The Stories That Leaders Tell During Organisational Change: The Search for Meaning during Large-Scale Transformations

Dieter Veldsman[*] and Michelle May

90% of organisational change efforts result in failure, with lack of change leadership and leaders' inability to create sustainable change cited as the most common reason for change projects not yielding a viable return on investment. The purpose of this research was to explore leaders' stories during a large-scale organisational change project and determine the type of stories leaders tell during the change process, as well as whether leaders find personal meaning in their own change stories. Change has become the norm in the knowledge economy as organisations aim to manage the organisational pillars of people, processes, and technology to build a flexible and agile business. Leaders as the drivers of the change process have been criticised for a lack of change competence and an inability to manage sustainable change for their employees, resulting in a high degree of failure during organisational change efforts, which impact the organisation and the community from a monetary, people, and sustainability perspective. The research utilised a qualitative research design, using narrative inquiry to explore multiple leadership stories collected during an organisational change journey. Thematic network analysis was used to explore the categorical themes of significance (the "Why?" of the change), simplicity (the end-state of the change), opportunity (the people within the change), and the future (the change vision), as obtained from the leaders' stories. The study identified and categorised different story types that leaders tell during the change process,which are aimed at making change meaningful to followers. The study also found that leaders themselves find personal meaning in the stories that they tell due to the nature and significance that they bring to the leaders' own life story. The study adds value to the fields of leadership, organisational change and storytelling, and provides an integrated perspective and framework for leaders to manage sustainable change within the knowledge economy.

1. Introduction

Organisations are failing the leaders of the 21st century (Hiatt 2007). Operating models are not producing business value, hierarchical structures are not conducive to productivity, inflexible strategies that are too rigid in today's ever-changing environment, and a workforce that is drowning in change has become the norm (Appelbaum, St-Pierre & Glavas 1998; Hiatt 2007). Guttman (2009) states that organisations have been attacked by the four horsemen of the apocalypse during the last decade: globalisation, growth in technology, increased competition, and the pressure for innovation. "Who are we?", "What is our identity?", "What is our core business?", and "What are we aiming to achieve?" are all questions that organisations need to answer if they aspire to navigate the hyper-turbulent changing environment and remain sustainable into the future (Hesselbein & Goldsmith 2009). Leaders as the drivers of organisational change have been criticised for a lack of

---
[*] Dieter Veldsman, Department of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, UNISA, South Africa, Email: dieterveldsman@hotmail.com

competence and an inability to create meaningful change for their employees (Bass 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Denning 2006).

2. Literature Review

The story landscape will be explored with reference to the Lewinian change model (Lewin 1951; Weiss 2001) that describes change according to the following three phases:

- Unfreeze: Preparing the organisation for change
- Changing the organisation: The transition process
- Refreeze the organisation: Embedding the change within the organisation

Stories will be explored within the context of the model and acknowledges the story of history (unfreeze), transition (the change), and future (refreeze) that will provide the landscape for the exploration of the collected leaders' stories.

From a literature perspective the study will focus on exploring the knowledge economy landcape with reference to organisational change, leader and storytelling as critical constructs to explore the research question.

2.1 The Knowledge Economy

The knowledge economy, defined by the OECD (1996) as the systematic production, distribution, and creation of knowledge within society, has challenged the organisation in terms of integrating the organisational people, processes, and technological capabilities to enable growth and prosperity in the future. Traditionally organisations, defined according to the Newtonian definition, holds that organisations are machines and systems that come together to solve problems in a predictable universe (Wheatley 2006). This implies that organisational success is determined according to the criteria of stability and predictability (Lawler & Worley 2009).

Champy (2009) is of the opinion that the traditional organisational perspective have become outdated in the knowledge economy. In order to survive, organisations will have to rethink the traditional strategies that were successful in the past. New role players, such as the BRIC economy (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) have brought a different type of challenge to the organisation, which is no longer just competing against competitors in the same industry, but in a global village that is innovative, faster, and more efficient than ever before (Champy 2009; Greenhaus, Callahan & Godshalk 1999). In contrast to the traditional view, knowledge economy organisations focus on vision, mission, mantra, and philosophy, with a more established and diversified workforce that informs the multi-directional relationships that define the culture and offering that the organisation brings to the global marketplace (Veldsman 2011).

In summary, organisational models that have governed the success of the traditional hierarchy and role-based organisation, as described by Wheatley (2006), have become outdated, and the criteria for organisational success have changed. Organisations need to change, as the new world demands organisations that are agile, fit for purpose, and change competent if they are to survive in the future (Champy 2009).

2.2 Organisational Change

Due to the size, complexity, and the speed of change, organisations can no longer rely on pockets of excellence that will bring about minimal change (Canton 2006). With organisations being described as hyper-turbulent (McCann & Selsky 1984; Selsky, Goes & Ouz 2007) and high-velocity structures of dynamic complexity (Eisenhardt & Martin 2000), organisational change initiatives need to move away from the notion of planning change to an approach that facilitates change from within the system (Seel 2000). Large-scale people involvement is gaining momentum in organisational change literature as the speed and complexity of change demands an inclusive approach to facilitating sustainable organisational change (Bunker & Alban 1997; Karp 2004). Organisations will need to shift their change approaches to building internal change capability that will facilitate change on a continuous basis within the organisation as opposed to a stop-start process that, at best, yields minimal return on investment (Canton 2006; Porras & Robertson 1992). King and Wright (2007) state that three key components need to be visible in organisations to enable internal change capability and build sustainable change practices into the future:

- **Component 1:** The establishment of an enterprise-wide change network
This entails building the ability to sustain change that will gain momentum across the enterprise and enabling business units to partake in changing the business activities, together with the right skills and tools to manage change projects.

- **Component 2:** A change management training curriculum for all employees
All employees need to be equipped with the tools and techniques to manage the change process.

- **Component 3:** Coaching and consulting support in the management of change.
Active mentoring and consulting employees throughout the change process

Change capability has become a competitive advantage, ensuring that all employees within the organisation are equipped and tasked with becoming agents of change (Seel 2000). Becoming change competent requires organisations to move away from the traditional paradigms that informed stop-start change approaches, and start referring to a change-capable business practice, as proposed by Lawler & Worley (2009). In essence, change-capable organisations display the following characteristics that will inform the rational within the knowledge economy business models and approaches to the future (Thompson 2008):

- The active management of change as a pro-active capability will influence and be influenced by the environment across all levels of the organisation;
- Investing in building organisational social capability, without regards for rank or title;
- Acknowledging the best and worst of the change history of the organisation;
- Celebrating the strengths of the organisation across the hierarchy; and
- Accepting conflict as a part of creating change, and focusing on the management of energy as opposed to managing conflict.

Building change capability, at both an individual and organisational level, is dependent on the internalisation of the change through the leaders of the

organisation: leaders that walk the talk and create a psychologically safe atmosphere for their people during times of change (Herscovitach & Meyer 2002). Bass and Avolio (1994) state that organisational change can only be accomplished through the persuasive power of the leaders that drive the process, accept responsibility for the change, and drive the change agenda across the organisation.

2.3 The Role of Leaders as Drivers of Organisational Change

The role that leaders needs to play during change efforts has been recognised by numerous researchers (Appelbaum & Wohl 2000; Potter 2001; Chapman 2002; Graetz 2000). Kouzes and Pousner (2009) state that leaders are the custodians of the future, and that they are tasked with the solemn duty to leave the organisation in a better position than that in which it found them. The following section will focus on leaders within the context of the knowledge economy, and will discuss leaders as the foundation for enabling successful organisational change.

- **An overview of the leadership construct**

Nahavandi (2009) states that leadership can be categorised into three distinct eras over the past century: the trait era (1800s – 1940s) that perceived leaders to be born as opposed to moulded and created through experience, the behaviouristic era (Mid 1940s-1970s) which focused on the behaviours which define a leader, and the contingency era (1960s to present) which focuses more on a situational leadership style that measures the effectiveness of leaders within the context of the situational demands. Leadership has been defined by numerous researchers across the literature, and various leadership frameworks exist with the leader being characterised as servant; transformational hero; Change Leader; Authentic Role model and Situational Direction setter (Burns 1978; Covey 2004; Greenleaf 1977; Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson 2007; Komives, Lucas & McMahon 1998; Kotter 2008; Kouzes & Pousner 1987; Rost 1991).

The 1980s saw a fundamental shift in leadership focus: incorporating aspects of change, followership and inclusivity, which established leaders as the custodians of organisational change (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber 2009; Smit& Carstens 2003). In the knowledge economy, the essence of leadership lies in change, i.e. leaders' ability to create sustainable change practices within the organisation (Conger &Kanungo 1998; Van Knippenberg & Hogg 2003). Change competence, or the ability to create sustainable change, has become a vital capability that leaders need to possess in order to ensure the longevity of the organisation in the knowledge economy (Van Knippenberg & Hogg 2003).

The 21st century has placed a new challenge on leadership's doorstep: a move from previous autocratic models of control to a contemporary model that focuses on teamwork and engagement (Dannhauser 2007). Knowledge economy leaders need to become a key component of the system, be involved with their followers, and practise a relationship-based leadership style that facilitates the change process from within the organisation (Griffin & Stacey2005). This perspective challenges organisational leaders to adopt a collaborative leadership style that facilitates change as opposed to top-down change enforcement approaches that tend to leave employees uninspired, disengaged, and demotivated (Mor-Barak 2005; Whitney, Trosten-Bloom & Rader 2010).

- **Leaders as change facilitators within the knowledge economy**

Historically, leaders have been to blame for the inability to facilitate sustainable organisational change for the following reasons (Beer 1999):

- Leaders crafted unclear strategies and conflicting priorities, resulting in employees not buying into the change or understanding the need for change;
- Ineffective leadership teams directed the change according to their own personal agendas;
- Laissez-faire leadership styles waited for change to happen as opposed to pro-actively making the change happen in the organisation;
- Poor co-ordination and teamwork across the key interfaces deflated the change energy of the organisation;
- Poor vertical communication from the leader left employees uninspired, demotivated, and resistant to the idea of change; and
- Inadequate leadership skills throughout the organisation left employees uncertain and unable to deal with the additional pressure of change.

Key to past failures is the notion of the leader standing outside of the system and aiming to create change as opposed to mobilising the existing energy within the organisation. Leaders, if they are to be successful at facilitating change from within the system, need to adopt an approach that is collaborative and inclusive and which builds, supports, and rewards the establishment of internal change capability (Thatchenkery & Metzker 2006). Cockerel (2009) states that leaders should change their language so that "the organisation" becomes "our organisation," "organisational success" becomes "our success," and "the customers" becomes "our customers." Building change capability implies that leaders fulfill different roles at different levels, which implies the fulfilling of different responsibilities during the change process (Katzenbach & Khan 2009), as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Leaders' responsibilities during change journeys (Katzenbach & Khan 2009, Schein 2004)

Leaders' role:	Change leaders' responsibility:
Strategically: The leader as visionary	- Leaders need to articulate and communicate the future that they want to see for followers. - Considering the path and what actions are required is essential.
Behaviourally: The leader as role model	- Followers will look to the leader to see what behaviour is expected and even rewarded in the future.
Operationally: The leader as reinforcer of the change	- It needs to be clear what the leaders are rewarding and what behaviours are crucial to organisational success in the new world.

In summary, leaders need to adopt new approaches to facilitate the enablement of change competence within the organisation. This implies a collaborative approach to organisational change; an inclusive leadership style, and the leader being a facilitator of the change from within the system. Stories have been identified as one of the most valuable tools in the leader's toolbox (Bass 1990; Bennis & Thomas 2002), and the past five years have seen a renewed interest in leadership narrative within organisations (Girard & Lambert 2007). The stories used by leaders during the

change process enable followers to believe in the transformation that the organisation is trying to accomplish and allow them to become part of the change process (Simmons 2006).   Stories relay vision, relate behavioural values, and communicates with employees in a way that makes them part of the process – all qualities that define change leaders in knowledge economy organisations (Adamson, Pine, Van Steenhoven & Kroupa 2006; Driscoll & McKee 2006; Mconkie & Boss 1994).

- **Leaders as storytellers in the knowledge economy**

Gabriel (2000) states that leaders such as CEOs, poets, novelists, and kings have used stories throughout history to unite, inspire, and entertain tribes and organisations.   Stories have the power to unite and call ordinary citizens to action (Thatchenkery & Metzker 2006).   Leaders such as Lincoln and Reagan used stories to share a message that united and inspired a nation to share the American dream (Harbin and Humphrey 2010).   Stories provide individuals with a sense of continuity, a feeling that the journey is achievable, and includes them in the story-crafting process (Boal & Schultz 2007).   Stories have become relevant in knowledge economy organisations that strive for two-way communication that fosters collaboration and meaningful contributions from across the organisational hierarchy (Denning 2006).   Change leaders are able to use stories to foster sustainable change competence that changes the organisational philosophy due to the co-creational nature of stories that enable the following during the change process (Bate 2004; Flock 2006, Vaughn 2009):

- Personal awareness and understanding for the individual within the larger change journey;
- A community narrative where everyone in the organisation belongs;
- A counter-narrative that speaks of a better future;
- Commitments that are translated into joint action and forward movement and, more importantly, keep the change momentum going;

Historically, leaders have relied upon the use of stories to create an organisational community across the boundaries of language, race, age, or cultural context (Hopen 2006; Sanetz & Maydoney 2003).   Leaders have used stories to achieve a number of business outcomes, such as improved productivity (Gill, 2009), creating a knowledge-based culture (McClellan 2006), crafting believable stories of the future (Denning 2011), and retaining talent within the organisation (Gill 2009).   Stories have become part of the change leader's repertoire and the official organisational truth that informs and drives the culture of the organisation through the conversations, symbols, and rituals that stories describe (Marra & Holmes 2005).   In the postmodern world, organisations need to take their stories seriously, as they will influence and drive organisational culture as employees co-create the organisational story and philosophy of the future**.**

2.4 An Introduction to Storytelling

Gabriel (1991) defines stories as events that, over time, become charged with significance as they are retold and remembered by individuals. Boje (1991) views stories as the institutional memory system that ties together single strands of narrative spanning across characters and ranks. These stories connect us, they make our daily lives meaningful, and they make the characters come alive (Boje &

Dennehy 1993). Stories are created, transformed, tested, and sustained, and they shape the existence of the organisation (Gabriel 2000). Peirano-Vejo and Stablein (2009) state that organisations can be defined in terms of the oral and written stories that build, reinforce, and break down the organisations that we live in. Storytelling can be described as the process of:

- Constructing a narrative identity of the people and the culture within a community (Ball-Rokeach, Kim & Matei 2001);
- Orally communicating beliefs, personal histories, and life ideas (Groce 2004); and
- Relating information pertaining to occurrences or a course of events (Corey 2005).

Postmodernism sees stories everywhere and in everything (Gabriel 2000). This means that stories are hidden in every text, document, conversation, report, performance appraisal, theory, and even in silence, as the absence of a story is a story in itself (Gabriel 2000). Stories are told within the context of the storyteller and, as such, can be classified into different patterns of stories, such as events, beliefs, thematic patterns of morality, truth, and metaphor, and patterns of consequences describing decisions and their subsequent impact (Habermas & Bluck 2000). The relevance of stories within the organisational context and their role in making sense of organisations have been emphasised by a number of researchers (Boje 1991; Dennehy 1999; Kaye 1996). Within knowledge economy organisations, stories are embedded in the culture and the DNA of organisational identity and, as such, need to be consciously created and tailored by leaders if they are to create sustainable change (Gabriel 2000).

- **Stories in organisations**

Inevitably, every organisation is telling a story and is constantly going through the process of creating stories, tailoring existing stories, and writing the history and future of the organisation. Storytelling allows individuals to share their opinions and shape their own ideas, and encourages commitment to organisational goals through a collaborative story, involving each individual in the organisation and shifting the language narrative that will facilitate the journey (Prusak 2001). Stories occur in the conversations that employees have with each other on a daily basis and, in essence, the change process can only be facilitated if the conversations are changed (Johnson & Scholes 2002; Seel 2000). Corporate stories are cognitive repositories of mapped ideas and stored information (Wilkins 1978). Boje (1991) views stories in organisations as the institutional memory system, recreating the past based upon the present. Stories are multi-authored and are continuously unfolding as they relate to other organisational members (Gabriel 2000). Vaughn (2009) states that the organisational memory system is shaped by organisational experiences that are recounted socially through all levels of the organisation, which will serve as a guiding force for decisions, actions, and individual assumptions going forward. Stories contain the elements of energy and experience that stir action and motivate people to change (Christie 2009; Denning 2011; Vaughn 2009). The importance of stories lies in the necessity of the collaborative effort to create shared meanings and give life to the knowledge of the organisation (Boal & Schultz 2007). As such, stories become embedded in the culture and sub-cultures of the organisation and will focus on the organisation's triumphs and tribulations, ultimately becoming the philosophy of who the organisation is and what it stands for (Gabriel 2000). Stephens (2009) states that organisational stories are told about real people and describe the

philosophy of the organisation through artefacts that are common knowledge. These stories are taken seriously by the members of the organisation and ultimately inform the psychological contract that binds employees to the organisational philosophy. Stories are part of the DNA of the organisation, which implies that if the organisation is to be changed by the change leader from within the system, the stories that the knowledge economy organisation tells need to be changed, co-created, and retold if organisations are to whether the coming storm of change.

2.5 The Integration of Leaders, Stories, and Organisational Change within the Knowledge Economy

In summary, the knowledge economy demands that organisational practices become agile, responsive, and flexible if the organisation is to become sustainable and change-capable. The building of internal change capability and enabling the organisation to deal with the complexity and speed of the knowledge economy change has brought a new challenge to the change leader. Inclusive and collaborative leadership styles that enable a system-wide approach to facilitating organisational change from within the organisation have become a necessity in the knowledge economy. Stories are embedded in the culture of the organisation, thereby implying that the leaders will have to change the stories if they are to successfully change the organisation to become fit for the future.

As such, the study aimed to explore the leaders' stories as part of a change process and answer the following research questions:

1. What are the stories that leaders tell during organisational change?
2. Do leaders find personal meaning in the stories that they tell?

The following section will discuss the research design and the findings obtained from the qualitative narrative inquiry as the researcher aimed to understand the stories that leaders tell during a large-scale organisational change project.

3. Research Methodology

The research approach
The research was approached within the constructivist paradigm through a qualitative research approach in order to gain a deeper understanding of the stories leaders tell during organisational change and the personal meaning they derive from the change stories as opposed to the factual accuracy of the told narratives.

The research strategy
The researcher adopted a narrative inquiry strategy to explore the research questions, as narrative inquiry allows for the sense-making of experience within a set time, place, and milieu, which, according to Connely and Clandinin (2006).

The research method
The following section will discuss the research in light of the research setting, the role of the researcher, and the approach to collecting and analysing quality data.

Research setting

The study was conducted within a global organisation in the financial sector that had initiated a transformational project with the mandate to build the organisation of the future from a people, processes, and technology perspective. The project team consisted of 480 individuals representing multiple nationalities and organisations that had been contracted to deliver the project.

Entrée and research roles

The researcher performed a scientist practitioner dual role – in the role of a change management practitioner, and also as researcher and collector of leaders' stories. The research was conducted with the support of the senior project management structure over a period of 16 months.

Sampling

A purposive sampling method, as described by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), was utilised to select participants based upon the following criteria:

- Representation from all the different organisations that the project team was comprised of;
- Participants had to be senior enough to influence strategy within the organisation; and
- Participants had to be responsible to tell the story to their respective teams.

Furthermore, convenience sampling methods as used by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) were applied in an attempt to choose participants who were both willing and available to partake in the research. The six leaders that formed part of the research study are described in Table 2.

Table 2: The research sample

	Representing area:	Level:	Representative of:	Gender	Home Language
Leader 1	People	Middle management	Consulting firm	Female	Afrikaans
Leader 2	Project delivery	Senior management	Consulting firm	Female	English
Leader 3	Technology	Senior management	Permanent employee	Male	Afrikaans
Leader 4	Project	Senior management	Permanent employee	Female	English
Leader 5	Process	Middle management	Permanent employee	Male	Afrikaans
Leader 6	Technology	Middle management	Permanent employee	Male	English

Data collection methods

A combination of the following data collection methods was used to collect the leaders' stories:

- Informal conversations with the project team were used to identify narrative pillars as input into the interview guide (Riesmann 2005);

- The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with sample participants (Bogdan & Biklen 1992);
- The researcher explored formal project documentation such as scope, business case, and requirements definitions, feedback reports, formal communication media, and strategy documents (Gravetter & Forzano 2006); and
- Field notes were kept, which recorded informal conversations held with project team members and observations by the researcher during the research (Webster & Mertova 2007).

Recording of Data

Informal conversations were captured according to a matrix that listed information according to the identified narrative pillars and transcribed accordingly. With the permission of the participants, the stories were captured and recorded via electronic recording mechanisms to allow the researcher to revisit the data. Data were transcribed and analysed within the context of collected field notes and observations made during the interview process.

Data Analysis

Within narrative inquiry, the researcher used thematic network analysis to analyse and derive meaningful themes from the data. Thematic network analysis is the process of identifying recurring themes in the data (Talitwala 2005) through the identification of lower-order premises evident in the research, obtaining abstract principles, and capturing themes related to the whole of the text (Attride-Stirling 2001).

Furthermore, the researcher used a coding framework that informed the structure of the thematic network analysis, as used by Hayes (2000) and Mohan and Uys (2006). Material was coded by identifying repetitions and phrases that represented the topics and patterns (Talitwala 2005). Data were coded in three phases, open coding which brought themes to the surface; axial coding which categorises and structures identified themes and selective coding which selects specified themes and draws comparisons and contrasts between existing data (Neumann 2000).

The Rigour and Quality of the Research Project

Narrative inquiry does not aim to tell the story of one collected truth, but rather focuses on multiple truths, multiple versions of the truth, and different interpretations of what truth is. Within narrative research, validity refers to the extent of certainty that the methods and approaches to research provide (Amsterdam & Bruner 2000;Geelan 2003; Huberman 1995; Polkinghorne 1988; Riesmann 1993). The onus is on the researcher to conduct the study in a way that allows for collection, recording, and accessing of data in such a way that it can be understood, used, analysed, and audited by the reader and members of the scientific community (Webster & Mertova 2007). Polkinghorne (1988) states that narrative research cannot state truth, as truth is relative to the story of the participant and cannot be viewed as the extent to which a narrative relates to factual reality. Thus, narrative research should adhere to the criteria of believability: whether the research depicts a believable account of the truth as told by the individual (Webster & Mertova 2007).

From a reliability perspective, narrative refers to the dependability of the data and the process (Polkinghorne 1988). Within the context of the current study, the reliability and validity of the study were ensured as follows with reference to the works of

Webster and Mertova (2007); Clandinin and Connelly (2000); and Polkinghorne (1988):

- The believability of the participant's story was validated with other participants who were familiar with the environment, with the research subject's consent;
- An external observer was used, with the participants' consent, to ensure the accuracy and dependability of the captured stories;
- Throughout the research, the researcher used an interview guide to support consistency of the interviews as well as the verification of experiences with the participants in an attempt to accurately retell their stories;
- Participants were allowed to remove any piece of story evidence that they deemed to be inappropriate in the context of the story;
- Responses were explored through the interaction between the researcher and the storyteller in an attempt to attain deeper levels of abstraction and understand the holistic context of the narrative;
- All decisions taken by the researcher in terms of the research study were documented and described in the manuscript to ensure the transferability of the study in the future; and
- The researcher in his role as researcher had the opportunity to be part of the project and thus had continuous access to the participants and the opportunity to validate the stories that participants told over time.

The quality and rigour of the study was taken into consideration with regard to the following ethical implications that were considered by the researcher during the course of the research study:

Ethical Considerations
The researcher was granted ethical clearance by the participating academic institution to conduct the research study. The organisation provided the researcher with permission and allowed the spend time with the leaders to obtain their stories. Ethical considerations, as described by Gravetter and Forzano (2006), were:

- **Informed consent**

Participants were contacted, and the aim of the study was explained before any interviews were conducted. Participants were then asked to provide written consent to participate in the study. Informed consent was also obtained from the project owner and the organisation.

- **No harm**

Stories that went deep into the personal lives of the participants and fell outside of the scope of practice of the researcher were referred to a clinical psychologist who was overseeing the study in a professional capacity.

- **Confidentiality**

The interviews were conducted on a floor separate to where the project team sat in the building, and data were stored securely.

- **Anonymity**

The anonymity of participants was respected at all times during the research and reporting process, and all feedback was reported using pseudonyms.

Reporting

All identifying references to the project and participants have been removed and the alias *Project Alpha* will be used to refer to the research setting. Participants were allocated pseudonyms and will be referred to as Leader 1, 2, etc. in order to ensure anonymity in the reporting.

4. Findings

The aim of this study was to explore the stories that leaders tell during a large-scale organisational change effort through a qualitative narrative inquiry. The findings will be presented as follows:

1. What are the stories that leaders tell during organisational change?
2. Do leaders find meaning in their stories?
3. What themes of meaning exist within the leaders' stories?

1. What are the stories that leaders tell during organisational change?

The study explored the different stories told by leaders during the change process, and concluded that leaders tell different types of stories during different phases of the organisational change process to achieve different outcomes (Gabriel 2000). As suggested by Denning (2011), the story type was influenced by the following factors:

- Target audience: To whom was the leader speaking?
- Desired outcome: What did the leader aim to achieve with the story?
- Timing: When was the story told?

Due to the interconnected nature of stories, story types are often combined and retold with the emphasis on different elements of the same story at different stages of the change process (Bluck & Habermas 2000). The story types identified during the research study arecongruent with those referred to in the literature (Boje 2001; Christie 2009; Denning 2011; Webster & Mertova 2007) and are detailed below in Table 3, together with the outcomes that the story types were aiming to achieve:

Table 3: The stories that leaders tell during organisational change

Leadership story	Aim of the story	Action outcome of the story
Vision story	Aims to explain the future direction of the organisation.	Organisational commitment and employee buy-in into the future of the organisation.
Identity story	To illustrate the past, present, and future of the organisation.	Creates a sense of belonging in the identity of the organisation and creates a community within the organisational culture.
Significance story	To explain the significance of change and agility in the competitive market – how the organisation will enable growth and competitive advantage through change into the future.	A sense of purpose within the organisation, enabling employees to move along the change curve in accordance with the change strategy. Employees feel that they are contributing to a greater outcome.
Collaboration story	To communicate how the organisation can only grow and change by everyone working together and facing the challenges as a unit.	A sense of belonging and a cultural shift. Employees feel that "we are all in this together" and that this can only be done by standing together.
Picture metaphor story	To illustrate how the change fits into the bigger picture of the organisation and the future that the organisation is aiming to achieve. This is usually done using a metaphor that is relevant and familiar to the members of an organisation.	Employees understanding the project and the holistic picture of the organisation of the future.

Effective stories need to adhere to the criteria of believability and authenticity (Clandinin & Connely 2000) and, therefore the second research question aimed to explore whether leaders themselves find meaning within the different stories that they tell during the change process.

2. Do leaders find meaning in their stories?

The credibility of leaders' stories is dependent on the sense of authenticity and resonance that stories create with those fortunate enough to hear the story (Clandinin & Connely 2000; Polkinghorne 2005). Stories, especially during the change process, are personal, as the nature of the move along the change curve is painful and intimate (Webster & Mertova 2007). As such, the study concluded that leaders need to tell a believable story that inspires meaning within their own personal change journey before being able to navigate a sustainable and believable change journey for the organisation. This implies that leaders need to find meaning within their own stories of change before being able to tell the stories that will change the organisation. This finding is based upon the following themes, presented in Table 4, which became evident in the stories that the leaders told, and provided a personal insight into the stories during the storytelling process:

Table 4: Findings based upon the categories of meaning identified in the story themes

Story Theme	Categories of meaning identified from the story themes
Significance and impact (Boje 1991)	Stories promote the belonging and contribution to a higher cause, which implicates how the individual can find meaning in being part of a bigger outcome. Leaders spoke about what it meant for them personally to be part of something bigger, to be part of creating a new future, and to be responsible for driving this initiative.
Personal impact and challenge (Denning 2011; Gabriel 2000)	Stories are personal for the leaders with reference to how the stories influenced who they were, either in their professional capacity or with regard to the sacrifices they had to make in their personal lives to be part of the story. Leaders spoke about not seeing their family, and shared some of the project artefacts with their families so that they could understand what kept them away from home.
Achievement and identity (Gabriel 2000)	Stories create personal meaning. Leaders told stories of how they have grown during the change process and how being part of the journey was personal – defining who they were by being part of the story and achieving success. Leaders all mentioned personal growth during the stories, not just professionally, but learning about who they were as leaders, how to interact with diversity, and become more robust human beings.

During the course of the study, it became evident that leaders themselves at times did not realise the impact that the stories have on their lives (Boje 1991) and that only through telling the story they became aware of what the story meant to them on a personal level. It also became clear that leaders did not realise the impact that their stories had on followers. This became evident during one of the informal discussions when a participant commented: "I am tired of the corridor terrorists who do not take responsibility for the impact that their words will have on junior staff."

In summary, leaders tell stories of vision, identity, significance, collaboration, and picture metaphors during the change process to achieve different action outcomes at different points in time (Boje 2001; Christie 2009; Denning 2011; Webster & Mertova 2007). On a personal level, the stories also create different abstractions of meaning for the leaders that become evident through the storytelling process. However, the lack of leaders' awareness of the impact and power that their stories have on the environment with reference to junior staff also became clear during the course of the study.

3. *The themes of meaning that exist within the leaders' stories*

The collected story types and the meaning derived from the story themes as discussed above and listed in Tables 6 and 7 were further studied through thematic network analysis, which provided the researcher with the opportunity to attain a deeper level of abstraction and explore the underlying themes of stories. The purpose of this analysis was to gain a deeper understanding of the leaders' stories by delving into the global theme, categorical themes, and sub-themes that informed the types and personal meaning that leaders found within the stories. The framework is illustrated in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Stories obtained from the data thematic network analysis

The stories are discussed in light of the global theme, categorical theme, and sub-theme per category.

Global Story: Changing the "heart" of the Organisation
Participants in the study all spoke about Project Alpha with the same passion, pride, and fondness, which signified their personal attachment to the project. Leaders all spoke about the impact that the project will have on people's lives, impacting a staff compliment of 17000 nationally and a multi-national client base. Technologically, the project was replacing the core operating model of the organisation, "taking out the heart of the organisation and replacing it mid-flight" (Leader 4). The project was the trigger event for an initiative that the organisation did not anticipate: a complete change in the culture of the organisation, including customer service and, ultimately, the overall strategy of the organisation to become a leader amongst emerging markets.

Within the context of changing the heart of the organisation, certain categorical themes emerged from the data.

The significance of the project for the organisation
Despite the obvious impact of the project on the organisation – cost, staff to be trained, project size, and business units – the real impact was one that was not

immediately visible to the members of the organisation: a cultural shift in the way the organisation thought about service and work and, ultimately, the organisational identity. This very traditional, hierarchical organisation was challenged in a number of areas that were identified through the leaders' stories:

- Leadership: Are the traditional leadership styles and models in the hierarchical organisation going to be able to deliver the project and bring the people along the change curve?
- The challenge of aligning different leadership teams at different levels across the organisation;
- The challenge of making difficult decisions and the impact of these decisions from a cost and people perspective;
- The tools and methodologies that the organisation had traditionally used to deliver projects were no longer applicable and able to deliver the significant project scope; and
- The traditional hierarchical structure of the organisation prohibited the fast decision-making and adaptability that the project demanded.

The following section will discuss the significance of the project with regards to the identified sub-themes.

- *Organisational impact*
Participants in this study all spoke about Project Alpha, not as merely a project that will implement a change within the organisation, but as a "transformational initiative that will influence the way that the organisation thinks and the way we do our business" (Leader 3). The impact of the project was organisation-wide, with participants deriving significance and meaning from the way they were changing the organisation. This was evidenced by statements such as: "I really think that we are making an impression on the organisation today" (Leader 2) and "You don't realise the impact until after you have implemented" (Leader 1).The essence of the project was captured by participants stating: "We are not just adding a system or a product, we are basically ripping out the engine of this organisation and replacing it with something new while we are still in flight" (Leader 3) and "We are unpacking the heart of the organisation by changing the way that we do business" (Leader 1). Leader 6 commented that they were delivering "a world class solution that has never been done before."

- *Breaking down business silos and fostering relationships across divisions*
The organisation in question had always run the two business units as separate entities, one with the purpose of running the business and the other playing the role of business enabler through the provision of systems and technology. Participants commented: "There was no sharing of information" (Leader 3) and "Look at the organisation and how it stands at the moment, it is very siloed" (Leader 6), referring to the interaction between the two divisions being limited to the operational dimension as opposed to strategic conversations.

- *Moving into unchartered waters – Challenges, and becoming the vehicle for change*
The storytellers stated that, "At the start of the project the organisation could not have foreseen the complexity and the size of the monster" (Leader 1) that they tried to tame. "It's a solution that will become less about technology; it will become less

about a system but it will be about how people changed the way in which we operate" (Leader 2). As the project progressed, the leaders' stories turned to stories of frustration and disbelief as the organisation tried to use the project as a vehicle for a number of organisational initiatives: a new way of working for staff, business units that needed to collaborate and start working across divisional borders, leaders from different areas giving up control and power, and a restructure that was initiated in an attempt to accommodate the project delivery. The project was in the limelight with every decision scrutinised by all stakeholders, every action questioned by IT, and a project team that was struggling to come to grips with the task they had to deliver. Team members felt the strain and said that "it was difficult to maintain motivation over such a long period of time" (Leader 1), the "immense complexity of this project makes it extremely difficult to get things right first time around" (Leader 1), and even that "if you can handle the challenges you face on this project, you can handle almost anything" (Leader 2).

Laying the foundation for simplicity
The project aimed to make the lives of the end users simpler by providing an intuitive system that would allow them to work from one platform in the future, to have a single view of the customer across business units and, ultimately, become a customer-centred organisation that focuses on building relationships with their customers (derived from field notes). The significance of this statement can only be understood in relation to the following sub-themes of the stories that were told by the project leaders:

- ***The history of the organisation***
The organisation has a rich history with a workforce that ranges from young graduate employees to employees who have been with the organisation for more than 50 years. The organisation has achieved a lot of success and has grown into a global role player in the financial industry, focusing on emerging markets such as Africa, Asia, and South America (derived from field notes).

From a leadership perspective, the organisation is very hierarchical, with the structure and reporting lines playing a key role in getting the job done. This has caused the organisation to develop and grow in silos, with different business units operating as their own businesses and, at times, losing touch with the overall strategy of the organisation and how the organisation delivers to its customers. A practical example of this is the story told of the experience of one of the project members: "Customer queries could not be resolved through one point of contact because the systems did not allow for a single view of the customer.

Moving from a product- to a people-centred organisation
The storytellers spoke about the enablement of a single view of the customer across the enterprise. Relationships and "know your customer" (Leader 4) processes had never been more important. One of the participants in the study commented: "Why, if I have already submitted all my documentation to open an account, do I need to resubmit my identification document when opening a new account? If the organisation can't even keep my identity document secure, why should I trust it with my money?" (Leader, 3). The reality is that the complexity of the internal environment did not allow the sharing of information across the enterprise, as products and divisions operated within their own governance structures.

The mindset shift required was one of holistic thinking with regards to the "way in which we deliver and conduct our business" (Leader 5). The whole concept of customer experience come to the fore, and the storytellers all told of the system that would enable the "customer consultant to build a meaningful relationship" (Leader 3) with the customer through the information provided in the system. From a systems point of view, this demands flexibility and a system that provides "real-time and flexible information" (Leader 6). Participants spoke of a customer experience where you know your customers the moment they walk into your branch and you are able to sell them a better offering because you understand their holistic financial needs and have the opportunity to interact with them on a personal basis.

Personal and Professional Growth Opportunity
The leader storytellers spoke about the project the way an artist speaks about his/her life's work. Within the organisation, the project was seen as the one to be working on if you wished to grow your career, utilise new opportunities, and learn from an international project team consisting of experts in their respective fields.

- *Career Opportunities*
Due to its unique nature, scope, and the prolific project profile, the project was perceived by many as the "project to be chosen for" (Leader 1) to fast-track and grow a career. The project leaders described the project as a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" (Leader 2) to gain skills and knowledge which, especially in the IT context, would enable team members to "open the doors internationally" (Leader 6).

Internally, the opportunities were also vast, with employees being promoted for good work and recognised and rewarded for their commitment to the project via internal reward programmes that were created specifically for this project. As the total project implementation would span numerous years, the question of succession planning and knowledge management came to the fore, with the continuity of the project being questioned.

The stories inevitably turned to the experience that project team members encountered on the project, the huge amount of new technologies and methodologies that the teams were exposed to, and the fact that "this is probably as big as anyone of us is ever going to see" (Leader 2). The team members felt that the project was "the opportunity to springboard with the organisation into the future" (Leader 5), as the skills and knowledge gained on this implementation were "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" (Leader 2) as organisations don't "overhaul their inner workings every day" (Leader 1).

- *Working with people from multiple cultures and nationalities*
All the storytellers spoke about the unique challenge and opportunity to work with people from other nationalities and cultures that the project provided. This sometimes posed unique challenges to the project team with regard to language, work ethics, and culture. Statements included: "The biggest learning on this project was with regards to teaming with the different people" (Leader 6) and "I have learnt a lot about the people that I have worked with and how to interact with people" (Leader 1). Some participants commented on the difficulties associated with "managing the expectations and perceptions of such a big team" (Leader 2). Besides the challenge of the project team not knowing one another, members came from different organisations and countries such as India, Germany, South Africa, and Russia.

The stories took a turn when relating how the team starting pulling together, "setting up some great relationships" (Leader 5). Participants spoke of the "energy that comes from everybody pulling together" (Leader 2) and "they all take what they do with personal pride" (Leader 6). A change network with representatives across the enterprise was created to "get input from the end users – the people that will actually be using the system, to ensure that we provide them with something that they would want to use" (Leader 4).

The project took the first steps to a new way of delivering projects: multi-national teams that draw on global expertise while listening to the end users with regards to providing a solution that will make "a difference to ordinary South Africans, both customers and our staff" (Leader 6).

The Future

The final theme focused on the future of the organisation and the paradigm shift that was required to break down the silos in order to enable a holistic perspective of the organisation.

- ***Enabling a solution as opposed to delivering a project***

The stories inevitably returned to the organisation of the future and what this vision could entail. Sub-themes such as designing solutions that are "reusable and standardised" (Leader 5) continuously emerged, as the team had set out to design a system that is so intuitive and logical for the end user that they would not "even need training to be able to work" (Leader 3) effectively on the system. A recurring story theme was the concept of developing an organisational solution as opposed to delivering a project. While this distinction may sound insignificant, the magnitude of the impact of this paradigm shift on the organisation cannot be underestimated. Decisions that were made during the course of the project had to be made with a journey in mind that would last for numerous years, often to the detriment of project timelines. "So it is almost going to become less about when the actual go-live is and more about the types of capabilities that will be delivered to the organisation over time" (Leader 2). Decisions were made with regards to "how we deliver such a significant scope" (Leader 1) and, at times, decisions were made that would negatively influence the deadlines of the particular project phase in order to enable a successful solution down the line.

5. Summary and Conclusions

The study aimed to explore the stories that leaders tell during organisational change through a qualitative narrative inquiry. In summary, the research found the following themes related to the data and relevant literature:

- Stories exist within the philosophy and culture of the organisation and have become more relevant in the knowledge economy where information overload has left employees feeling disengaged and demotivated (Boje 1991; Denning 2011; Gabriel 2000);
- Leaders utilise stories during the change process. Whether they are consciously or unconsciously aware of the stories that they tell, stories are utilised to achieve movement within the organisation or at times drive the personal agenda of the leader (Connelly & Clandinin 2006; Gabriel 2000).

- Leaders tell different types of stories based upon the timing, audience, and desired outcome of the story. These stories include, but are not limited to, stories of vision, identity, significance, collaboration, and picture metaphors (Denning 2011);
- Leaders need to go through the change process from a personal perspective if they are to tell stories that adhere to the criteria of believability and authenticity that will enable sustainable change practices (Hiatt 2007). The study found that leaders themselves find meaning within their own stories through the themes of significance and impact, personal impact and challenge, achievement, and identity, which were evident in the collected stories.

The study thus agrees with the existing literature regarding the existence of stories within organisations (Boje 1991; Denning 2011; Gabriel 2000), yet indicates that the fragments of narrative run far deeper than initially anticipated. The literature indicates that stories are part of organisational culture (Johnson & Scholes 1998), but the current study shows that stories are core to the identity of the organisation. Stories enable change, as the nature of stories within constructivism implies movement and co-creation (Talitwala 2005), but the current study confirms the notion that leaders often lack the self-awareness to realise the impact that their stories have on their followers. This implies that if the constructs of stories and leadership are to be studied, the question of leaders' maturity needs to be answered in order to determine whether leaders apply stories intentionally or unintentionally within the organisation. The fact that leaders do utilise stories to achieve action outcomes, and tailor their stories to suit audience and environment cannot be disputed (Boje 1991; Denning 2011). The personal meaning that leaders ascribe to their stories became evident during the research process and, as such, the study agrees with Hiatt (2007) who states that leaders also need to go through the change themselves before being able to lead others along the change journey.

Based upon the literature and the findings of the current research study, the following conclusions, as discussed in Table 5, can be derived:

Table 5: Conclusions from the literature and the data

Conclusions drawn from the literature	Conclusions drawn from the data
• Organisations are having to adapt to an ever-changing world (Champy 2009; Ulrich & Smallwood 2009) • Leaders are responsible for leading effective and sustainable change within organisations (Hiatt 2007) • If leaders themselves do not find personal meaning within the change, they cannot create authentic, sustainable change for their followers (Habermas & Bluck 2000) • Leadership has shifted to inclusive practices that enable a flatter structure that "gets the whole system into the room"(Conger & Kanungo 1998; Nahavandhi 2009; Smit & Carstens, 2003; Van Knippenberg & Hogg 2003). • Stories exist within the organisational philosophy (Johnson & Scholes 1998)	• The knowledge economy demands the breaking down of business silos if the organisation is going to be competitive in the future • The knowledge economy demands a simplistic view of the future – making sense of the complexity of the environment through organisational identity • Leaders tell different types of stories at different points in time to facilitate change (vision, identity, significance, collaboration, picture) • Leaders themselves find meaning in the stories that they tell (significance and impact, personal impact and challenge, achievement and identity) • Leaders, at times, lack self-awareness and insight into the impact and power of their personal stories

Contribution of the study

The study aimed to contribute to the organisation, leaders, the field of Industrial Psychology, employees, and the researcher in the following manner:

- Organisation: The study contributes to the organisation through the discussion of trends that will inform knowledge economy organisations and promote the establishment of a sustainable and competitive organisational delivery model.
- Leaders: The study benefits leaders by providing insight and guidelines to creating meaningful change within the knowledge economy. The study highlights crucial competencies and skills that leaders need to acquire to enable change journeys within the organisation. This implies a different leadership style that focuses on inclusion, collaboration, and involvement of the whole system. The study further aims to create awareness of the impact that leaders' stories can have on the organisation and followers.
- Industrial Psychology: The study contributes to the field of Industrial Psychology through the proposed perspective of leadership in the future, the relevance of organisational philosophy during change journeys, and the impact that the knowledge economy will have on the organisation.
- Employees: The study contributes to employees within organisations by advising that leaders utilise a new leadership style that includes the individual voices of all employees, regardless of rank and title, during organisational change.
- Researcher: Delving into stories as part of the research project made the researcher gain deeper insight into his own change journey.

Recommendations for future research

Based upon the research findings discussed above, the following recommendations can be made that will enable knowledge economy organisations to become sustainable into the future and adhere to criteria of corporate citizenship, social responsibility, sustainability, and leading with integrity, as stipulated by the King 3 report:

- Organisations will have to develop internal change competence as part of their organisational philosophy to remain sustainable and competitive in the knowledge economy;
- Organisational stories will build the culture of the organisation based upon the past, the present, and the future, and leaders will need to tell stories that are congruent with the organisational identity if they are to facilitate change;
- Leaders should build a culture based upon the stories that they tell during the change process and employ inclusive leadership styles that foster organisational identity;
- Leaders will have to create purpose and significance for their employees in the organisational philosophy;
- Leaders will have to change the stories inherent to the DNA of the organisation in order to enable long-term organisational change whilst remaining true to the identity and philosophy of the organisation; and
- Leaders will have to change the organisation from within the system as opposed to a bottom-down change approach that produces minimalistic pockets of change excellence.

From a conceptual perspective, the opportunity exists to test and validate the hypotheses derived from the study. Furthermore, the opportunity exists to explore the stories from a follower perspective and determine whether the stories are understood and congruent with the intent of the leader telling the story.With reference to sampling, the researcher would recommend a detailed biographical element to the study that includes a biographical profile of the leader participants, which will provide the opportunity to explore whether cultural backgrounds influence the type of stories told and meaning that is derived from the leaders' stories.

Limitations

The study only focused on a single point in time and did not include a longitudinal component, which could have added value to the level of abstraction and depth of the data. The researcher was also limited to exploring the stories through the lenses of his own personal life story, and acknowledges the fact that the stories obtained from the data could have been vastly different if interpreted though the lens of another researcher.

References

Adamson, G, Pine, J, Van Steenhoven, T & Kroupa, J 2006, 'How storytelling can drive strategic change', *Strategy and Leadership*, vol. 34, no. 1, p. 36.

Amsterdam, G & Bruner, J 2000, *Minding the law*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Appelbaum, H, St-Pierre, N & Glavas, W 1998, 'Strategic organisational change: The role of leadership, learning, motivation and productivity', *Management Decision*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp. 298-301.

Attride-Stirling, J 2001, *Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research.* Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Avolio, BJ, Walumbwa, FO & Weber, TJ 2009, 'Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions', *Annual Review of Psychology,* vol. 60, pp. 421-449.

Ball-Rokeach, SJ, Kim, YC & Matei, S 2001, 'Storytelling neighbourhood*:* Paths to belonging in diverse urban environments*', Communication Research*, vol. 28, pp. 392-428.

Bass, BM 1985, *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*, Free Press, New York.

Bass, BM 1990, 'From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision', *Organisational Dynamics*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 19-31.

Bass, BM & Avolio, BJ 1994, *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Bate, P 2004, 'The role of stories and storytelling in organisational change efforts: The anthropology of an intervention within a UK hospital', *Intervention Research*, vol. 1, pp. 27-42.

Beer, M 1999, 'Leading learning and learning to lead: An action learning approach to developing organizational fitness', in JA Conger, GM Spreitzer & EE Lawler III (eds.), *The leader's change handbook: An essential guide to setting direction and taking action,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 127-161.

Bennis, WG & Thomas, RJ 2002, *Geeks and geezers*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.

Boal, KB & Schultz, PL, 2007, 'Storytelling, time and evolution: The role of strategic leadership in complex adaptive systems', *The Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 18, pp. 411-428.

Bogdan, RC & Biklen, SK 1992, *Qualitative research for education.* 2nd edn, Allyn & Bacon, Boston, MA.

Boje, DM 1991, 'Consulting and change in the storytelling organisation', *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 7-17.

Boje, DM & Dennehy, R 1993, *Postmodern management: America's revolution against exploitation*, Kendall-Hunt Press, Dubuque, IO. [2nd ed. (1994). Web edition (2000). http://cbae.nmsu.edu/~dboje/mpw.html].

Britton, B, 2010, 'Monitoring and evaluation of personal learning', *Self-reflection*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 264-275.

Bunker, BB & Alban, BT 1997, *Large group interventions: Engaging the whole system for rapid change*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Burns, JM 1978, *Leadership,* Harper & Row, New York

Canton, J 2006, *The extreme future: The top trends that will reshape the world for the next 5, 10 and 20 years*, Dutton, New York.

Champy, J 2009, 'Outsmart your rivals by seeing what others don't' in F Hesselbein & M Goldsmith (eds.),*The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 3-12.

Christie, P 2009, *Breathing brightness into business*, Knowledge Resources, Johannesburg.

Cockerell, L 2009, 'The organisation of the future will foster an inclusive environment', in F Hesselbein & M Goldsmith (eds), *The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 243-258.

Conger, JA & Kanungo,1998, 'Toward a behavioral theory of charismatic leadership in organizational settings', *Academy of Management,* vol. 12, pp, 637-647.

Connelly, FM & Clandinin, DJ 2006, 'Narrative inquiry', in JLGreen, G Camilli & P Elmore (eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research,* 3rd edn, Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ, pp. 477-487.

Corey, G 2003, *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy,* 7th edn, Thomson Learning, Toronto, Canada.

Covey, SR 2004, *The 8th habit: From effectiveness to greatness.* Free Press, New York.

Dannhauser, Z 2007, *The relationship between servant leadership, follower trust, team commitment and unit effectiveness*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Stellenbosch.

Denning, S 2006, 'Effective storytelling: Strategic business narrative techniques', *Strategy & Leadership,* vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 42-48.

Denning, S 2011, *The leader's guide to storytelling: Mastering the art and discipline of business narrative*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Driscoll, C & McKee, M 2006, 'Restorying a culture of ethical and spiritual values: A role for leader storytelling', *Journal of Business Ethics*, *73*, pp. 205-217.

Eisenhardt, KM & Graebner, ME 2007, 'Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 25-32.

Eisenhardt, KM & Martin, JA 2000, 'Dynamic capabilities: What are they?', *Strategic Management Journal*, vol. 21(special issue), pp. 1105-1121.

Flock, K 2006, *Communication in organizational change*, viewed 3 November 2011, <www.kipflock.com/store/pdf/organizational-change.pdf>.

Gabriel, Y 2000, *Storytelling in organisations: Facts, fictions and fantasies*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Gabriel, Y 2007, 'Co-creating stories: A collaborative experiment in storytelling', *Critical Management Studies*, vol. 5, pp. 11-13.

Gartner, 2010, *Magic quadrant for international retail core banking*, viewed 16 October 2011, <http://www.gartner.com/DisplayDocument?doc_cd=206241>.

Geelan, D 2003, *Weaving narrative nets to capture classrooms*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, London.

Gill, R 2009, *Building employee engagement and reputation through storytelling, Communication: Creativity and global citizenship*, ANZCA, Brisbane.

Girard, JP & Lambert, S 2007, 'The story of knowledge: Writing stories that guide organisations into the future', *The Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 161-172.

Graetz, F 2000, Strategic change leadership, *Management Decision*, vol. 38, no. 8, pp. 550-562.

Gravetter, FJ & Forzano, LB 2006, *Research methods for the behavioural sciences*, Thomson Wadsworth, Belmont**.**

Greenhaus, J Callahan, GA & Godshalk, VM 1999, *Career management,* 3rd edn, Fort Dryden, Fort Worth.

Greenleaf, RK 1977, *Servant leadership : A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness,* Paulist Press, New York.

Griffin, D & Stacey, R (eds.) 2005, *Complexity and the experience of leading organizations*, Routledge, London.

Groce, R 2004, 'An experiential study of elementary teachers with the storytelling process: Interdisciplinary benefits associated with teacher training in the classroom', *Reading Improvement*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 122-127.

Guttman, HM 2009, 'The new high-performance, horizontal organisation', in F Hesselbein & M Goldsmith (eds.), *The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 268-283.

Habermas, T & Bluck, S 2000, 'Getting a life: The emergence of the life story in adolescence', *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 126, pp. 748-769.

Harbin, J & Humphrey, P 2010, 'Teaching management by telling stories', *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 99-106.

Herscovitch, L & Meyer, JP 2002, 'Commitment to organisational change: Extension of a three-component model', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 87, pp. 474-487.

Hersey, P, Blanchard, KH & Johnson, DE 2001, *Management of organizational behavior: Leading human resources,* 8th edn, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ:

Hesselbein, F & Goldsmith, M 2009, *The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA:

Hiatt, JM 2007, *ADKAR: A model for change in business, goverment and our community*, Prosci Research, Loveland, Colorado.

Hopen, D 2006, 'Editor's notebook: The art and purpose of storytelling', *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 2.

Huberman, M 1995, 'Working with life-history narratives', in H McEwan & K Egan (eds.), *Narrative in teaching, learning and research,* Teachers College Press, New York, pp. 184-194.

Johnson, G & Scholes, K 2002, *Exploring corporate strategy,* 6th edn, Prentice Hall, London.

Karp, T 2004, 'Learning the steps of the dance of change: Improving change capabilities by integrating futures studies and positive organisational scholarship', *Foresight: the Journal of Futures Studies, Strategic Thinking and Policy*, vol. 6, no. 6, pp. 349-355.

Katzenbach, JR & Khan, Z 2009, ,Mobilizing emotions for performance: Making the most of the informal organisation', in F Hesselbein & M Goldsmith (eds.), *The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 98-112.

Kaye, M 1996, *Myth-makers and Story-tellers,* Business and Professional Publishing, Melbourne.

Kerfoot, K 1999, 'On leadership', *Nursing Economics*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 76-86.

King, SB & Wright, M 2007, 'Building internal change management capability at Constellation Energy', *Organization Development Journal*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 57-62.

Komives, SR, Lucas, N & McMahon, TR 1998, *Exploring leadership for college students who want to make a difference*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Kotter, JP 2008, *A sense of urgency*, Harvard Business Press, Boston.

Kouzes, JM & Posner, BZ 2009, The Leader's mandate: Create a shared sense, in F Hesselbein & M Goldsmith (eds.), *The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 27-37.

Lawler, EE & Worley, CG 2009, 'Designing organisations that are built to change', in F Hesselbein & M Goldsmith (eds), *The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 188-203.

Lewin, K 1951, *Field theory in social science,* Harper and Row, New York.

Marra, M & Holmes, J 2005, 'Constructing ethnicity and leadership through storytelling at work', paper presented at the Annual meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Communication Association*, July 2005, Wellington.

McCann, JE & Selsky, J 1984, 'Hyperturbulence and the emergence of Type 5 environments', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 460-470.

McConkie, ML & Boss, RW 1994, 'Using stories as an aid to consultation', *Public Administration Quarterly,* vol. 17, no. 4, p. 377.

McDermott, RJ 2009, 'Applying leadership paradigms to public health challenges', *Florida Public Health Review*, vol. 6, pp.1-2

Mclellan, H 2006, 'Corporate storytelling perspectives*', The Journal for Quality and Participation*, vol. 29, no. 17, p. 1.

Mitchell, J 2011, *Overseas Development Institute: The role of the private sector in development*, viewed 2 February 2012 <http://blogs.odi.org.uk/blogs/main/archive/2011/02/02/dfid_private_sector_dev elopment_plan.aspx.

Mitchell-Weaver, C & Manning, B 1992, 'Public-private partnerships in third world development: A conceptual overview,' *Studies in Comparative International Development Winter*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 45-67.

Mor-Barak, M 2007, *Managing diversity: Toward a globally inclusive workplace*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Nahavandhi, A 2009, *The art and science of leadership*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

OECD, 1996, *Employment and growth in the knowledge-based economy,* OECD, Paris.

Parsell, G & Bligh, J 2000, 'Encouraging educational leadership', *Medical Education*, vol. 34, pp. 199-200.

Peirano-Vejo, ME & Stablein, RE 2009, 'Constituting change and stability: Sense-making stories in a farming organisation', *Organization*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 443-462.

Polkinghorne, DE 1988, *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY.

Porras, JI & Robertson, PJ 1992, Organizational development: Theory, practice, and research, in MD Dunnette & LM Hough (eds), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology,* 2nd edn, Consulting Psychologists Press, Palo Alto, CA, pp. 720-822.

Potter, J 2001, Creating a passion for change: The art of intelligent leadership. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, vol. 33, no. 2, p. 54.

Prusak, L 2001, *Storytelling, passport to the 21st century,* viewed 13 January 2009, <www.creatingthe21stcentury.org/larry>.

Riesmann, CK 2005, *Narrative analysis: narrative, memory & everyday life*, University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield.

Rost, JC 1991, *Leadership for the twenty-first century*, Praeger, New York.

SAICA, 2009, *Summary of the report on governance for South Africa (King 3 Report),* viewed on 10 February 2012 <http://www.auditor.co.za/Portals/23/king%20111%20saica.pdf>

Schein, E 2004, *Organizational culture and leadership,* 3rd edn, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Seel, R 2000, 'Culture and complexity: New insights on organisational change', *Culture and Complexity: Organisations & People*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 2-9.

Selsky, JW, Goes, J & Ouz, NB 2007, Contrasting perspectives of strategy making: Applications in 'hyper' environments, *Organization Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 71-94.

Simmons, A 2006, *The story factor,* Basic Books, Brisbane.

Smit, H & Carstens, L 2003, The influence of leadership role competencies on organisation change outcome in the manufacturing industry in South Africa, *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 45-52.

Stephens, G 2009, Using storytelling to meet technology and information literacy needs of millennial students, in American Society for Engineering Education, *2009 Midwest section conference,* Milwaukie, Wisconsin, June 2009.

Talitwala, EM 2005, *Father's parenting strategies: Their influence on young people's social relationships*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Tashakkori, A & Teddlie, C 2003, *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Thatchenkery, T & Metzker, C 2006, *Appreciative intelligence: Seeing the mighty oak in the acorn*, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, CA.

Thompson, RM 2008, Building change-capable public organisations, in KA Brown, M Mandell, CW Furneaux & S Beach (eds.), Contemporary Issues in Public Management*, The Twelfth Annual Conference of the International Research Society for Public Management (IRSPM XII)*, Brisbane, Australia.IRSPM*26-28 March 2008*.

Ulrich, D & Smallwood, N 2009, Organisation is not structure but capability, in F Hesselbein & M Goldsmith (eds), *The organisation of the future 2: Visions, strategies and insights on managing in a new era.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, pp. 13–27.

Van Knippenberg, D & Hogg, MA 2003, 'A social identity model of leadership effectiveness in organisations', in B Staw & RM Kramer (eds.), *Research in organisational behaviour*, JAI Press, Greenwich, CN, pp. 245-297.

Vaughn, TS 2009, *Measuring leaders' attitudes about the use of story to communicate organisational vision*, Unpublished master's thesis, B.S. Wright State University, Fairborn, OH.

Veldsman, TH 2011, Organisational design as a critical organisational discipline. In: *SIOPSA, Conference Course Material.* Pretoria, South Africa, 26-28 July 2011.

Webster, L & Mertova, P 2007, *Using narrative inquiry as a research method: An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching*, Prepress Projects, Perth.

Wheatley, MJ 2006, *Leadership and the new science*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, CA.

Whitney, D, Trosten-Bloom, A & Rader, K 2010, *Appreciative leadership: Focus on what works to drive winning performance and build a thriving organisation*, McGraw Hill, New York.

Wilkins, AL 1978, *Organisational stories as an expression of management philosophy*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University School of Business, Palo Alto, CA.

Williams, K, Crafford, A & Fourie, L 2003, 'An exploration of individual experiences of constant organisational change', *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 98-105