners have to consider work-place assessment which may involve employers as mentors and possibly assessors - a substantial devolvement of the traditional lecturer role.

The conclusions from this study offered few surprises as to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of specific learning methods. The fact that the learning method and grid element "Listening to Speakers" had been construed as the most ineffective method of learning is not new. Similarly, it is not surprising to those intimately involved in education today that the study participants admit to using this method often in their own teaching because they feel constrained by heavy timetables and lack of resources. This practice denies staff/learners' intuitive, professional constructs that such methods as: work-based projects; systematic reflection; discussing issues with others; practising a skill and presenting and explaining ideas to others are effective methods, perceived to be essential to an experienced manager's learning process. Therefore, again, the frustration that staff have with their work is not surprising. College management, in its organisation of timetables and resources, need to be educated about what will ultimately provide good learning experiences which will attract a greater number of students in the long term.
9.6.2. Constructs that Describe and Enable Effective Learning

The major theme that effective learning processes should integrate those activities that are 'active' or 'experiential' have been fully described in the previous section (9.4.). However, it is noteworthy that the APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) process is based upon Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle (See Chapter 5 and Chapter 10.3). Certainly, the APL/Crediting Competence process leading to the award of an NVQ in management appears to incorporate the major common constructs that were derived from this study. Thus, the underpinning philosophy of APL and NVQ provision is that it is: active; experiential; practical; work-based; reflective; individually and group based and importantly allows control and ownership of the learning process by the manager/learner.

The importance of ownership and/or control of learning is not a new proposition! For example, Knowles (1980) proposed four crucial assumptions about adult learners ie that they move from dependence to self-direction; their accumulated experience becomes a rich resource for learning; their readiness to learn is orientation towards social roles; their orientation to learning shifts from subject centredness toward performance/practical centredness. These assumptions are described more fully in Chapter 5 and Chapter 10.2.

However, it was found from this study that those learning methods that allowed ownership and control of learning also may be those very methods that were construed as 'threatening'. How can staff/learners create a learning experience that allows manager/learners to gain ownership and control and, at the same time, create a 'safe' learning environment? This is an ongoing dilemma for staff/learners! The occasional need for adult learners to recreate dependence has in someway to be incorporated with Knowles's andrological assumptions (1980) by those providing management programmes because:

"These assumptions ignore the occasional adult need to recreate dependence, adult expectation, validated by previous experience, that education will impose a dependency relationship, and an adult desire for education as an end in itself, rather than for its utility in the further development of a social role" (CNAA/BTEC, Project Report, 1990, p 74).
Perhaps teachers need to recognise that responsibility is threatening and thereby provide safety nets for when mistakes are made. This dilemma was also strongly related to the common theme that effective learning could be achieved by the manager/learner being 'alone' as well as 'in a group'. This paradox alone/control of learning - in a group/not in control of learning, indicates a need to enable manager/learners to understand why different ways of going about a task work better in different circumstances. In other words, gaining such understanding is part of learning to learn:

"Successful learning is about individual learners being able to choose the best way to learn for themselves as individuals. This will involve making choices about their own feelings and perceptions as well as about the task they are undertaking (FEU, 1990, p 6).

These views from staff/learners indicate that manager/learners should be encouraged to develop in themselves a variety of learning techniques in order to achieve successful learning or 'learning to learn'. This process is later described in Chapter 10.4. and in Chapter 12.2. and provides the foundation upon which the final recommendations contained in this thesis are based. However, this study has revealed cognitive conflict on the staff/learners' part when perceived ineffective methods are used to conform to practical exigencies and when perceived effective methods are eschewed when parts of their own role are perceived to be at risk. These barriers must be surmounted if progress in management education is to be achieved.

9.6.3. Future Areas of Research

There are many tools available that can raise consciousness regarding learning and teaching and which can be used to 'bridge' classroom learning with work-place learning. These tools include: learning logs (Greene and Gibbons, 1991); personal journals (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1986); repertory grids and autobiographical snakes (Pope and Denicolo, 1991) and action learning (Revans, 1980). Each involves a considerable time commitment by the manager/learner alone but also gives the staff/learner an essential role as guide and facilitator.
For example, a Personal Development Journal (PDJ) can be used by the manager alone with little need for tutorial input except for informed input on how to utilise the PDJ. A learning log or PDJ is a means of tracking personal development by writing-up what is considered to be significant learning experiences that occur in the form of everyday incidents. Structured reflection upon these incidents will improve future actions and in this way learning ceases to be a haphazard process and becomes conscious and learner-centred. This requires that manager/learners have guidance in how to structure their reflections, recognise their own learning style preference and be motivated to develop and use other learning styles. In learning styles terms (Honey and Mumford, 1982) keeping a learning log or PDJ can help very high Activists become more reflective, while those with strong Reflector/Theorist profiles would benefit from the opportunity to action plan and do things following reflection (Greene and Gibbons, 1991).

Further, it is important that, within any management development programme or management educational initiative that professes to be based on Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle, a period of reflection should be incorporated as an integral part of a holistic approach to self-development for managers. However, the Kolb model does not "help to uncover the elements of reflection itself" (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). Boud et al are exponents of the integral role of conscious reflection in the process of learning. They maintain that reflection at an unconscious level does not allow the individual to make active and aware decisions, whilst conscious reflection enables evaluation to begin and choices about the future to be made. It is this very need for a process of conscious reflection in the process of learning that has been drawn from the analysis and interpretation of grids within this study. The study also reveals that staff/learners need to reflect consciously on their own practice in order to help their learners to make their unconscious reflections conscious (Schon, 1983 & 1987).

Action Learning (Revans, 1980), although not synonymous with reflection, does allow the manager/learner to engage fully in a process of reflection. The action learning process can provide a suitable 'bridge' for individual manager/learners to reflect on practice 'alone'
and to engage in a reflective 'group' process. Structured action learning 'set' meetings can also provide the manager/learner with a forum that would enable the consideration of workplace experiences in a 'safe' and non-threatening environment.

Thus, the processes of experiential learning, critical reflection and action learning will be further illustrated within the next Chapter (Chapter 10). It will also be shown that these processes incorporate andragogical assumptions (Knowles, 1980) and the philosophy of education of equals (Jarvis, 1985). This chapter will conclude that reflective processes involves action learning and reflective tools such as personal narratives and personal development journals are prime requisites for the successful implementation of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes.

The research process, in this study, used the Repertory Grid as a tool to help the staff/learners reflect on practice. The richness of data obtained from this study provided a way forward for future research. Therefore, repertory grids and autobiographical snakes will be used to explore the perceptions and behaviour of staff/learners after the implementation of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes at Pathway College. These findings will be fully illustrated in Chapter 11.

It should be recognised, however, that these processes and tools do not provide preformed answers to the dilemmas which face staff/learners but they do provide an individualised means for them to effectively review their own strategies. One overwhelming argument for the use of such tools by staff/learners as managers of the educational process and by manager/learners is that they enable both groups continually to use their experience and prior knowledge as professionals to cope with the anomalies and paradoxes imposed upon them by their respective contexts.
Chapter 10 - "Reflective Learning in Action"

10.1. Introduction - Effective Learning as a Process of Development and Action

In order to facilitate the embedding of effective learning strategies, identified by staff/learners in the previous Chapter (9) within METD, a rationale to guide such practice is required. Without such a rationale it is likely that most adult educators/staff learners will fall unthinkingly into actions "that support structures of organizational convenience and confirm learners' patterns of dependency..." (Brookfield, 1986, p 297).

Findings contained in Chapter 6 indicated that the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) model and the MCI (Hall, 1992, p 56) recommended Crediting Competence model (See Figure IX) could provide an educational process that is both an accreditation device for manager/learners' to achieve an NVQ and a continuous developmental process. Thus, the Crediting Competence process, within the NVQ framework, would appear to be able to provide one solution that could satisfy the management development needs of employers and of individual manager/learners that have already been identified in previous Chapters (See Chapters 4, 6 & 7).

As has already been indicated (See Chapters 5 & 8), due to the changing social and economic circumstances FE Colleges have been re-structuring the concept of education by becoming more flexible and learner centred. Andrologistical assumptions (Knowles, 1980, p 43 & 1990, p 27) and the philosophy of 'personal knowledge' (Burgoyne, 1983, p 72) outlined in Chapter 5 corroborates the re-structuring of educational practice in FE Colleges. The process of marketing and selling the new concept of 'education of equals' (Jarvis, 1985, p 49) is appealing to a growing number of non-traditional adult students (Hart, 1992, p 60). However, it is considered by the writer that this emphasis on marketing and selling could lead to a dilution in the provision of quality management programmes. Therefore, in order to provide quality learning programmes for manager/learners adequate support and development programmes must also be provided for staff/learners. Without such support and guidance staff/learners could fall unthinkingly into patterns of behaviour (See Chapter 5.1.) that
more closely reflects the philosophy of a didactic approach to the curriculum and 'education from above' (Jarvis, 1985, p 49).

It is considered that the essence of concepts such as: androgogy; experiential learning; action learning and critical reflection require full integration within a philosophy of 'education of equals'. These concepts provide the essential underpinning philosophy for effective implementation of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. This chapter will, therefore, reflect upon such educational concepts in (10.2.) androgogy (Knowles, 1990); (10.3.) experiential learning (Kolb & Fry, 1975); (10.4.) action learning (Revans, 1982); and (10.5.) critical reflection (Mezirow, 1990). It will be argued that these notions should form an essential and integral part of the emerging staff/learners' practice (See Chapter 9) because:

"Trainers, consultants and Business School lecturers have for practical reasons always been concerned with how managers learn. Consciously or not, they have assumed that to be a manager has definite implications for how, indeed for if, managers learn" (Salaman & Butler, 1990, p 185).

Therefore, the facilitation of effective learning for managers, whether staff or students within innovative management programmes such as Crediting Competence and NVQ's will be explored further in Chapter 11.

10.2. Androgogical Assumptions in relation to APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes

The research findings shown in the previous Chapter indicate that staff/learners wish to promote an effective learning process that enables manager/learners to take responsibility for and control of their own learning. It can be seen, therefore, that management education provision, based upon Knowles's (1990) androgogical assumptions, can also be related to McGregor's (1960) management assumptions of motivation (See Chapter 5). The introduction of such initiatives as Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes may have kindled a re-appraisal of these educational and management assumptions. Thus educational staff/learners, during the
development phase of new management programmes, may wish to verify which assumptions are realistic and practical within a new and changed learning situation.

The process of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes will be shown to be firmly based upon Knowles's androgogical assumptions (Knowles, 1990, pp 57 - 63). The implications for applying these assumptions will now be explored.

The first of Knowles's androgogical assumptions "adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it" (1990, p 57) indicates one of the first tasks for staff/learners when introducing Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes to potential manager/learners. The benefits that could be gained from a particular learning programme and the negative consequences of not engaging in it need to be clearly identified if adult learners are to commit themselves to any programme of study. Clearly, prior to the implementation of the programme, the task of identifying both the benefits and potential problem areas need to be explored during the recruitment and introductory stages and within guidance materials. However, staff/learners should take due notice of Simosko's (1991, p 36) warning that:

"Many APL services during their development period make the mistake of promising more than they can deliver".

Raising potential manager/learners' expectations will not only have adverse affects upon the quality and durability of the programme but may also leave the manager/learner frustrated and floundering in a new learning situation. Innovative programmes, as Crediting Competence and NVQ's, may introduce a new dimension to the learning situation which may contrast or conflict with managers' expectations of a college-based management programme. It may be due to an inherent feature within the managers' role that managers learn in peculiar ways or may resist learning situations (Salaman & Butler, 1990, P 185) especially if they feel that others are imposing their wills on them. They may, nevertheless, resort to dependency behaviour when confronted with an 'education' or 'training' context (Knowles,
Manager/learners have a self-concept (second andrological assumption) of being responsible for their own decisions and their own lives and careers. They may, however, need assistance to create learning experiences that make the transition from dependent to self-directing adults (Knowles, 1975, pp 39 - 43). Hence:

".......adults may be admitted to programs in which self-directed learning principles are applied, on the basis of their own declarations and documentation of self-directed learning capacities, only to find themselves threatened by the educator's refusal to chart every step of their learning path for them" (Brookfield, 1986, p 69).

It has been demonstrated (Hall, 1992 and Tjok-a-Tam, 1991) that older manager/learners enter such developmental activities as Crediting Competence programmes "with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from youths" (Knowles, 1990, p 59, third assumption), by virtue of simply having lived longer. It is recognised, however, that although adults have lived longer than youths this does not necessarily mean that adults have accumulated a broader set of experiences from which they can draw. Brookfield (1986, p 93) suggests that the attainment of adulthood (in the sense of maturity) can only be considered to have occurred if and when an individual behaves in a self-directed manner:

"Their attainment of a certain chronological age is most emphatically not accompanied by the exhibition of self-directedness. However, to describe those adults who do exhibit such behaviours, we would use the term mature" (Brookfield, 1986, p 93).

Thus the difference in manager/learners' quantity and quality of experience and maturity may have several consequences upon innovative management programmes. In any group of adults there may be a wider range of individual differences drawn from wider experience than in a group of younger people, hence the growing emphasis on individualisation of teaching and learning strategies in flexible competence-based education (FEU, 1990). However, Crediting Competence programmes are based upon a self-directed approach to learning (See Chapter 6.4.2.), the essence of which depends on an
individual manager/learner taking responsibility and gaining unique evidence from formal or informal life experiences. Certainly Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes can unleash a rich resource for learning that resides in the adult learner themselves. However the negative side of an accumulation of life experiences may be the development of mental habits, biases and presuppositions that tend to act as barriers to new ideas and alternative ways of thinking. Accordingly, staff/learners who develop and facilitate new management programmes may need to help adult learners to discover new ways of examining such presuppositions through a process of self-reflection and consciousness raising (Mezirow, 1990, pp 54 - 57).

The fourth andragogical assumption (Knowles, 1990, p 60) - readiness to learn - proposes that adults become ready to learn when they have to cope effectively with their real-life situations. However this assumption implies a critical need to focus upon the importance of timing learning experiences to coincide with developmental tasks or real-life situations. With the more familiar or 'traditional' learning programme staff/learners can achieve control and choice over the timings of lectures or sessions within a course curriculum. This can not be the case with Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. In order to implement the Crediting Competence process successfully, it is essential that learning needs are identified during an early stage of the programme and then the programme is developed accordingly. This can be achieved by comparing individual manager/learners' recent and current experiences with the units, elements and performance criteria contained in the national standards of management competence. Appropriate 'top-up' learning, eg simulations and role play, can then be planned and executed. The ensuing learning projects or activities could be organised so that the staff/learners are enabled to negotiate and agree some form of timetable, plan or learning contract with the manager/learners. Thus programmes that profess to help adults cope effectively with real-life situations, eg NVQ management programmes, should also be designed to incorporate learner-centred and self-directed learning techniques (Knowles, 1975, p 21).

This andragogical assumption can be justified by the findings derived from repertory grid interviews (Chapter 9.4.). The term 'active' (as
opposed to 'passive') elicited from staff/learners was shown to be a common construct for effective learning. This construct - active - was linked very strongly with the element or learning method 'Negotiating a Learning Contract'. Therefore, it is suggested that a negotiated learning contract can provide a more elaborate and rigorous format than a simple timetable or plan and can help organise the learning more efficiently. It also induces manager/learners "to be more creative in identifying learning resources and developing learning strategies, and forces them to get better evidence of their accomplishments" (Knowles, 1975, p 25). Thus a Learning Contract, as an essential element within Crediting Competence programmes, can help organise learning more efficiently and effectively. The activity of negotiating a Learning Contract can also provide evidence of the manager/learners' readiness to learn. By such a process staff/learners would be enabled to plan and provide appropriately timed developmental opportunities or activities for NVQ participants.

Knowles's fifth assumption suggests that adults have been found to be life-centred, task centred or problem-centred in their orientation to learning (Knowles, 1990, p 61). Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes, based upon the MCI national standards of competence, can be directly related to work-based activities. These programmes can provide the opportunity for manager/learners to:

"......learn new knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes most effectively when they are presented in the context of application real-life situations (Knowles, 1990, p 61).

Therefore, the process of participating in NVQ programmes, presents the manager/learner with learning opportunities that are task or work centred and which are also perceived to help improve managerial performance. Thus such management programmes are firmly based upon Knowles's fifth assumption - orientation to learning.

The last assumption 'motivation' (Knowles, 1990, p 63) relates very closely to the original works of McGregor's Theory Y assumptions (cf. 1960) and Herzberg's (cf. 1966) motivation theory. Knowles (1990) suggests that while adults are responsive to some external motivators
(better jobs, promotions, higher salaries) the most important motivators are the internal or intrinsic motivators (the desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life). Such intrinsic motivators, however, are frequently 'blocked' by such barriers as inaccessibility of learning opportunities or time constraints. These 'blocks' to learning have been identified by MCI (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991) and have provided a useful framework within which Crediting Competence management programmes have been marketed and established.

Knowles (1975, pp 14 & 15) posits two particularly cogent reasons for persuading people to take the initiative in learning and become self-directed learners:

1. that proactive learners learn more things, and learn better, than people who are taught (reactive learners);
2. that self-directed learning is more in tune with the natural processes of psychological development;

For innovative management learning programmes that are based on Knowles's (1990) concept of andrology, it is no longer realistic to define the purpose of education as transmitting what is known. Staff/learners should be enabled, therefore, to exploit every experience as a 'learning experience' while education or learning should be defined as a lifelong process (Knowles, 1975, pp 15 & 16). These characteristics were initially reflected within the philosophy of NVQ and Crediting Competence management programmes.

10.3. Experiential Learning within Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes

It would be useful at this point to revisit the meaning and definition of the term APL (See Chapter 6.1.) as, at the time of writing, the essence and purpose of the concept of APL is often misconstrued by staff/learners and manager/learners. The outcome of this basic misunderstanding has been the usage of vague or ambiguous definitions which have had a negative impact upon the delivery of the APL process. Thus clarification of the meaning of the term is essential if staff/learners are to be effective in delivering either an assessment and accreditation device and/or a developmental opportunity.
Formerly the term used was APEL (See Chapter 6.1.), Assessment and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (Evans, 1992), now known as Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), or Crediting Competence when applied to the MCI national standards of management competence. Evans (1992) explores the ways in which the assessment and accreditation of prior and current experiential learning (APEL) is practised in higher and further education and community and training provision. He describes one interesting view of APEL suggesting that those experiences from which experiential learning is derived are, for the most part, experiences which lie outside those provided by formal education institutions ie informally acquired learning. However, the focus is later developed and expanded to provide an inclusive view of what experiential learning refers to in the current context and he refers to learning that:

"may have been gained through formal teaching in formal educational institutions which has not been certificated by any established validating or examining body. In other words uncertificated learning whatever its source can come under the label of experiential."

(Evans, 1992, p 66).

This suggests that uncertificated learning from whatever source can be labelled "experiential".

Thus prior experiential learning can stand instead of or be a complement to, formal academic qualifications and can also be used to support access to a formal course and produce academic credit towards the completion of a course (Evans, 1992, p 67). The APEL process is regarded as being more than an accreditation mechanism as experiential learning cannot be accredited without being assessed. The process of 'Systematic Reflection', which was regarded by staff/learners as an effective learning method (See Chapter 9.4.), can act as a stage within a formal assessment and accreditation process eg a Crediting Competence programme. Thus the twin understandings of the concept of APEL can be seen in terms of a developmental programme and/or in terms of assessment for accreditation to a formal qualification:
"These twin understandings of APEL, implicitly or explicitly run through every scheme which has been developed" (Evans, 1992, p 67).

Perhaps the confusion that has arisen from these dual meanings is understandable and was further aggravated by the removal of the 'E', representing experiential, from the label APEL (See Chapter 6.5.1.) and the subsequent utilisation of the label Crediting Competence by the MCI.

Now the MCI term, Crediting Competence, is in general usage by staff/learners and manager/learners with the potential outcome that participants may lose sight of the developmental aspects of Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes for managers, focusing only on the accreditation facet. It should be reiterated that the MCI based the APL or Crediting Competence process (Hall, 1992, p 56) upon the experiential learning cycle (Kolb & Fry, 1975). We shall now turn for a further exploration of this process (See also Chapter 5.1.).

Experiential learning, in spite of its increasingly widespread use and acceptance, has its critics and sceptics but does offer a foundation for an approach to education and learning as a lifelong process "that is soundly based in intellectual traditions of social psychology, philosophy, and cognitive psychology" (Kolb, 1984, p 3). Further,

"The experiential learning model pursues a framework for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work, and personal development" (Kolb, 1984, p 4).

There is a great deal of similarity among the learning process models conceived by Dewey, Piaget and the Lewinian Model of Action Research and Laboratory Training. Taken together, they form a unique perspective on learning and development. The emphasis on the process of learning as opposed to the behavioural outcomes distinguishes experiential learning from the idealist approaches of traditional theories of learning and from the behavioural theories of learning based on an empirical epistemology (Kolb, 1984, p 20).
Working from Lewin's original experiential learning model, Kolb stresses the need for learning that enable students to work with, and build upon, learning experiences in a variety of ways. Kolb's cycle can be summarised as follows: experience serves as the basis for reflection and observation; conceptualisation and analysis follows and then the testing and application of ideas. Each cycle gives rise to yet another cycle (Kolb, 1984).

Thus the APL process or Crediting Competence Programmes, based upon the experiential learning model, offers a system of competencies for describing job demands that can be related to educational objectives. This emphasises the critical linkages that can be developed between the classroom and the "real world" (Kolb, 1984, p 4). Such an educational programme fulfils the developmental needs for a process of 'lifelong learning' and 'work-based learning' as identified in Chapters 4 and 7.

The purpose of the MCI APL/Crediting Competence model was based upon developmental assumptions as well as an accreditation device:

"The perceived benefits of APL included a means of motivating experienced managers and providing a development tool, as well as drawing in large numbers of existing managers into qualifications" (Hall, 1992, p 1).

Again, we see that staff/learners must be enabled and supported by educational institutions to implement the process to achieve both aims. The evolving learning process, within these management programmes, involves the four-stage experiential learning cycle (See Chapter 5), of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984, p 40) but may not involve the more complex developmental aspects of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory of Development (1984, Chapter 6) because in practice, staff/learners have been encouraged to use only Kolb's basic one dimensional four-stage experiential learning cycle within Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. The Learning Style Questionnaire (Honey & Mumford, 1982), which is closely related to the Kolb experiential learning cycle, has also been
used as a means of developing individual manager/learners' self-awareness through a process of reflection and application. However, the development that is attained through higher-level integration and modes of dealing with the world (Kolb, 1984, p 140) involves not only grasping knowledge, at experiential and intellectual levels, but it also involves actively transforming it. This potential transformation of personal frames of reference are central to the way in which people see themselves both inside and outside the work-place (Mezirow, 1990, p 25). Thus the following discussion explores the processes and structure in experiential learning and the related theory of development.

Borrowing heavily from Kolb (1984), the experiential learning cycle presents a structural base for the learning process which lies in the transactions among four adaptive modes and the way in which the adaptive dialectics get resolved eg concrete experience/abstract conceptualization and active experimentation/reflective observation are two distinct dimensions, each representing two dialectically opposed adaptive orientations (See Figure XII).
Using this brief overview of a structural perspective more substance can be provided to the definition of learning:

"......namely, that learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it."
(Kolb, 1984, p 41).

Thus a further exploration of Kolb's commentary results in four different elementary forms of knowledge: divergent knowledge; assimilative knowledge; convergent knowledge and finally accommodative knowledge. The central idea here is that learning, and
therefore knowing, requires both a grasp of figurative representation of experience and some transformation of that representation.

Kolb (1984, pp 140 - 141) argues that the four modes of operating identified in his learning cycle each foster different capacities: affective; perceptual; symbolic and behavioural (See Figure XIII). He further divides the human developmental process into three broad development stages of maturation: acquisition, specialization, and integration as the following Figure demonstrates:

Figure XIII The Experiential Learning Theory of growth and development

(Kolb, 1984, p 141)
and criticises the tendency of academic environments to 'over-emphasise' symbolic learning and early specialisation and to fail to provide sufficient opportunities for development and integration or learning how to learn.

In Kolb's experiential learning theory of growth and development the model demonstrates that adaptation, to reach these three distinct levels of development, represent successively higher-order forms of learning and are governed by three qualitatively different forms of consciousness (Kolb, 1984, p 145) eg:

"In the acquisition phase of development, adaptation takes the form of performance governed by a simple registrative consciousness. In the specialization phase of development, adaptation occurs via a learning process governed by a consciousness that is increasingly interpretative. The integrative phase of development marks the achievement of a holistic developmental adaptive process governed by a consciousness that is integrative in its structure" (Kolb, 1984, pp 145 - 146).

Thus each developmental stage of maturation is characterised by acquisition of a higher-level structure of consciousness than the stage preceding it, although earlier levels of consciousness remain:

"that is, adults can display all three levels of consciousness: registrative, interpretative, and integrative. These consciousness structures govern the process of learning from experience through the selection and definition of that experience" (Kolb, 1984, p 146).

Torbet (1972) described the hierarchical structure of consciousness as a three-tiered system of higher order feedback loops: goal-directed feedback is referred to as first-order feedback; second-order feedback has been named 'learning' and third-order feedback is called 'consciousness'. This three-level structure of consciousness is used to solve problems that arise in explaining how the focus of experience, or feedback in Torbert's terms, is determined. This hierarchical structure of consciousness can be related to Kolb's hierarchic integration of the four learning modes and increasing affective, perceptual, symbolic and
behavioural complexity comes from the emergence of interpretative consciousness and second-order "learning" feedback (Kolb, 1984, p 155).

This focus on consciousness as an essential part of a holistic approach to effective learning by manager/learners can be illustrated by the outline of two clusters of constructs (demonstrated by CBS 1 in Chapter 9.4.). This indicates that methods of learning that are active and group based enable the learner to be "more conscious of learning" in contrast to the more reflective and individual methods of learning whereby the learner is "less conscious of learning". Thus the importance of the reflective observation stage contained in Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984) cannot be ignored if learners, whether they be staff or managers, are to be fully engaged in the integrative and higher-order stages of consciousness and transformative development. This conscious reflection on practice ensures that learners (See Section 10.5. of this Chapter), whether they are managers or educational staff, develop from an 'unconscious incompetence' level to an 'unconscious competence' level of staged development as the following Figure demonstrates:

Figure XIV Levels of Staged Development

unconscious competence

conscious competence

conscious incompetence

unconscious incompetence

(Boak, 1991, p179)
If staff/learners are not enabled to fully comprehend the critical linkages between education, the work-place and personal growth that are contained within the experiential learning cycle and theory of development (ibid) then the developmental aspects that are potentially contained within Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes are doomed to failure. Unfortunately, we will see in the next Chapter, not all staff/learners are given the guidance and support necessary to develop full understanding of the complexities that lie within the developmental aspects of the experiential learning cycle.

The results of this lack of support and guidance within staff development mechanisms may, therefore, lead to a shift towards a more mechanistic approach in NVQ and Crediting Competence programmes. The ultimate effect of a more mechanistic approach is likely to be the loss of a potential opportunity for personal growth and development for both staff/learners and manager/learners.

Although it can be appreciated that 'experiential learning' can offer a means of linking education, work and personal development, the various different interpretations of the term can lead not only to confusion but to misunderstandings between practitioners, especially those not well-versed in its ramifications:

"They see 'experiential learning' - with different meanings - as relevant to the challenges they currently face: in their personal lives, in education, in institutions, in commerce and industry, in communities, and in society as a whole" (Weil & McGill, 1989, p 3).

A description of the 'four villages of experiential learning' (Weil & McGill, 1989, Chapter 1) provides an illuminating way of analysing some of the fundamental issues which bind, and divide, adult educators or staff/learners.

Village 1 - the assessment and accreditation of 'prior' experiential learning incorporates current initiatives around widening access to education and employment to all those with few or no qualifications. This, according to Weil and McGill (1989, pp 4 - 7) is the most widely developed form of experiential learning within Britain. The focus of
work is largely around methods and approaches to the assessment and accreditation of prior experiential learning and this 'village' would certainly incorporate the MCI Crediting Competence Programme:

"The focus of APEL is on the outcomes of learning that has taken place prior to the point of assessment and accreditation" (Weil & McGill, 1989, p 5).

This village emphasises the responsibility of the student to support his/her claim to knowledge and skills derived through experiential learning with appropriate evidence. Simulations, structured interviews, written papers, portfolio documentation and on-job-observation are some of the assessment and accreditation procedures adopted. Structured activities such as the development of portfolios and autobiographical reflection can be used to support these methods (Weil and McGill, 1989, p 6).

Village 2 - experiential learning and change in higher and continuing education. This village incorporates a wide range of people in post school education who are concerned with either developing new approaches within teaching or are developing student-centred or learner-managed learning as the basis for an entire course, department or institution. The people in this village who are involved in experiential learning approaches, tend to share two main concerns: that the prior experience of adult learners is valued and used as resource for further learning; and that learning is active, meaningful and relevant to 'real life' agendas. Within this village, the importance of experiential learning techniques or methods are stressed eg structured exercises, role plays, simulations, project work or field research (Weil & McGill, 1989, pp 7 - 11).

Village 3 - experiential learning and social change. This village (Weil & McGill, 1989, pp 12 - 15) is concerned with using learning from experience as the basis for group consciousness raising, community action and social change:
"In this village, therefore, a particular concern is how internalized dominant assumptions or ideologies in the wider society are recognized. Reflection on prior learning in this village is seen as a means towards personal and collective empowerment" (Weil & McGill, 1989, p 12).

This village includes many different kinds of groups, each of which brings a different emphasis and ideology to their interpretations and purposes for experiential learning. These groups may be involved in community action and mutual support networks that do not necessarily challenge or transform social structures, but rather transform the group's relationship to them.

Village 4 - personal growth and development.
This village is concerned with increasing personal and group effectiveness, autonomy, choice and self-fulfilment. Personal development is seen by this village as providing opportunities to explore new ways of being in the world:

"to recognise unproductive patterns in our ways of responding: to learn how what we say we do may be contradicted by our behaviour: to change old ways of responding to interpersonal situations: and to affirm aspects of ourselves which have been undervalued" (Weil & McGill, 1989, pp 15 - 19).

A common assumption operates about what is meant by the term 'experiential learning' which emphasises the processes of how we learn, how to diagnose administrative situations and how to learn from experience. However, despite this commonality, there may be profound differences in the means, ends and ideologies that are consciously or unconsciously ascribed to experiential learning. As experiential learning is often used as a vehicle for personal and organisational change the particular notions and current understandings of experiential learning should be examined in order to become better attuned to these differences.

Therefore those staff/learners engaged with implementing the experiential learning process should be encouraged to explore the
diversity and implications of the process in order to understand the richness that can emerge from engaging with different meanings and purposes for experiential learning:

"A person who knows only his own village will not understand it; only by seeing what is familiar in the light of what is the norm elsewhere will we be enabled to think afresh about what we know too well" (source unknown, Weil & McGill, 1989, p 4).

Rather than being inhibited or limited by knowledge of only one village, through dialogue across all the villages staff/learners may be enabled to consider their intentions and actions from new perspectives. This dialogue can afford them an opportunity to participate in conceptualising and enacting new possibilities for experiential learning.

Therefore a framework is necessary that provides a process which facilitates such dialogue through both learning and action and which can illuminate the making of a judgement without predetermining an outcome. A process is required whereby all participants, involved with innovative management programmes, can use their own knowledge and experiences as a basis for action and add to that knowledge through action. Thus new learning emerges through the process and on-going learning is fostered. Such a framework that fosters learning through action is 'Action Learning' advocated by Revans (1980).

10.4. The Action Learning Process within APL/Crediting Competence and Educational Staff Development Programmes

We have seen that 'learning' can be divided into two general types along a continuum of meaning. At one end of the scale is the kind of task that Kolb (1984, p 26) considers to be bound to "the notion of constant, fixed elements of thought". This notion has resulted in a tendency to define learning in terms of its outcomes and has had a profound effect on traditional approaches to learning and education. Significant, meaningful, experiential learning, however, proceeds from a different set of assumptions; ideas are not fixed but are formed and reformed through experience. Rogers (1983, p 20) defines more
precisely the elements that are involved in such significant or experiential learning:

"It has a quality of personal involvement.....
It is self-initiated........
It is pervasive......
It is evaluated by the learner.......
whether it leads toward what she wants to know, (ie she/he wants to know if it is meeting her/his needs.).....
Its essence is meaning"

Many teachers - staff/learners - may prefer to facilitate this experiential, meaningful whole-person type of learning but are often "locked into a traditional and conventional approach that makes significant learning improbable if not impossible" (Rogers, 1983, p 21). An example of this was noted in Chapter 9.4. CBS 3 in the repertory grid study.

However, staff/learners and manager/learners are now presented with an potential opportunity to form a new learning community, a different learning that can pervade and illuminate their lives. With adequate organisational support, new competence-based management programmes and educational staff development programmes can be designed to encompass experiential learning techniques through a continuous process of learning and reflection. Such a process could enable providers as staff/learners and customers as manager/learners to cope with all the ambiguities and changes in the current environment. Action Learning is just such a process that can combine whole-life development with the learning needs of both the individual learner and the organisation:

"...the formula popularized by Reg Revans, that for an organisation to survive its rate of learning must be equal to, or greater than, the rate of change in its external environment, is fundamental. (Garratt, 1987, p 54).

The Process of Action Learning
According to Mumford (1991) Revans unfortunately has never provided a single, comprehensive statement of action learning but it is regarded to be holistic in its view of the person, the management process and learning. Action learning is highly situational, flexibly
treatng elusive problems and combining a social process with individual needs (Mumford, 1991):

"Action learning is a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by colleagues, with an intention of getting things done. Through action learning individuals learn with and from each other by working on real problems and reflecting on their own experiences" (McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 17).

Thus, the process of Action Learning enables the creation of a structure within which people can explore their own experience and that of a few like minded others as members move cautiously into new and challenging activities.

In short, the action learning process provides a structure or arrangements that enable 'set members' to learn from the experiences of other members of the 'set'. The support comes mainly from the 'set' not from the 'teacher'. Firstly, within the 'set process' a step-by-step analysis is undertaken and each move is brought into consciousness by reviewing it and exploring its significance. Secondly, as day-to-day events or problems are exposed individuals can interpret and digest these events thereby consciously accepting these experiences as part of the individual's growth (See Section 10.3. of this Chapter). Thirdly, the best form of action for learning is work on a defined project which is significant to the learners themselves. Fourthly, learners should have responsibility for their own achievements on their own project, though the learning process is a social one. Next, the social process is achieved and managed through regular meetings of learners to discuss their individual projects. Finally, as the 'set' matures, insight can be gained into the way each member behaves in the work situation and into her/his values and attitudes which have a vital influence on effective management.

"When changes in behaviour occur and are noticed by a member of the set, others can provide support with their own recollection of his or her previous ways of behaving. There is then agreed evidence of personal learning - and encouragement to hold on to the change" (Lawrence, 1986, p 221).
In contrast to most management education devices action learning has three essential characteristics - the participants work on real work (not exercises or cases), they learn from each other by a questioning process (not from teachers) and they carry through the work to implementation (not just a report).

Action Learning within NVQs and APL/Crediting Competence Programmes

Working to implementation through defined projects, as for example collecting evidence against NVQ performance criteria in order to develop a portfolio within a Crediting Competence Programme, has significant advantages. A defined project, such as developing a portfolio, produces clear boundaries, timescales and an end result which can be equally productive and relevant to both the organisation and to the individual manager. Within this example, the purpose of action learning can be geared to personal development and to resolving managerial and organisational problems through the medium of developing a portfolio of evidence.

Mumford (1991, pp 34 -37) was, nonetheless, critical of competence strategies which he believed "offered an atomistic, analytical, discrete view of management and learning". He argued that the competency approach, as he then saw it, rested on a prefigured detailed analysis of what managers' need and was in direct contrast to the philosophy of action learning based on the individual’s development through significant managerial tasks. According to Mumford, each strategy has its strengths and weaknesses, but it is easier to demonstrate that management development through action learning is 'owned' by managers themselves than it is to show this from the competency approach. He also noted that action learning has much in common with the processes of self-development in that:

"The individual has substantially more choice about what to learn, how to learn it and how to share that learning" (Mumford, 1991, p 37).

(The next Chapter (11) provides illustration of this need for choice by manager/learners).
However, the MCI has recognised (Hall, 1992, p. 64) that the Crediting Competence process should be "characterised by being self-managed and in the control of the candidate at all times" and that "self-help groups can facilitate development by sharing ideas and by one manager providing guidance and the benefit of experience to another manager". Thus the process of action learning could be fully integrated within Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes as a means of providing support to manager/learners, also being cost effective in terms of adviser time.

Such programmes, similarly, could be designed to integrate the action learning process with the development of a portfolio of evidence leading to an NVQ in management. Thus the individual manager/learner could have substantially more choice about what to learn, how to learn, and how to share that learning, when incorporating the use of structured problems (portfolio development) and projects within active and reflective processes (action learning sets).

In reality, many management educational providers still believe that knowledge is the core of managerial learning and that real management processes are seen as merely an interesting way of testing knowledge. All too often the term 'action learning project' is offered as an isolated project towards the end of a management course such as the Diploma in Management Studies. Thus action learning projects have become diluted as "another technique introduced without any learning strategy and with no connection to any central core of belief about how managers learn" (Mumford, 1991). Learning about the processes by which the task is achieved has been given little emphasis in management education. Therefore, management education programmes still use projects as integrative exercises in multi-disciplinary and strategic processes. This criticism is supported by those educational staff/learners, involved with the Pathway College management development programme, who perceived that 'Work-based Projects' were an ineffective method of learning (See Chapter 9.4.). If a task or project orientated learning approach is used it will not achieve the transformation that is potentially available when action learning is at the core of a learning programme (Mumford, 1991).
Action learning programmes must be designed, therefore, to ensure that similar attention is given to the learning process as well as to the learning outcomes.

The evidence gained from the repertory grid study in the previous chapter (Chapter 9) could be used as part of a core learning strategy within future Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. Such evidence, collected from staff/learners, relates to core beliefs and constructs that should be contained within an effective learning strategy for manager/learners:

Common Constructs: Action Learning is:
active; taking effective action
experiential; based on experiential learning theory
allows control and ownership of learning; taking control of own learning
creative and innovative; creating new ideas/solutions to problems
learning with others; learning with and from others
learning by/of self; developing self-awareness
being alone; self reflection

The process of action learning also correlates closely to MTD 5’s grid (See Chapter 9.A.) that effective learning is construed as having two aspects eg two clusters as follows:

Cluster 1 Constructs
practical; work related; practising a skill; interaction with others; short-term activities; active.

Cluster 2
reflective; alone; time consuming; more conscious of learning.

Therefore, the action learning philosophy corresponds to staff/learners core beliefs about effective learning for managers and could be fully integrated within the process of developing a portfolio of evidence as well as the development of a process of self-reflection and personal growth.
Action Learning within Educational Staff Development Programmes

Revan's (1982) basic premise was that 'traditional learning' is about providing answers to questions or solutions which are already known to teachers; action learning on the other hand addresses questions to which there is no obvious solution but which can be tackled by re-interpreting experience:

"Only individuals prepared to give it a go and to take a risk will be able to act and learn in this way. Only companies open to learning will allow members this sort of freedom. Action learning is one of the most powerful methods of development to emerge from the 1970s and 1980s. You can make it part of a longer course, or you can have freestanding sets. These days it is getting hard to find a well-designed development programme without at least an action learning component." (Pedler, Burgoyne, Boydell, 1991, p 131).

Within staff development programmes at Pathway College the potential of a curriculum driven approach that combines aspects of competence standards and developmental issues, do not appear to have been considered at the time of writing. It is suggested, however, that the need has been identified for a more process orientated approach to staff development programmes than is currently the case. The initial staff development programmes were rightly designed to help staff/learners implement NVQ and Crediting Competence Programmes. Such documents as those produced by London and South East Region Advisory Council for Education and Training (LASER, 1992) have also advocated the use of a consortium-based approach to MCI Crediting Competence programmes as a means of staff and management development for further education staff. However, such programmes have neither included an opportunity for risk taking within a safe climate nor have they provided an opportunity for staff/learners to reflect on 'reflection-in-action' (Schon, 1987, p 31) through action learning.

More specifically, the ad hoc nature of staff development programmes, which had been introduced within Pathway College during the period 1990 to 1993, produced a series of task orientated staff developmental events eg Adviser and Assessor Training towards
accreditation of the Training and Development Lead Body (TDLB) units. Although these events had been correctly introduced at the time (as a means of promulgating the requisite knowledge and skills to achieve the successful implementation of competence-based programmes and assessment of portfolios of evidence) the initial focus on assessment or accreditation driven staff development could now be replaced by a focus upon the requisite reflective practices within NVQ delivery mechanisms.

In brief, action learning is based upon the relationship between reflection and action. Thus by learning through experience, ie by thinking through past events and seeking ideas that make sense of the event, could help both staff/learners and manager/learners find new ways of behaving in similar situations in the future. This reflection on reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983) provides an essential link between past action and more effective future action:

"In times of crisis or radical change reflection becomes more important and also more difficult: it is at these times that we make powerful decisions about our future" McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 17).

Action learning builds on this normal human process of learning by making the links clearer in order to make them effective. Critical reflection, therefore, is a necessary precursor to effective action.

In summary, current staff development programmes have been task orientated without due attention being given to the requisite process skills that are necessary to achieve successful implementation of innovative management programmes. These notions of 'reflection-in-action' (Schon, 1987) and 'conscious reflection' (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985) will be discussed more fully in the next section (10.5.) of this Chapter. The position of staff development programmes within Pathway College and staff/learners attitudes towards Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes will also be fully explored within the next chapter (11).
10.5. The Process of Critical Reflection within Crediting Competence/NVQ and Staff Development Programmes

10.5.1. Current Reflective Tools used within Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes

There are many tools that are available that can raise consciousness regarding learning and teaching and which can be used to 'bridge' classroom learning with work-place learning (See Chapter 9.6.). These tools based upon the reflective aspects of experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) can be a difficult concept to practice if full understanding of the complexities involved within the learning context cannot be achieved. Although every experience has the potential for learning not all experience involves learning:

"... of the hundreds of managers who pass through my hands each year, whilst none ever objects to the model, they nonetheless do not know what to do to learn from experience. Nor do they know what to do help other people, such as subordinates or colleagues, to learn from experience. Instead there is a widespread tacit assumption that if you have experiences you inevitably learn from them"

(Honey, 1990, pp 30 - 32).

The key concept in the APL learning process is reflection (Imeson & Hull, 1991), however, the present often informal reflection mechanisms installed in a Crediting Competence Programme and other competence-based management programmes may not allow the development of the full learning potential by individual manager/learners. To achieve positive outcomes for both the business and the manager/learner the Crediting Competence Programme could be used as a process to enable the individual learner to go round the learning cycle and the organisation to go round the improvement cycle. This would require a learning strategy that utilises reflective mechanisms. For example, reflective devices as personal reports could be used as an essential part of the MCI Crediting Competence Programme:
"Personal reports are both learning tools and a focus for assessment. However, their main purpose is to contain a candidate's reflections on learning and achievements, mapping experiences against elements of competence and performance criteria with the ranges indicated." (CNAA/BTEC - Summary Report, 1991 p 5).

The MCI Crediting Competence Centres encourage participants to use the Personal Report as an important reflective tool. However, there has been criticism that such tools have the danger of being too subjective, too time-consuming, an added danger is that too much evidence is amassed in portfolios (CNAA/BTEC, 1991).

Another reflective device is a Personal Development Journal (PDJ). Unfortunately the problem in practice is that managers are often unable to maintain these reflections within a journal. Honey (1990) identified eleven causes for lapses: tight deadlines; complacency; passivity; lack of support; people's expectations; criticism; exasperation; boredom; tiredness; holidays; lack of immediate gratification. Honey suggests that this rather depressing total of triggers for lapsing may be caused by the attempt to sustain learning by operating as a lone-learner:

"There is no question that when a process is left entirely to the discretion of an individual it is much more difficult to sustain than if discretion is removed, or reduced, by incorporating it into the system" (Honey, 1990, pp 30 - 32).

Thus, although Pathway College's Crediting Competence Programme integrates such mechanisms as self-awareness of individual learning styles and the PDJ acting as a reflective tool, it does not pursue such reflective processes fully within action learning set meetings. The problem is more likely to derive from constraints on resources rather than on unwillingness on the part of the staff:
"While student choice remained an important consideration the paramount emphasis has become one of changes in the system which required attention to question of administration, the efficient deployment of resources, the maximising of opportunity within tighter management control." (CNAA, 1990 - The Modular Option p 6)

Such resource constraints may very well deter staff/learners from promulgating the use of reflective tools, such as the PDJ and Personal Reports but the scale of loss derived from incomplete implementation of effective processes must be addressed by organisations. The next section discusses the implications of implementing such programmes, recognising the complexity of the process and thereby acknowledging the skills and considerable sensitivity that staff/learners need to commit to that process.

10.5.2. Promoting Reflection in Learning Strategies

It can be seen, from the previous section, that such reflective tools and practices as the Personal Report, Personal Development Journal and Action Learning can be incorporated within competence-based management programmes. Such devices can provide some guidance for an individual manager/learner to make their learning more conscious. Thus manager/learners are required to operate along the full range of abilities that correspond to the experiential learning cycle dimensions (Kolb, 1984) if they are to be fully effective in their learning role. However, as noted previously, Kolb does not discuss the nature of his stage of observation and reflection in much detail and although his model has been useful in assisting in the planning of learning activities it does not help, however, "to uncover the elements of reflection itself" (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985, p 13).

Firstly, it would be useful to clarify the meaning of the term 'reflection' and secondly, to analyse in greater depth the essential components contained within the term 'critical reflection'. Two approaches to learning have been identified: a deep approach is one in which students seek an understanding of the meaning of what they are studying, relate it to their previous knowledge and interact actively with the material at hand; those who adopt a surface approach tend to memorise information and focus on the requirements of tests and
examinations (Boud et al, 1985, p 24). Mezirow (1990, p 1) elucidated the deep approach further by suggesting that:

"To make meaning means to make sense of an experience; we make an interpretation of it. When we subsequently use this interpretation to guide decision making or action, then making meaning becomes learning. We learn differently when we are learning to perform than when we are learning to understand what is being communicated to us. Reflection enables us to correct distortions in our beliefs and errors in problem solving. Critical reflection involves a critique of the presuppositions on which our beliefs have been built".

It is this deep approach to learning through a process of critical reflection that is of principle concern. Mezirow (1990) further differentiated between 'nonreflective action' or 'thoughtful action'. This latter is reflexive but is not the same as acting reflectively to critically examine the justification for beliefs. He likened this mode to the one which often takes place in playing chess or making an argument and he stated that:

"All human action, other than that which is purely habitual or thoughtless, is thoughtful action, which involves consciously drawing on what one knows to guide one's action".

This is in contrast to 'reflective action' which is an action predicated on a critical assessment of assumptions, and which may also be an integral part of decision making (Mezirow, 1990, p 6). The following model demonstrates this differentiation:
Thus, reflection in thoughtful action involves a pause in the decision-making process to reassess action and it is this reflection that is integral to deciding how best to perform or may involve an ex post facto reassessment. Consequently, although reflection and action are dialectic in their relationship, they should not be polarised as in Kolb (1984). Mezirow's term 'ex post facto reflection', looks back on prior learning and may focus on assumptions about the content of the problem, the process or procedures or the presupposition on the basis of which the problem has been posed. This reflection on presuppositions is what is meant by 'critical reflection'.

Thus while all reflection implies an element of critique, the term 'critical reflection' refers to challenging the validity of presuppositions in prior learning. Critical reflection, therefore, addresses the question of the justification for the very premises on which problems are posed or defined in the first place:
"By far the most significant learning experiences in adulthood involve critical self-reflection - reassessing the way we have posed problems and reassessing our own orientation to perceiving, knowing believing, feeling and acting " (Mezirow, 1990, p 13).

Reflection may be an integral part of making action decisions as well as an ex post facto critique of the process. However, critical reflection cannot become an integral element in the action process unless there is a pause or hiatus in which to reassess meaning perspectives and, if necessary, to transform them. Thus:

"Critical reflection is not concerned with the how or the how-to of action but with the why, the reasons for and consequences of what we do" (Mezirow, 1990, p 13).

Thus, the transformation of meaning schemes and perspectives that are not viable can be achieved through a process of critical reflection and critical self-reflection "Reflection on one's own premises can lead to transformative learning" (Mezirow, 1990, p 18). Transformative learning involves a particular function of reflection, that is reassessing the presuppositions on which beliefs are based and acting on insights that have derived from the transformed meaning perspective that results from such reassessments. Emancipatory education is an organised effort to precipitate or to facilitate the learner, challenge presuppositions, explore alternative perspectives, transform old ways of understanding and act on new perspectives. It is this issue, emancipatory education, that is of major concern to those staff/learners who have and who will be attempting to facilitate transformative learning for manager/learners participating in Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes.

Having clearly defined the meaning of the term 'reflection' or 'critical reflection' an analysis of the essential components of reflection can now be undertaken. Boud et al (1985 p 36) offers a useful and understandable model (See Figure XVI) which gives reflection a central place within the learning experience and does help to uncover the elements of reflection:
The previous model indicates the starting point and objects of reflection and demonstrates the totality of experiences of learners, the behaviour in which they have engaged, the ideas of which learners are aware and the feelings which they have experienced. There are two main components: the experience and reflective activity based upon that experience. The sense in which the term experience is used "consists of the total response of a person to a situation or event: what he or she thinks, feels, does and concludes at the time and immediately thereafter" (Boud et al, 1985, p 18). As can be seen by the a model (Figure XVI), after the experience there occurs a processing phase and this is the area of reflection. However it must be recognised that the capacity to reflect is developed in different stages in different people and "it may be this ability which characterises those who learn effectively from experience" (Boud et al, 1985, p 19).

For adult learners these events which precipitate reflection arise out of normal life occurrences that provoke a feeling of dissatisfaction which leads to a reconsideration of such events. These events could be
provoked by an external occurrence or could develop from an individual's reflection on a series of events over time. Boud et al (1985, p 21) suggest that the characteristics and aspirations of the learner and their response to the initial experience should also be examined. Therefore those learners who approach the new learning experience from a history of success may be able to enter more fully into the new learning situation in contrast to those learners who may have had a negative experience from a past learning situation. Thus a manager/learner who has had an unpleasant learning experience may feel some discomfort when exposed to a similar situation. These feelings can interfere with the process of learning, which will need to be addressed and resolved by the staff/learner, if there is to be a positive learning outcome for the manager/learner.

The intentions of the learner can also influence the approach to the learning situation (Boud et al, 1985, p 24) and the reflective devices that are chosen to process that experience. The learner has a choice in which to direct reflective activities to a variety of ends; however, intentions can influence both the manner of reflection and its outcome. For example, a manager/learner engaged upon a Crediting Competence/NVQ Programme is required to produce a Personal Report demonstrating her/his feelings, ideas and learning outcomes from that experience. However if that manager/learner sees this activity merely as a means of producing a portfolio and gaining accreditation and not as a means for learning and personal development then a deep understanding of the meaning and integration of a formal learning experience with a personal reflective experience may be lost. This point has been discussed more fully in an earlier stage of this section (See 10.3.).

It was therefore suggested by Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985, p 21) that, following an examination of the characteristics and intentions of the learner, attention is given to the three major elements contained within the reflective process ie returning to the experience, attending to feelings and re-evaluating the experience. However, it should be noted that:
"Despite all that has been written about reflection it is difficult to be precise about the nature of the process" (Boud et al., 1985, p 21).

The process of Stage 1, 'returning to experience', entails a close attention to detail within either a written or verbal chronological description. If the description is clear, as far as possible of any judgements which may distort the individual's recollections, then what can emerge is a descriptive analysis of the observation, interpretations at the time and the feelings about the experience itself. This acknowledgement of positive or negative feelings can enable the learner to gain unplanned insights which may signal the beginning of an entry into the second and third phases of reflection (Boud et al., 1985, p 28).

Thus, describing an event can bring the learner to an awareness of feelings that were present during that particular experience. Certainly Boud et al (1985) placed great emphasis on the affective aspects of learning (Stage 2, 'attending to feelings') and the opportunities these provide for enhancing reflection. However, even though emotions and feelings are a significant source of learning they can also become barriers to the reflective process. Depending on the circumstances and the learner's intentions the staff/learner would need to work with these emotional responses and discover ways of minimising them if they were negative, or retaining and enhancing them if they were positive. Action learning sets provide an ideal opportunity for manager/learners to express positive or helpful emotions through a process of self-disclosure which is largely under the individual's control and which may be released verbally and/or non-verbally eg 'leakage' (McGill & Beaty, 1992, pp 145 - 147).

Utilising positive feelings can help learners find the impetus to persist in what may be perceived as a challenging situation and can provide a sharper focus to events thus leading to a new basis for affective learning. Similarly discharging or transforming feelings can enable a learner to regain flexibility and creativity in response to a situation and provide a different interpretation and understanding of that experience (Boud et al, 1985, p 31). This description of the affective stages within the reflective process is given in order to demonstrate the role these
processes play in experiential learning programmes and the abilities that staff/learners need to employ to be able to manage their own reflective activities and those of their manager/learners.

The final stage in the reflective process, Stage 3 're-evaluating experience', demonstrates four aspects:

"association, that is, relating of new data to that which is already known; integration, which is seeking relationships among the data; validation to determine the authenticity of the ideas and feelings which have resulted; and appropriation, that is, making knowledge one's own" (Boud et al, 1985, pp 30 - 34).

Within Crediting Competence/NVQ programmes the first aspect of 'association' could involve the connection of those ideas and feelings which appertain to the collection of work-based evidence or simply to being in a formal or new learning situation. This aspect of reflection could lead to a discovery that old attitudes are no longer consistent with new ideas and feelings. Certainly the action learning process could assist with the generation, without criticism, evaluation or comment from members of the group or set, of new ideas and creative suggestions (McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 152).

These associations would then need to be examined by the individual manager/learner in order to discover whether they were meaningful and useful and can be integrated (second aspect) in a new pattern of ideas and developing attitudes. There are two aspects to integration: the first, is seeking the nature of relationships that have been observed; the second, is drawing conclusions and arriving at insights. The third aspect is validation in which a learner tests for internal consistency between new appreciations or insights and existing knowledge and beliefs. If there are contradictions then the learner re-appraises the situation and decides on future action. One of the techniques which can aid validation is rehearsal. This can take place internally or through enactment (Boud et al, 1985, pp 32 - 33). These two aspects, integration and validation, of re-evaluating experience can be closely associated with the purpose and processes of action learning and provides the 'presenter of the problem or issue' with an opportunity to
gain insights and to design creative ways of progressing with her/his issue through a rehearsal of the situation with other members of the set (McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 62).

For some learning tasks and learners it may be sufficient to have integrated and validated knowledge in this way and therefore the final aspect of re-evaluation, 'appropriation', may not be suitable, because, as Boud et al suggested:

"appropriate knowledge becomes part of our value system and it is less amenable to change than other knowledge which we accept and work with but do not make our own to the same degree" (Boud et al, 1985, p 34).

Significant feelings can come to be attached to this type of learning and any experience which touches this aspect can produce strong emotions that may need to be taken into account during future reflective processes.

The outcomes of these reflective processes is action or a new set of ideas. The changes may be small or large and could involve the development of new perspectives on experience or change in behaviour:

"Some benefits of reflection may be lost if they are not linked to action" (Boud et al, 1985, p 35).

Although application and action need not necessarily be observable by others, what is important that the learner makes a commitment of some kind on the basis of her or his own learning.

This lengthy exposition of the components contained within the model (Boud et al, 1985) has exposed those elements of reflection that are critical to the effective outcome of experiential learning management programmes. If manager/learners are to succeed in their desire to gain accreditation of an NVQ and for them to gain personal development then staff/learners need to be aware of and to understand these reflective components. Further, for staff/learners to be enabled to
support experiential based programmes they need guidance to provide emancipatory education and help uncover these elements of reflection which would enable manager/learners to fully engage in transformative learning (Mezirow, 1990).

It is, therefore, essential that staff/learners are guided and supported in the process of making an adjustment from 'knowing-in-action' which refers to the publicly observable, spontaneous, skilful execution of performance or delivery of the content aspects of management programmes, to reflect on 'reflection-in-action' (Schon, 1987, pp 25 - 26). Staff/learners need to consciously reflect upon their own practice and to make their unconscious reflections conscious (Schon, 1987) in order to help their manager/learners to develop from an 'unconscious incompetence' level to an 'unconscious competence' level of development (Boak, 1991, p 179). Thus, reflection-in-action is a reflective "conversation" (conversation in a metaphorical sense) that each person carries out within her/his own evolving role. The individual "listens" to the surprises that result from earlier moves and responds through new moves that give new meanings and directions to future action. These surprises leads to reflection, which is in some measure conscious, and then questions "the assumtional structure of knowing-in-action" (Schon, 1987, p 28). This critical function of 'reflection-in-action' is similar in meaning to the notion of 'critical reflection' (Mezirow, 1990). Both urge that it is essential that staff/learners are enabled to reflect on past reflection-in-action which may indirectly shape future actions (Schon, 1987, p 31).

Schon (1987) in his analysis of the processes of learning within an architectural design studio, which he terms a "reflective practicum", argued extensively that:

"the professional schools must rethink both the epistemology of practice and the pedagogical assumptions on which their curricula are based and must bend their institutions to accommodate the reflective practicum as a key element of professional education" (Schon, 1987, p 18).
Thus action learning is a process that could be introduced, within academic institutions as well as commercial organisations, which enables both educational staff/learners and their manager/learners to learn,

"Observing, reflecting on experience, leads to making sense of that experience in a new way, leading to understanding. Understanding can lead to insights which allow for new plans, new strategies for action and new modes of behaviour. These plans lead to new actions which have an effect in the context which lead to experience which can be as expected or have consequences quite different from those expected. This leads on through another evaluative cycle with reflection and learning occurring at each stage" (McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 27).

In conclusion, it has been argued that action learning combines individual responsibility and reflection on personal experience with comprehensive attention to the various perspectives of participants within a unit eg organisation or group within a management programme. It is orientated to problem solving with an emphasis on helping people to better understand and formulate problems through continual cycles of action and reflection on and in action (to use terminology developed by Schon, 1983 & 1987). Action learning is uniquely suited to critical reflection in the work-place because it helps people, both individually and collectively, make explicit and then question the social norms and presuppositions that govern their action ie transformative learning (Mezirow, 1990). Action learning is also highly compatible with many of the premises on which adult education is built. It is driven by the peer group, focuses on immediate problems, is based on learner experience, and is highly participatory. As action learning is built on real-life problems with real consequences, staff/learners and manager/learners can be motivated to deal with issues that arise that block understanding and solution of such problems (Marsick, 1990, p 44). Although many of these issues arise from previous misperceptions, beliefs and dysfunctional habits that raise powerful feelings that have often not been examined before, action learning does provide a relevant stimulus for learning and effective action.
However, for action learning to be effective in the 'reflective practicum' (Schon, 1987) a climate must be fostered that will allow staff/learners to examine their own beliefs, practices and norms in order to fully participate in the processes of critical reflection (Mezirow, 1990) and to practice the essential components of reflection (Boud et al, 1985). Thus a climate of trust and openness must be engendered within such providing organisations as colleges of further education, in order that educational staff/learners to be enabled to fully participate within emancipatory education (Mezirow, 1990).

Since such staff development and organisational development as is posited here requires considerable investment (personal and temporal), a small scale study was conducted as the final part of this thesis to ascertain the views and attitudes of staff/learners towards: the implementation of such initiatives as NVQ and Crediting Competence management programmes; and towards the parallel process of staff development in order to effectively deliver competence-based management programmes.
Chapter 11 - "The Implications of Educational Initiatives upon Staff and Organisational Development"

11.1. The effect of educational initiatives upon staff development practice
During the course of this study it was noted that the influence of the MCI and awarding bodies eg BTEC upon innovative developments in colleges can be seen as highly significant in several ways. It was the initial training courses offered by MCI that alerted and alarmed the staff/learners, in Pathway College, about the wide changes necessary to prepare for Crediting Competence and NVQ delivery. The effect of implementing such changes upon the organisational culture, administrative systems, curriculum and staff development practice were profound. Not only were the organisational systems and procedures under constant review (to incorporate greater flexibility and learner centred services) but staff were also finding difficulty in integrating changes and developments within their lecturing role. Such changing administrative procedures, learning and assessment modes had repercussions upon curriculum design and upon the attitudes and behaviour of staff/learners at Pathway College.

Pathway College was considered, by other academic institutions, to be proactive and successful in the introduction of APL and NVQ's within the mainstream curriculum. During 1990 and 1991 Pathway College was invited to participate in a national FEU research project which investigated the mechanisms needed for the preparation, planning, implementation and control of APL within FE Colleges (FEU, 1992). This study also sought to guide and co-ordinate the work of staff in key roles in three FE colleges involved in that research project. This national project and the writer's presentations at a number of educational conferences (eg NABSE and LASER) generated feedback from lecturing staff who were involved with the implementation of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes in FE colleges throughout the UK. These presentations mainly focused upon issues that arose from previous research findings contained in this thesis (See Chapters 6, 7 & 9) and as such led to general discussion about common concerns and successes in the APL.
and NVQ area (See Appendix XV). Thus, the information gleaned from these conference presentations and discussions confirmed the writer’s view that the research findings obtained from staff/learners at Pathway College could not be considered to be idiosyncratic.

During the implementation periods of 1990 - 1993 staff/learners were expected to identify and implement internal as well as external awarding body changes to the curriculum. They were also expected to develop their personal skills and abilities in order to deliver these new programmes. Thus, educational providers, as staff/learners, were perceived to be attempting to retain their balance upon the backs of 'cantering ponies of change' (Foster, 1988) in order to provide new learning and assessment strategies as part of a structured reflective learning process. The full implications of these changes upon staff development policies and practice were not fully appreciated. The identification of individual staff development needs, from Pathway College's Continuous Professional Development interview system, did not fully prepare the College management or staff/learners for the resulting implications upon the delivery and assessment of NVQ management programmes. As was discussed in Chapter 10.3. staff development events were linked to a very specific vision of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes which may have been appropriate for the early part of the development stages of NVQ's and related services but were not appropriate for the later provision stage. Such staff development programmes did not address the processes that were required to enable staff/learners to change their attitudes and perceptions for delivering such programmes. Therefore these events focused upon content issues such as the NVQ framework; management standards; procedures for assessment and accreditation of portfolios and programme design.

During the latter part of the 1980's and early 1990's Pathway College was proactive in designing APL and NVQ programmes and associated staff development events for three main areas: catering; hairdressing and management. The initial training for staff delivering management NVQ and Crediting Competence programmes consisted
of: initial APL awareness-raising sessions; a three-day MCI Adviser and Assessor Course and a college-based Training and Development Lead Body (TDLB) Assessor training. A one day Action Learning Programme was arranged but without the essential follow-up and support sessions. It was during such staff development events that staff expressed their fears that the demands of work-based learning and assessment may be complex, time consuming and expensive. There were also fears that the competence and NVQ movement laid too great a stress upon assessment at the expense of learning.

Such staff development initiatives did not include the identified effective learning components (Chapter 9) that would allow staff/learners to gain ownership and control of their own learning programme. Further, this earlier study (1991) revealed that staff/learners needed to reflect consciously on their own practice in order to help their learners to make their unconscious reflections conscious (Schon, 1983 & 1987). The identified effective learning element, 'systematic reflection', was not included within such staff development initiatives. There appeared to be little coherent planning in the process of learning for change nor any related personal development or support mechanisms that would enable staff/learners to cope with these major alterations to their job role and to the curriculum.

Pathway College demonstrated what appeared to be an ad hoc approach to staff development policies and practice which was in contrast to a planned approach to the marketing, design and delivery of NVQ services and programmes. The College's Mission Statement and Corporate Plan encompassed the notions of flexibility, learner centredness and continuous professional development that were not apparent within staff development initiatives. Thus the College management were perceived to be espousing such theories of action for the students but the theory that actually governed actions in staff development - 'theory in use' - was not compatible:

"Perhaps organizations also have theories of action which inform their actions, espoused theories which they announce to the world and theories-in-use which may be inferred from their directly observable behavior" (Argyris & Schon, 1978, p 11).
Thus this chapter seeks to explore the attitudes and behaviour of staff/learners after the implementation of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes within the curriculum at Pathway College. The effect of introducing new programmes upon staff development practice and organisational development will also be fully discussed.

The Structure of the Chapter
The rationale of the research strategy and methodology, utilising Repertory Grid Interviews (Kelly, 1955) and autobiographical 'snakes' (Denicolo & Pope, 1988), is described within Chapter 9.2. and Section 11.2. of this Chapter. The fieldwork plan and its rationale are provided in Section 11.3. A descriptive summary of results, Section 11.4., follows and then an elucidation of the effects of such findings on staff development policies and practices, Section 11.5. The final Chapter (12) explores ways in which the difficulties identified in this Chapter may be addressed advantageously.

11.2. General Methodological Approach
The rationale and the methodological approach for previous research activities have been firmly situated within a qualitative and phenomenological paradigm. The use of ethnomethodological techniques, within this thesis, have endeavoured to seek the truth through attempting to explore and describe how people make sense of their everyday activities within the management education field. It was anticipated that the findings from this ethnomethodological evaluation study would create a programmatic self-awareness that would, in principle, facilitate change and improvements in management education programmes (Patton, 1990, p 75).

A research approach in which participants have been co-researchers reviewing their own situation has been a strong theme within all aspects of this research activity while the primary focus has been on a specific situation at a specific time. Such an action research process, being grounded in the reality of the individual's job and organisation, enables a view of authentic issues that are salient to the researcher, the community of participants, the organisation and the management
education arena. As part of this process, action research encourages joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework to solve organisational or community problems (Patton, 1990, p 129). However:

"No single study can serve all of these different purposes and audiences equally well" (Patton, 1990, 150).

The views of representatives of the organisation, for instance, can only be inferred from documents and observed practice. Therefore, this short study, within the constraints of time and budget, can only be taken as indicative of a way forward in a particular context, but it may provide guidelines, for reflection for others in the wider context (See Appendix XV).

Action research undertaken to solve a specific problem may involve a number of participants sharing the analysis process to generate a mutually understood and acceptable solution. In some cases, there may be no permanent written record of the analysis, as in much action research the process is the product (Patton, 1990, p 374). However, an effective interview programme and observational skills can provide the researcher, or Professional Stranger (Agar, 1980), with valuable insights that could provide helpful feedback to the participants and possibly to the organisation. The point here is that the rigour, duration and procedures of analysis will vary dramatically depending on the study’s purpose and audience. Thus the techniques used within this phase of research provided documentary evidence of a mutually shared experience of delivering Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. The action research process, in this case, also attempted to bring about effective and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1990) for the staff/learners at Pathway College.

The results from the 1991 Repertory Grid study, shown in Chapter 9, indicated the essential components that were necessary for effective learning by manager/learners participating in particular management educational programmes. Study findings also revealed that staff/learners at Pathway College needed to develop a process of
"reflection on reflection-in-action" (Schon, 1983, 1987) in order to implement effectively such innovations as Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. Chapter 10 also demonstrated that the abilities of staff/learners to facilitate reflective practice may have been impeded by the lack of appropriate staff development in this area. Therefore, it was considered essential that an appropriate research mechanism should be utilised that would "uncover the elements of reflection itself" (Boud et al, 1985) to enable staff/learners at Pathway College to engage fully with a process of critical reflection.

Therefore, the purpose of this phase of study was: "To explore current perceptions of teaching/learning strategies appropriate to the Crediting Competence process leading to an NVQ in management".

A more detailed explanation of the underlying concept of personal construct theory (Kelly, 1955) and the Repertory Grid mechanism has been described in Chapter 9.2. What now follows is a description of the different approaches towards the elicitation of Repertory Grids and a description of other reflective tools that have been used in this phase of research.

A Description of Techniques Used - Repertory Grid Elicitation
It had been found, from the analysis and interpretation of Repertory Grids in 1991, that there was a high degree of commonality between higher-order constructs that demonstrated a slightly different way of expressing the same underlying dimension (Candy, 1990, p 232). Thus, where staff/learners expressed in similar ways understandings of events common to them then it was considered that for each one the "processes are psychologically similar to those of the other person" (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 17).

Therefore, as the Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes were only in the initial stages of design and development during the previous study it was considered that participating staff/learners may have anticipated these events by elaborating their construct system by exploring new areas that were only very partially understood. Such elaboration is sought in terms of the construct
system as it exists at the time so that there is no implication that this elaboration is always successful (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 13). Thus, the previous repertory grid findings may only have provided information that demonstrated that staff/learners were trying to move away from confusion towards understanding at that particular time. However, utilising repertory grid as a reflective tool could produce an up-to-date and a unique and detailed overview of staff/learners' past and present perceptions of critical events leading to the implementation of NVQ programmes from September 1992.

A similar repertory grid procedure was, therefore, used in 1993 to that previously used in 1991. The same element list and triadic elicitation process was utilised as a means for obtaining constructs. However, in this study a 'laddering procedure' (See Appendix XI) was adopted, within the interview, to elicit more super-ordinate constructs than could be gained by solely utilising the 'triadic procedure'. This is a form of construct elicitation in which the staff/learner would be able to indicate the hierarchical integration of their personal construct system (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 50). The use by the researcher of the question "Why?" would produce an end product that would express the super-ordinate constructs related to the participant's philosophy of life. Equally, the laddered conversation could be directed downwards to more subordinate constructs by asking "In what way?" or "How?" in order to ascertain in more detail the participant's perception of critical events.

Repertory grid interviews were used, therefore, as a tool to explore staff/learners' perceptions of effective learning strategies. It was also considered that individual and common constructs may provide some meaning and explanation of staff/learners' attitudes, thoughts and behaviour towards the implementation of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. However, additional reflective tools were utilised during this phase of research in order to enhance collaboration in the research process and personal learning of the individual staff/learner because:
Although the Repertory Grid is a useful and theoretically defensible method for "tapping into" a person's construct system, it would be unrealistic to pretend that simply completing a grid would inevitably lead to significant personal learning (Candy, 1990, p 288).

Mezirow (1990) also suggests that some of the most important modes of learning for adults are those which free them from their habitual ways of thinking and acting and involve them in what he terms 'perspective transformation':

"knowledge of one's meaning perspective in itself is not sufficient to bring about a perspective transformation, ........ the opportunity to experiment with alternatives is also required" (Candy, 1990, p 273).

Alternative reflective measures were utilised, in tandem with the Repertory Grid interview, in order to illuminate and explore more fully the reasons and events which underlie the elicited constructs. Thus it was considered that such a co-operative inquiry approach to this phase of research could assist in developing significant learning and perspective transformation of the staff/learners at Pathway College.

**Autobiographical Reflective Tools**

Research workers in the social sciences have made use of a range of personal documents in order to shed light on a wide variety of problems. However, educators have been rather slower to see the potential of autobiographical material and personal reports on learning (Boud et al 1985, pp 41 & 42). The aim of this phase of study was to reveal, describe and interpret the past experiences of staff/learners in order to illuminate the present and to highlight the potentialities of the future. In order to achieve these aims an autobiographical diagram, in the form of a 'snake', was requested from each staff/learner. It was envisaged that the interpretation of responses would reveal and expand upon the critical incidents that had occurred during the implementation stage of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes.
This joint exploration of the meanings that staff/learners attributed to their experiences was intended to provide specific reflections and examples of past and present experiences. It was considered that these reflections, upon events of the prior eighteen months, would contribute to visions of the future and would serve as illustrations to highlight the implications of changes to the curriculum and staff development practice.

However, the use of such autobiographical techniques may lead the staff/learner to make certain assumptions in their responses. It was essential, therefore, that the interview context and climate would enable the researcher to ask clarificatory questions which would prompt the recall of further details and so result in the exploration of topics and meanings that may have remained hidden in a purely written narrative. Thus, through a co-operative dialogue of reflective exploration and questioning, hidden issues could be exposed and insights gained by the staff/learners and the researcher.

This mode of co-operative reflection requires a high degree of openness and trust within the interviewing situation. Operating in an ethnomethodological paradigm, whereby the researcher is participating in the events as they occur, produces both ethical and practical concerns. A description of how each research activity affects the meaning and connotations of words like objectivity, subjectivity, neutrality and impartiality has to be agreed with particular participants in specific research settings (Patton, 1990, p 476). Essentially, these concerns are about the extent to which the evaluator can be trusted and is one dimension of perceived methodological rigour because:

"For better or worse, the trustworthiness of the data is tied directly to the trustworthiness of the evaluator who collects and analyzes the data" (Patton, 1990, p 476).

Certainly, the completing of a repertory grid matrix may produce an appearance of 'distance' between the researcher and participant which other autobiographical techniques may not. Nevertheless, it is recognised that the biographical approach could become "a new fad in
adult education because people love to hear and to tell stories and anecdotes" (Dominice, 1990, p 211). In this research, therefore, the methods were combined to preserve the kind of openness and critical reflection offered by the biographical approach so that transformative, co-operative learning between the researcher and the participant about the processes could be achieved.

However, the very openness and trust that is necessary to utilise this technique begs some key ethical questions. The researcher is witness to the personal testimonies and core feelings and values of the participant staff/learner. Therefore, a clear indication of the ownership of such written versions is imperative within research studies of this nature. Thus, as with all data derived during the course of the whole research process the data presented at this point was collected under a strict regime of confidentiality and anonymity, with participants giving permission for its use within the thesis. The condensed data for the whole group is presented in this Chapter. Examples of individual snakes and grids are provided in Appendix XVI and XVII from participants who gave permission for their full data to be displayed.

Denicolo and Pope (1988) refer to the method of a diagrammatical representation of an autobiography as the 'snake technique', after Priestley et al (1978). The aim of using 'snakes' was to encourage participants to focus on 'critical incidents or critical points' during the preceding eighteen months which had relevance to their current thinking about implementing NVQ management programmes. Staff/learners were asked to reflect in private, visualising and drawing this period of their professional lives as a winding snake in which each 'turn' in its body represented a critical incident or point within the implementation phase of NVQ management programmes. No instructions were given as to 'what kind' of events may be critical (Denicolo and Pope, 1988). Further details about the process used can be found in the next section.

Although this reflective process was termed an 'interview', it was envisaged that the process would be more of a reflective monologue whereby the researcher maintained an active listening stance and
offered no judgements. Any intervention was kept to a minimum, only taking the form of encouragement for the staff/learner to continue or to clarify meanings and perceptions.

Thus it was with respect for valuing the personal experiences of staff/learners at Pathway College that the researcher embarked upon this co-operative inquiry phase of research.

11.3. Fieldwork Plan

The following demonstrates the three stages of the fieldwork plan: entry; data collection and closing activities with participants who were staff/learners at Pathway College.

Firstly, the *entry stage* consisted of writing to all the staff/learners who had previously participated within the 1991 repertory grid study and who were actively participating in the design and delivery of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. Seven people within this category were contacted in December 1992. This number was later supplemented by a further four people who were engaged with Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes but who had not participated in the earlier study. The emphasis, within this request, was placed upon the potential benefits to the participant staff/learners. A variety of times and dates were offered in order for staff/learners to participate at a time convenient for them. Each interview was to be conducted individually with the participant in a private environment.

All respondents were further contacted early in January 1993 with an explanation of the 'purpose of the study'. This memorandum included a repertory grid Element List and a request for staff/learners to re-word, delete or add to this list in order to make the exercise more meaningful and to provide the participant with a degree of choice. The proposed Element List utilised six elements derived from the 1991 repertory grid study ie

- E2 Observing a Role Model
- E4 Presenting and Explaining Ideas to others
- E6 Practising a Skill
- E8 Undertaking a Work-based Project
E9 Reading Selectively (to Gather Information)
E11 Listening to Speakers

Interspersed with these were five elements that related specifically to techniques used in Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes:

E1 Developing a Portfolio of Evidence
E3 Discussing Issues in an Action Learning Set
E5 Negotiating a Learning Contract
E7 Writing a Personal Narrative
E10 Reflecting Systematically (to Solve Problems)

Thus a homogeneous range of eleven teaching/learning techniques was produced.

Within this second memorandum a personal narrative or autobiographical story, that showed the 'critical incidents or critical points' that had occurred to staff/learners in their teaching/lecturing role, was requested. It was suggested that this period of their professional lives could be depicted in the form of a winding snake in which each 'turn' in its body represented a change or critical incident that could be briefly annotated to represent the experience or critical incident. The researcher considered that as the time factor was of major concern to her colleague staff/learners it was imperative that this research activity should not be construed by them as a lengthy process. Therefore, all respondents to this second note were verbally assured by the researcher that the time allowance for this process would constitute a minimum of one hour and a maximum of one and a half hours. This framework of times would, it was considered, enable the staff/learners to participate fully and relax within the interview process.

Secondly, the data collection stage consisted of the initial phase of each 'interview' in which the researcher reiterated the purpose of this study. A mutually agreed time period for the interview was negotiated and ethical issues such as confidentiality and use and ownership of data were fully discussed and agreed with each participant. The researcher also explained that the 'interview' would be in two parts. The first part would be the collection of information via a repertory
grid interview followed by an explanation of the annotated 'snake' by the participant staff/learner. Feedback of the analysis and interpretation of the repertory grid matrix was promised for a later date.

The Element List was clarified and agreed with all participants and any amendments or changes were made if necessary. The repertory grid process was explained and further clarification of the processes involved was given to each participant. This initial phase of the interview took ten to fifteen minutes but was considered to be essential in order to gain the trust and full co-operation of each staff/learner. During the repertory grid process, questions, utilising the 'laddering' technique (Stewart & Stewart, 1981, pp 20 - 27), were posed. The responses to these questions were recorded and summarised in writing. If the participant responded too quickly to allow the making of an accurate record or if further explanations of the meaning of terms were necessary, the researcher read the notes aloud to the participant staff/learner, who indicated what changes were necessary, and the written notes were then amended. The device of annotating such interchanges (using LU for 'laddering up' and LD for 'laddering down') were made on each repertory grid matrix. Similarly if the 'full context' of elements were used, instead of the 'triadic method', then a note (FC) was made on each matrix.

As has been noted, staff were under considerable time constraints, and it was interesting to note that participating staff/learners anticipated that these would be relaxed and informal events by bringing to the 'interviews' drinks, snacks or in one case a lunch. The researcher encouraged this practice as it was perceived that staff/learners were using this 'space' for essential relaxation periods as well as reflection. This activity also indicated a high degree of trust with the process and researcher.

With prior approval, the participants demeanour and body language during the interview process were also recorded. During the later closing stage of the study process a record of such physical behaviour and questions and answers were included in typed summaries. These
summaries were given to the participating staff/learners for further amendment and agreement. Feedback from the analysis and interpretation of repertory grids were also given as were affirmations of confidentiality and anonymity. During this feedback process a number of the participating staff/learners offered their data for use as a means of improving the quality of management programmes, the staff development process and their delivery role. An example of the full interview transcript of one of these participants is provided in Appendix XVII. Examples used in the analysis and interpretation are given in Section 11.4. come from two other of these participants whose responses were particularly representative of the group as a whole.

11.4. Analysis and Interpretation of Repertory Grids
The analysis and interpretation of the repertory grids, which were completed in early 1993, indicated both differences and commonalities between findings in the earlier (1991) Repertory Grid Study (Shown in Chapter 9). An exemplar and an elaboration of a repertory grid, by participant CBS 3, can be seen in Appendix XVI & XVII. What follows is a detailed breakdown of these differences and commonalities under two major components: 1) Element Cluster Analysis and 2) Construct Cluster Analysis. The Focus Analysis Programs (Shaw, 1990) was used to obtain clusters throughout the analysis.

11.4.1. Element Cluster Analysis
The first major difference in this study indicated that staff/learners clustered learning methods or Elements into two distinct categories:

a) Crediting Competence and NVQ mechanisms

and

b) 'conventional'/ 'traditional' learning methods

It should be noted at this point, that the terms 'conventional' and 'traditional', were used by participants within this study. The meanings of these terms were verified by the researcher during the interview process. They were used to depict those familiar methods used in management courses that were syllabus and skills based in contrast to the methods used in new competence or NVQ related management programmes.
It may not be surprising that such learning methods as:

E3 Discussing Issues in an Action Learning Set
E5 Negotiating a Learning Contract
E1 Developing a Portfolio of Evidence
E7 Writing a Personal Narrative

were shown to be clustered together by all respondents and related to those learning processes that were integral to Crediting Competence and NVQ provision. Similarly all the grids showed that the methods that were related to NVQ processes (shown in a) above) were depicted to be 80% or above in matched values on the Focus Analysis grid scale. This also demonstrated a high level of commonality between participants' perceptions of these teaching and learning strategies.

The element E10 'Reflecting Systematically' was found, by all participants, closely linked to integral Crediting Competence and NVQ learning processes. This method was not considered to be an effective or related element within the more familiar 'conventional' management programmes.

There was also a high degree of commonality of perception of two other elements:

E11 Listening to Speakers
E2 Observing a Role Model,

these being closely associated with the more 'traditional' or 'conventional' methods of learning within management courses. There was also a degree of linkage or pairing by participants of these two elements. The earlier Repertory Grid study clearly demonstrated that the learning method 'Listening to Speakers' was an ineffective method of learning. Thus it might be considered that these two elements were now both being construed as being less effective learning methods. This finding was also reflected in the participant's construct labels.

The elements:

E6 Practising a Skill
E9 Reading Selectively
E4 Presenting and Explaining Ideas to Others
showed a mixed pattern of values and clusterings within the grid Focus Analysis. These three elements were included by participants in a cluster formation that related to both i) NVQ mechanisms and ii) conventional methods of learning.

The analysis of the grids of two respondents showed the element E8 'Undertaking a Work-based Project' as linking to the cluster formations of both i) NVQ mechanisms and ii) conventional methods of learning. This may not be significant in itself as a portfolio leading to an NVQ is work-based and could be construed as a project in its own right. Also a work-based project has, in the past, been used in 'conventional' management courses as a vehicle for integrating work activities with course activities and as a means of enabling the transfer of learning from the classroom to the work-place.

The two elements that were closely linked or shown as a pair within the cluster diagram by all participants were:

E10  Reflecting Systematically
E7   Writing a Personal Narrative

These two elements were matched in value on all the grid scales and shown above the 80% mark. As can be seen by the example shown in Appendix XVI, CBS 3 paired these two elements at the 98% point on the scale and closely linked E10 and E7 with E1 'Developing a Portfolio of Evidence'. This indicates an acknowledgement of the processes involved in developing a portfolio of evidence.

11.4.2. Construct Cluster Analysis

A major finding within the elicited constructs was a distinct commonality of the use of the term or label "reflection" to enable effective learning by manager/learners. This degree of agreement about the reflective process being of paramount importance within the learning process was considered to be significant. It was also considered important to note that this particular construct was voluntarily elicited from all participants in contrast to the element analysis in which the element E10 'Reflecting Systematically' had already been provided.
Nevertheless the perceived importance by the staff/learners of the element 'Systematic Reflection' and the construct 'reflection/reflective' within the learning process cannot be ignored.

The perception that manager/learners could learn effectively either 'alone' or 'with others' was also perceived by all participants as being an important ingredient within NVQ programmes. Examples of labels denoting this meaning perspective are shown below:

- CBS 6 subject to outside constraints/personal control
- CBS 8 active interaction/individual activity
- CBS 3 input from others/candidates 'doing' by themselves
- CBS 11 do it with other people/do it alone

However, these construct labels were also closely linked, for example, to other construct labels such as 'personal control' (CBS 8) or 'choice and responsibility' (CBS 3). This paradox is similar to that found in the earlier Repertory Grid study and indicated a need for a process that would enable manager/learners to understand that different tasks and circumstances require different learning approaches. Again, the effectiveness of learning methods that involve active interaction with others is therefore dependent upon the willingness of those 'significant others' to engage in the whole learning process. Not surprisingly, therefore, it was found from the interpretation of the grids using Focus Analysis that Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes provided the manager/learner with a degree of choice of and responsibility for (See CBS 3 Appendix XVI) learning methods that involve group or individual processes.

The construct 'active' was not so common or pronounced as in the earlier (1991) study. It may have been considered by the staff/learners that the whole learning process was 'active' and that the onus and responsibility for actively learning or gaining evidence for a portfolio was placed upon the manager/learner; that 'active' processes were implicit and integral to innovative management programmes that were based upon the experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984).

The use of the such constructs by staff/learners as: 'has management'
standards' (CBS 3); 'competence-based' (CBS 11) and 'work-based' (CBS 6) indicated a high degree of understanding by staff/learners of the essence and nature of the NVQ process.

The elements that were clustered in the Focus Analysis under NVQ methods (i) had a high degree of correlation to those constructs and meanings that related to reflective processes, the learning and development process, work-based learning, individual choice and onus of responsibility for learning. This indicated a high level of understanding about the benefits of effective learning that NVQ programmes can bring to manager/learners. However, these findings also highlighted the difficulties that staff/learners had in attempting to provide a work-based management programme that by its very nature demands a reflective and an individual and group process. Such paradoxes and dilemmas have imposed an enormous degree of stress upon staff/learners as facilitators and providers of effective learning processes through Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. These paradoxes and dilemmas are further elaborated upon in the following section.

11.4.3. Interpretation of the 'Laddering Process' within the Repertory Grid Interview

The constructs and learning methods/elements were further elaborated upon, in the repertory grid interview process, by staff/learners as being core issues in the development and delivery of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. To maintain consistency with Chapter 9 and for ease of reading the elaboration derived from the interview with CBS 3 has been included in Appendix XVII.

It is interesting to note that during the repertory grid construct elicitation and ranking process all the staff/learners maintained an outwardly calm appearance. However, during the 'laddering process' (See Section 11.2.) two staff/learners exhibited extreme emotion. The core issues that appeared to provoke such reactions fell under three interrelated categories: the reflective process; the learning and development process and expression of feelings towards the role as providers of management education.
Firstly, all staff/learners further elaborated upon the central and core issue of reflection during the 'laddering' process. This has already been discussed in earlier Sections (11.4.1. & 11.4.2.) within the element and construct cluster analysis. However, this elaboration can best be illustrated by showing below some of the comments gleaned from staff/learners about the importance of the reflective process for their manager/learners.

CBS 8's first two constructs:
C1 "individual activity/active interaction"
and
C2 "interpersonal skills/ doesn't involve interpersonal skills"

CBS 8 focused on elements E10 'Reflecting Systematically' and E7 'Writing a Personal Narrative'. CBS 8 explained that these two constructs enabled a reflective process:

"Depends on how you (the staff/learner) use the reflective process in the group and individually and that ideally someone helping you (the manager/learner) to reflect upon self-development should be built into the programme deliberately in order to see how the process works for you! (the manager/learner)".

Researcher Question: Why?
CBS 8:
"To enable people to identify their strengths and learning opportunities - difficult to do on own. This requires such interventions as mentoring, advising process and action learning which is critical to the learning process. Without these mechanisms it is just an open learning system".

Researcher Question: Why?
CBS 8:
"It is about sharing ideas; getting reflections; sorting out issues and acts as a catalyst for other people to get into perspective".
This perspective was shared by another participant CBS 6 whose third construct was: "more inward and reflective/active - more outgoing"

Researcher Question: Which pole is more important?

CBS 6: "The left hand pole. This is what it is all about - people are *doing* management. There is no time for most of us to reflect on *why* we are doing or *what* we are doing!"

CBS 6 further enlarged upon her views about NVQ programmes:
"NVQ's should give us time to step back and find better ways of doing things. To *prioritise* and to *think* about our assumptions and stereotyping. We do things because we've always done them, new NVQ programmes gives us a chance to reflect upon such issues as Equal Opportunities and Recruitment and Selection of students".

CBS 6 enlarged upon the effect of the reflective process on the staff/learner's role:
"Also enabling staff to reflect would assist in uncovering biases and assumptions which would enable greater self-awareness and self discovery. You could surprise yourself!"

CBS 8 also elucidated upon the teaching or staff/learner's role by stating:
"That the teaching role is about developing the interpersonal skills, which are important, to identify learning opportunities; potential (of the manager/learner) and the learning process itself. The learner's role is critical to making the best use of the NVQ opportunity such as the development of interpersonal skills and the ability to listen and reflect".

CBS 8 expounded further that in order to take the learning process forward it should:
"open people to constructive criticism as an important part of learning. Then develop (manager/learners) from being comfortable and then to move forward on a parallel course of self-development and organisational development".
CBS 6 also provided a valuable insight into the whole learning and development process for manager/learners when the researcher 'laddered up' on construct 6:

"part of the learning and developing process/
not part of overall learning process"

Researcher Question: Which pole is important?
CBS 6:
"Left-hand pole - part of the learning and developing process"
Researcher Question: Why is that important?
CBS 6:
"Element 5 'Negotiating a Learning Contract' is unimportant as part of the learning process as it was badly drafted; nobody understood it; it required no effort and was a waste of time".

CBS 6 recognised that it may have been the process of negotiating a learning contract that was incorrect by stating:

"Maybe it was the way it was done. However the process has been a waste of time for students and teachers by reducing the creditability of teachers in the eyes of students which is so demoralising for the teacher!"

CBS 6 then expressed her feelings about her role:

"I feel a sham, not giving what is wanted and needed. It is destructive both for students and teachers, I feel demoralised. If the NVQ programme is based upon wrong premises then the perception of students will be wrong".

CBS 6 angrily expressed her feelings and self-perception as being a "sham" and that being "authentic is so important for a teacher". CBS 6 posed a rhetorical question about the NVQ process surely being based on ethical principles and a positive philosophy of teaching and learning.

These comments may appear extreme. However, similar feelings were also demonstrated by other participants during the 'snake' interviews. It was considered that the more positive factors, which related to the learning and development process and to the staff/learners' role, may not have been mentioned by staff/learners due to the relative ease of implementing particular aspects of the NVQ programme eg easy access
to NVQ materials. Certainly during the interview process opportunities provided for highlighting positive aspects were not taken up by the participants.

11.4.4. Interpretation of the Autobiographical Snakes

The interpretation of the 'snakes', drawn by staff/learners, showed a surprising degree of similarity which had not been anticipated by the researcher. During the preceding eighteen month's process of designing and delivering Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes the perceived critical incidents indicated by all staff/learners were concerned with staff development events. Sadly, all snakes showed a downward shift in response following the initial excitement and enthusiasm engendered by a three-day introductory course to Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. What follows is an elucidation of CBS 3's snake which is shown in Appendix XVII. This is given as an exemplar because it not only shows the staff development events, which were annotated on other staff/learners' snakes, but clearly indicates the feelings that CBS 3 expressed during the course of her reflective journey.

CBS 3 Snake Interview Notes:
The first critical incident on this snake occurred in June 1991 when she was trained as a Crediting Competence Adviser/Assessor on a 3-day programme run by MCI. It was explained by the Interviewee that once she started to understand about the concept and processes of APL and NVQ's she started to panic about her 'contact hours'. She was short of teaching/contact hours and realised that she needed to 'fill in' with Crediting Competence facilitation. Although she still had doubts (which she reported as stifling) about the process she rationalised to herself that because of her past management development experience, especially in the processes of counselling and action learning, she would be able to cope. However, it was a "big mistake" to think that the MCI Crediting Competence and NVQ process would be similar to other similar experiences she had in industry. Her previous experience in a similar area provided her with:

--- "support networks of like minded people"
--- "masses of time for personal development"
"an opportunity to develop with candidates"
"de-briefing sessions in order to learn from doing"
"changing and developing strategies"
"a network of people who care about me"
"flexibility in managing my time, not constrained by a timetable"

These past experiences, outside of education, were in contrast to her present fixed 7.5 hour traditional lecturing, marking and preparation workload.

By November 1992 the Interviewee was not so concerned because she "did not know enough to be worried!". However, the Action Learning Staff Development session, in January 1993 did not fit into her "traditional" timetable, so she was unable to pursue her own staff development. CBS 3 explained that the "Lack of personal development led to lack of confidence". The Interviewee was "not sure why certain things in Action Learning Set meetings went well" - as there was no debriefing or support network of colleagues. During this time CBS 3 experienced conflict between "time-tabled traditional work" and MCI Crediting Competence which was a more flexible programme. This conflict caused problems of availability and therefore she had to work on "days off", causing her a great deal of stress.

By February 1993 CBS 3 had more MCI Crediting Competence work plus her involvement with the TDLB training which again did not fit into her "contact time timetable". She found that every TDLB session conflicted with her MCI or 'traditional' work. She also believed that the TDLB training was a "top-up for a formalised personal development programme and was too little, too late!"

Time off for sickness added to her stress level as did a confusion about her responsibilities in delivering a programme, derived from unclear instructions. At the same time a client had requested that their own Trainers "sit in" on CBS 3's facilitation of Action Learning Set Meetings. CBS 3 said "I was actually quite unhappy about this". She felt that such an intrusion conflicted with the ethos of Action Learning.
Although CBS 3 recognised that there was a partnership agreement for the project and programme she questioned the motives of this request. CBS 3 viewed her role as facilitator for candidates and not for the employer. She agreed with the researcher that she had experienced role conflict. CBS 3 observed that Management did not fully understand the Action Learning process as, "lots of people (candidates) were demanding separate hours". This caused her some confusion in attempting to understand the terms and conditions of the Client contract and added that she was also "not clear about the programme contract".

During this period CBS 3 had, due to illness, to cancel at short notice an action learning set meeting. CBS 3 showed some distress about a comment received from one participant (who had not attended an earlier action learning set meeting) that CBS 3 had not given enough notice. This was considered by CBS 3 to be "the final straw" and she "decided to stop and get off".

In summary, she expressed her concern that her line managers did not understand the complexity of or the demands inherent in the job she was asked to do.

Concluding Viewpoint:
In conclusion, CBS 3 was satisfied with the concept and process of Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes during the period June 1991 until October 1992. CBS 3 believed that she had an overview of the programme but needed practical experience with the MCI standards and intermediate or formative assessment of portfolios or units. She considered that the TDLB programme would have been more useful earlier in the staff development process. CBS 3 also identified that a staff work group and a support network eg staff action learning set was an essential mechanism for all staff involved in the Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes.

11.5.1. The Implications of Findings for Staff Development Practice
Effective learning strategies for manager/learners have been discussed
The findings shown in Chapter 9 and earlier sections of this Chapter clearly indicate that the starting point and responsibility, for effective delivery of such innovative management programmes, lie with the staff/learners themselves. Thus this section will attempt to bring together this study’s research findings and relevant literature in order to provide a way forward for staff development in Further Education colleges. This exposition is followed by recommendations and a model that will enhance the effectiveness of management education through staff and organisation development in Further Education Colleges.

11.5.2. The Changing Role of Staff/Learners in FE Colleges

It has been demonstrated in earlier Chapters (9 & 10) that staff/learners need to develop the skills and ‘artistry’ of reflection on ‘reflection-in-action’ (Schon, 1983 & 1987). It is emphasised that if these critical reflective processes (Mezirow, 1990) are not addressed, by both staff/learners and manager/learners, then the potential benefits that can be accrued from participating in NVQ management programmes may well be lost.

Such innovative management programmes have been based upon andrological assumptions (Knowles, 1990) and upon the experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). However MCI, as the Lead Industry Body, was responsible for promulgating the use of
management standards of competence and the Creditin g Competence process. MCI may, however, have missed the importance of the reflective and developmental aspects contained in Kolb’s (1984) learning cycle. An illustration of the MCI’s approach to Crediting Competence based upon the learning cycle (Kolb, 1984) is given in Figure XVII.

11.5.3. The Reflective Aspects of the Staff/Learners’ Role

By utilising only one dimension of Kolb’s learning cycle, MCI may have lost the importance and meaning of the ‘reflective observation’ stage within their translation. MCI have effectively translated ‘reflective observation’ as having a similar meaning to the activity ‘match experience to standards’. Such an activity does not uncover the full potentiality for individual learning and development that was originally intended within Kolb’s learning cycle (1984). The aim of NVQ programmes is for participants to achieve learning and development as well as to gain accreditation towards a certificate. It is argued, therefore, that greater emphasis must be placed upon the ‘reflective observation’ point of the cycle in order to transform an experience and acquire a higher-level form of consciousness. If a full transformative perspective (Mezirow, 1990) is to be achieved, by both staff/learners and manager/learners, then a process of critical reflection should be engendered at this point of the cycle.

The research findings, previously illustrated in Chapter 9, have clearly indicated that the reflective process is a key and core issue for effective learning by manager/learners within NVQ provision. However the effect of the mistranslation and misusage of the ‘reflective observation’ component has caused major conflicts in the staff/learners’ role as providers of NVQ management provision. For example, staff/learners at Pathway College have utilised the MCI translation of Kolb’s cycle (See Figure XVII) as a major component in the design and delivery of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. However, research findings shown in this Chapter, clearly indicate that staff/learners recognised that the lack of ‘reflection’ components within NVQ programmes were also incongruent within their practice as delivers of learning and development.
This perception of the need for critical reflection can best be illustrated by CBS 8's comment that a process of reflection upon self-development should be "deliberately" built into an NVQ programme. Furthermore, staff/learners have not been enabled to develop their skills of critical reflection through staff development activities. This shortcoming is well illustrated by CBS 6 who notes that staff/learners need time to reflect on "why" or "what" is being done within NVQ programmes.

It is suggested, therefore, that the MCI's learning cycle model could, therefore, be adapted by replacing their present label "match experience to standards" (See Figure XVII) with "managers' reflecting upon past experience" (See Figure XVIII which is a modified version of the MCI Learning Cycle). This would bring the original reflective aspects of Kolb's learning cycle (1984) into relief and emphasis the
importance of this component to both staff/learners and manager/learners. This is not to suggest that less emphasis should be placed on the assessment process, but rather that a balance in emphasis on the two components should be achieved.

Figure XVIII  Researcher's Recommended, Crediting Competence, Experiential Learning Model:

The assessment process involves the presentation of portfolios of evidence to nominated Assessors for summative assessment and recommendation for accreditation of an NVQ in management. The portfolios of evidence are assessed against the performance criteria contained in the Management Standards.
"These require the assessor to draw inferences from the evidence gathered and presented about the candidate's performance. It requires the assessor to go through a systematic process that will satisfy the candidate, the advisor, other assessors and perhaps external verifiers that the assessment and the resulting decisions were made as validly, reliably and fairly as possible" (Simosko, 1992, pp 99 - 100).

Assessors, then, must ensure that the evidence meets the technical requirements which include: validity, reliability, sufficiency, authenticity, and currency (Simosko, 1992, p 101). All Centres providing an APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ service should also undertake an interview with each manager/learner. These interviews should seek clarification of evidence from the candidates, should check the authenticity of evidence and check the knowledge of the principles underpinning competent performance (Hall, 1992, p 43). However, there is no provision within the guidance notes issued by MCI for Assessors to enquire into 'what' has been learnt or 'how' the learning has taken place. The focus of assessment has, in the main, concentrated upon evidence matching the management standards in contrast to how a manager reaches a standard through a process of learning and development. The research findings clearly indicate that the process of critical reflection as well as the management standards must form an integral and equally important part in the whole learning process. Thus these dichotomies within the advisory, assessor and learning role have caused conflict, confusion and stress to staff/learners. It may be that these stresses have resulted in staff/learners (See CBS 3 and CBS 6 -Appendix XVI) displaying negative attitudes towards the whole process of delivering Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes at Pathway College.

11.5.4. The Facilitative Aspects of the Staff/Learners' Role
Changes in the staff/learners' role were amply demonstrated by CBS 3 who reiterated that "reflection is key to the Crediting Competence process" and explained further the differences in the role of "teacher", suggesting control by teacher, as opposed to the role of "facilitator", suggesting "energy, excitement, commitment, flexibility, and adaptability". These perceptions indicate a major change in the role of staff/learner from a didactic to a more facilitative and reflective
approach. This perception is further reinforced by Burke's research (1989, p 124):

"The change from lecturing to a whole class, to a more student-centred approach caused practical difficulties and was far more demanding."

This major change in role, according to Burke (1989, p 125), presented possible barriers to the successful implementation of NVQs and accounted for some of the difficulties individuals have in adapting to new methods of assessment. Burke further enlarged upon the theme of attempting to create an 'ideal type' of lecturer who would most need support in adapting to a new role involving a genuine change of practice rather than a mere outward acquiescence or compliance. Burke further suggested that not only would staff/learners require a less didactic, more student-centred, flexible approach but would also need to develop a close liaison with industry. These issues are richly illustrated by CBS 3's perception that her role demanded greater involvement and partnership with the organisational client but that her new role as Facilitator was "for candidates" and "not for the employer". (See interview transcript in Appendix XVII).

11.5.5. The Role of Change Agents within the Organisational Hierarchy

The importance of APL co-ordination or project leaders, senior lecturers or principal lecturers, who were cast in the role 'change agents' has also been highlighted by Burke (1989, p 113):

"They too were extremely enthusiastic, well informed and 'dedicated'."

He found that the pro-active involvement of such change agents focused upon staff development activities as a central core for much of the work of the APL project (Burke, 1989, p 113). Similarly in Pathway College the initial enthusiasm for implementing APL and NVQ's was provided by the staff developers and APL co-ordinators. However, initially these roles were not perceived as being an important position (such as a Head of Department) in the hierarchy of power and responsibility within the traditional pattern of FE college management (Burke, 1989, p 116). The role of APL Co-ordinator was upgraded to
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"Education today occurs in a context of high stress which has an infinitely deleterious effect upon practice and delivery. We would seek for learner teachers an experience which is built, not upon structures which are anxiety inducing, but rather upon processes which enlarge vision and help to transfer the continuum from past to present into future. If teachers are to take constructive risks - as have some of the best educators of our time - they must develop both a breadth of perspective and a courage which facilitates the willingness to recognise and respond positively to conflict and challenge" (Haffenden, & Brown, 1989, p 45).

This is amplified by CBS 3's perception that the inherent flexibility of the Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes directly conflicted with the rigidity of the traditional "time-tabled" teaching work. Such conflicts as the one between availability to 'teach'/ 'facilitate' and availability to participate within staff development sessions caused CBS 3 a great deal of stress.

It was perceived that the staff/learners within this study could be suffering from 'initiative fatigue' (Haffenden & Brown, 1989, p 51) due to the amount of changes related to management education provision that had occurred within the educational system over the past decade.

11.5.7. The Changing Attitudes and Practice of Staff/Learners
The use by staff/learners of an 'autobiographical snake', during the latter part of interviews, led to profound verbal expressions of anger and frustration concerning their new role within competence-based management programmes. Such verbal expressions by CBS 6 as: "Since September 1992 I have felt the experience has been totally demoralising"; "I felt involved in a sham process"; "that being authentic is so important for a teacher" demonstrate the attitudes concerning the practice of implementing these new initiatives.

Staff/learners in the 1991 study were attempting to anticipate such events as the implementation of NVQ management programmes by developing personal construct systems that would help them move in those directions which seem to them to make most sense (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 13) ie they were willing to learn in the projected new
situation. However, it can be seen from the later 1992/1993 study that attitudes had developed into those indicating frustration derived from experiences of that situation. Thus staff/learners' personal construct systems were being put to perpetual tests and changes:

"We change our construct systems in relation to the accuracy of our anticipations. Predictions are sometimes proved correct, sometimes found wanting, sometimes turn out to be totally irrelevant in terms of the unfolding events " (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p 15).

The intent of the new NVQ curriculum, in terms of offering an experiential and reflective base to learning, differed from what actually happened in practice. Therefore, staff/learners at Pathway College were perceived to be changing their construct systems and were going through a painful experience of changing themselves. Although some participating staff/learners were undoubtedly cynical and negative in their attitude towards the new management curriculum there was an acceptance that such changes were inevitable. However, this study's research findings indicated that at practitioner level staff/learners were involved in taking the risks but felt that they had little control of the new management programmes.

Policy decisions about management programmes were made higher up in the hierarchy, but staff/learners were nevertheless expected to implement them. Staff/learners therefore had to live with the consequences of these decisions which might adversely affect their career prospects, or run counter to their perceived self-interest, or to their students best interests. It is hardly surprising that Burke (1989, p 129) found that many lecturers in a similar situation employed a range of strategies that would circumvent imposed changes:

"The most frequently reported strategy was outward compliance - getting the paperwork right - with very little change in practice".

However, the staff/learners at Pathway College did not seem to employ such strategies and were experiencing cognitive dissonance (cf. Festinger's seminal work 1957) whereby their professional actions were out of balance with their core values.
Staff/learners at Pathway College were clearly given little structured opportunity to discuss their concerns. These conflicts in the staff/learners' role often arose from their using a 'known' teaching process (based upon a philosophy of 'education from above') in a situation which required a learning process based upon the 'education of equals' (Jarvis, 1985, p 49) Thus, in order for staff/learners to develop from perceived conscious incompetence (in these new facilitating techniques) to unconscious competence (Boak, 1991, p 179) there was a need to design appropriate learning opportunities.

11.5.8. The Guidance and Support required to enable Staff/Learners to Change their Practice

In the midst of all these changes appropriate staff development activities and support in order to bring staff/learners' beliefs and actions into harmony were needed:

"But many were very uneasy about the degree of change which was possible. The very breadth of possible change was daunting. What was clearly required was a sufficiently ambitious staff development programme that took account of their needs" (Burke, 1989, p 129).

The repertory grid interview process confirmed staff/learners' perceptions of the constituent parts needed for effective learning by manager/learners that could be accommodated within Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. However, much of the expressed anger and frustration was due to staff/learners perceiving that they were inadequate or unskilled in the effective delivery of management NVQ programmes. There was a need for psychological support and understanding that would provide staff/learners with the assurance:

"...that it took time to develop new expertise and that in the early stages progress would be hindered by lack of confidence which should not be confused with incompetence" (Burke, 1989, p 130).

Staff/learners were also attempting to cope with role changes that were eroding their perceived power base of didactic teaching towards an often new facilitative mode of learning. In a changing situation most
people feel threatened but staff/learners at Pathway College were not able to draw on any similar previous experiences:

"When you ask an individual to change his or her practice you are in effect putting them into a novice situation where they may not be able to rely on past experience" (Burke, 1989, p 130).

Therefore, staff/learners needed greater guidance and support because they may expose themselves to error and mistakes which may be both stressful and discouraging (Burke, 1989, p 130). This is supported by CBS 3's description of the previous supportive climate experienced in industry as compared with her present experiences in education. A 'no blame' climate needed to be engendered whereby staff/learners and higher level management could recognise and value "productive failure as contrasted with unproductive success" (Garvin, 1993, p 86). Without Pathway College management's acceptance of such role ambiguity and role conflicts (Handy, 1976, p 56-59) the process of attitude change would be made more difficult by staff/learners not cooperating with changes in practice. As Handy (1976, p 56) suggested, individuals often find it hard to escape from the role that cultural traditions have defined for them and such role ambiguity may lead to role stress.

Thus staff/learners at Pathway College needed a supportive forum that would be conducive to reflection and discussion about their concerns with changes in educational practice and changes in their role. They also needed constructive feedback on their performance in order to evaluate their progress in the delivery and assessment of manager/learners participating in NVQ management programmes. Moreover, staff development activities should be clearly linked to curriculum development and practice, so that staff/learners:

"...... may be empowered not only to identify need but to actually implement change" (Burke, 1989, p 131).
The following Chapter brings together the results of research conducted between 1988-1993 within the Conclusions. An attempt is made to identify and define a strategy for the management of change in colleges of further education. It is anticipated that such a strategy would enable the development of the organisation through a process of action learning and staff development.
Chapter 12 - "Learning to Learn - The Management of Change"

12.1. Section Overview
This section of the Chapter brings together and reviews the main findings from research conducted between November 1988, and January, 1993. It will be seen in Section 12.1.2. that Part I (Chapters 1 - 5) of this thesis charts the introduction and growth of innovative, flexible and competence-based practices within management education. This establishes the foundation for later research by reviewing management educational policies and practices at national or macro level compared with practices at micro or local level.

Section 12.1.3. describes the findings shown in Part II (Chapters 6 - 8) of this thesis and depicts the growth and practice of a flexible and collaborative approach between employers, managers and management education providers. The specific focus is upon the process of APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning), or APL or Crediting Competence as it is now called. The process of APL was considered to be a potential vehicle to bring about change and innovation in management education and development practice. However, the repercussions of such innovative practices and their effect upon the curriculum, academic institutions, college staff and ultimately upon the manager/learner appear not to have been fully appreciated by those responsible for policies and practices in management education provision.

Thus, section 12.1.4. of this Chapter describes the research findings contained in Part III (Chapters 9 - 11) of this thesis. These chapters describe the research studies that explored the attitudes and behaviour of educational staff/learners within this context of complex environmental and organisational change. These studies revealed that management lecturers (staff/learners) need to consciously reflect on their own practice in order to provide effective learning strategies for their manager/learners participating in NVQ management programmes.
These conclusions will be followed by recommendations (12.2.) for managing changes to the curriculum, the organisation and the staff role in an educational context. This is followed by a final section 12.3. which includes comments on the research process, as a method of self development and life-long learning, and provides suggestions for further areas of research.

12.1.2. Conclusions arising from Research Results - Part I
(Chapters 1 - 5)

Part I (Chapters 1 and 2) provides a description of the organisation within a complex and changing environment and a historical review of literature in the management education, training and development area. Chapter 3 describes the general approaches to the methodology that was utilised throughout the whole term of research.

These early chapters provide the reasons for undertaking qualitative research in this area and indicates the changes in the political, social and economic climate that led to the re-examination of the management educational system. The need to widen access to management qualifications generally was accepted by industry and education in the light of such forces as demographic changes, global competitiveness, the Single European Market, legislation and the changing nature of employment itself.

One major repercussion, which resulted from these external factors, led to the changed nature of the management qualification system in the UK. Informal interviews were conducted with senior personnel responsible for implementing these changes. The results of interview findings are illustrated in Chapter 4 and demonstrate the need to provide management qualifications that are flexible, three-tiered and modular so that they could be interleaved with work-based experience. Interviews were also conducted with staff at a local college who were responsible for management education provision. The findings from these two sets of interviews illustrate the discrepancy between views at macro and micro level and between those and educational theories, as reviewed in Chapter 5. These chapters indicate that management
education providers had not recognised the need to: develop student centred learning programmes; innovative assessment and accreditation mechanisms and the development of collaboration between academic institutes, awarding bodies, employers and management students. Similarly, providers were not paying heed to such educational theories as: androgogy (Knowles, 1980); experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) and the education of equals (Jarvis, 1985). These theories reflect the need for management educational providers to integrate national innovations with educational practice for adult learners.

Chapter 4 also reveals that many management educators, at that time, were still enamoured with the notion of producing more or different management courses to satisfy the needs of individual management students. On the other hand, it was found that some innovations and changes within management education provision were greeted with a high degree of scepticism and resistance from the teaching fraternity. This was in contrast to the increasing interest in the outcomes of management education amongst employers. This interest was stimulated by many factors, among them being the development of the MCI's activities which produced a flexible and competence-based approach to national management qualifications.

This research phase (Part I) established the foundation for the later study by revealing that external environmental factors had far-reaching effects within the Further and Higher Education Sector. Thus the findings from this phase of research crystallised the view that, for providers of management education to survive and prosper, they needed to develop and implement a proactive work-based process and a flexible approach that would satisfy the needs of employing organisations and managers/learners.

12.1.3. Conclusions arising from Research Results - Part II
(Chapters 6 - 8)
In order for management education provision to survive and prosper an innovative and flexible delivery, assessment and accreditation mechanism was identified and investigated that could satisfy market
needs and that could incorporate sound educational practice. The mechanism chosen that could fulfil these aims and develop collaboration between academic institutions and employers was the process of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) (Chapter 6). Therefore, interviews were conducted with representatives from academic institutions responsible for implementing the APL process and with senior members of the MCI responsible for the national APL/Crediting Competence Experienced Managers project.

Research findings contained in Chapter 6 illustrate that the original concept of the Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) process was based upon the experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). Research results also demonstrate that the process of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), or Crediting Competence as it is now known, varied slightly in detail between the different academic institutions involved in the study. This variation was due to the different 'purposes' for which APL was used which included: access to higher level courses; accreditation of prior experiences and achievements and the identification of training needs for career development. However, for all identified 'purposes', the APL process was based upon the notion that individual learners were required to produce and submit a portfolio of evidence that would be assessed. Research findings indicate, in Chapter 6, that although the APL process had been used in the past to fulfil a variety of purposes, it had not been fully utilised to enable accreditation within a national system of qualifications. However, the Management Charter Initiative (MCI) was in the process of introducing APL as a mechanism with which to assess portfolios of evidence against the national standards of management competence. This national initiative supported the view that employers required management qualifications that were flexible and work-based and would develop collaboration between themselves and accrediting institutions.

This view led to a research study being undertaken to ascertain the management development practices of employing organisations and development needs and motivations of experienced managers representing organisations across all employment sectors. Telephone
questionnaires and semi-structured or guided interviews were conducted with senior human resource specialists and managers. The results contained in Chapter 7 demonstrate that the management qualification system in existence in 1990 could not fully prepare all managers for complex changes and practices at work for the next decade.

Indeed, the research results indicate that employers with sophisticated management education, training and development programmes ignored the development needs of older and experienced managers in contrast to the attention given to 'high-fliers', graduates and senior managers. However, employers did value performance appraisal and assessment techniques as a means of identifying training and development needs. These techniques were integrated with a growing use of in-company management training and development programmes in contrast to a diminishing use of College management qualification programmes.

One critically important factor leading to this diminishing use was that the period of absence from work needed to achieve a qualification outweighed the perceived benefits to the organisation. Another important factor was that organisations tended to encourage managers towards those management qualification programmes that were specifically job and organisationally related and/or only encouraged such activities when there was an identified shortage of skills or expertise. These organisational responses complemented, at least in part, the reactions, identified in this study (Section 7.5.), of older and experienced managers who found that management development programmes were more effective if they were linked to work and with personal growth or self-development activities.

The growth of in-company programmes and the accreditation of qualifications derived from them eg the British Gas, BTEC, Certificate in Management Studies, allowed employers to provide qualification programmes that were directly related to organisational needs without having recourse to management programmes at an FE College. However, if management education providers could not fill the gap in
the market with appropriate management development activities then this sector of education would not survive. An accredited management qualification programme, incorporating APL, would thus provide an ideal opportunity for employers and colleges to develop collaborative practice that would satisfy all the 'stakeholders' within management education. However, in 1990, the APL process was still a comparatively unknown mechanism to the vast majority of employers and their managers.

The introduction, in the late 1980's, of the national standards of management competence and the subsequent National Vocational Qualifications, in the early 1990's, combined the worlds of education, industry and commerce through the provision of competence-based management qualifications.

The establishment of a new system of management qualifications ie the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) and the MCI's APL/Crediting Competence process were ultimately accepted by employers and management education providers. However, the new management qualification initiative appeared over-complicated and confusing to all those involved in their implementation. Thus, Chapter 8 clarifies the relationship between the 'employer-led' MCI standards and the 'candidate led' NVQ's. These innovations in the management qualification system provided a potential role for staff in Further & Higher Education Colleges to develop APL or Crediting Competence programmes leading to NVQ levels in management.

It was difficult, however, for any College to fully provide a proactive approach to these new initiatives during the latter part of the '80's and early '90s when the key foci of such initiatives - NVQ's - were still not fully in place. Thus research was undertaken, at a further and higher education college, to investigate the educational provision of innovative practices such as APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes.
12.1.4. Conclusions arising from Research Results - Part III
(Chapters 9 - 11)

The developing concepts and practices of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ's had not been introduced into the world of management education and development provision without some degree of conflict, confusion and resistance. These initiatives appeared to have left staff/learners, within the educational sector, struggling to interpret and to implement NVQ management programmes.

A programme of research was undertaken prior to the implementation of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. This research phase attempted to explore the attitudes and behaviour of staff/learners, in a college of further and higher education (Pathway College), who were involved in the initial design and development of the new (NVQ) management qualification system. Kelly's (1955) repertory grid analysis was used as a means of describing staff/learner's attitudes towards the effectiveness of learning methods in management education. The research results are fully described in Chapter 9.

The major common themes arising from this study indicated that effective methods of learning for managers were those that incorporated a process of systematic reflection related to practical and work-based activities. Other pronounced and common themes, arising from an analysis of constructs, demonstrated that manager/learners needed to participate in an experiential and active learning process. Similarly, the importance of manager/learners gaining ownership and control of their learning were crucial aids to effective learning. Methods that "involve other people" were also perceived as effective but the corollary was that effectiveness was therefore dependent upon the willingness of those others to engage in the process. These propositions were illustrated by such constructs as "alone/control of learning" - "in a group/not in control of learning" which through the paradox indicated a need to enable learners to understand why different ways of performing a task work better in different circumstances. Such perceived effective learning processes were already substantially incorporated within elements of the APL/Crediting Competence process.
Participants found the repertory grid interview unlike a traditional interview and described the experience with emotional words as "revealing", "confrontational" and almost always "reflective" and "tiring". There was no intention in these grid interviews to attempt to change core constructs nor was the research process intended to be used as a staff development method, nevertheless, the interviews and feedback sessions provided the time and opportunity for staff/learners to ponder and reflect upon their past experiences and future expectations of their "teaching" or "learning" role.

These research findings led to a more detailed investigation and description of the processes of critical reflection (Mezirow, 1990 and Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985); androogogical assumptions (Knowles, 1980); experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). Thus, these theories of adult education and learning have been related, in Chapter 10, to the process of APL/Crediting Competence and action learning (Revans, 1982).

Chapter 11 describes a second research study, conducted in 1993, after the introduction of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes at Pathway College. The use of further repertory grid interviews verified research results contained in Chapter 9. However a greater degree of focus was applied, during those interviews, to effective learning within NVQ programme provision. The subsequent results indicated that staff/learners were experiencing frustration and stress caused by the introduction of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. It was found that during the intervening period, 1991 - 1993, the roles of educational staff/learners had radically changed as a result of these attempts to provide innovative and flexible NVQ programmes for managers. The autobiographical snakes identified the need to provide improved staff development and support to staff/learners engaged in major changes to the curriculum.

In parallel with what staff thought was appropriate for manager/learners, staff/learners considered that specific time was required for them to reflect consciously upon their own practice in order to help their manager/learners to make their unconscious reflections conscious (Schon, 1983 & 1987). Such 'reflection-on-practice' ensures
that learners, whether they were managers or educational staff, develop from an 'unconscious incompetence' to an 'unconscious competence' level of staged development (Boak, 1991, p 179).

It was, therefore, considered to be critical that staff development programmes focused at a strategic level upon a conscious process of reflection and action, thus enabling educational staff/learners to develop their skills which would ensure the quality provision of Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. An attempt is made, in the next section 12.2., to identify and define a strategy for the management of change in colleges of further education. It is anticipated that such a strategy would enable the development of the organisation through a reflective process of staff development and action learning.

12.2. The Management of Change - A Strategy for Staff and Organisational Development

This part of the Chapter attempts to outline the implications of curriculum changes for staff development (Section 12.2.1.) and organisational practice (Section 12.2.2.). The process of planned change (Sections 12.2.3.) is discussed and is followed by an indication of how such changes can be managed in the educational field (Section 12.2.4.). A strategy is proposed which specifically relates to the implementation of such curriculum changes as APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. These sections (12.2.5. - 12.2.9.) form the major part of this Chapter and attempts to bring together the major findings contained in this thesis. Therefore, the following elucidation follows an iterative mode and provides a strong basis for the recommended change strategy and model. Finally, Section 12.3. provides a retrospective and progressive personal perspective.

12.2.1. The Implications of Curriculum Changes for Staff Development

In Chapter 8 it was demonstrated that it was difficult for any college to fully provide a proactive approach to new vocational qualification initiatives: during the latter part of the 1980s and early 1990s, when the key foci of such initiatives - NVQ's - were still not fully in place. However, research findings contained in Chapters 9 and 11 show that
providers of NVQ management programmes, e.g. Pathway College, were not perceived to be planning this process of educational change. In particular, such providers were proactive in developing and providing innovative practices such as APL and NVQ's but were not, however, perceived to be effectively managing and supporting the process of curriculum change and staff development in order to meet the challenges and changes within a complex environment.

The research findings have supported Burke's (1989) view that staff development was needed, as shown in Chapters 9 and 11 where it was indicated that staff/learners needed to acquire the necessary skills and areas of competence to design effectively and deliver Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. Staff/learners needed support and an appropriate process of learning for the changes within their job role and curriculum in order to cope with cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). In Chapter 11 it has been shown that staff/learners identified the need to engage upon a learning and staff development process that reflected the espoused theories (Argyris & Schon, 1978, p 11) of the college management and the educational theories (See Chapter 10) of a changing academic world. Such paradoxes within the Lecturers' role required a planned preparation for role transition in order that attention could be paid to ways of learning a new role. To address such paradoxes would require re-focusing upon a new formula for staff development initiatives. Such a formula would include those elements already identified (See Chapter 9 and 11) for effective learning such as, for example, experiential and active learning. This would allow staff/learners to gain ownership of their learning and, importantly, provide a specific period of systematic reflection. It was this very need to provide a specific process of conscious reflection for staff/learners that was drawn from the analysis and interpretation of grids within this study.

It has also been demonstrated in earlier chapters that findings revealed that staff/learners needed to reflect consciously on their own practice in order in turn to help their learners to do the same ie to make their unconscious reflections conscious (Schon, 1983). However, it has been argued (Chapter 10) that the Kolb model does not "help to uncover the
elements of reflection itself" (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). This point is amply illustrated by Boud et al (1985) who are exponents of the integral role of conscious reflection in the process of learning. They maintained that reflection at an unconscious level does not allow the individual to make active and aware decisions, whilst conscious reflection enables evaluation to begin and choices about the future to be made. Thus it was considered, by the writer, that the omission of a specific period of guided reflection in college staff development programmes could ultimately lead to a potential dilution in the quality of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes.

12.2.2. The Implications of Curriculum Changes for Organisational Practice

The requirement to provide quality NVQ management programmes was of paramount importance if colleges were to satisfy the needs of employers and managers within a complex and changing business environment. Yet the extent and magnitude of external environmental and educational changes and internal changes to the institution may not have been fully appreciated by college management. To promote effective change, the change process itself has to be managed and a process of curriculum change has to be actively promoted and supported. To effect the translation of innovative and flexible NVQ programmes from theory to practice requires more than a dissemination of the underlying ideas. It also requires changes to the whole management system of FE Colleges.

Many of the organisational and systemic changes required for the implementation of competence-led curriculum should complement or reinforce other changes within the college. These would lend support to contemporaneous developments, such as flexible learning provision and the search for new clientele (Haffenden & Brown, 1989, p 163). Although this may result in synergy, it was found by the researcher that such developments as APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes were often viewed by Pathway College's senior management and staff/learners in isolation to other developments within the organisation. For instance, the NVQ programme development was both a centralised and a departmental function.
This led to a perceived fragmentation of effort and resources and to wasteful duplication (See snake interview findings in Chapter 11.4.4.). Therefore a mechanism was needed that would enable cross-college fertilisation of information and resources.

Evidence gained from the Haffenden and Brown research study (1989) and that derived from this research study indicated a clear need for a strategic approach to the implementation of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. The management of these changes, especially at a time of resource constraints, is crucial if college staff are to be empowered to work in a concerted effort to implement curriculum changes:

"...there is a world of difference between informed staff in a reflective mode being able to identify the changes required and the realisation of those changes in practice. In order to promote effective change, the change process itself has to be managed" (Haffenden & Brown, 1989, p 162).

The Further Education Unit provided a curriculum development model (see Stanton, 1989, p 97)) and suggested that there are four interrelated stages: aims, values and needs; design; implementation; evaluation and review. However, the existing literature does not specifically focus on the implementation stage as such and provides little advice or attention to the necessary organisational structures and support mechanisms required to manage the implementation process (Haffenden, 1990, p 13). Yet the FEU model indicated that all four processes must be satisfactory if a good quality learning experience is to be achieved and maintained.

There was strong evidence that Pathway College had identified, through its Corporate Strategic Plan, the policies and objectives outlining the aims, values and needs that NVQ programmes would satisfy. There was also evidence of a proactive approach to the design and marketing of NVQ programmes. However, the research findings (Chapter 11) demonstrate that a planned approach to the implementation, and evaluation and review stages contained in the FEU curriculum development cycle were lacking at strategic level at
Pathway College. These findings agree with Stanton's (1989) view that the implementation stage was the concern of the college lecturer (staff/learner) and that the review and evaluation stage for (NVQ) programmes was often neglected.

Consequently, there is an urgent need for colleges, such as Pathway College, to formulate a strategic response to curricular changes and for substantial, planned in-service staff training and development (Haffenden & Brown, 1989, p 144). Such a strategy should focus upon the processes of institutional and staff development as well as the development of individual skills and competences required to deliver Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. Therefore, a co-ordinated strategy of institutional development, curriculum development and staff development is needed rather than an unplanned or un-coordinated approach to educational change.

12.2.3. The Process of Planned Educational Change

When change is unplanned or uncoordinated the consequences or outcomes can be either beneficial or non-beneficial. The probability, given the implicit human unpreparedness, is that the consequences will, at best, be a struggle towards benefit. Most likely, unplanned changes will be non-beneficial, at least in the short term. Unplanned change is likely to affect the individual as: sudden and therefore a shock; imposed; stressful; causing loss of equilibrium and therefore a loss of control; and causing a loss of security - either perceived or real. Such effects were manifest within the analysis and interpretation of repertory grid interviews with staff/learners at Pathway College and shown in Chapter 11. Change which is planned and co-ordinated, on the other hand, implies or even entails a positive and creative management response to a challenge or opportunity. These challenges or opportunities can, firstly, be the necessity to correct a failure in an existing process or, secondly, to reorientate in order to re-establish a formerly agreed objective. In order to plan effective interventions to initiate change, to manage the total change process, and to stabilise desired change outcomes one needs some kind of comprehensive change theory (Schein, 1980, p 243).
Such a comprehensive approach to planned educational change has been suggested by Haffenden (1990 p 13) who views the commonly sequential initial stages in planned educational change as follows:

Figure XIX The Process of Change

Policy Aims → Institutional & Curriculum Organisational and Development → Programme Evaluation → Evaluation & Review

(Haffenden, 1990, p13)

According to Haffenden (1990) these four stages in the change process can be related, from a management perspective, to three decision areas. Firstly, 'the what' of the change which relates to the policy aims combined with the strategic planning through institutional and curriculum re-organisation and development. Secondly, 'the how' of change addresses the relationship between the change in theory and the change in practice. Finally, 'the what versus the how' of change addresses the programme evaluation and review. Haffenden (1990, p 14) considered that those responsible for managing change need to address these three decision areas in order to facilitate the implementation of planned educational change in colleges of further education.

There are many examples of models of planned organisational change borrowed from management literature (Lewin, 1951, Lickert, 1961, Schein, 1961 & Handy, 1976). However, Haffenden (1990, p 12) noted that:

"...there is no major body of literature relating to the implementation of planned educational change in colleges of further education."

He explained further that the existing literature does not specifically focus on the implementation process as such, so that change appears to be governed by ad hoc decisions.
This view correlates highly with the findings gained from this research study (See Chapter 11) and other NVQ studies (Burke, 1989 and Haffenden & Brown, 1989). It was perceived by the researcher that in Pathway College the process of planned (or unplanned!) curriculum change was of an ad hoc nature. Further, the findings drawn from the repertory grid interviews indicated that it was not until during and after the implementation stage, of Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes, that thought was given to reviewing the effectiveness and/or efficiency of curriculum changes. Indeed, feedback from participants revealed that they felt that the review process was initiated in effect by the conduct of this research study. No other pre-organised review was known to them.

12.2.4. The Management of Educational Change

Haffenden (1990, pp. 12-27) provided an example of a framework for managing planned change in colleges of further education. The framework comprises three strategic elements each containing component parts. The major elements are: the management element, the communications element and the staff development and support element (See Figure XX on the following page).
Haffenden (1990) argued that the implementation of planned educational change within any educational institution involves a number of different levels of organisation and responsibility; the senior management team, the middle management level represented by department or area heads and the operational level consisting of individual staff teams, team leaders and lecturers. Each of these identified staff groups form a separate 'strategic level' of the change process. At each of these strategic levels a number of managerial issues
need to be addressed. Within the 'management element', for example, there is a need to give some kind of order to the political processes, the organisational processes and the administrative processes involved.

Haffenden's model (1990) provides an appropriate framework:

"...in which educational leaders, managers and facilitators can operate, co-ordinate and review their practice" (Haffenden, 1990, p 12).

but does not claim:

"...to provide a comprehensive theory on changing - if such a theory were possible. What it does provide is a model of the relationships between key elements involved in the implementation process; elements without which, it is argued, no effective planned change can be brought about" (Haffenden, 1990, pp 12 & 13).

The described framework can be used in a number of different ways, depending on the type of innovation and its current state of development. It can, according to Haffenden (1990, p 25), be used diagnostically to facilitate the change strategy or alternatively, the framework can be used to aid the introduction of change. This framework provides an insightful and perceptive approach to the implementation stage of the change process within education. However, Haffenden (1990, p 26) placed the onus of responsibility for planned educational change upon senior management who would then provide the leadership and co-ordinate the developments at other strategic levels. However, notwithstanding the importance and recognition of this 'top-down' approach to managing change, it does not meet all the difficulties identified by this research.

In Pathway College the onus of responsibility for implementing and evaluating curriculum changes lay with staff/learners engaged in the delivery and assessment of programmes. This may have formed an integral part of Pathway College's strategic aim to empower and value its academic staff. However, a key factor in the change process is the participants' satisfaction with the system of communications and the
style of the interactions that take place at all levels (Haffenden, 1990, p. 20). It was clearly demonstrated from the analysis of the repertory grid interviews that staff/learners were not satisfied with the style or system of communications and management of NVQ programme implementation. Nor did staff/learners perceive that they were given an opportunity for development and support of their own learning for changes to the curriculum.

'Learning for change' may be achieved either through a modification of existing practices or by developing new ways of thinking and problem solving but, as in fact Haffenden (1990, p. 23) noted, a general programme of staff development is inadequate in itself to aid such a development. Staff/learners need encouragement and the opportunity to try out new ideas and practices within a period of supported trial and error. However, due to external constraints and internal business needs such a supportive trial period was not available to staff/learners at Pathway College. Also, regular and supportive periods of reflection and diagnosis were perceived as being neither planned nor encouraged by senior management at Pathway College.

Haffenden's (1990) worthy contribution, to facilitate planned change in colleges of further education, was perhaps either unknown or not understood by those responsible for introducing NVQ's at Pathway College. Indeed Pathway College is not an isolated case as other colleges, such as those involved with the on-going NCVQ-funded project (Burke, 1989, p. 109), may also have benefited from this framework for managing change in colleges of further education. Noting Haffenden's (1990, p. 26) offer to use and adapt his strategic framework for educational change, a developed model has been designed to incorporate this research study's findings and thus to provide a practical and planned approach to the implementation of NVQ management programmes.
12.2.5. Recommendations for Managing Change in Colleges of Further Education

It has been shown that a planned approach to facilitate educational change can be achieved through viewing the processes of interaction between the three strategic elements of: management, communication and staff development and support (Haffenden, 1990). Haffenden's model clearly shows that the direction for influencing the implementation of change arises from the management element (first strategic element). However, though systemically correct, it does not adequately reflect the reality of the situation at Pathway College. This study's research findings clearly indicated that staff/learners were attempting to manage the implementation of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes without the appropriate mechanisms for staff development and support (the third strategic element). What was needed, therefore, was a framework for systematically planning and facilitating the implementation and evaluation stages of the NVQ curriculum which also recognises the critical influence of staff development within the change process itself.

Utilising Haffenden's framework (1990), but making staff development and support (the third element) precede and be contemporaneous with the change would both empower and value individual staff members and encourage a process of continuous evaluation of the change. It was considered, by the writer, that this would provide a more realistic and pragmatic approach to the implementation of curriculum change. It is also suggested that within this strategic element (staff development and support) the Action Learning process could be utilised as a key mechanism for developing the process and content skills of staff/learners delivering and assessing NVQ programmes. Thus staff/learners 'learning to learn' and communicating through a group process of action learning and critical reflection would help 'oil the wheels of change'. Without an effective system for communication (second strategic element), at all levels of the organisation, the whole change process would cease (Haffenden, 1990, p 20). In particular, the management element (first strategic element) cannot function unless there are effective channels for communication. It is considered, by the writer, essential that information can be conveyed up and down the institution and between and within the strategic levels in order to
effectively manage the curriculum change. Therefore a 'bottom up'/'top down' approach, whereby staff development and support is placed first in the implementation process, could provide an effective framework for colleges strategically to manage changes to the curriculum. The model, on the following page, demonstrates such a strategic approach to planned educational change which may be appropriate for colleges who are similarly engaged in the process of NVQ programme implementation, or indeed in any other new developments (See Figure XXI).
Figure XXI  The Management of Curriculum Change through a Learning Company

The Need to Manage the Implementation of Curriculum change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development and Support: Action Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning to learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Support</td>
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<td>Skills Development</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Learning Company

Changes to the Institution

Changes to the Curriculum

Changes to Staff Roles

The Need to Manage the Process of Curriculum change

Management Element: Organisational Learning
The model provided as Figure XXI demonstrates the provision of planned intervention processes that could enhance the relationship between the management, communications and staff development element. The key process for improving the effectiveness of the organisation and of the individual would be through the strategic intervention of action learning at all levels of the organisational hierarchy through a 'Learning Company' approach (this approach is described in Section 12.2.9.) Pathway College already had in place formal groups at both senior and middle management level. These groups were responsible for the development and operational side of the College curriculum and met regularly on a monthly basis. However no formal groups existed at lecturer or staff/learner level to consider the implications of providing Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes. The formality and regularity of the senior and middle management group meetings were in contrast to the informality of NVQ course team meeting held at the beginning and end of the academic year. It has been argued in Chapter 10 that the action learning process would resolve some of the identified development needs of educational staff/learners. Importantly research findings, demonstrated in Chapter 11, identified that there was a need to relate these staff development needs to a planned process of curriculum and organisational change. Thus, an action learning process could be introduced within academic institutions as part of a strategic approach to staff and organisational development. The following elucidation outlines how the action learning process could operate by providing a planned approach to educational change.

12.2.6. Staff Development & Support Element - The Action Learning Process

It is suggested that the action learning process could be introduced within academic institutions, as well as commercial organisations, as a staff development and support mechanism. The following describes the interactive process underlying the staff development and support element shown in Figure XXI. As has already been suggested the direction of influence can be placed at the strategic level of staff development and support.
Skills Development for Crediting Competence and NVQ Programmes
The action learning process could provide a practical means of identifying and helping to develop the skills needed to deliver and assess Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. It has been shown (in Chapter 11.1.) that, during 1991 - 1993, Pathway College's staff development programme focused upon the content issues of NVQ management programmes. Thus staff development programmes were related to the management standards and procedures for the assessment and accreditation of portfolios eg college-based Training and Development Lead Body (TDLB) Assessor training. Such staff development activities did not address the issue of staff/learners placed in a new role as facilitators of the action learning process. Nor were there funded opportunities which could provide the necessary support and feedback mechanisms to assist in the role transition. Although a one-day session about action learning was funded by Pathway College, this programme was not followed-up by essential review and support sessions necessary to ensure full understanding and effective practice of a new learning method. Such practices are contrary to those advocated by Revans, 1982 and McGill & Beaty, 1992. The essence for successful facilitation of Action Learning Sets is that the facilitator must firstly be involved with the process itself - as a set member. Such involvement in the highly interactive process of action learning would ensure the development of facilitation and other related skills. The action learning process had been utilised for the manager/learner since 1991 by Pathway College as an integral part of Crediting Competence and NVQ management provision so that the provision of action learning as a major element within a staff development programme could have been viewed by staff/learners as a logical progression for their skills and personal development.

The Provision of Group Support through Action Learning
Action learning could also provide the desired support mechanism and a collegial network that could enable staff/learners openly to confront and rationalise identified role conflicts and role ambiguity. Such a support mechanism could help build the confidence of staff/learners in order to guide fully and support their manager/
learners within a Crediting Competence and NVQ learning process. Thus, through a shared process of support and critical reflection, staff/learners could be empowered to develop from a perceived stage of 'unconscious incompetence' to an 'unconscious competence' stage of development (Boak, 1991, p 179).

**Developing Critical Reflection through Action Learning**
The action learning process could help staff/learners change their attitudes and perceptions about the delivery and assessment of competence-based management programmes. Thus through a process of critical reflection (Mezirow, 1990, pp 12 -13) staff/learners could be enabled to assess the validity of their presuppositions and to examine the sources and consequences of their meaning perspectives in order to fully engage in what Mezirow (1990) terms "transformative learning".

**Learning to Learn through Action Learning**
The most important aspect of action learning is the relationship between action and learning, the reflection on past action to construct future action (McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 26).

Action learning incorporates the central themes of learning that were perceived, by staff/learners, to be effective (See Chapter 9): it is 'reflective'; 'experiential'; 'active'; 'gains ownership and control of learning'; could be used 'in a group'; and allows the learner to reflect 'alone' and 'with others'. Action learning enables educational staff to learn by:

"Observing, reflecting on experience, leads to making sense of that experience in a new way, leading to understanding. Understanding can lead to insights which allow for new plans, new strategies for action and new modes of behaviour. These plans lead to new actions which have an effect in the context which lead to experience which can be as expected or have consequences quite different from those expected. This leads on through another evaluative cycle with reflection and learning occurring at each stage" (McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 27).
The notion of 'learning to learn' by individuals can provide a powerful thrust to the management of curriculum change in colleges of further education. The model shown in Figure XXI demonstrates a further possibility of relating the staff development element with the communication element through a process of double-loop and deutero-learning (Argyris & Schon, 1978).

12.2.7. Communication Element - Deutero Learning
The search for new opportunities for learning to learn and to enable the exchange of information, at all levels of the organisation, about institutional, curriculum and role changes led to the consideration of the notion of single-loop, double-loop and deutero learning (Argyris & Schon, 1978, p 26). Argyris and Schon (1978) argue that organisational learning occurs at three fundamental levels: single-loop learning (O-I), double loop learning (O-II) and deutero learning.

The first level of learning involves the detection and correction of error enabling the organisation to continue with current policies and objectives, the result being single-loop learning. On the other hand, double-loop learning is concerned with changing existing organisation values and operating assumptions. This process involves deeper inquiry, questioning and, inevitably, ensuing conflict and power struggles. To resolve these conflicts, it must first be recognised that correction cannot be achieved within the frame of existing organisational values - an exercise in single-loop learning. Double-loop inquiry, though more difficult, must be undertaken to result in changing the organisational values themselves. This requires the development of organisations that can be controlled by people empowered to perform their jobs well and would involve a great deal of personal change in order to depart from traditional values and models of organising (Mohrman & Cummings, 1989, p 127).

The third variety of organisational learning is deutero-learning, which is a form of second-order, learning to learn activity. When an organisation engages in deutero-learning:
"...its members learn, too, about previous contexts for learning. They reflect on and enquire into previous episodes of organisational learning or failure to learn. They discover what they did that facilitated or inhibited learning, they invent new strategies for learning, and they evaluate and generalise what they have produced. The results become encoded in individual maps and images and are reflected in organizational learning practice" (Argyris & Schon, 1978, p 27).

Argyris and Schon (1978) argue that organisations learn through the agency of individuals working, and that individual learning is a necessary but insufficient condition for organisational learning, since the learning experienced by the individual may not become transferred into the memory of the organisation. Although few organisations are involved in either double-loop or deutero-learning, it is possible however to move towards this state. Organisations could demonstrate greater tolerance for perceived error and become aware of events which are no longer relevant to the organisation's 'theory-in-use'. They could disseminate more widely the aims, objectives and core values of the organisation so that members 'know' their own organisation and are encouraged to share rather than internalise experiences of conflict and resolution.

Such a process could potentially result in revised joint values of both Pathway College's management and staff/learners which would enable the re-focusing of efforts and energy. This would ultimately have an impact, through training in quality and interpersonal processes, on all the participants' future job security. This change would enable teams to be technically more self-sufficient and improve organisational performance (Mohrman and Cummings, 1989). This form of learning is akin to Haffenden's (1990 p 21) view that a system of supportive communication and supportive styles of leadership will enable consensus to be reached, with teams developed and maintained through communication.

A process of action learning could challenge 'theories-in-use' and could provide a shared awareness of organisational experiences of learning (Ross, 1992, pp 19-22). Therefore a planned intervention, as
action learning, could encourage all the organisational members to fully engage in double-loop and deuterio-learning through planned and regular review of activities and suggested actions for change. Using such experiences as a basis for the formation of new learning activities and insights would provide an ideal opportunity for all college staff involved in curriculum-driven change to develop a more effective two-way flow of information:

"We know already from our review of second-order change and double-loop learning that a static and top-down approach will not allow sufficient feedback for an organization to learn.......what is needed is a two-way flow of information so that directions can be given, and the operational consequences checked and adjusted through a strategic integration mechanism (Garratt, 1987, p 74).

This notion of a two-way flow of information has been taken further by Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1991, pp 29-32) in their representation of an energy flow model which involves an interactive process from an individual to a collective or organisational level. The energy flow model (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1991) is further amplified in the next Sections (12.2.8. & 12.2.9.) of this Chapter and accords with the writer's notion of co-ordinating the flow of organisational communication both horizontally and vertically in order to enhance effective change.

12.2.8. The Management Element - Organisational Learning
The Political Process

Haffenden (1990) argued that the political processes involved in managing change relate largely to the distribution of authority and the range and extent of autonomy by those who make decisions and/or take action without referral. This approach at strategic level may encourage a style of management that fosters co-ordinated participation of all team members. It does, nevertheless, suggest that authority can be divested down to those individuals involved with implementing curriculum change.

This devolvement of authority to staff/learners providing NVQ
management programmes was not in evidence at Pathway College. It was not considered by the researcher practicable, at this stage of implementation, to consider a traditional 'top-down' approach. Staff/learners, responsible for implementing NVQ management programmes, were perceived (See CBS 6 and CBS 3 interview notes in Chapter 11) to be negative and frustrated and would not wish to be involved in such a belated participatory exercise. What was needed was an opportunity to present their dilemmas and conflicts about NVQ programme provision. It is suggested that a 'bottom-up' approach to the evaluation of such programmes would engender a review of errors (single-loop learning) and engender a style of learning (double-loop or duetero learning) for future action and development of NVQ programmes.

The Organisation Process
Haffenden (1990) suggested that the implementation of change in any institution necessitates an infrastructure through which to support the change process. To achieve this consideration needs to be given to the existing formal hierarchy of positions and related role responsibilities and to the formal and/or informal mechanisms through which regular feedback is conveyed from the strategic level of operation to that of senior management.

Such objectives, it is suggested, could be achieved through applying the process of action learning to engender personal insights and change at all levels of the organisation. Action Learning Sets could be established based on the development and implementation of a specific change in the curriculum eg NVQ's in management. By utilising action learning as a mechanism to change the boundaries of authority and related role responsibilities could enable a departure from the traditional values and models of organising and management.

The Administrative Process
The resource implications are a critical component in determining the long term success of any change. However, one of the major findings arising from this study was that the allocation and use of resources, especially staff resources, were not fully determined prior to the
implementation of NVQ programmes (See interview notes CBS 3, Appendix XVII). It is, therefore, critical that realistic action plans and time schedules should reflect consideration of such resources as: staff, buildings, materials and finance. Such action planning and regular review of resources could also have been achieved through the strategic intervention of action learning.

Thus through a process of individual action and learning, colleges, such as Pathway College, could develop capacities for organisational learning and development.

12.2.9. The Learning Company
The notion of developing organisational effectiveness through the development of individuals has become a topical vehicle in the annals of managing change. Consideration of notions as: Investors in People (IIP); Kaizen; Total Quality Management (TQM) and the Learning Company are all concerned with the development of the individual to enhance the quality of the business and/or to enable the organisation to achieve its objectives. Unfortunately, these notions can be construed as 'flavour of the month' initiatives without understanding the true essence, contained within these concepts, for achieving individual and organisational effectiveness.

The concept of the 'learning company' is considered by the writer to encompass the notions of: Investors in People; Kaizen; Total Quality Management. Each of these emphasises the importance of investing in the people at the delivery level through staff development and enabling those staff to contribute their consequent expertise to the continued development of the organisation, thus ensuring commitment of change through ownership and high-quality relationships with both internal and external customers.

In summary it has been shown within this Chapter that the development of the organisation is dependent upon the development of the individual which in turn is dependent upon the conscious systems of managing change that are created. It has also been suggested that the key strategic elements for managing change are
interdependent, with action learning providing:

* a process and a vehicle by which staff/learners can utilise their development and learning individually and collectively to engage in organisational learning (Adapted from McGill & Beaty, 1992, p 192).

Thus the organisation can be viewed as learning and matching its development as a whole to the direction and objectives of its managers, other stakeholders and organisational influences (McGill & Beaty, 1991, p 192) and thus, it continuously transforms itself (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell, 1991).

The ideas behind the concept of the 'learning company' are not new: they have been in existence for many years, propounded by scholars such as Argyris & Schon (1978), Revans (1982) and more recently by Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1991). There is no blue-print for a 'learning company' but even before the notion is clearly defined it has entered the mainstream of management development vocabulary (Pedler, Boydell & Burgoyne, 1989). Unfortunately, there is a view that:

"Scholars too have jumped on the bandwagon, beating the drum for "learning organizations" and "knowledge-creating companies" (Garvin, 1993, p 78).

However, although a clear definition of a 'learning company' has proved to be elusive the need to provide learning opportunities, as an integral part of individual and organisational development activities, is a key factor in understanding the underlying concept of the 'learning company'. The essence of a 'learning company' is not training per se but individual and organisational self-development. Central to the concept is that learning and working are synonymous and can be operated by colleagues and companions from both inside and outside of the organisation. This notion is set out in a descriptive framework of the 'learning company'. This framework includes eleven characteristics which signify a 'learning company', divided into
five clusters, the most important of which is that of evolving structures (a description of these characteristics are given in Appendix XVIII).

However, the ability to assemble all the benefits of individual learning to enhance the effectiveness of organisations can be both difficult and often impractical (Kenny & Reid, 1988 p 213). The great challenge of the 'learning company' concept, therefore, is 'to learn how this can be done' (Pedler, Boydell and Burgoyne, 1989, p 3).

Individuals who are continuously searching for newness: new ideas; new problems; new opportunities for learning (Pedler, Boydell and Burgoyne, 1989, p 6) can enable the development of a learning company approach. Such a notion of harnessing individual ideas and action in order to promote effective collective policies and operations is an integral part of the 'learning company'. The following energy flow model (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1991, p 32) provides a useful insight into ways of providing constant energy flows and connections between the individual and organisational levels:
Figure XXII  The Learning Company Energy Flow Model

(Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1991, p32)

The model is depicted as four figures of eight which, firstly, shows a vertical energy flow which "mutually enriches collective purpose with individual purposes" (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell, 1991, p 31). Secondly, horizontal energy flows link vision with action:

"Inner searching, which leads to company policy, is realized through collective operations and individual actions realize the learning and development of the people in the company". (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell, 1991, pp 31 -32).

There are many elaborations and ways in which the energy flow model can be used. One such development could be the utilisation of this model for a planned approach to educational change. For example, the 'idea' of providing flexible and competence-based learning for managers through a process of AFL or Crediting Competence was first
considered by the writer in 1989 (See Chapter 6). At the same time, Pathway College was considering the 'policy' and appropriate mechanisms for developing and implementing the APL process across four key areas within the college. During the period 1990 to 1993 there was a concerted organisational effort to implement fully the 'operations' side of APL and NVQ programmes in order to fulfil the needs of the new college clientele (See Chapter 7). The transposing of collective 'operations' into individual 'action' through the implementation of innovative NVQ programmes can be reflected within the research findings shown in Chapters 9 and 11. Thus the constant horizontal and vertical flow of energy and connections through the design and delivery of Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes can be 'glimpsed' through the energy flow model. However, the originators of this concept readily agree that work on the energy flow model is incomplete (Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1991, p 33) but it does present the main dimensions of the 'learning company' idea. The energy flow model also offers a core 'idea' to promote effective management of change in the educational area.

Harnessing the processes for learning to learn, critical reflection, group support and skills development within an action learning vehicle would empower individuals to transform continuously themselves and their organisation. Action learning could be seen to be depicted (See Figure XXIII) as a central oil, within the energy flow model, driving both individual ideas and action and collective policy and operations in a continuous horizontal and vertical flow of energy in order to transform the organisation and its members.
Such a framework (See Figures XXI & XXIII) would enhance the strategic development and implementation of such curriculum changes as Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes. Thus by college management focusing upon a major area of curriculum change, eg NVQ programmes, staff at all levels would be empowered to develop ideas and deliver quality programmes that would ensure the long-term survival of a college as a learning organisation.

(Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell, 1991, p32)
This thesis has charted the developments and changes within management education provision. In 1988, when research for this thesis commenced, management courses were rigid, exam/assignment orientated and college based. The concept of a flexible, work and competence-based management programme was virtually unknown to those staff/learners providing management education. Now, at the time of writing, APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes have become increasingly in demand by employers and individual managers as a means of promoting management development. Such innovative management programmes have become, in 1993, an integral part of the mainstream curriculum in colleges of further education. Colleges, such as Pathway College, have had to manage this process of major change to the curriculum and have had to adapt to ever increasing changes, in the external and internal environments, in order to survive. However, in the process, the staff have had to develop their professional practice, and this has not always been easy or successful. Thus, the concept of the 'learning company' has been introduced which encompasses the belief that change can be managed through a process for all staff learning and adaptation.

Staff, at all levels, in colleges of further education need to continually search for new ideas if learning for change is to take place:

"Sometimes they are created de novo, through flashes of insight or creativity; at other times they arrive from outside the organization or are communicated by knowledgeable insiders. Whatever their source, these ideas are the trigger for organizational improvement" (Garvin, 1993, p 80).

However, such generation of new ideas cannot by themselves create a learning company. Without the accompanying changes in the way that work gets done only the potential for improvement exists!
12.3. A Retrospective and Progressive Personal Perspective

"...and then another hundred lives until we began to learn that there is such a thing as perfection, and another hundred again to get the idea that our purpose for living is to find that perfection and show it forth. The same rule holds for us now, of course: Learn nothing, and the next world is the same as this one, all the same limitations and lead weights to overcome" (Bach, 1972, p. 54).

Nearing the so-called end of this particular phase of learning has caused me to ponder and reflect upon my research or 'detective story' (Thorpe and Moscarola, 1991). Although my primary purpose was to search for a means of contributing to the field of management I have, in the process, recognised the importance of 'learning to learn' as a process of self-development and life-long learning.

What at first seemed a huge undertaking has only provided some partial suggestions and leaves many other questions unanswered. I have, through the investigation, attempted to remain dispassionate about the major changes in management education. I have met, in my work role, great resistance and hostility as well as excitement and commitment to these challenges from colleagues, employers and managers. My early vision of attempting to make a contribution to the provision of management education that would encompass: equal learning opportunities; personal development and an accreditation process has not been dimmed. I, as a staff/learner and as a manager/learner will continue to ask questions, even although the work for the thesis has to be finite.

An immediate question that needs to be addressed is to review the quality of APL/Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes and to evaluate the benefits of these programmes, to the individual manager and to the business organisation. These management programmes have now, in 1993, become embedded within the national qualification system. An urgent and critical evaluation of the whole learning process is required. If the MCI competence standards are used purely as an accreditation device then few, if any, managers would immediately be able to provide evidence to prove competence against all the standards. However, the present
delivery processes and funding arrangements may dilute the educational ability of those providers who offer accreditation towards a qualification as well as a developmental process that focuses on how managers' learn. In other words future research could focus not so much on the assessment and completion of the task - the submission of a portfolio of evidence leading to assessment for NVQ accreditation - but in addition focus in more detail upon how that task is completed. The definition and notion of 'task' is especially important in managerial work as one of the special features of managing is that it has to create and define its own task (Burgoyne, 1989, p 57). Therefore, an exploration could be conducted of how the MCI Personal Competences model or interpersonal skills are utilised and the extent to which the underpinning knowledge and understanding is acquired and transferred to the work situation by the manager/learner. Such a critical evaluation of the NVQ learning process may also encourage a review of how learning is transferred to the work-place and how a lifelong learning process can be engendered within individuals. If NVQ programmes are to be implemented in a truly reflective and experiential manner then educational providers must also learn to adapt and develop the learning process as well as the programme content in order to provide quality management programmes within an increasingly demanding business environment.

It should be noted that at the point of binding this thesis many of the above suggestions have been incorporated (and have substantially supported the findings contained in Chapter 7) within another study conducted in the Midlands and reported in the Journal of Management Education and Development (Smith & Preston, 1993). The MCI are also in the process of finalising a Department of Employment funded project which aims to identify how companies are currently using the MCI Personal Competences model in order to develop guidelines for use by trainers and managers.

The need for colleges to adapt to the business environment was reinforced by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, and by Further Education Colleges becoming Corporate Institutions in April 1993 and has caused a radical re-appraisal in the way management education provision is funded and resourced. These changes in
funding procedures has led to college management costing Crediting Competence and NVQ management programmes on a self-financing basis. This concern, by college management, for increasing income generating activities in contrast to providing educational programmes that could enhance managers' self-development and career opportunities has led to college staff questioning their own value system and assumptions and those of their employing organisation. Such conflicts and changes in societal, organisational and individual staff expectations provides a rich and important area for future research.

An evaluation and review of action learning as a process of professional and personal development for educational staff could also be addressed. As described within this study the action learning process should help staff/learners to create and develop their own learning opportunities and support mechanisms in order to develop professional expertise and confidence in areas of innovation. It is this process of creating learning opportunities and developing areas of competence through a structured process, such as Action Learning, that would enable staff/learners as managers to reflect upon their actions and the quality of their management programmes. Thus action learning as an integrative process of professional and personal development within academic institutions requires further investigation.

Chapter 7 has indicated that there is a need to investigate the process of providing equitable assessment and accreditation of NVQ's for managers of all ages. This notion could be taken further in terms of providing equal opportunities for the unemployed manager, women returners, disabled managers and managers from ethnic groups who may have found difficulty with the ambiguity and language of the standards. Therefore further exploration needs to be undertaken with regard to APL and NVQ's providing an equal opportunity for accreditation.

The implications of increasing integration with European vocational education and business communities could provide a rich avenue for further investigation. A comparative study with our European
educational counterparts could provide another dimension from which useful lessons could be gained and utilised in the UK.

I initially viewed the advent of Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes for managers with great excitement and enthusiasm. I considered that such programmes provided a means of personal development for all managers, regardless of their gender, culture or age, to gain credit for experience and to gain access to higher level educational programmes. In retrospect, such management programmes may not have provided a totally adequate answer to those questions that I initially raised and which provided the 'raison d'être' for first undertaking this research study. However, the excitement and enthusiasm did energise and commit me to a lengthy involvement in a research process which aimed to contribute to the improvement in the process of learning for managers. I will continue to seek answers through the research process of ethnomethodology, about which I have learned much in action through the research. For me a process of enquiry:

"...must therefore be participative, qualitative, sensitive. It is inquiry with people, rather than research on people, a personal process pursued in relation to others: it must be for me as well as for us and for them. So in order to understand fully the research process we must have some view of the personal development process" (Reason & Marshall, 1986, p 4).

I have also learned to appreciate the "step-jump", as described by Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell (1986, p 7) whereby any development requires a "little death" or disintegration before any improvement occurs. Critical reflection on the research process and on my own learning has been a transformative process, such as I recommend for other staff/learners, as I have attempted to "integrate the voices" in the research which have sometimes been contradictory, either with each other or with my past understandings.

"There is a new excitement about learning and the power of the mind" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986).
Appendix I/1

An Example of an Interview at Macro Level (Chapter 4.2.). Interview with a senior representative of a National Awarding Body (A i) 4th April, 1989;

This interview was undertaken on the 4th April, 1989. The highlighted points indicate key or superordinate themes emerging from all interviews conducted within this phase of research. As such this interview is considered to be representative of the content and opinions shared by all Interviewees at macro level.

General Background:
The purpose of the interview was as follows:
* to investigate the current market position of management courses offered by an FE/HE College.
* to establish where a certificate level management course was placed within the national framework of management qualifications.
* to gain the personal view of the interviewee about the future of UK management education.

Findings Related to Management Development Initiatives:
The Interviewee firstly provided a 'model' demonstrating his perception of the future structure of management education, which is shown in Chapter 4.3.

The Interviewee also suggested that the researcher contact two senior representatives at a similar Awarding Body to obtain further information about the above developments within management education. The Interviewee noted that this 'referred Awarding Body' were reviewing and reconstituting a diploma level management course which would possibly incorporate the employing institute's certificate as the first year of the similar Awarding Body's reconstituted diploma level qualification. This would consequently mean that year 2 will be at diploma level ie a shortened diploma level course. It was also intimated that at MBA level competences/outcomes would be difficult to define.
Appendix I/2

He stated that the employing institute "is approving a post certificate level (or Diploma level programme) which would correspond to the second level of the 'model'". He described this course as having been developed from an industrial employer's certificate level management course and was designed for those people who aspire to higher management and wish to obtain a diploma level qualification. The Interviewee's opinion was that a collaborative approach, such as that initiated by this particular employer and a local University, appears to be the emerging pattern.

The Interviewee further elaborated upon this theme by indicating other examples of Awarding Bodies validating a collaborative approach to management course provision, which were:

* A major service employer were providing national certificate level provision to staff which would differ to the traditional approach in orientation and delivery mode.
* A noted Management Centre with an approved Employer's Training Staff had developed an in-house certificate level course.
* Three approved employer-based certificate level courses were being developed and implemented "This would incorporate an action learning approach and a personnel management skills package."

According to the Interviewee, these examples demonstrate an emerging pattern of collaboration between course providers and user organisations.

It was noted that the employing Awarding Body and the Training Agency were represented on a CMED Steering Committee which is considering the provision of management courses to correspond with the MCI framework. The content of the employing Awarding Body's certificate course was similar to the newly designed and developed 'referred Awarding Body' certificate in management entitled the New
Initial Award in Management (NIAM). The delivery mechanisms were quite different between the two courses. The Interviewee explained that a Northern Regional Management Centre provided an example of different delivery modes through the negotiation of a learning contract and personal development programme. He emphasised that the employing institute "are prepared to modify the certificate level course to ensure a 'fit' with the MCI suggested framework". The Interviewee considered that a comparison should be made of the cost difference between the employing Awarding Body's certificate course and the new initial award (which is being piloted at 5/6 centres).

The Training Agency had carried out a review of the institute's certificate course in July 1988. This is an evaluation of six certificate level centres which will be compared with six 'referred Awarding Body' centres. The aims of this evaluation were to examine the competence approach; to identify good practice and to fulfill requirements of the new CMED certificate. The report was to be published in July 1989. It was believed by the Interviewee that research should be conducted into the level and content of all management qualifications (eg NEBSM: CMS; DMS). Especially with regard to the supervisory level course as a possible entry requirement for the certificate level qualification. It was suggested that the ScotVec format was a an example that could be considered by the 'referred Awarding Body' and the employing institute for accreditation at certificate and diploma level. However, the Interviewee raised the following questions and problems about the issue of accreditation:

"Will there be a joint validating board or will validation be carried out on an individual basis (ie the employing institute -at certificate level and the 'referred Awarding Body' at diploma level)?"

The Interviewee believed "at diploma level a new philosophy should be written in outcome terms and that for assessment purposes credit and exemption guidelines would require publication".

"How can work-based learning be accredited?"
He was concerned that, without guidelines, inappropriate decisions might be reached.
"Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) must therefore be considered".

"A system of networks would provide a focus for assessment centres, however, this would imply the need to consider cost factors." It was noted that the 'referred Awarding Body' proposal would allow major institutions to operate as Assessment Centres.

The Interviewee indicated his personal thoughts about the future of Management Education. Firstly, he felt that the 'referred Awarding Body' Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme (CATS) could be utilised which would allow the employing institute's new Certificate level programme to be awarded a credit accumulation for 4 units plus a project.

A second point was: "the utilisation of an action learning approach should be considered whereby a programme could be unitised, given exemptions and given credits." Thirdly, he felt that greater links need to be forged between the employing institution and employers. This would require an entirely new approach to the whole management development and national accreditation structure. The employing Awarding Body's role would then be to offer a quality control/assurance and monitoring service. Fourthly, he advocated the integration of to integrate ScotVec's format of qualifications. Lastly, that open learning should be considered for management qualifications.
An Example of an Interview at Micro Level (Chapter 4.4.) Interview with a member of a southern College ('D') responsible for the policy, operation and delivery of a certificate-level management course, May, 1989:

This interview was undertaken in May, 1989. The highlighted points indicate key or super-ordinate themes emerging from all interviews conducted within this phase of research. As such this interview is considered to be representative of the content and opinions shared by all Interviewees at micro level.

Findings Related to Perceived Trends for a Certificate-level Management Course:
The certificate course was offered as a part-time day release to two groups on the college site but also the course offered sector specific programmes e.g. N.H.S. and Local Authority. Sector specific courses were seen to be a deliberate principle of an overall developmental strategy. Future plans included an on-site certificate course for a service industry and a local Hospital. A course specifically designed for 'women' was also proposed for implementation in January 1990.

The Modes of Delivery:
The course submission had been validated by the appropriate Awarding Body in July 1988. This course had undergone major changes in delivery methods since July 1988. It was noted that greater emphasis had been placed on a team approach within the teaching style and methods. The Course Director noted that this approach was reflective of her participative leadership style.

The Interviewee considered that the course integrated the core areas of management with themes and skills associated with a general management course. The Interviewee further elaborated by noting that integration and relevance of subject areas had been increased within Local Authority certificate-level course. Course delivery times had also been changed, to three days per month block release from a one day per week mode, for the L.A. course this, she perceived, was in recognition of organisational needs.
The Interviewee described the team approach as having been developed gradually to allow greater flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of the students. A learning contract was negotiated at the start of the course between staff tutors and students. Students maintained a self-development log which was monitored with staff during tutorial sessions. Emphasis was placed upon students being responsible for their own learning.

The Interviewee considered that the students held a strong influence about course content and course delivery and an informal evaluation was held after each session.

The Assessment Process:
The Interviewee described the continuous assessment process which was maintained through both peer group and self assessment techniques as well as assessment by staff. A profile of student skills which reflected all aspects of the course was developed through the course via tutorial sessions. Within these tutorial sessions students were encouraged to reflect upon their personal objectives and the objectives of their employing organisation. Employers were encouraged to participate during presentation sessions but were not involved with the assessment process. Mentoring was being considered for inclusion within the whole assessment process.

The first residential week-end was an induction team building programme which was non-assessed. The second residential week-end developed skills through the utilisation and student involvement in practical case study materials. This second week-end was assessed.

It was noted that course assignments and projects were work-based with an emphasis on skills development. The Interviewee considered that the implementation of proposed work-shops required greater development and integration within the course.

(These comments result from the interviews with the Course Director in May 1989 and were verified in June 1989).
Appendix III/1

An Example of Notes taken at Meeting with an MCI Representative:

On the 4th April, 1989, a further meeting was held with Interviewee B, a senior representative from MCI and a consultant who was an expert in APEL. During this meeting the roles of Interviewee B and the consultant were clarified and the purpose of an MCI APEL project, specifically aimed for managers, was defined and agreed. It was also agreed that the certificate level standards, which were to be validated during 1989, would be used as a starting point within this proposed APEL project.

The following is a summary of points agreed during this meeting:

* that the ultimate aim was to agree industry-led standards at national level, which would place the UK ahead of the USA in the APEL area
* that the present assessment arrangement were 'ad hoc' which therefore necessitated an investigation of the national assessment context
* that the standards must be rigorous and must be consistently applied
* that there were no examples of national standards in other parts of the world
* that the objective was to define a proposal to the Training Agency for funding a major APEL project for managers
* that the emerging standards; the assessment process; the types of evidence and the role of the Validating Bodies must be considered within this proposal
* that National Assessment Centres would be considered
* that all units should be re-written in outcome terms
* that an assessment and accreditation committee should be established to form a consortium of Validating Bodies and providers
* that a network of colleges and organisations should be considered
* that the network's role would be to help implement the MCI Code of Practice and assessment process
* that achievements, and not abilities or capabilities, should be assessed
* that valid methods of assessment for all levels of managers should be considered
* that competences should be linked with present national qualifications and Awarding Bodies
* that training people in APEL instruments should be validated
* that assessment; training methods and accreditation is a core issue
* that there are few people with management and education skills

NB: It was during this meeting that the researcher was provided with two further contact names.
An example of an interview transcript with an APEL practitioner (Interviewee 1) at a Southern University - Wednesday, 10th May 1989.

Purpose of Interview:
To investigate the current work being conducted in the area of Assessment of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning. The Interviewee provided the following background information to her work in APEL:

The History:
The Interviewee explained that the APEL programme commenced 2-3 years previously and was funded through a 'PICKUP' project. A close liaison between the Interviewee and her team was developed with London Boroughs and with the Economic Development Unit. The reasoning behind this initiative, the Interviewee argued:
"... was in order to respond to what employers and individuals actually needed in terms of management education. This reasoning was opposed to what the college had traditionally thought was needed - for example interpersonal skills courses - without any real consideration of the needs of the individual and the organisation.

The Interviewee explained that this course was started 5-6 years previously:
"This course was based upon experiential learning techniques. Through a process of reflection participants could then produce a portfolio that would document their learning experiences and which would also make sense to an employer or to an H.E. institution. The purpose of this process was to enable participants to use their portfolios as an alternative form to qualifications".

The Interviewee had previously, five years before, considered this to be an innovation.

Start of the Project:
The Interviewee and her team asked themselves the following questions:
"What happens at work?"
"Where are people deriving the learning they need in order to carry out their job?"

It was suspected by the Interviewee's team that people acquired this learning from informal methods as opposed to certificated learning and they, therefore, agreed to undertake this research project. Therefore, in collaboration with Local Boroughs and the Economic Development Unit, and funded by the DES, this project was started.

The Interviewee provided the following reasons for identifying the financial sector as the target population within this research project:

a) it was necessary to have a target population for research purposes
b) "to challenge the assumption that the financial sector had expertise in in-company training"
c) that Banks, Building Societies and Insurance companies employed large numbers of staff
d) that the financial sector also had small, "one-man-band", sized organisations
e) that her team "needed to know what happened to employees who had not received any training and in order to analyse their career progression".

The Interviewee considered that the first stage was to identify groups of self-selected employees from a wide range of jobs. Participants were divided into 3-4 groups each group having 9-10 people. These participants were predominantly women whom, the Interviewee stated, "were more used to reflecting and communicating about their experiences than men". She considered that the differences between methods of learning between men and women were an important factor as she had found that "men tended to learn through more formal methods e.g. courses and women tended to learn through broader channels e.g. home based projects".

It was noted that there was a desire, by the Interviewee and her College team, to involve senior executives within this project but there was neither the time nor the participants available to achieve this.
the most senior person involved in this research was a Senior Personnel Officer.

Project Interviews:
A series of structured one-to-one interviews with participants were conducted, and posited the following questions:
"What do you do?"
From the responses obtained, gathered the participant's perception "of their job description and brought together a generic job description which included the major parts of the job; plus assumed tasks such as the social role." The Interviewee described this outcome as "a job description plus role description".

It was perceived by the Interviewee, that there was a direct benefit from this exercise in terms of confidence building, as participants had not been aware of the size and importance of their total role.

The next question given to participants was:
"Where have you learnt it?"
The Interviewee described that within a process of careful reflection the sources and types of learning were establised. For example the question:
"required people to reflect upon childhood experiences and enabled participants to cut across their learning experience by not only using formal experiences but also considering informal experiences". The Interviewee and her team then categorised these experiences into "sources and sites".

Categorisation of Experiences:
The Interviewee explained that the analysis formed four broad categories
i. Formal Education
   -- certificated learning
   -- Open University
   i.e. any learning that was formal and considered academically credible.
ii. In-Company Training
   -- external courses
   -- company training centre
Appendix IV/4

-- on-job training e.g. mentoring/coaching
i.e. any training that the employing company provided.

iii. Personal Study
-- participant's conscious attempt to learn something
e.g. T.V. programmes
-- adult education classes (non-certificated)

iv. Informal Experiential Learning
-- unintended or unrecognised learning that had taken place.

After analysing this information the project team were "staggered by the extent of learning that had taken place within the category 'iv' - informal experiential learning". They found that 80% of significant learning took place within category iv and "very little came through formal learning methods". To ensure "fairness" within the research, it was explained, that the team did not concentrate upon 'iv' but emphasised that formal methods of learning were just as important as the more formal methods. Individual learning styles were also considered within the research as it was discovered "that the way people learn informally is the same as by more formal means". The Interviewee further demonstrated this point, by providing examples of interview findings with a Senior Personnel Officer and a General Manager's secretary, indicating the variety of informal means by which people learn. It was emphasised that "homespun learning is often applied in a formal way at work therefore greater value should be placed upon this informal learning especially as no formal training nor fees were incurred".

Questionnaires:
The Interviewee described the use of Questionnaires within the project, "which were designed and issued in order to validate the interview process" (shown above). The Interviewee recognised that "as the concept of experiential learning and the terminology used during the reflection process was very complicated it was considered necessary to verify participant's understanding by use of the questionnaire".
Appendix IV/5

The Interviewee and her team decided to target 'women returners' involved in a Bank 'Returner Scheme'. Within this project the skills and qualities that women involved in this scheme, may or may not have, were studied. The Bank had already consciously asked their employees to consider skills gained at home and those skills that were required in order to re-commence their job. It was found from a questionnaire analysis that many of the women had been involved in a wide range of learning activities whilst being at home e.g. running a play group. The Interviewee believed it to be quite clear that many of the experiences and skills gained through 'motherhood' could be transferred to the work place.

Stage II of the Project:
The second stage was working with and involving Trainers/Employers with the project. The purpose of an 'ice-breaking' activity with Employers was to demonstrate that the project process was not consciously used with employees as a confidence building exercise to give career progression routes, nor to provide formal accreditation. It was recognised by Trainers/Employers that there was value in the process and they also agreed that people did learn from experience.

Towards the end of the project a questionnaire was given to Trainers asking such questions as:
"How are you going to assess people?"
"What sort of things do you want to know, in order to assess people?"

From the questionnaire findings, a package of materials was put together relating the project conclusions with practical/work based implications e.g. performance appraisal; training; confidence building. Within this package it was shown that it was necessary for Employers to consider the structures and barriers that would inhibit successful implementation of the process. Also contained in this package were training materials such as: workshop sessions; information on work-related learning; CATS; information on guidance and counselling; adaptable materials such as distance learning packs. This pack is now being piloted by a large Insurance Company.
Future Work:
It was the intention of the interviewee to meet with the person responsible for APEL at the Training Agency to take this project 'one step further'. The purpose of this further research would be to establish the feasibility of accrediting all learning especially with regard to the views of validating bodies i.e. BTEC/RSA/City and Guilds. "It was the intention to broaden the project and incorporate not only the finance sector but retail institutions."

The methodology would be to work with companies and begin by scrutinizing all the rules and regulations of the validating bodies with a view to introducing a more flexible approach to accreditation of prior learning. "City and Guilds, for example, are already introducing guidelines for APL with their present examinations."

By working with companies, in-company courses can be identified with a view to establish 'credit worthy' courses. Then looking at employees with prior learning that could be accredited. With 1992 fast approaching there is a possibility of a project being funded by Brussels in the area of work-related learning.

This Interview Transcript was subsequently verified as accurate by the Interviewee in a letter dated 27th September, 1989.
THE EXPERIENCED MANAGER - DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND MOTIVATION

A Joint Proposal for Funding for a Research Project from MCI and

31st October 1989
1. **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

MCI is currently undertaking a project to develop and pilot test a method of Accrediting Prior Learning against the management competences standards, aimed at experienced managers. It is estimated that 60% of the UK's 2.4 million managers are over 35 - the target group. Little work seems to have been done in profiling this group in terms of development and indeed little management development activity has been specifically targeted. At the same time it has been recognised in other APL projects (NCVQ, SCOTVEC) that marketing the product in terms of getting the right message(s) to the right target groupings has been a problem.

With this in mind, a better picture of the motivations, needs and wants of these managers, ideas of how they divide into sub-groups, and also employer attitudes is needed if the APL project is to succeed in reaching them. We need to ensure that the process is tailored and the messages are right to ensure the successful implementation of APL at the end of the project.

This proposal outlines an initial research project which would be undertaken by Sandra under MCI's guidance. It would be a joint project, with providing half the funding - hence the modest budget requirements.

2. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

This project may be seen as initial qualitative research to explore the following issues prior to a wider quantitative study.

1. To explore the motivations, needs and wants of experienced managers in relation to management development.
2. To develop profiles of types of experienced managers by such indicators as age, qualifications, career ranks, industry, size of organisation, public/private sector.
3. To explore the attitudes of employers to experienced managers and their development needs.
4. To explore current practice in management development of experienced managers.
5. To introduce the concept of APL and gauge reaction.

3. **METHODOLOGY**

The proposed research plan is as follows:

3.1 Desk Research

This will cover major work carried out on the experienced manager/plateaued manager. It would seem that much has been written about career development but little about development needs of this group.
3.2 Telephone Research

To explore the issues with employing organisations through a structured questionnaire. Target respondent would be Human Resources Development or Personnel managers. Target group would be medium to large companies across industry sectors (we would endeavour to cover small companies through talking to individual managers during the next stage). Areas to cover at this stage would include the following:

- size of company/% managers over 35;
- management development offered specifically for experienced managers;
- attitudes to experienced managers/management development;
- attitudes to qualifications.

3.3 Face to Face Interviews

To explore in-depth the issues with both employers and experienced managers through semi-structured questionnaires.

We would aim to speak to 20-25 organisations, selected mainly from telephone respondents, and to interview in depth both the HRD manager and one or two experienced managers.

In addition will interview experienced managers taking CMS/DMS about their motivations towards qualifications, and their views on APL.

4. OUTCOMES

The findings will be presented in report form to MCI and the Training Agency. The report will cover the following:

1. Findings from the survey.
2. Implications and recommendations for the APL project.
3. Proposals for further, broader-scale (quantitative) study to validate the findings from this study.

5. STAFFING AND BUDGET AND TIMESCALES

5.1 Staffing

The MCI Project manager would be Sandra. Sandra is carrying out an MPhil at Surrey University looking at management education and specifically APL. are therefore keen that whilst it is clear the work is being carried out and the subsequent report, written to MCI’s specification, the findings could be used freely for academic research purposes.
APPENDIX 1

EXPERIENCED MANAGER PROJECT
TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE

PURPOSE
1. To explore the attitudes and current practice of employers towards experienced managers and their development needs.
2. To explore the attitudes of employers towards management qualifications

BACKGROUND DATA
DATE ..........................  TIME ..........................

SECTOR
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Manufact.</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Construct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Name of contact and job title
2. Name of organisation
3. Address of organisation
4. Telephone number

QUESTIONS

1. HOW MANY PEOPLE EMPLOYED?
NATIONALLY 0 - 199  200 - 499  500+
|        | 5.0%  | 20.0  | 75    |

2. HOW MANY MANAGERS EMPLOYED?
SITE 5-10%  10-15%  15-20%  20-25%  25+%  Don't Know
|        | 32.5% | 17.5  | 10.0  | 7.5    | 22.5    | 10.0    |

What is the % of managers aged 35+?
25-39%  40-54%  55-69%  70-84%  85+%  Don't Know
|        | 5.0%  | 22.5  | 12.5  | 2.5    | 5.0     | 52.5%   |
3. DOES YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. DOES YOUR ORGANISATION SEE VALUE IN NATIONALLY RECOGNISED MANAGEMENT QUALIFICATIONS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IF YES - WHAT COURSES DO YOU REGULARLY USE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N.E.B.S.M.</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.M.S</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.M.S</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.B.A</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.P.M</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.C.S.A</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.C.C.A</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.P.S</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

IF NO - WHY NOT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REASON</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not relevant</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste of time</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste of money</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflexible</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too academic</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor teaching</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience more important</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DOES THIS APPLY TO THE EXPERIENCED MANAGER?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. WOULD YOU SEE VALUE IN FOCUSING SPECIFICALLY ON THE OLDER/EXPERIENCED MANAGERS DEVELOPMENT NEEDS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IF YES - WHY? % IF NO - WHY NOT? %

- Skill shortages 30.8 Promoted by seniority 6.6
- Demographic changes 20.5 Requires policy/pos. action 13.3
- Individual needs 20.5 Small no. of managers 6.6
- Specialist skills 15.4 Business needs 13.3
- Generalist skills 7.7 Already experienced/skilled 26.7
- Motivator 5.1 Need to target all groups 33.3

6. ARE THESE NEEDS ASCERTAINED FROM:

- Performance Appraisal Schemes
  - YES: 88.2 NO: 11.8
- Requests from Supervisor/Manager
  - YES: 82.4 NO: 17.6
- Requests from individual managers
  - YES: 79.4 NO: 20.6
- Assessment Centres - Asked 73.5%
  - YES: 44.0 NO: 56.0
  - Not Asked 27.5%

7. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW PROGRAMME FURTHER?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO - THANK YOU!</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTACT NAME(S): (1) ........................................

(2) ........................................

TELEPHONE NO.: ........................................

DATE OF APPOINTMENT: ........................................

VENUE: ........................................
APPENDIX II

EXPERIENCED MANAGER PROJECT

INTERVIEW GUIDE-LINES - EMPLOYERS, HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALISTS

PURPOSE

This project may be seen as initial qualitative research to explore the following issues:

1. To develop profiles of types of experienced managers by such indicators as age, qualifications, career ranks, industry, size of organisation, public/private sector.

2. To explore the attitudes of employers to experienced managers and their development needs.

3. To explore current practice in management development for experienced managers.

4. To introduce the concept of APL and gauge reaction.

SECTION ONE - BACKGROUND DATA

1. ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

- Public 13%
- Financial 30
- Manufacturing 26
- Retail 9
- Service 22

2. ANALYSIS BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION

- 0 - 199 8.6%
- 200 - 499 4.4
- 500+ 87.0
SECTION TWO - CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ABOUT ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

3. DO YOU UNDERTAKE ANY MANAGEMENT TRAINING?
   YES - 95.6%    NO - 4.4%

   WHAT IS IT?

   DO YOU HAVE A STRUCTURED MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME?
   YES - 69.6%    NO - 30.4%

   WHAT IS IT?

4. DOES YOUR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME INCLUDE CAREER PLANNING?
   YES - 65.2%    NO - 34.8%

5. HOW ARE ORGANISATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS IDENTIFIED?

   ORGANISATIONAL
   1. Corporate Plan 56.5% 43.5%
   2. Performance Appraisal 95.7 4.3
   3. Assessment Centres 47.8 52.2
   INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS 69.6 30.4

6. DO YOU IDENTIFY DIFFERENT GROUPS OF MANAGERS THAT REQUIRE SPECIFIC ACTION FOR DEVELOPMENT

   Graduate Entry 69.6% 30.4%
   Older 13.0 87.0
   Plateaued 8.7 91.3
   High-Flyers 56.5 43.5
   Women 56.5 43.5
   Ethnic Minorities 26.0 74.0

Please Describe

PAGE 65
7. **WOULD YOU CONSIDER A SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR EXPERIENCED MANAGERS?**

   YES - 82.6%
   NO - 17.4%

8. **WHAT IS YOUR ORGANISATION'S ATTITUDE TO MANAGEMENT QUALIFICATIONS?**

   (PRIORITISE)
   1. Positive - if job and organisation related
   2. Selectively encouraged
   3. Positive - if towards professional or academic qualifications
   4. Positive - if for promotion purposes
   5. Generally encouraged
   6. Not encouraged

9. **DOES THIS VARY FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS OF MANAGERS?**
   E.G. WHAT ABOUT EXPERIENCED MANAGERS?

   YES - 26.0%
   NO - 74.0%
### SECTION THREE - DESCRIPTION OF APL

10. **WOULD THE APL PROCESS BE HELPFUL IN IMPROVING YOUR MANAGERS' EFFECTIVENESS?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. **WOULD YOU CONSIDER USING APL IN YOUR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. **DO YOU THINK THAT CREDITS TOWARDS A NATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATION WOULD BE HELPFUL IN DEVELOPING YOUR 'EXPERIENCED MANAGERS'?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61.0%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. **IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?**

..................................................
..................................................
..................................................
APPENDIX III

EXPERIENCED MANAGER PROJECT

INTERVIEW GUIDE-LINES - EXPERIENCED MANAGER

PURPOSE

This project may be seen as initial qualitative research to explore the following issues:

1. To explore the motivations, needs and wants of experienced managers in relation to management development.

2. To develop profiles of types of experienced managers by such indicators as age, qualification, career ranks, industry, size of organisation, public/private sector.

3. To introduce the concept of APL and gauge reaction.

SECTION ONE - BACKGROUND DATA

ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANALYSIS BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-199</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500+</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PAGE 68
SECTION TWO - CONFIDENTIAL CAREER INFORMATION

6. HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN AT MANAGEMENT LEVEL?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>0-4</th>
<th>5-9</th>
<th>10-14</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR PRESENT POST?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>0-2</th>
<th>3-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-14</th>
<th>15-20</th>
<th>20+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. WHAT PROFESSIONAL OR MANAGERIAL QUALIFICATIONS HAVE YOU OBTAINED?

- Professional 65%
- None 35%
- Managerial 10%
- None 90%

9. WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>30-44</th>
<th>35-39</th>
<th>40-44</th>
<th>45-49</th>
<th>50-54</th>
<th>55+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. DO YOU HAVE AN INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLAN?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. WHAT MANAGEMENT TRAINING HAVE YOU HAD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) In-Company courses</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) External courses</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Professional courses</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DID YOUR ORGANISATION 'BACK YOU'?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY MANAGEMENT COURSES THAT WERE PARTICULARLY USEFUL?

USEFUL?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All</th>
<th>30%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None/Cannot remember</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHY?

USELESS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHY?

13. DO YOU THINK A MANAGEMENT QUALIFICATION WOULD ENHANCE YOUR CAREER PROGRESS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enhance Externally

| 75%      | 25%|

Enhance Externally
14. **DO YOU THINK A LACK OF MANAGEMENT QUALIFICATIONS WOULD INHIBIT YOUR PROGRESSION?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inhibit Externally</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. **WHAT MANAGEMENT TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD BENEFIT FROM?**
- General Management
- Inter-personal Skills
- Assertion/Leadership

16. **DOES YOUR ORGANISATION PROVIDE THIS?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. **WOULD YOUR PRESENT QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR EXPERIENCE ALLOW YOU ACCESS ON TO THIS PROGRAMME/COURSE?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. **WOULD YOU BE GIVEN TIME TO ATTEND THIS PROGRAMME/ COURSE?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. **WOULD YOU BE SUBSIDISED FINANCIALLY TO ATTEND THIS PROGRAMME/COURSE?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION THREE - DESCRIPTION OF APL

20. WOULD THIS PROCESS BE HELPFUL IN IMPROVING YOUR MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE?
   YES   NO
   90%   10%

21. DO YOU THINK CREDITS TOWARDS A NATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATION WOULD BE HELPFUL IN DEVELOPING YOUR CAREER?
   YES   NO
   80%   20%

22. DO YOU THINK GAINING CREDITS THROUGH APL WOULD ENCOURAGE MANAGERS TO GO ON TO FURTHER SELF-DEVELOPMENT?
   YES   NO   DON'T KNOW
   90%   -    10%

23. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?

..........................................................
..........................................................
..........................................................
..........................................................
APPENDIX IV
SCRIPTS AND LETTERS USED IN THE PROJECT

My name is Sandra Tjok-a-Tam.
I am involved in a study looking at development needs for experienced managers (i.e. 35 years plus 5 years experience) for the Management Charter Initiative and
I am carrying out some initial information-gathering by telephone, for national publication. I wonder if you could spare some time to talk to me about the management development practice within your organisation.

YES
Thank-you. There are only seven questions which are of a structured nature and will only take about 15 minutes. This telephone contact may be followed by an interview programme if convenient.
(See Appendix 1 - for questions)

NO
- convenient time to telephone again?
- other contact person?
Name:.............................................. Tel:..............................
LETTER TO EMPLOYERS

Dear [NAME]!

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview programme for the MCI Experienced Manager Project. This is to confirm our meeting on [DATE].

The two interviews will be of a semi-structured nature and will take approximately 45 minutes each. As I agreed with you, one interview will be with an experienced line manager and the other with the manager responsible for management development.

Under the terms of this study, it is the intention to undertake 50 interviews with 25 organisations. The findings and implications will be presented in report form to the MCI, ..., and the Training Agency who are funding this research. It is emphasised at this point, that confidentiality will be maintained for all individual comments and interviews. Information gained from such interviews will be presented as an overall analysis in the final reports.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

SANDRA TJOK-A-TAM
INFORMATION THAT ACCOMPANIED THE “LETTER SENT TO EMPLOYERS”

THE EXPERIENCED MANAGER - DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND MOTIVATION

MCI is currently undertaking a project to develop and pilot test a method of Accrediting Prior Learning using the management competence standards, being developed by MCI and the Training Agency. The project is aimed at experienced managers. Thirteen pilot centres are involved, including colleges, employers and training organisations.

It is estimated that 60% of the UK’s 2.4 million managers are over 35 - the target group. Little work seems to have been done in profiling this group in terms of development and indeed little management development activity has been specifically undertaken.

With this in mind, a better picture is required of the motivations, needs and wants of these managers, ideas of how they divide into sub-groups, and also of employer attitudes if the APL project is tailored and the messages are right to ensure the successful implementation of APL.

A proposal has been accepted by the Training Agency for Sandra Tjoka-Tam to undertake this research for a joint MCI/ project.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This project may be seen as initial qualitative research to explore the following issues prior to a wider quantitative study.

1. To explore the motivations, needs and wants of experienced managers in relation to management development.

2. To develop profiles of types of experienced managers by such indicators as age, qualifications, career ranks, industry, size of organisation, public/private sector.

3. To explore the attitudes of employers to experienced managers and their development needs.

4. To explore current practice in management development of experienced managers.

5. To introduce the concept of APL and gauge reaction.
INFORMATION THAT ACCOMPANIED THE “LETTER SENT TO EMPLOYERS” (CONT.)

MCI AND APL

As an experienced manager, you have achieved a great deal. You have managed people and resources. You have developed products and services and you have solved many difficult problems. Whether you have had one job or five, as an experienced manager, you have had a variety of rich and valuable experience.

In you are like most British managers, you have no formal qualifications to adequately reflect your levels of achievement or your range of current competence. You may have acquired a qualification right after you completed school which has little or no bearing on the work you are doing now, or perhaps, you have taken one or more in-company training courses. In either case, you probably do not have a qualification that reflects what you know and can do now.

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING

APL is a process that enables people of all ages, backgrounds and attitudes to receive formal qualifications and credit for achievements and competences that they have acquired outside the formal college or university classroom. The basic premise of APL is that individuals can and do learn throughout their lives and that often the ensuing skills, knowledge and abilities are equal to and frequently superior to those obtained by students following traditional academic or training routes. Inherent to the APL concept is the notion that individuals can be assessed without regard for the time, place or method of learning. In accrediting people’s prior learning, the focus is on the outcome or achievements of learning, not the learning process itself.

In summary:

APL is the measurement and certification of competences acquired up to the point of assessment.
LETTER TO CONTRIBUTORS

30 October 1990

Dear <<name2>>

MCI EXPERIENCED MANAGER PROJECT

As you can see by the attached information sheet, I am in the final stages of publishing research findings. I therefore, believe it is important that you know about the “Forgotten Manager” report at this early stage. The enormous interest shown in this report, even prior to its publication, indicates its relevance to all those interested in human resource development.

I have emphasised and maintained confidentiality in all aspects of this report. I would however, like to include a “List of Contributors”. I hope you will agree to the name of your organisation appearing as a Contributor and will appreciate it if you will sign and return the “tear-off” slip to me at , by the 7th November. Again, I should emphasise that no individuals will be named or addresses given.

May I again take this opportunity of thanking you for your help and contribution to this research study.

Yours sincerely

SANDRA TJOK-A-TAM

THE “FORGOTTEN MANAGER” REPORT

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO: Sandra Tjok-a-Tam

I am willing to give permission for my organisation to be included within the “List of Contributors” for the Forgotten Manager report.

SIGNED: .................................. DATE: ..................

NAME OF ORGANISATION: ..................................
CASE STUDIES - CASE NO. 1: JIM

Jim is in his early 50's and has been responsible for technical and engineering staff at junior and middle management level for over 20 years.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS
All Jim's qualifications are on the technical and engineering side, mostly covered by the City and Guilds awards. He has not attended any external courses nor gained any managerial or professional qualifications. He has, however, a great wealth of first-hand management experience.

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT
Jim does not have a career plan and has attended a number of varied in-company training courses. These courses cover such areas as Communication and Presentation Skills; Introduction to Management; Computer-based Training and Industrial Relations. He found all these courses "a very positive experience" especially those courses that enhanced negotiation and presentation skills in the early part of his management career. Jim found that he learnt a lot about himself which he believes is an essential factor to being a successful manager. He does not believe that a management qualification would enhance his career progress - "It is who you are and how effective you are in a job which is important." However, Jim strongly believes that due to subjective methods of assessment during promotion interviews, a lack of management qualifications would inhibit career progress - "If you are good then you get promoted but it is usually on one person's judgement rather than by other more objective means."

APL AND INDIVIDUAL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT
Jim sees 'people' skills as his strength but has tended to hide his weaknesses (eg costing, budgeting and statistical skills) during performance appraisal interviews. He feels unsafe, especially within the present organisational climate due to the number of recent redundancies. He has applied to take the DMS but has been refused both the time and finance to undertake this programme. He has not been allowed to attend any external courses. He believes that APL could help him develop his subordinates and would help build their confidence. He believes that gaining a qualification would have been helpful 5 years ago but as he is now over 50, his career period is shorter. Him feels that APL must be related to other personnel policies such as 'early retirement' and 'redundancy'. Jim thinks APL would provide a 'safe' environment within which a manager could reflect upon their strengths and weaknesses and would encourage self-development. Jim recognises that courses are available which would help develop staff prior to promotion into management - which he believes is a good way forward. However,
the only direction he was given when promoted to a manager was his boss saying:

"Give me your screwdriver and I'll give you a pen!"

CASE STUDIES - CASE NO. 2: NICKI

Nicki is Regional General Manager for a large service organisation. She is 36 years old, has been at management level for the last 10 years and was promoted to her present position of General Manager two years ago.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS
Nicki obtained a B.A. (Hons.) at the age of 21. She started her career as a Training Officer and passed her Institute of Personnel Management exams through evening class studies. Nicki’s employers gave her little encouragement to study for the IPM but did provide a ‘book allowance’. She is now an M.I.P.M.

APL AND INDIVIDUAL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT
Nicki strongly believes that management training should provide a practical problem-solving approach plus help in developing the individual. This approach would be particularly useful for her. In her own words: “I want ownership and commitment to my own development.

As a manager, Nicki believes that the process of APL would be helpful in improving management performance. She is of the opinion that due to the culture of the organisation, APL would be difficult to implement. "Commitment must come from the top and the top only develops high-flyers in this organisation." She also outlined her perception of the organisation’s attitude to staff development. The organisation operates a 'greenhouse effect' whereby staff are allowed to "grow through experience". Although the company operates a "Customer Care' policy, she believes this should be equal in status to an 'Employee Care' policy, this would then represent "two sides of a coin".

Nicki believes that APL would enable an individual to develop their own career and learning guidelines. It would also "be highly appropriate for on-the-job development of subordinates by 'marking-up' their learning and by applying their experiences. She summed up her views by emphasising the importance of individual motivation and the will to continue learning.

"I'm 'switched off' by schools and colleges and formal training routes, but 'switched on' by flexible and relevant training".
CASE STUDIES - CASE NO. 3: TREVOR

Trevor is a Manager of a specialist service department for a financial organisation. He is in his early 40's and has been at management level for 16 years with the same organisation.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS
Trevor has a professional qualification - he was not given time or financial support to gain this qualification. He has no managerial qualifications.

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT
He has attended many in-company courses which covered his particular financial specialism plus other management courses such as marketing and people management. He was also given an opportunity to meet people and trains from other sectors which enabled him to "....develop a less parochial perspective". The structure, content and delivery of this three-month programme was of a very high quality. Trevor believes that management qualification would make little difference to his internal career progress but may enhance his mobility with external organisations. He felt that within the present climate, a lack of management qualifications could have a negative effect on a younger person's desired career progress.

APL AND INDIVIDUAL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT
The 3-month management programme gave Trevor the opportunity to reflect upon his past achievements and has given him a far broader perspective on life. Since then he has given a great deal of thought to his future development therefore applied to an MBA programme. The MBA, Trevor believes, would develop a "broader external view of industry and a broader perspective of non-financial areas." Due to Trevor's extensive experiences, especially in the financial sector, a truncated version of the MBA was recommended. However, Trevor's present organisation refused to support his application as an MBA could provide a "mobility passport". This attitude clearly saddened Trevor, especially as he was a long-standing employee and clearly saw his future career developing within the same organisation.

Trevor believes that the APL process would help him identify his strengths and weaknesses. Also, the process would help in identifying and providing top-up training modules for his weak areas which could thereby enhance his management performance. He firmly believes that gaining credits would encourage managers to go on to further self-development and quoted his desire to complete an MBA as an example.

"The whole MBA is a daunting task and it would be a waste of time for me to do all the modules, so any thing that would restrict the time would be a bonus."
Definitions of Repertory Grid Terms:

Elements are labels or terms given to objects, people or behaviour. They can be construed as tasks eg in terms of behaviour required to perform their task effectively or they can be construed as people eg in terms of the ways in which they go about their work. The element set must relate to the purpose for which the repertory grid is to be used and must be representative of the range and level of participants' experiences.

Constructs are ideas about or reactions to elements. They should be appropriate to the purpose of the study and cover the range that the individual participant feels is important to the area. Constructs represent a continuum along which elements may be placed and so are bipolar.

Triadic Procedure is a method of enabling the participant to separate and construe the differences in meaning between three elements. Three elements are presented to a participant who is then asked to specify some important way in which two of them are alike and thereby different from the third. The reply is recorded and the participant is asked in what way the third element differs from the other two elements. The answer to the question concerning the difference is the contrast pole.

Laddering is a procedure for eliciting increasingly superordinate constructs; that is, constructs of a higher order of abstraction than those elicited from triads of elements. This procedure involves first eliciting constructs in the usual manner and then asking the participant to say which pole of each construct they prefer or they think is more important. The question "why" is asked about the preferred side of this new construct. The question "why" is asked of each new construct until the person is unable or unwilling or produce more.
DISPLAY OF CBS 3 RAW GRID

something I would be active
I would be making a choice about HOW I operated
the situation provides a role with few choices
I'd be a lot happier
I would do it in an organized and efficient way
essential that managers are motivated to learn

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 5 3 2 5 2 1 2 1 1 3 2 3
2 5 1 2 5 2 2 1 1 3 2 3
3 4 4 3 2 3 1 3 1 3 2 3
4 1 4 5 1 3 2 3 1 1 3 2 3
5 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 2 3 2
6 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
7 1 3 3 1 3 5 3 3 3 3 3 3
8 4 1 3 3 1 3 2 1 5 5 5 2
9 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 I would be reactive
2 I would not have control over activity
3 only my perceptions and limitations are taken into account
4 evaluation of past happenings
5 not an effective learning method
6 I'd like the shortest route to the objective
7 reliant upon others
8 learning is an imposition

DISPLAY OF CBS 3 FOCUSED GRID

the situation provides a role with few choices
learning is an imposition
I'd take the shortest route to the objective
I would be reactive
I would have no control over activity
reliant upon others

1 4 1 10 9 7 3 6 5 12 2 8 11

4 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
5 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 2 3 2 1
6 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
7 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
8 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
9 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
10 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
11 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
12 1 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

14 evaluation of past happenings
6 essential that managers are motivated to learn
3 because they involve own perceptions which are open to alteration by others
5 I'd be doing in an organized and efficient way
4 I would have no control over activity
2 something I would be active
1 I would be making a choice about how HOW I operated
7 because I would use past experiences

PRINCIPLE COMPONENT ANALYSIS OF CBS 3 GRID

crisis management
practising a skill
systematic reflection
group de-briefing

the situation provides a role with few choices
learning is an imposition
an effective learning method
role playing
listening to speakers

because I would use past experiences
because they involve own perceptions which are open to alteration by others

I would be doing in an organized and efficient way
I would be reactive
Dear [Name],

Re: Research - Management Education

As you know I have reached the final stage of data collection for research towards a Ph.d. I would, therefore, appreciate your permission to undertake this stage of research within the College.

The overall aim of this stage would be:-

* to investigate provider's needs in order to implement a flexible and relevant management education service.

The specific purpose being:-

* to investigate and identify effective means of enabling experienced managers to learn.

I intend using the Repertory Grid technique with College Staff who are responsible for providing management education. This would entail interviewing a number of staff within [College Name] and I would obviously gain permission from [College Name] prior to undertaking this study.

I would also like to carry out a similar study with the 12 participants on the MTD programme possibly using the Repertory Grid technique as an evaluation tool for the Management Training and Development Programme. Similarly it would be my intention to gain agreement from [College Name] to proceed with this study.

The findings from this research study may well prove useful to the College in the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan. I have also attached a paper outlining the methodology and the reasons for undertaking this study which may be of interest to you.

I would be most grateful for your permission to conduct this study if, however, you would like any further information please contact me on extension [Extension Number].

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]
Further and Higher Education lecturers within the management education field are attempting to make sense of the numerous educational initiatives and demands placed upon them by Industry Lead Bodies, Examining and Validating Bodies, employers and students. Management educationalists are struggling to interpret and to implement such initiatives as A.P.L. competence-based learning and N.V.Q.'s. Recent research suggests that older, experienced managers are demanding increased self-development and work-based learning programmes that reflect today's needs (Tjok-a-Tam, 1991). Employers are demanding management programmes related to immediate business needs as opposed to longer term educational strategies. Both employers and their managers are requiring that providers meet their needs at times and venues best suited to the business environment.

The understand Further and Higher Education lecturer's behaviour within this context of complex environmental and organisational change this study will explore the effectiveness of Kelly's repertory grid analysis as a means of describing the reasons for resistance to change and as a means of promoting successful implementation of new initiatives in the management education field.

Kelly's Personal Construct Psychology approach proposes that we perceive the world through our own personal pair of goggles, that we each bring our own unique history and experiences to situations, which affects how we view and deal with them (Denicolo and Pope, 1990). Repertory grids will be used as tools in a research study at an Further and Higher Education College to explore the attitudes that lecturers have towards effective means of enabling experienced managers to learn and to elucidate lecturers perceptions of their role in managing the learning process. Initial results indicate that lecturers are attempting to accommodate these changes and demands, though they are perceived as stretching the existing course programme structure to its limits.

Further results relating to role perceptions will be included in a paper, as the contribution of a particular research technique to understanding teachers thinking, at a time of change.

Sandra Tjok-a-Tam
16th May 1991
31st May 1991

University of Surrey
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 5XH.

Dear Sandra

Re: Research - Management Education

In reply to your letter of the 15th May I am happy to give permission for the interviews you outline to take place, providing it is with the agreement of the Heads of Faculty concerned, and does not involve any additional work for the already over-stressed staff of the Faculty.

Yours sincerely

Principal.

Management of Learning in Management Education: 
an exploration of reactions to new initiatives

As you may know I have been carrying out research in the area of management education and have reached the final stage of data collection. I have attached a paper outlining the methodology and the reasons for undertaking this study which may be of interest to you. I would, therefore, be very grateful for your help in order to complete my research.

I would very much appreciate about 45 minutes with you to undertake a Repertory Grid interview. Or if you would like to learn more about the Repertory Grid technique for evaluation purposes a small group workshop could be arranged where data could also be collected (this would obviously take longer). I should like to emphasise that confidentiality will be maintained. Feedback and interpretation of the grid will be given via a computer print-out and personal interview. If you would like further information on any aspect of this study please contact me on extension 3123 or leave a note in my pigeon hole.

If you would like to be involved in this study please tick a convenient time on the enclosed sheet indicating your availability for a group workshop or individual interview and again return to me via my pigeon hole.

Many thanks.
Appendix XIII

List of Elements:
The following list was derived from a pilot study with three staff/learners and shared the following characteristics: that the physical location of the learning can be many and varied and were not tied to the work-place and formal learning situations.

Suggested Element List 1:
Using/Observing a Role Model
Reflecting on Errors
Reflecting on PDJ
Undertaking Projects
Being Guided by Another
Reading Professional Journals
One-to-One Conversations - with others
Conversations/Discussions in a Group
Listening to Outside Speakers

Suggested Element List 2:
Guided Reflection
Using the PDJ for Reflection
Presenting and Explaining Ideas to Others
Selected Reading to Gather Information
Listening to Focussed Speakers
Watching a Demonstration - Practical Skills
Observing a Role Model (attitudes)
Group Problem Solving
Writing to Express Ideas
Writing an Analytical Report
Undertaking Work-based Learning
Guided Assessment

Suggested Element List 3:
Listening to Speakers
Guided Reflection
Selected Reading to Gather Information
Observing a Role Model
Undertaking a Work-based Project
Writing to Express Ideas
Taking Part in Case Studies
Practising a Skill
Presenting
Discussing Issues
Appendix XIV

Interpretation Synopsis - CBS 3:

CBS 3 construed that those learning methods that were ineffective were those that provided few choices and were imposed upon the learner also that the teacher had to be reactive and therefore had no control over the learning activities which were reliant upon other people eg role-playing; listening to speakers; observing a role model. Those learning methods where she (the teacher) was happier were those that were active, could choose how they were operated, were more effective eg work-based project, writing, reading, discussing issues and presenting to others. Reliance upon others lessened control by the learner and thereby became mostly in-effective. Methods that were active, enabled the learner to have a choice of operation, were motivating and those that allowed evaluation of past happenings/experiences were effective eg work-based project; writing; reading; discussing and presenting/explaining. Systematic reflection and group de-briefing were mostly effective learning methods except group de-briefing which relied upon others and systematic reflection was construed to take into account the perceptions and therefore the limitations of the teacher. CBS 3 believed that a core issue was for learners to gain ownership of their learning. See Appendix XI for Principle Component Analysis - Top r/h quadrant is what CBS 3 is doing now and bottom 1/h quadrant is what she did in the past and what she wants to do now. CBS 3 was experiencing cognitive dissonance whereby her present behaviour was out of balance with her core values.

Elaboration of Grid:
"Managers need hands on experience and have an opportunity to question".
"I want to be able to try out new ideas and have an active role to play with a fair chance of success".
"I need to feel I've achieved something. Most of the motivation comes from the 'buzz' I get when I've done something well in any role. It is to do with my perception of myself as being worthwhile".

Display of Focused Grid - CBS 3
Interpretation Synopsis - CBS 6:
CBS 6 has construed that presenting, writing, reading, reflection, discussing issues with others and observing a role model are more effective methods of learning. However, these methods were perceived to be more threatening and needed a third party to facilitate effective learning. Discussing issues; listening to speakers and observing a role model were construed to be effective learning methods related to the work place, were less threatening and within the control of the learner. A work-based project was construed to be more threatening and less effective. The learning method 'presenting' was an individual activity and was construed to be more threatening and a less effective method of learning. Those learning methods that were construed as threatening and were less effective did not have a third party to facilitate effective learning. CBS 6 construed that those learning methods she liked were also those learning methods that students liked. Systematic reflection was a learning method that was effective and liked by students and the participant but was more threatening and required a third party.

Display of Focused Grid - CBS 6:

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<th>Range: 1 to 5</th>
<th>Context: cbs - management of learning</th>
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<tr>
<td>in the work-place</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 1 1 3 2 1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you can do on your own</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 1 1 5 2 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less of a threat</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 1 3 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to learn</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 1 2 3 2 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how students like to learn</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 2 2 2 2 1 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are effective ways of learning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 2 1 3 1 2 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- 1: undertaking a work-based project
- 9: presenting and explaining ideas to others
- 6: writing to express ideas
- 3: selected reading to gather information
- 2: systematic reflection
- 8: practising a skill
- 7: discussing issues with another/s
- 1: listening to speakers
- 4: observing a role model
Interpretation Synopsis - CBS 8:

CBS 8 construes that effective and more valuable learning methods are those that are active, experiential, challenging (to the teacher), innovative and that can show measurable development e.g. role playing, discussing issues, work experience, projects, practising a skill and presentations. However, those learning methods that involve interaction with other people are not within the control of the student - except for E9 'presenting'. CBS 8 believes that a realistic active learning process within a group or with other people provides a more valuable learning experience but is reactive to outside control. Discussion revealed that learning methods such as observing role model, reading, listening to speakers were construed as more 'traditional' methods and were less effective. Systematic Reflection is linked to all learning methods but during the interview it emerged that this learning method is perceived to be outside the 'traditional/progressive methods' frame.

Elaboration of Grid:

"Learning is an active process which can enable development".

"There is a world of difference between academic understanding and practical ability of the manager".

"Our role is to broaden people's awareness which is transferred to a work setting. It is about the development of transferable management skills which can be used in a variety of management roles".

Display of Focused Grid - CBS 8:
Appendix XIV

Interpretation Synopsis - MTD 1:
MTD 1 (as a learner) construed that effective methods of learning for experienced managers were: undertaking a work based project and practising a skill, problem solving through case studies and role playing. All these methods were linked with the selected reading element. These methods were likely to be active; practical; and are what MTD 1 liked most and would like more time to do. Importantly MTD 1 construed that the value of these methods depended upon the individual. Selected Reading was a slight exception to this as MTD 1 liked this method less but believed that this method was theoretical. MTD 1 therefore learns through practical and problem solving activities. Other methods: observing a role model; listening to speakers; discussing issues; presenting and explaining ideas would not involve writing but would involve other people. The value of these methods (with the exception of 'presenting and explaining ideas') was not under MTD 1's control. Other methods such as: listening to speakers; discussing issues with others; presenting and explaining ideas to others; writing to express ideas and systematic reflection MTD 1 would like less time for and believes these methods to be theoretical. These methods loosely linked to systematic reflection which was construed to be passive. At this point one may assume that the term 'active' means in the physical sense. MTD 1 learns through his perceptive qualities and his skills in writing to express ideas; presenting and explaining ideas; discussing issues with another. MTD 1 learns through exploring issues.

Those methods that were passive and the value was not entirely under his (the learner) control linked with 'involves others' and 'like less'. MTD 1 would like more time for practical as opposed to theoretical methods of learning.

Display of Focused Grid - MTD 1:

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isn't necessarily involve others</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>value depends on me</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like most</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like more time for</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>getting information</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no writing involved</td>
<td>1 to 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>values not entirely under my control</td>
<td>1 to 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive</td>
<td>1 to 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like less</td>
<td>1 to 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less time for</td>
<td>1 to 100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td>1 to 100</td>
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</thead>
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<td>selected reading</td>
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<td>problem solving through case studies</td>
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<td>practising a skill</td>
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<tr>
<td>role playing</td>
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<td>listening to speakers</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>discussing issues with another/s</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>presenting and explaining ideas to others</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>writing to express ideas</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>systematic reflection</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
18 January 1993

Ms S T‘jok-a-tam

Dear Sandra

Just a note to thank you for helping to make our APL Conference a success. Teachers - and particularly FE teachers - are a notoriously critical audience. You held their attention, and it was clear that a great deal of learning was taking place. There were many complimentary comments about the style and content of your presentation.

I rarely take notes at conferences but felt impelled on Friday to record as much as I could of what you said: there was so much that was useful and that could not be gleaned from the huge volume of 'literature' on APL. Those of us who have worked on the Hampshire APL project are most grateful to you.

Yours sincerely
DISPLAY OF CBS 8 RAW GRID

Фокуст: CBS 8 - Jan 93
Элементы: 12, Конструкты: 6, Диапазон: 1 до 5, Контекст: Разработка персонала.

1. Doesn't involve interpersonal skill
2. Active interaction
3. Subject to outside constraints
4. Listening without understanding and learning
5. Not necessarily involving development
6. Active

DISPLAY OF CBS 8 FOCUSED GRID

Фокуст: CBS 8 - Jan 93
Элементы: 12, Конструкты: 6, Диапазон: 1 до 5, Контекст: Разработка персонала.

1. Writing a Personal Narrative
2. Observing a Role Model
3. Reading Selectively (to Gather Information)
4. Listening to Speakers
5. Undertaking a Work-based Project
6. Developing a Portfolio of Evidence
7. Practicing a Skill
8. Reflecting Self-development
9. Reflecting Systematically (to Solve Problems)
10. Negotiating a Learning Contract
11. Presenting and Explaining Ideas to Others
12. Discussing Issues in an Action Learning Set
Laddered down - Construct 2 - shared onus upon individual.
Q In what way does E6 "practising a skill" differ from E4 & E5?
A "onus upon individual" - indicates "what they have done, what they do and what they need to do in terms of proving personal competencies and competence standards".
"shared onus" - "as for example action learning which demonstrates sharing experiences and gaining help and support from other candidates. With facilitators help the individual can understand and interpret the personal competencies, range indicators and sources of evidence".

NB: However, both poles are "equally important in an NVQ programme as taught qualification places much more onus on Lecturer and Tutor". In contrast to the work-based project learning method, the Learner has "no choice in time; place or other people's reactions".

Laddered up - Construct 3 - individual choice and responsibility/candidate doesn't have choice.
Q Which pole is more important?
A "candidate choice" more important".
Q Why?
A "with choice comes responsibility.
Q Why is that important?
A "Because if you make choices you have to stand by them. It is OK to make mistakes as this is part of the learning process. Next stage is for candidate to accept responsibility for mistakes and learns from it, for example reflective learning".
Q Why does reflective learning help the learning process?
A "That's how people change, get better and improve understanding and have an effect upon other people".
Q Why is this important?
A "I see it as a personal growth programme"
Q Why is this important to you as a Facilitator?
A "It is important to me that candidates have learnt and understood what is good and bad practice. They have the choice to move on and be good practitioners".
Q Why is choice so important to you?
A "Otherwise the programme is a redundant exercise and doesn't work for me. People need a bit of theory, practice and then they are learning and changing".
NB: Interviewee's 'body language' exhibited excitement/contentment eg smiles and relaxed posture.

Laddered up - Construct 6 - 'every learning unit unique/same learning of core information'.

Q Which pole important?
A "in terms of Crediting Competence/NVQ - L/H pole (ie 'every learning unit unique') because it takes into account where people are when they start".
Q Why is this important?
A It provides the candidate with "total flexibility about areas of concentrated learning and practice".
Q Why is flexibility important?
A "On a taught course candidates have to go through courses regardless of prior learning and competence. Areas of greater need still only allocated with requisite number of weeks". Therefore flexibility provides the candidate with a programme that provides "greater response to needs".
Q Why?
A "It is about dealing with reality about what people need as opposed to dealing with what they ought to need".
Q Why?
A "Makes more sense and efficient use of time and money".

Full Context - Construct 7 - E10/reflecting systematically and E11/listening to speakers were considered by the Interviewee to be opposite ends of a spectrum. "If a candidate is set a test and their answers are wrong but there is no facility for why they got the wrong answers then learning cannot take place. Reflection is key to the Crediting Competence process".
Q Why is reflection important?
A "Because people need to own their own learning need to understand what's happening".
Q Why?
A "No understanding - no change! Like teaching robots!"

NB: Discussion followed about 'labels'. The Interviewee explained her meaning of such labels as "teaching" means traditional courses equals control by teacher; "facilitation" equals energy; excitement; commitment; flexibility; adaptability.

NB: CBS 3 demonstrated her commitment to 'facilitation' mode through 'body language' eg leaning forward, smiles and sparkling eyes.
Snake Interview Notes:

CBS 3 started her snake in June 1991 when she was trained as a Crediting Competence Adviser/Assessor on a 3-day programme run by Qudos. Once Interviewee started to understand about the concept and processes of APL and NVQ's she started to panic about her 'contact hours'. She was short of 'teaching/contact hours and realised that she needed to 'fill' this in with Crediting Competence facilitation. Although she still had doubts (which were stifled) she rationalised that due to her past management development experience, especially in counselling and action learning, she would be able to cope. However, it was a "big mistake" in thinking it would be a similar process to similar experiences she had in industry. Her previous experience in a similar area provided her with:

- "support networks of like minded people"
- "masses of time for personal development"
- "an opportunity to develop with candidates"
- "de-briefing sessions in order to learn from doing"
- "changing and developing strategies"
- "network of people who care about me"
- "flexibility in managing my time, not constrained timetable"

These past experiences were in contrast to her present fixed 7.5 hour traditional lecturing, marking and preparation workload.

By November 1992 the Interviewee was OK "did not know enough to be worried!". However, the Action Learning Staff Development session did not fit into her "traditional" timetable which intruded on her staff development. "Lack of personal development led to lack of confidence!" The Interviewee was "not sure why certain things in Action Learning Set meetings went well" - as there was no debriefing or support network of colleagues. During this time CBS 3 experienced conflict between "time-tabled" work and MCI which was a flexible programme. This conflict caused problems of availability and therefore she had to work on 'days off' and as a .5 Lecturer this caused her a great deal of stress.

By February 1993 CBS 3 had more MCI work plus her involvement with the TDLB training which again did not fit into her 'contact time timetable' and she found that every TDLB session conflicted with her MCI or 'traditional' work. She also believed that the TDLB training was a "top-up for a formalised personal development programme and was too little, too late!"
NB CBS 3's showed non-verbal signs of being angry and distressed with staff development decisions made by management. "Does Management understand?"

March 1993 CBS 3 was away from work for one week due to 'flu. This added to her stress level as she had been asked in February to do four days training but was not clear about whether these days were only the Induction Workshop or whether it would mean subsequent Action Learning Set meetings. At the same time a client requested that their own Facilitators "sit in" on CBS 3's facilitation of Action Learning Set Meetings. "I was actually quite unhappy about this". Although CBS 3 recognised that there was a partnership agreement for the programme she felt that this intrusion conflicted with the ethos of Action Learning. CBS 3 viewed her role as facilitator for candidates and not for the employer. She agreed that she experienced role conflict. CBS 3 observed that Management did not fully understand the Action Learning process as "lots of people (candidates) were demanding separate hours" which caused a conflict in the terms and conditions of the original programme contract. She added that she was now "not clear about programme contract".

During this period CBS 3 had to cancel at short notice, due to illness, an action learning set meeting and noted a comment from one participant (who had not attended a previous action learning set meeting) "this is not just enough notice". This was considered to be "the final straw" and CBS 3 "decided to stop!".

Q What activities would have helped you to progress?
A "A Manager - there was no formal set-up!" CBS 3 was hurt by a throw away comment from her Line Manager "you've got 3.5 hours so you can do a bit of this".

NB: It was agreed by CBS 3 that she "needed a formal contract to understand the rules of the game". She was not sure what Faculty Management's position was which would enable her to make a decision to move forward more positively.

Overall:

CBS 3 was satisfied with the concept and process of Crediting Competence during the period June 1991 until October 1992. She believed that she had an overview of the programme but needed practical work on standards and intermediate portfolio assessment. The TDLB programme would have been more useful earlier in the staff development process and she also identified that group work and a support network eg staff action learning set was essential for all staff involved in the Crediting Competence and NVQ programmes.
Original was hand-written, therefore, to preserve confidentiality the 'snake' has been copied though the original words are preserved except that names have been omitted.
Characteristics of a Learning Company

A Descriptive Framework:
1. Learning approach to strategy
2. Participative policy making
3. Informating
4. Formative accounting & control

5. Internal exchange
6. Reward flexibility

7. Enabling structures
8. Boundary workers as environmental scanners
9. Inter-company learning

10. Learning climate
11. Self-development for all

APPENDIX XVIII/1
Description of Characteristics

APPENDIX XVIII/2

1. Learning approach to strategy - company policy and strategy formation, together with implementation, evaluation and improvement are consciously structured as a learning process enabling continuous improvement through flexibility.

2. Participative policy-making - sharing of involvement in the policy- and strategy-forming processes by all members, including the ability to generate and resolve conflict; members include not simply staff but all stakeholders in the company such as customers, suppliers, owners and neighbours.

3. Informating - the use of information technology to inform and empower people, encouraging wider access to information and more 'open' systems.

4. Formative accounting and control - system of accounting, budgeting and reporting are structured to assist learning and add value, encouraging individuals and units to act as small businesses and think about who their customers are.

5. Internal exchange - perception that all internal units and departments are both suppliers to and customers of each other, encouraging wider sharing of expectations and information, negotiating, contracting and providing feedback on goods/services received; fostering an environment of collaboration rather than competition.

6. Reward flexibility - using different methods of reward and questioning the use of financial rewards.

7. Enabling structures - create opportunities for individual and business development.

8. Boundary workers as environmental scanners - asking for, respecting and using the experiences of all members who interact with external customers to feedback back information on customer needs.

9. Inter-company learning - initiation of mutually advantageous learning activities such as joint training, sharing in investment and job exchanges, including learning from non-competitors.

10. Learning climate - perception by managers that their primary task is to facilitate experimentation and learning from experience.

11. Self-development opportunities for all - resources and facilities for self-development are made available to all members, employees at all levels and external stakeholders.

(Source: Ross, July, 1992).
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Lewes, East Sussex The Falmer Press
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