

CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

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EMPOWERED TEAMS: CASE-STUDY ANALYSES OF THE PROCESS OF
INTRODUCING EMPOWERED TEAMS INTO ORGANISATIONS WITH A
POOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS HISTORY

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

PhD THESIS

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Supervisor: Professor Andrew Kakabadse

June, 2001

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD.

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on case-study analyses of the process of introducing empowered teams into organisations with a poor industrial relations history.

The chosen research methodology is in the ethnographic mode and analogous to grounded theory; data was collected in five case-study organisations.

The respondent data is presented for each case study in turn and then analysed in a cross-case manner, highlighting some critical themes/issues identified by respondents who were key to the process of introducing empowered teams into their organisations. Principal among these critical themes/issues were: pre-planning, visioning/directioning, managerial commitment, role clarity, communications, union engagement, skill development and training, reward/money and trust.

This researcher interprets the data from within organisations in our chosen context and develops a model aimed at explaining the leadership processes that affect the five critical enabling conditions of shared values, key processes, role clarity, training and employee-centred systems. The model highlights the critical importance of personal and organisational leadership skills within the organisation to facilitate focus on the above enabling conditions and on the key leadership processes of 'articulation' and 'promulgation'.

Suggestions are made for possible lines of future research in terms of either replicating this work or in searching for outcomes with respect to operational and/or opportunity potential within an input–process–output model.

Frank Scott-Lennon, June 2001.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The relevant parts of my career to this current research stretch back 30 years when I first commenced working in an industrial relations/personnel (as then termed) role in a number of organisations within the food, electronic and pharmaceutical sectors. Responsibilities at that time were particularly focused on industrial relations in multi-union environments and where the nature of those relationships was essentially adversarial; some of the organisations were in fact making efforts to turn those relationships into a more collaborative mode.

For the past 20 years I have been working as a consultant specialising in management development, performance management and employee relations. As I was focusing on the problems of different client organisations there appeared to me to be a growing awareness within those organisations of the usefulness of team-based approaches.

The consultant/researcher within me wanted to examine some organisations that were making the transition towards more team-based approaches but such an examination could not be satisfactorily undertaken in the consultancy mode.

Following this realisation I initially looked at the literature and found that much that was written in the subject area of the process of introducing teamwork into organisations was mainly written about experiences with what I might call 'glamorous' organisations; that is those organisations that were high-tech, fast growth, relatively new and non-union and usually with the advantageous start-point of good employee relations already existing within the organisations. My interest however had been to see if I could learn from the literature some insights about less 'glamorous' organisations that were at the opposite end of the spectrum with respect to each of the criteria mentioned above.

Following the realisation that little work had been done in the type of organisations that were more problematic I then focused on some criteria that would assist me in identifying organisations that would be worthwhile having within this research project.

In the first instance I wanted to look at relatively mature organisations and my yardstick for this was that such organisations would be in existence at least 30 years. From a technology viewpoint I felt I would like to be dealing with companies that were at the low/medium level of technology. I also believed that organisations that perhaps had a poor industrial relations history would also be interesting and finally I wanted to particularly focus on organisations whose staff were unionised.

Thus potential organisations would for me be a matched set of organisations that met the following criteria :

- Mature organisations
- Low/medium technology
- Poor industrial/employee relations
- Unionised.

It was on this basis then that the 5 chosen case-study organisations were finally identified, as follows: Kilycra, Harvestco, Cheeseden, Septire and Portco.

Once the above criteria were identified I approached the question of access which was going to be of great importance in the light that some of these organisations might have regarded some of the data I wished to delve into as quite confidential. Accordingly I focused on organisations where I was personally known to the senior management and/or had already worked with

that senior management in the past. Thus I would be able to gain access to all relevant levels in the organisations under focus and have sufficient credibility in the eyes of managers that they would have confidence in me undertaking this research. I probably came to this access issue with greater advantages as a practicing consultant than if I were a post-graduate undertaking the research immediately after a primary or secondary degree.

The confidence in me as an individual, referred to above, was an important issue and indeed two of the organisations requested me at some stage during the process of research to assist them with the task-in-hand from a consultancy standpoint. This latter request did raise some conflict within me but I will address this issue later during the research strategy and methods chapter.

When considering access and my experience as a consultant I was very aware that I wanted to be able to look at these cases as objectively as possible; I therefore had to get as close as possible to the organisations to be able to obtain rich detailed data but also needed to be distant enough to ensure that I was not looking at that organisation too subjectively.

My search then is for some answers as to how the process of introducing team-based approaches to managing an organisation can best work in the barren kind of soil described within the deliberately chosen case-studies. The journey will bring us into the heart of five organisations and allow us the privilege of developing from the data gathered therein some enhanced understanding about the process of introducing empowered teamworking into these organisations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Within this section we will undertake the literature review under the following headings:

- 2.1 INTRODUCTION
- 2.2 HISTORICAL ROOTS OF EMPOWERMENT
- 2.3 EMPOWERMENT LITERATURE
- 2.4 LEADERSHIP: THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT
- 2.5 ADDITIONAL RECENT LEADERSHIP THEMES/THEORIES
- 2.6 MODELS OF SMWT PERFORMANCE
- 2.7 THE PROCESS OF CHANGE
- 2.8 THE GAP FOR THIS RESEARCH
- 2.9 ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT
- 2.10 CONCLUSION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This literature review will first focus on the historical roots of empowerment and consequently treat:

- The Human Relations School
- Human Resources Perspective
- Socio-technical systems
- Job Enrichment
- Participation
- Involvement-oriented approaches.
- Comparison of Control-oriented and Involvement-orientated Approaches

Following this we examine empowerment and initially focus on social concerns and technical needs as they emerge from the historical roots and then move on to examine the empowerment literature and in the first instance

what I term structural empowerment, which includes: sharing power, information sharing and feedback, transference of additional responsibility and development of individuals/teams.

A further section looks at joint values and practices that are conducive to empowerment which include: staff/union inclusion, commitment-evoking, communication, training, pay/rewards and trust.

The issues treated under structural empowerment and joint values/practices can lead to what has been termed psychological empowerment and in looking at same we will concentrate on the feelings of individuals who have been empowered and the effect that this might have on increased effort/commitment.

This section on empowerment concludes with a brief explanation of empowerment within this research project.

Our continuing examination of the literature brings us into contact with many of the important implementation processes and consequently we then review: Leadership, the Role of Management, Additional recent leadership themes/theories and Models of self-managed work team (SMWT) performance.

We then turn our attention to viewing empowerment as an evolutionary process and consequently we examine the two critical issues of organisational context and change management.

Finally we address our perceived gap in the literature which will be the focus of our study.

This journey through the literature, which will be treated in greater depth on subsequent pages, is graphically summarised in Figure 2.1 below:

Frank Scott-Lennon Literature Review Model

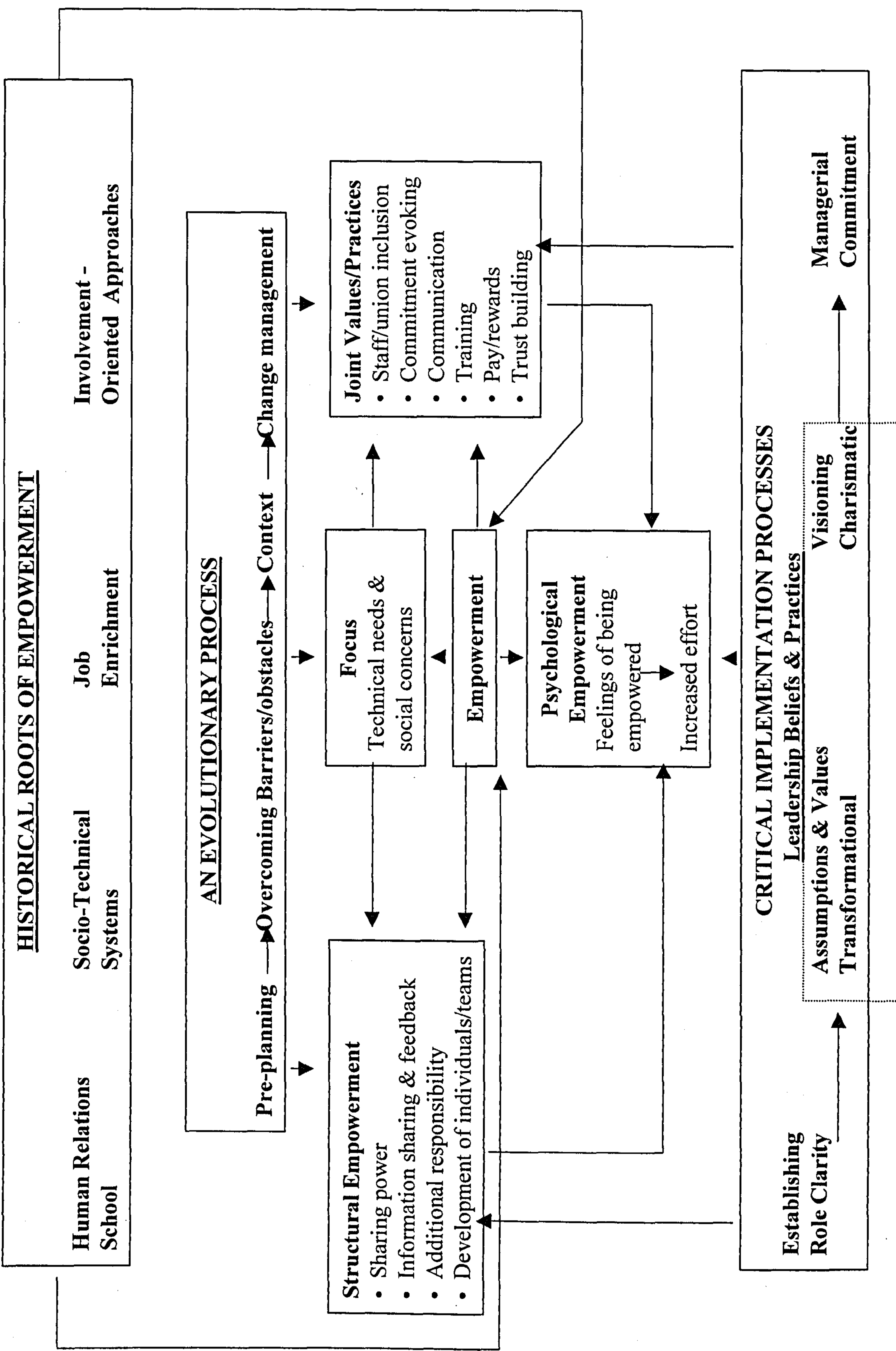


Figure 2.1

2.2 HISTORICAL ROOTS OF EMPOWERMENT

2.2.1 Human Relations School

Research conducted at the Western Electric Hawthorne Plant by Roethlisberger & Dixon (1939) and their associate Mayo (1946) was attempting to examine issues other than just the technical aspects of work. Essentially two groups of workers doing the same kind of jobs were put in different rooms and treated somewhat differently. One group (the focus group) had the intensity of lighting increased whereas the other group (the control group) did not. What first puzzled the researchers was that not alone did productivity increase within the focus group but it also increased in the control group. Following further intervention where the intensity of lighting was reduced for the control group it was observed that productivity continued to be at a higher level than heretofore. Thus the theory of the 'Hawthorne effect' was put forward to explain the apparent contradictions inherent in some of those interventions; this theory implied that the focusing of attention on a particular group was more responsible for the rise in productivity than any of the particular interventions that were made.

Of deeper significance however is the fact that these studies gave rise to an emerging belief in the importance that should be attached to social organisation at work; in particular the informal organisation within a group and the relationship of this informal organisation to the total social organisation of the company. Thus in the view of Roethlisberger & Dixon (1939) the work activities of a group, together with their satisfactions and dissatisfactions, had to be viewed as manifestations of a complex pattern of inter-relationships.

Barnard (1938) continued the line of investigating human relationships and particularly the relationship between morale/satisfaction and productivity and between management, leadership and productivity. The work of Barnard and other researchers in the area appeared to imply that the creation of positive human relationships within an organisation would give rise to more satisfied

employees and that that in turn would increase the performance level within the organisation. Subsequent research however, as we know, has been inconclusive with regard to the relationship between satisfaction and performance.

Advocates within the human relations school also put forward that high performance could be achieved if employees were treated fairly, with respect and were allowed some participation in the decisions that related to their work. As a result of this managers were encouraged to be more co-operative with workers, to upgrade the social environment at work and to reinforce individual employees' self-images. Good management was seen as democratic rather than production orientated and concerned with human relations rather than bureaucratic rules and procedures. Barnard (1938) had been a major contributor to this view and advocated that more conciliatory management relations would enhance co-operation between employees and supervisors.

2.2.2 Human Resource Perspective

Some seeds of the current interest in empowered teams and self-managed work teams (SMWT's) can be seen to have developed from the Human Relations School and in particular to strands emanating therefrom, *the human resource perspective and the participative management/high involvement perspective*.

During the 1950's and 1960's a number of researchers advocated a *human resource perspective* believing that the treatment of employees should be clearly seen as being with fairness and respect. Maslow (1970) had been researching throughout this era and indicated a belief that all individuals had a hierarchy of needs. For Maslow once the lower order needs (physiological and safety) are satisfied then the higher order needs such as self-actualisation and autonomy become important to the individual. When focusing on organisational applications of this work it became apparent that to satisfy

these higher order needs employees needed extensive involvement in and identification with the organisation.

Attention was also being focused on employees as valuable resources for organisations and Miles (1965), for example, explained that when employees have an input into decisions, better decisions are likely to be developed. Human resource advocates contended that organisations should make long-term commitments to the development of employees because that would then give employees feelings of being more valuable to the organisation. McGregor (1960) has also provided human resource advocates with a conceptual model in explaining that management generally take two views of employees. Theory X viewing employees as hating work, avoiding it and not being concerned about organisation needs and goals, whereas within Theory Y employees are assumed to want to take extra responsibility, desire the opportunity for personal development within their job and are also concerned about organisational needs and goals. Human resource advocates are of the view that managers should view employees as valuable resources and arrange work so that employees' personal goals and those of the organisations are in support of one another and consequently argue that the Theory Y approach is the correct one.

The participative management/high involvement approach referred to earlier will be treated at a later time, once I have first examined the contributions of the socio-technical movement.

2.2.3 Socio-technical School – closed perspective

The early classical theory school in many senses ignored the human relations perspectives; likewise the human relations perspective gave very little attention to the operation of the technical aspects of work. Socio-tech systems move in the direction of attempting to give attention to both. The focus is therefore on the work system and the social relationships around that system. Trist & Bamforth (1951), who carried out their study in the coal mining industry in Britain, observed that that business could best be

understood by looking at two systems – the technical system which included for them machinery and other equipment and the social system which included the social relationships and interactions between employees.

The term 'socio-technical' was coined by Trist & Bamforth (1951) to describe a method of viewing organisations which emphasises the inter-relatedness of the social and technological sub-systems of the organisation and the relationship of the organisation as a whole to the environment in which it operates. Pasmore et al (1982) suggest that the socio-technical system perspective contends that organisations are made up of people that produce products or services using some technology and that each affects the operation and appropriateness of the technology as well as the actions of the people who operate it.

The principal of joint optimisation, which is the goal of socio-technical system intervention, implies that an organisation will function up to its optimum only if the social and technological systems of the organisation are designed to fit the demands of each other and the environment. More broadly, according to Pasmore et al (1982) the social system includes the reasons that organisational members choose to work in the organisation, their attitudes towards it, their expectations of it, patterns of supervisory subordinate relationships, skill levels of employees and the nature of the sub-groups within the population. The technical sub-system of an organisation consists of the tools, techniques, procedures, skills, knowledge and devices used by members of the social system to accomplish the tasks of the organisation. Pasmore et al (1982) put forward that the technology also affects the location of workers, the motions required to operate it and the behaviours required to keep the entire system running smoothly.

2.2.4 Socio-Technical School - Open Systems Perspective

The term 'open systems' implies that all parts of the organisation are interrelated, so that the design of one necessarily affects the operation of the other. Additionally organisations must interact with their environments to

survive. They must import resources in the forms of labour and materials and produce some product or service which can be exchanged for additional resources. Pasmore et al (1982) comment that if organisations are to exist over time they must be capable of adapting to changing environmental conditions.

Fisher et al (1995) stress the necessity to consider both the social and technical systems within organisational work teams by indicating that the two types of issues that arise in a team are task and relationship. They indicate that tasks are the work that the team must accomplish and that relationships relate to how well the people on the team get along and work together. A team for Fisher et al (1995) that over-emphasises relationships may find that certain important tasks do not get satisfactorily undertaken. An overemphasis on technical issues may also give rise to unsatisfactory performance. Thus an emphasis is required on both.

Argyris (1990) in studying bureaucratic organisations explained that such organisations work well based on the assumptions that people will perform most effectively when assigned a highly specialised repetitive task, when there is one best way to perform any job, differences among people should be ignored, leaders are fair-minded and unemotional and all goals and decisions should be determined by superiors for their subordinates. He argued that these assumptions created an environment where employees are expected to be respectful of authority figures, dependent and passive. Argyris (1990) however does clearly indicate that common employee needs and desires are that they wish to be active, independent, experiencing variety in the workplace, equal, able to make decisions and control their own actions. He suggests that if we do not recognise these needs within the social system we may well create a technical system that frustrates employees rather than accommodates their needs and desires.

2.2.5 Job Enrichment Theories

Lawler (1992) informs us that job enrichment must be viewed both from the horizontal and the vertical. Horizontal enrichment strives to provide whole tasks for individuals, whereas vertical enrichment involves giving employees responsibility for those control and planning activities that require decision making.

A number of researchers focused on ways in which the jobs of individuals at work could be enriched. The earliest of these was Herzberg et al (1957) who advocated that among other things individuals would only be fully motivated if they were given additional responsibility, opportunity for achievement and some form of recognition. He argued that organisations that undertook to examine jobs and re-design them according to the above three criteria would receive benefits therefrom in the form of more motivated employees.

Turner & Lawrence (1965) highlighted the fact that there were five critical job design characteristics that required focus in an organisation, as follows:

- Variety of work
- Employee autonomy in performing their work
- Social inter-action provided by the job
- Knowledge and skill
- Responsibility entrusted in the employee.

Building on the work of earlier proponents of job enrichment Hackman & Oldham (1975, 1976 & 1980) added several additional job characteristics and by proposing a causal relationship between the job design characteristics, the employee's psychological state and employee's motivation, satisfaction and

performance. It was their belief that enriching jobs (both vertically and horizontally) which allowed employees to undertake a whole piece of work, utilise a greater range of skill variety and which provided autonomy and feedback would provide employees with the opportunity to experience greater feelings of responsibility and consequently would have a positive effect on their work attitude and performance.

2.2.6 Participation

Participative management is not a feature solely of current management thinking; indeed we can trace its origins back to the 1960's. However, Louis (1986) has contrasted participative management approaches during the 1960's with current approaches on three dimensions:

1. in the 1960's participation tended to be initiated by managers and supervisors whereas current participative approaches are very often initiated by subordinates (Ouchi, 1981).
2. the participative approaches in the 1960's period tended to be bounded in time and space to a particular event or instance whereas the thinking nowadays is much more open ended, on-going and flexible.
3. using internal boundaries as criteria one could say that historically participation was role-based whereas current approaches are whole-people based.

In building on some of the ideas within participation Kanter (1989a) writes that true participation is a way of sharing power. She states that the "new managerial work" implies very different ways of obtaining and using power. Various alternative methods of communication, access, resources and execution erode the authority of those in the nominal chain of command. Thus the opportunity for many in organisations to achieve greater speed and flexibility undermines hierarchy. As a result the ability of management to get things done depends more on the number of networks in which they are centrally involved than on their height in hierarchy. Leadership is therefore becoming more difficult yet more critical than ever with the passing out-of-favour of the old motivational tool kit and leaders now need newer and more

effective incentives to encourage high performance and build commitment (Kanter, 1989a).

This search for higher performance and the building of commitment has led practitioners and researchers towards more involvement-oriented methods of managing groups.

2.2.7 Involvement-oriented Approaches

Involvement-oriented approaches centre on how work is organised at all levels in the organisation right down to the lowest level. In contrast to the control-oriented approach the involvement-oriented approach relies much more on self-control and self-management (Lawler, 1992). The key issue appears to be that once individuals are given challenging work and a customer to serve they can and will control their own behaviour. The involvement-oriented approach strives to develop employees who are responsive to change and in many respects self-programming. The pace at which the involvement-oriented approach has evolved and gained acceptance has been much slower than the control-oriented approach. Because it has not been used in as many instances as the control-oriented approach there is no great clarity about the practices and policies that are required to support the involvement-oriented approach.

Only within the last decade or so have writers been concerned with the broader issues of how the involvement-oriented approach needs to be supported within organisations that are using it as their overall style of management. My on-going search within the literature will ultimately strive for enhanced clarity about these support mechanisms that are required within organisations pursuing an involvement-oriented strategy.

2.2.8 Comparison of control-oriented and involvement-oriented approaches

Lawler (1992) has undertaken a comparison between control-oriented and involvement-oriented approaches. This comparison will be summarised under the headings of cost and productivity, quality, innovation and labour force.

(a) Cost and Productivity

The control-oriented approach has quite significant costs associated with it as it often takes an elaborate hierarchy of supervisors, measurement systems, control systems, reward systems and discipline systems to be sure that the work is being carried out to the required standard. There are also large overheads associated with designing work flow systems that lend themselves to standardised, specialised and simplified work (Lawler, 1992).

The involvement-oriented approach attempts to have the employee who is performing the work add greater value to the product or service than does the employee working within the control-oriented model. There are however significant costs with the involvement-oriented approach insofar as selection needs to be more careful, training more extensive and employees may need to be paid improved wages if they are to use a greater range of ability and skills than workers operating under the control-oriented approach.

The decision as to which approach is the most cost effective for an organisation seems to depend on the type of work being done and the wage structure at the location where the work is being done (Lawler, 1992). When the work requires little co-ordination and problem solving then it is quite possible that the control-oriented approach will produce better results. It may also work best when the work being carried out is routine and can be programmed to be carried out in that way for a long period of time. Where labour costs are high and the competition is global, as they are for many organisations today, the involvement-oriented approach seems to be the clear choice as it appears to be the best way to utilise the ability of employees to add value to products and services in a cost competitive manner.

(b) Quality

For many years the dominant thinking about quality has been that it is best achieved through "inspecting in" quality, but thinking has changed dramatically in recent years. The advantages of self-inspection and using employee empowerment to improve quality have been evident in the work of Juran (1989) and Deming (1986).

Both the control-oriented and the involvement-oriented approaches to quality have significant cost attached; the former in building the hierarchy of inspectors and systems and the latter approach, for example, in training and motivating individuals to "get it right first time".

Situations where a talented work force is not available and the work is simple and easy to do may be more amenable to a control-oriented model. However the involvement-oriented approach posits that employees can be trained and motivated to high personal standards of quality if they are given meaningful, challenging jobs and the training to perform them well.

(c) Innovation

The control-oriented approach particularly relied on staff experts and senior managers for solving problems and thinking of innovations whereas the involvement-oriented approach, on the other hand, tries to structure work in the organisation so that individual employees can do some of this innovative thinking about work. This has the effect that more individuals will come forward with helpful innovations/suggestions for the organisation.

Tichy (1983) also indicates that very often the difficulty with a particular change is in the implementation phase and that less extensive programming is required for the implementation of change in involvement-oriented organisations. Thus if major change requires employee acceptance then an involvement-oriented approach to management is probably superior both in terms of the speed with which the change can be implemented and the quality of the implementation.

(d) Labour Force

The extent to which the labour market can provide individuals with the right skills for either of these two approaches is a key issue. For control-oriented organisations it is usually easier to recruit individuals who can learn basic work skills. However this situation is quite different for the organisation that wishes to undertake or develop an involvement-oriented approach.

The latter approach requires individuals who are capable of and interested in developing themselves and being responsible for their own performance. To be so, employees need basic problem solving, communication and

quantitative skills and must be willing to make the commitment to learning, development and being a responsible and productive member of an organisation, Lawler (1992).

It can be concluded that there will be some circumstances related mainly to quality of labour force, technology and task structure where the control-oriented approach will be most suitable. There will however also be situations where an analysis of similar variables will indicate that the involvement-oriented approach is more suitable.

Before departing then from this comparison between control oriented and involved oriented approaches it should be noted that Lawler (1992) presents a comparison, not a decision one way or the other. The benefit of his analysis is that he clarifies some of the bases on which one should concentrate when trying to decide the most suitable organisation structure and style for a particular organisation.

2.3 EMPOWERMENT LITERATURE

2.3.1 Structural empowerment

The literature within recent years contains many articles on empowerment, mainly describing initiatives which involve differing interpretations and/or applications of empowerment and indeed on the language used to describe empowerment initiatives.

There is a natural progression from the earlier socio-tech movement and job enrichment movements towards much of the literature on empowered /self-managed work teams; this area focuses on situations where employees in teams are given additional responsibility for managing and performing the technical tasks involved in their work and also responsible for all or most of the decision making elements of that work. Very often technical tasks are rotated among team members as are management responsibilities such as monitoring the team's productivity and quality.

Self-managed teams are a natural out-growth from the socio-tech movement as they are intended to design in a team way the best match between the technical and social systems. In considering both the technical needs and social concerns prior to taking decisions employees in teams, according to Manz & Sims (1987), are in the best position so to do because of their first-hand knowledge of the work and of their fellow employees.

One can also think of self-managed teams as providing within a teamwork environment many of the job enrichment characteristics that were earlier highlighted. Larson & La Fasto (1989) also suggested that the social needs of employees are best addressed as team members get to know and understand one another. Team members are seen by Larson & La Fasto (1989) to be the most knowledgeable about the social needs of other members of the team and about how the work should be organised to take account of such social needs/preferences.

On the technical side it has been argued that self-managed teams provide opportunity for team members to regularly share technical information with one another and to give feedback on various aspects of job performance and other job related matters (Hackman, 1990, Larson & La Fasto, 1989 and Lawler, 1992).

In looking directly at empowerment Bowen & Lawler (1992) define empowerment as sharing with front line employees four organisational ingredients:

- (i) information about the organisation's performance
- (ii) rewards based on the organisation's performance
- (iii) knowledge that enables employees to understand and contribute to organisational performance
- (iv) power to make decisions that influence organisational direction and performance.

In the production-line type of organisation the above four elements of power were concentrated in the demands of managers and supervisors. Bowen & Lawler (1992) view empowerment as being where employees receive power from senior management in each of the above areas.

Ford & Fottler (1995) indicate that empowerment for them is when employees are asked to accept responsibility for the definition of the content of their jobs and the quality of their work. They see empowerment as existing when employees have the authority to do something about problems they face in doing their jobs. Essentially, then empowerment involves passing decision making authority and responsibility from managers to employees.

As earlier suggested by Kanter (1989a) the 'new managerial work' implies very different ways of using power than had been the case in traditional managerial work. In her view the ability of managers to achieve results in organisations is more dependent on their networking ability than on hierarchical position. In stressing that leadership is more critical than ever she points out that success in the new managerial work will require knowledge, skill and sensitivity to mobilise people and motivate them to do their best. Thus giving individuals/teams power is not alone inclusion for them but also is motivating for such employees.

Ford & Fottler (1995) focus on power as being the real difference between empowerment and earlier participative approaches. For them this power is not only over job content but also over job context. Empowerment, Ford & Fottler (1995) say, enables individuals or teams to make responsible decisions about the work they do. The degree to which they are empowered is in direct proportion to the increase in the decision-making power that they have over both job content and job context. As both increase, according to Ford & Fottler (1995), individuals and teams pass beyond an initial empowerment to total self-management.

Randolph (1995) goes somewhat further than Ford & Fottler (1995) in stating that empowerment is not *just* "giving people the power to make decisions"; it

is however, in his view, recognising and releasing into the organisation the power that people already have in their wealth of useful knowledge and internal motivation. He stresses that information sharing is the crucial first step and that the sharing of particularly sensitive information greatly enhances the vital ingredient of trust. In support of this view of the vitality of information sharing Kanter (1989a) states that organisations must “make more information available to more people at more levels through more devices”. For Lawler (1992) this information has to be also about organisation mission and organisation performance.

Beatty & Ulrich (1991) present a process of re-energising organisations that culminates in the achievement of significant cultural change within those organisations. However they emphasise in their model the need for this cultural change to be preceded by re-structuring, bureaucracy “bashing”, employee empowerment and continuous improvement. They indicate that one must challenge and change those elements within the organisation’s bureaucratic approaches prior to moving to employee empowerment. They particularly emphasise the need for ‘bureaucracy bashing’ because they assert that it is this very act that commences the empowerment of employees; such empowerment in their view is required for lasting organisational improvement. In their new world power and authority do not come from position and status but from relationships, trust and expertise.

De Meuse & Bergmann (1996) define the team concept as:

An evolutionary process in which team members gradually become empowered to make all (or increasing) decisions relative to the functioning of their work.

In looking at smaller organisations, which they define as being organisations of approximately 200 employees, De Meuse & Bergmann (1996) came across the following barriers to successful teams:

- Confusion regarding what the team concept means

- Insufficient commitment of company resources
- Failure to adequately communicate across teams
- Lack of owner/top management commitment
- Unwillingness of management to relinquish power
- Employee discomfort with accepting increased responsibility.

The following are the key actions that they (De Meuse & Bergmann, 1996) found as necessary for senior managers/owners to carry out if the team concept was to be successful in their organisation :

- Establish a clear vision
- Allocate sufficient resources
- Communicate across teams
- Owners/managers let go of power
- Employees accept increased responsibility

Fisher (1993) addresses values and assumptions of team leaders and suggests that they should ensure that they:

- Publish value statements, which must be demonstrated through behaviour
- Manage by vision which helps to clarify and inspire
- Focus on customers
- Institutionalise continuous improvement.

Fisher (1993) stresses that all of the above are personal values in the leader but that they must also work hard to help the organisation live the following organisational values:

- A strong belief in the importance of teamwork
- A belief that work is a part of life
- A belief in the development of team members
- A conviction that the role of management is to eliminate barriers to team performance.

Fisher (1993) suggests that the new managerial/supervisory role is that of a boundary manager and highlights the particular activities involved in boundary management, as follows:

- Not working in the system but on the system
- Organisational design
- Infra-structural building
- Cross-organisation collaboration.

Manz, Keating & Donnellon (1990) set out to study the two key challenges facing managers/supervisors as they struggle with the transition to empowered teams: (i) the loss of power and influence, and (ii) the fear that they will not be able to master the required new set of skills. They urge that managers need to be helped through this transition by :

- Overcoming initial suspicion, resistance and uncertainty
- Helping them “see the positive side of the new arrangements”
- Counselling them during their wrestling with the new role
- Learning the new language and skill.

Mills (1995) suggests that empowerment is the right to decide and take action. Participation for him is about consultation and communication between manager and employee whereas empowerment is the explicit grant of authority to make decisions and take actions – usually in the context of a broad set of rules and frameworks.

The thoughts contained within this section above demonstrate the variety of meanings of empowerment in practice and some of the important implementation issues. We will at a later stage again take up these themes within this empowerment literature when we attempt to analyse and comment upon our case-study organisations, as many of the issues raised will have relevance to those organisations.

I would now like to turn to an examination of some views within the literature on joint values and practices conducive to empowerment.

2.3.2 JOINT VALUES/PRACTICES

(a) Staff/union inclusion

A number of authors notably Walton (1985), Piczak & Hauser (1996) and Lawler (1992) make regular reference to the need for union inclusion in a process such as the movement towards empowered or self-managed work teams.

This issue of union inclusion is particularly important in the context of this study – taking place as it does in organisations where the work force is unionised.

(b) Commitment

Commitment is viewed in the literature from three different strands. Several researchers (Bennis & Nanus 1985, Ehin 1995, Katzenbach & Smith 1993a and Fisher 1993) all confirm the necessity for managerial commitment to a major change such as introducing empowered teams. Further researchers (Lawler 1992, Pfeffer 1994 and Fisher 1993) stress that such commitment from top management and line management must be seen to be demonstrated through behaviour; they emphasise that it is by demonstrating such follow-through that employees see, feel and sense managerial commitment.

From the second viewpoint authors such as Yeatts & Hyten (1998), Lawler & Mohrman (1989) and Yukl (1998) equally stress the importance of having committed employees within teams. A further contributor to this theme (Ehin 1995) stressed that the future belongs to companies filled with committed partners and to leaders who know how to unmanage and develop a space

where natural inter-action or co-operation can take place without traditional controls and where there is self reference or form without structure.

Katzenbach & Smith (1993a) follow the same theme when indicating that the essence of the team is common commitment to team objectives. Without it, groups perform as individuals; with it they become a powerful unit of collective performance.

In respect of the third aspect of commitment several authors (Lawler 1992, Yeatts & Hyten 1998, Bennis & Nanus 1985 and De Meuse & Bergmann 1996) all suggest that commitment must be in fact a joint expression between the first and second above. Thus these authors stress that it is insufficient to have just either managerial commitment or employee commitment but that somehow the leaders of the organisation have got to develop a jointness of commitment to the objectives for the unit and/or organisation.

(c) Communications

Several authors (Ulrich 1997, Pfeffer 1994, Mills 1991 and Lawler 1992) emphasise the critical need for open communication and full sharing of information across all levels of the organisation. Many of these researchers found communication levels and skills to be capable of serious improvement in moving from a traditional organisation to a high-involvement one.

Piczak & Hauser (1996) inform us that one of the most awkward adjustments for management is the sharing of information and data. Company information traditionally has been the exclusive domain of management, not to be divulged to employees and certainly not to the union. If the organisation is to work together as a team, however, full disclosure of relevant information is, according to Piczak & Hauser (1996), absolutely necessary.

Bass & Avolio (1994) also stress the importance of communication, particularly upward communication, for organisations that are moving forward with any kind of transformational change.

In analysing the results of a study of Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Winners, Covey (1992) identified that all of these companies championed two-way communication within the organisation in addition to key communication links to their customers. The same line is supported by Blanchard (1995) in his stressing of the need for management teams to address the common concerns of individuals in organisations such as their need for more information, how change will affect them personally, what they need to do to implement the change and finally the impact and benefit of the change.

Randolph (1995) argues that information sharing is at the core of building relationships and trust. Shaffer (1994) agrees and adds that information sharing and the communication process can be the binding threads that hold an empowerment initiative in place. Covey (1992), stresses that such information sharing must be completely open and honest if it is to help foster organisational values consistent with an empowerment initiative.

Wilson et al (1994) go beyond a structural or skill aspect of communication when they assert that we “need to consider the leader’s willingness and motivation to communicate”. This assumes an even greater importance when one considers Harshman & Phillips’ (1994) view that what people hear or read (or don’t hear or read) greatly influences their attitudes.

(d) Training

Almost all researchers and writers in the area of SMWT’s stress the importance of training at a variety of levels but particularly for facilitators/team leaders and team members (see Lawler (1990 & 1992), Fisher (1993), Yukl (1998), Yeatts & Hyten (1998), Pfeffer (1994) and Ulrich 1997); the skills advocated by these various researchers range from team decision making, inter-personal skills, team goal setting, self-monitoring, self-leading and the taking of responsibility.

Ray (1994) lay great stress on the need for team member training. Such training should cover key areas of team functioning such as problem solving and decision making, facilitation skills, listening skills, assertiveness, influencing processes, negotiating skills and conflict resolution.

Wilson et al (1994) indicate that a key training need would be in coaching skills for facilitation; particularly so if the participants are attempting to make the journey from manager/supervisor to facilitator.

(e) Pay/Rewards

Several authors notably Lawler (1990 & 1992), Piczak & Hauser (1996) and Lawler & Mohrman (1989) have stressed the need to have reward and pay systems high on the agenda and to have policies clear about how one sees the way forward in this regard. Yeatts & Hyten (1998) point to the need to have payment systems related to team performance whereby team members can share in the gain resulting from their new structures and work roles; some organisations have company-wide gainsharing where it is less easy to make the link between a particular team and performance.

(f) Trust building

Numerous writers commenting on the building blocks required for empowerment stress the need for trust building activities, Heckscher (1995), Randolph (1995), Wilson et al (1994), Baillie (1995) and Drought & McLaughlin (1995). Within the organisations involved in this research trust building assumes a significant importance bearing in mind their previous industrial relations histories.

2.3.3 PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

Another most interesting approach to empowerment is taken by Conger & Kanungo (1988) who distinguish between empowerment being seen as a relational construct and a motivational construct. They propose that one could understand empowerment in terms of the relational dynamics of power sharing among workers and management; this empowerment becomes the process by which management gives or shares power with workers. In this context power is interpreted as the possession of formal authority and control over organisational resources/issues. Such a view of empowerment as a relational construct is not dissimilar to the earlier definition of Bowen & Lawler (1992) described above.

Conger & Kanungo (1988) however also indicate that one can view empowerment as a motivational construct and that this thought stems from the social psychological literature, in particular from the work of Bandura (1977). Thus for example they indicate that individuals have a need within themselves to have more power in organisations. They also stress that empowerment in this motivational sense also refers to a belief in self-determination and a belief in personal self-efficacy. They point out that any organisational strategy or technique that strengthens this self-determination or self-efficacy belief of workers will tend to make them feel empowered at work and consequently de-alienated.

My own view for the purpose of this research is that account must be taken of both the relational and motivational constructs. Thus we must realise the importance of self-determination and self-efficacy but also accept that empowering workers does require managers to share power on an on-going basis. When done successfully employees can continue to develop feelings of self-worth, which may be the important trigger for releasing increased personal commitment from workers

Thomas & Velthouse (1990) focus on intrinsic task motivation as they attempt to understand psychological empowerment; the effort is not to understand the

management or employee practices within empowerment but to understand the mental practices that lead to psychological empowerment. They believe that if organisations can get intrinsic task motivation right then such organisations will be motivating people and at the same time empowering them. The four dimensions of this intrinsic task motivation are : meaning, competence (synonymous with Conger & Kanungo's (1988) self-efficacy), self-determination and impact. Thomas & Velthouse (1990) point out that these dimensions are additive but that the absence of any one, or less impact within one of the dimensions, will not necessarily imply the lack of psychological empowerment. They put the four dimensions forward as a nearly complete or sufficient set of conditions for psychological empowerment. Building on the work of Conger & Kanungo (1988) and Thomas & Velthouse (1990), Spreitzer (1995) has attempted to measure psychological empowerment in the workplace; she has found that each of the four dimensions above do in fact contribute to an overall construct of empowerment.

As referred to earlier Conger & Kanungo (1988) suggested that we must look at empowerment as a motivational construct whereby the process of empowerment results in a growth in self-efficacy within an individual or team. In building on this earlier work Kanungo (1992) when treating alienation and empowerment states that in view of the conceptual difficulties raised in connection with empowerment as a relational construct one should view empowerment as a process within a motivational concept whereby one "enables" rather simply than "delegates". Enabling, as described by Kanungo (1992), implies the creation of conditions which heighten the motivation for task accomplishment through the development of a strong sense of personal or team efficacy. The moral justification for empowerment strategies, according to Kanungo (1992), lies in viewing empowerment as an enabling, rather than as a delegating process. Thus, alienation, or a sense of powerlessness, cripples workers by **disenabling** them; empowerment or an enhancement of self-efficacy or team-efficacy develops workers by **enabling** them. Managerial practices which cripple workers potential are morally

wrong, in Kanungo's (1992) thought process, but empowerment practices which develop workers potential are ethical imperatives.

The self-efficacy theme within Conger & Kanungo (1988) is in turn taken a step further by May & Schwoerer (1994) when they outline the influences on team-efficacy, which they enumerate as follows :

- Generating successful team experiences
- Team modeling
- Verbal encouragement
- Interpretation of stress experiences.

They argue coherently that specific attention being given to these four elements will generate belief in team-efficacy and that that in turn will lead to enhanced team effectiveness.

2.3.4 Empowerment within this research project

In the light of the discussion highlighted in the above literature and the knowledge that this researcher has of specific empowerment interventions the definition of empowerment that will be used in this research and which embodies the above principles and values is:

An initiative where an organisation progressively devolves some meaningful work responsibilities to staff teams and provides opportunity for personal growth of those staff.

The benefit of a definition such as that given above is that it will allow us look at empowerment under a number of different guises rather than having to search for precisely similar manifestations of empowerment in a number of organisations.

This will greatly facilitate our research insofar as the manifestations of empowerment will differ from case-study to case-study from the viewpoint both of the objective for the initiative and the manner of its implementation.

We will however only be looking at organisations whose approach to empowerment can come within the ambit of the above definition.

2.4 LEADERSHIP: THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

De Meuse & Bergmann (1996) when addressing the issue of management needing to relinquish control for the successful establishment of effective work teams identify barriers to implementing teams which must be overcome as an organisation moves towards the team approach. Two particular ways that they suggest for overcoming these barriers are establishing a clear vision and 'walking the talk'. De Meuse & Bergmann (1996) place the primary responsibility on top management for establishing and communicating a clear vision of the future in practical teamwork terms. Secondly, they place great stress on the deliverance of management commitment through doing rather than just talking and it is in this context that they use the phrase 'walk the talk'.

Lawler (1992) puts in context the role expected of senior management in the change to a high-involvement culture by stressing that behaviour, rather than talk, is critical. He particularly suggests that the responsibility rests with top management for setting the overall direction of the organisation. Lawler (1992) re-inforces the thoughts of Prahalad & Hamel (1990) when indicating that the best corporate statements of strategic intent tell people the right things to do in their job, how to behave toward one another and how to behave towards customers, suppliers and others.

A second key issue for Lawler (1992) is the importance of team managers modeling the kind of behaviour that they expect to see demonstrated throughout the organisation. Bennis & Nanus (1985) have supported this view when indicating that modeling correct behaviour helps provide people at all levels of the organisation with an example and helps establish a climate and culture in which this behaviour is seen as acceptable and even demanded.

Lawler (1992) indicates that it is important to the high-involvement approach to management that managers are willing to seek information from team members about how effective they are in their decision making and leadership behaviours, however difficult.

In discussing five stages of participative management system development Fisher (1986) emphasises the need for managers at all levels to *create culture bridges* for all employees whereby they can assist them moving from one culture to another culture or context. He also stresses the need for line management to honour commitments in a direct effort to focus on building trust. Emphasis is also placed by Fisher (1986) on individual line managers modeling participative behaviours themselves and particularly providing development opportunities for individuals and team members.

Manz & Sims (1987) have clearly indicated that the uniqueness of the self-management leader's role lies in the commitment to the philosophy that the team should successfully complete necessary leadership functions for themselves. The dominant role of the external leader, according to Manz & Sims (1987), should be to lead others to lead themselves. This is quite different from the traditional role of the manager.

In their seminal work Walton & Schlesinger (1979) analyse the role difficulties that present themselves for supervisors who are involved in a radical role change. They put forward strategies for successfully addressing the supervisory issue and emphasise supervisory support systems, training, evaluation and reward systems that are tied to the required new role.

Manz, Keating & Donnellon (1990) suggest that line management regularly find themselves wrestling with their new role within the change to team-based management. They regularly question how being a facilitator is different from or better than being a manager and it is necessary, in their view, for organisations to provide intensive support to line management to help them into this new role. Manz, Keating & Donnellan (1990) also indicate that a key task in this transition is to help line management learn a new language that fits

the team-based approach; failure to do so will perhaps mean that others will interpret the use of inappropriate language as an indication of a lack of commitment to the required change. Spreitzer (1996) in a rigorous testing of various hypotheses across 393 managers in a Fortune 50 company found that individuals who perceive a high degree of role ambiguity in their work will report a lower level of empowerment than those individuals who perceive less role ambiguity; consequently in her view it is critical that as much as possible role ambiguity be removed for line management.

Yeatts & Hyten (1998) have found that the use of self-managed work teams requires a management philosophy but some managers choose not to accept such a new perspective. Such managers seem to feel that they have spent several years getting to the stage in their careers where they could now have control over others, had paid their dues, as it were, and to now be told that all of this was changing left them very unsure. Yeatts & Hyten (1998) point to training and orientation activities as being two important enablers that assist managers in overcoming the obstacles noted above. Their data showed that those managers who clearly understood what their roles and responsibilities were and could see if there was a place for them in the participative management environment experienced fewer obstacles to practicing management roles important to SMWT performance. Senior managers who acted as exemplary role models for other managers likewise had the effect of reducing obstacles.

The manner in which role is reviewed and carried out in organisations pursuing empowerment initiatives will be absolutely critical, in the view of the above researchers. It is my belief that this will be worth examining within our case-study organisations.

Bergmann & De Meuse (1996) studied team working in a manufacturing plant and found that managers, team leaders and team managers may express a readiness to increase empowerment but may simultaneously lack the understanding to effectively implement it. Several authors such as Bennis (1989), Fisher (1993) and Ulrich (1997) all point to the necessity for leaders to

chart the vision and clarify the values that an organisation needs in its journey of implementation of team work. They also point to the fact that top management need to get the on-going commitment of other levels of management during the implementation process. It is my belief however that this area of engaging the on-going support of line management has not been sufficiently researched and is therefore not referred to extensively in the literature.

In addressing key steps in the process of implementing teamwork Randolph (1995) suggests that there comes a stage when teams sense a lack of competence and lose motivation to continue to work towards empowerment – a tremendous let-down after the excitement shared at the outset of their journey. Teams at this stage need a strong leader, capable of providing guidance, encouragement and support to help them over their difficulty. Unfortunately at this juncture managers according to Randolph (1995) are often just as disorientated as employees. Even the top level managers who initiated the empowered processes are usually unsure what to do or may well have turned to another project. This phenomenon might best be labelled 'the leadership vacuum'. It may seem incredible that such a vacuum could occur but it is plausible, even expected when one realises that managers and employees are embarking on a journey and emerging from the grip of bureaucratic hierarchy.

One of the ways of perhaps understanding this gap is through thoughts developed around discretionary leadership by Jaques (1996), who distinguished between 'prescribed' roles and 'discretionary' roles. A prescribed role for Jaques (1996) is one where there is very little opportunity for a leader to exercise judgement and a discretionary role is one where considerable judgement is necessary in order for the individual to function effectively in the role. According to Jaques (1996) different bosses permit different degrees of discretionary role and likewise job incumbents exercise discretionary role to a greater or lesser degree as they influence their bosses. All individuals occupying discretionary leadership roles need to set boundaries around that role so that they and others can make sense of the role. It

appears to me that lack of understanding of this central issue of prescribed and/or discretionary roles could be one of the issues that prevents the message of top management getting to all levels of the organisation and particularly generating the required degree of enthusiasm and commitment.

Belasco & Stayer (1994) suggest that the new role for organisation leaders must see them:

- Transfer ownership for work to those who execute the work
- Create an environment for ownership in which each person wants to be responsible for his or her own performance
- Coach the development of individual capability and competence
- Learn faster by learning themselves and by creating the conditions under which every person in the organisation is challenged to continually learn faster as well.

The manner in which role is viewed and carried out in organisations pursuing empowerment initiatives will be absolutely critical in the view of the above researches. It is my belief that this will be worth examining within our case-study organisations.

2.5 ADDITIONAL RECENT LEADERSHIP THEMES/THEORIES

I wish to now briefly examine recent research literature in the areas of leadership within teams, visioning, transformational leadership and charismatic leadership. I deem these themes/theories as important contributions in the development of leadership theory, particularly when related to the process of introducing empowered teams in organisations.

(a) Leadership within teams

Much thinking and writing about leadership practices in recent years has encouraged leaders to focus their attention on the leadership of teams. This is not to say that leadership of individuals is not of continuing importance but it is a question of giving increasing impetus to team development as organisations experiment in efforts to optimise employee contribution.

Walton (1985) emphasises that there is a definite move from control strategies to commitment strategies in the work place. For him control strategies reduced performance to the lowest common denominator as traditional models of management wished to establish order, exercise control and achieve efficiency. Walton (1985) informs us that notwithstanding the fact that there were early models of this kind of leadership in the Church and military the real father of this control philosophy from an industrial viewpoint is Frederick W. Taylor at the turn of the Century.

The strategies that seek commitment, on the other hand, look to develop trusting adult relationships between management and workforce. Research carried out by Walton (1985) indicates that a significant number of organisations were focusing on teams rather than individuals as the accountable unit of performance. Under this commitment strategy stretch objectives were developed by teams which focused on particular needs in the market-place rather than just maintaining an internal focus. Walton also acknowledged that in unionised situations there was a definite need to move relationships from their adversarial mode to a joint problem solving one. In Walton's view all of these things assist the release of increased employee

commitment which leads to enhanced performance. These ideas provide a link to the work of Bandura (1977) and Conger & Kanungo (1988) - to which we will refer again, when Walton asserts that such commitment practices promote the development of human skills and individual self-esteem.

Barry's (1991) study of self-managed teams brought forward an explanation for the manner in which leadership should be experienced within teams on the basis that said leadership should be distributed among the team members. Thus in essence the distributed model asserts that leadership is actually a collection of roles and behaviours that can be split apart, shared, rotated and used sequentially or concomitantly. At any given time there can be one or more leaders within a team. The dimension that Barry adds to earlier work in this area is that he believes that most self-managed teams can actually function best without any formal leader on the outside of the team and that such teams will be quite effective through making use of the varying leadership skills within the members of the team.

Thus both Walton (1985) and Barry (1991) are highlighting the fact that many organisations are now focusing on teams in their search for greater commitment and performance. Barry (1991) adds the idea that leadership should be distributed as much as possible within the team and that it is not necessary to have a formal leader with every team.

(b) Visioning

The process of 'visioning' is where leaders develop clarity about where the organisation needs to be going; this vision is sometimes exclusively their own but more often is developed with the aid of others in the organisation. Indeed some leaders develop visions in such powerful terms that they 'enlist' followers in the vision thereby motivating them towards the behaviours required to deliver that vision.

In distinguishing between leaders and managers Bennis (1989) refers to leaders as being ones who understand and master the context and managers

as those who surrender to that context. He describes the differences between managers and leaders as follows:

- the manager administers; the leader innovates
- the manager maintains; the leader develops
- the manager focuses on systems and structures; the leader focuses on people
- the manager relies on control; the leader inspires and trusts
- the manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective
- the manager asks how and when; the leader asks why
- the manager has his eye always on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon
- the manager imitates; the leader originates
- the manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it
- the manager is a classic good soldier; the leader is his own person
- the manager does things right; the leader does the right things

Berlew (1986) distinguishes between Push and Pull energy. He states that at the organisation level Push energy is a dynamic equated with structural management systems such as job descriptions, policies and formal reward structures. These systems are equated with Push energy in that they prescribe actions to be taken or procedures to be followed. On the other

hand Pull energy is an influence process expressed in the culture and spirit of an organisation and has to do with shared values and visions that members aspire to attain. Both Push and Pull energy are essential to creating energy alignment among members; however, Berlew (1986) suggests that “common-vision leadership” is very necessary particularly when missions are mundane, tasks are dull, employees are cynical or members are being asked to cut back on resources they need in order to accomplish more. In such circumstances it is really a ‘pull’ leadership framework that is required.

Berlew (1986) goes on to equate the Push strategies as oftentimes becoming over-controlling and having a negative impact on organisations, even when there is some Pull energy present. On the other hand he stresses that Pull energy is more often associated with leadership than management and that it enlivens the organisation by creating a common vision towards which organisation members can aspire.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) identified four major behaviours observed in key leaders as follows :

- Attention through vision
- Meaning through communication
- Trust through positioning
- Deployment of self.

They found that these characteristics were present in all of the leaders that they observed. Like Berlew (1986), Bennis & Nanus (1985) stress that the essential thing in organisational leadership is that the leader’s style pulls rather than pushes people on. Thus they lay great emphasis on the fact that successful leaders followed these four strategies above through empowering others; they saw this empowerment as a process whereby they empowered others to translate intention into reality and sustain it. Bennis & Nanus (1985) and Tjosvold & Tjosvold (1991) lay particular stress on obtaining and

maintaining focus through the process of visioning and describe it as a key aspect of leadership behaviour.

Kanungo & Conger (1992) in treating charismatic leadership also lay emphasis on the leader being able to 'focus' the organisation through visioning, particularly where they place emphasis on the positive features of the future vision and the negative features within the status quo. In this context the status quo is often presented in clear specific terms as intolerable and the future is presented as the attractive and attainable alternative.

Kakabadse & Kakabadse's (1999) model addresses the essence of leadership as raising human consciousness by creating meanings and evaluating motives and goals against existing and emerging structures and vision that are located in the near and far future.

Thus it can be seen through the eyes of Bennis (1989), Bennis & Nanus (1985), Berlew (1986), Kanungo & Conger (1992) and Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) that providing direction through visioning processes is a key managerial behaviour. This 'visioning' aspect of leadership is taken up again in the views we express on transformational leadership in the next section.

(c) Transactional/Transformational leadership

Bass (1990) distinguishes between transactional leadership whereby the leader gets things done by making and fulfilling promises of recognition, pay increases and advancement for employees who perform well; those who do not perform well incur some form of penalty on one or more of these criteria. It is this promise and reward for good performance or the threat of discipline for poor performance that in transactional terms characterises the effective leader.

On the other hand Bass (1990) indicates that superior leadership performance through transformational leadership occurs when leaders broaden and elevate

the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group. Transformational leaders achieve the results in one or more ways: they may be charismatic to their followers and thus inspire them; they may meet the emotional needs of employees; and/or they may intellectually stimulate employees.

Bass & Avolio (1994) add to our understanding of transactional/ transformational leadership when they state that transactional leaders work within their organisation cultures by following existing rules, procedures and norms; transformational leaders, on the other hand, change their culture by first understanding it and then realigning the organisation's culture with a new vision and a revision of its shared assumptions, values and norms. In their view transformational leaders are ones who include the four I's as follows : Idealised Influence, Inspirational Information, Intellectual Stimulation and Individualised Consideration. In contrast transactional leaders are characterised by contingent reward and management by exceptions. To accomplish the needed changes in an organisation's culture it is essential for top management to clearly articulate the change that is required.

Burke (1986) analyses executive power and indicates that the broader the base of one's power (across reward, coercive, legitimate, expert and referent) the more powerful one is; thus when one's source of power stems from multiple bases one is more powerful. When treating the process of empowering others Burke (1986) links to Zaleznik's (1977) work and attempts to distinguish between transformational leaders and transactional leaders (managers) on the following basis:

Dimensions for Comparison	Leaders	Managers
Emotional involvement	With the institution and with ideals/vision	With the task and the people associated with the task
Personal life	Work and personal life not that distinguishable	Work is separate from personal, private life
Achieves commitment via	Inspiration	Involvement
Holds people accountable via	Guilt induction; want whole person	Contractual transactions; want task accomplishment
Value emphasis	Terminal; end state	Instrumental; means
Problems	Create them	Fix them
Plans	Long range	Short range
Appreciates from followers/subordinates	Contrariness	Conformity
Engenders in followers/subordinates	Intense feelings - love, sometimes hate; desire to identify with; turbulent	Feelings not intense but relations smoother and steadier

Burke (1986) also talks of how leaders develop followers and subordinates and stresses that successful leaders develop their subordinates by inspiring them to achieve things they did not believe they could achieve, thereby contributing to the development of self-efficacy within those individuals or teams. In conclusion Burke indicates that in his view leaders empower via direction and inspiration whereas managers empower via action and participation.

(d) Charismatic leadership

Building on transformational leadership thoughts Kanungo & Conger (1992) examine the key elements of the charismatic leadership influencing process. They present a three-stage model as follows:

Stage I:

- Evaluation of status quo
- Assessment of environment/resources/constraints/ follower needs
- Realisation of deficiencies in status quo

Stage II:

- A formulation of organisation goals
- Formulation and effective articulation of inspirational vision that is highly discrepant from the status quo yet within the latitude of acceptance

Stage III:

- Means to achieve
- By personal example and risk, counter-cultural empowering and impression management practices, the leader conveys goals, demonstrates means to achieve, builds follower trust and motivates followers.

Kanungo & Conger (1992) also stress that followers invest faith in leaders in whom they can place trust; thus the charismatic leader strives to develop strong trusting relationships with followers.

Manz & Sims (1987) in quoting Jack Welch, CEO of General Electric poignantly summarised the contrast between control mechanisms and involvement-oriented ones: “we have to undo a one-hundred-year-old

concept and convince our managers that their role is not to control people and stay 'on top' of things but rather to guide, energise and excite".

In their treatment of charismatic leadership Kanungo & Conger (1992) and Manz & Sims (1987) re-echo some of the ideas raised in our treatment of transformational leadership in the previous section. They also lay emphasis on the leader's role as a builder of trust, a theme to which we shall return later, and also on the leader's need to energise and excite the organisation.

All of the above researchers in various ways have given critical emphasis to the process of visioning and in particular also to that of what I term 'directioning' whereby in day-to-day situations the vision is transferred down through the organisation in a manner which makes it clear to everybody what the direction is in an on-going sense; as indicated above it is a critical part of this visioning and directioning that they are carried out in an inclusive manner which culminates in the team members being enlisted in this new vision and direction.

2.6 MODELS OF SMWT PERFORMANCE

A number of researchers have attempted to summarise elements in the literature and experience of empowerment and SMWT's to the extent that they have developed models of performance. These models integrate some of the ideas from the research and we highlight four of same below, those of Pearce & Ravlin (1987), Hackman (1988, 1990), Sunstrom et al (1990) and Yeatts & Hyten (1998).

(a) Pearce & Ravlin Model of SMWT performance

Pearce & Ravlin (1987) have presented a theoretical model of SMWT performance and this model is presented at Figure 2.2 below. They first talk of pre-conditions needing to be in place for successful SMWT performance and these pre-conditions include task organisation and personnel conditions.

For Pearce & Ravlin (1987) the tasks must allow for the exercise of autonomy and must be meaningful to team members with respect to the prevailing organisational conditions. Management must be wholly supportive of SMWT's and the expectations of both parties, particularly team members, must be well defined and reasonable. The third pre-condition in respect of personnel requires that all team members themselves regard SMWT's and the autonomy and responsibilities associated with them as desirable.

Pearce & Ravlin (1987) propose that the pre-conditions directly affect the design and how it functions. Within this issue of design they included open communication, heterogeneous composition, minimal status differences, flexible co-ordination, autonomy over task assignments and reward at both group and individual level. These design issues had an inter-dependant relationship with what they called activation which refers to instituting within the organisation activities or functions that will break down workplace norms that do not fit the SMWT environment and which on the other hand will encourage the types of employee behaviour necessary for SMWT's.

Activities such as explicit support from management, training, incentives to violate old norms and recognition of the development stages of teams.

Pearce & Ravlin (1987) see that the process criteria are affected by the teams activation functions and design. Consequently they suggest that a variety of inputs are required from team members for effective decision making. They also see that co-ordination is central to teams because of the multiple skills and inter-related tasks that SMWT members typically perform. Within Pearce & Ravlin's (1987) process criteria is the issue of commitment which is viewed as essential because of the need for team members to be self-motivated to accomplish team goals. Finally within the model Pearce & Ravlin (1987) include as evaluation criteria employee satisfaction, absenteeism, turnover, safety, innovation and productivity.

THE PEARCE-RAVLIN (1987) MODEL OF SELF-REGULATING WORK GROUP PERFORMANCE

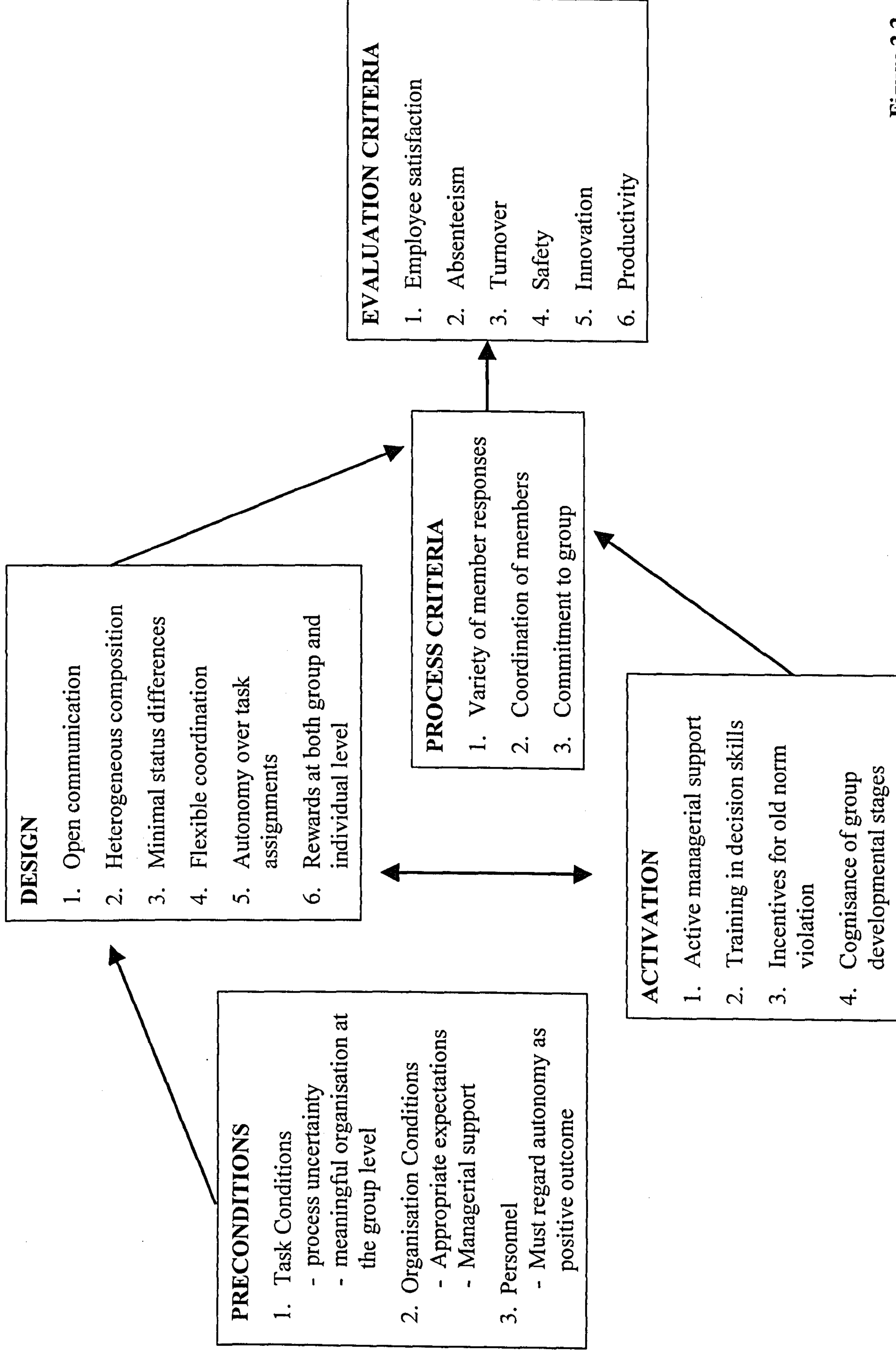


Figure 2.2

(b) Hackman's model of SMWT performance

Hackman (1988, 1990), building on earlier work with Oldham (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), has presented a thorough model attempting to explain SMWT performance; his model is in an input-output format and it is presented at Figure 2.3 below.

On the input side Hackman (1988, 1990) suggests that there are two issues of immediate concern: organisational context and group design. Within context he suggests that the reward system, education system and information system need to be such that they support and re-inforce competent task work. Group design which includes the structure of the task, composition of the group and group norms about performance processes need to be able to prompt and facilitate competent work. Thus his input issues of organisational context and group design are the issues/themes that will be affected by his process criteria of effectiveness. The level of effort brought to bear on the group task, the amount of knowledge and skill applied to task work and the appropriateness of task performance strategies used by the group are the key process criteria that Hackman (1988, 1990) suggests are vital for SMWT effectiveness. These process criteria are affected by two moderating variables. In the first case the nature and demands of the task under work technology and secondly group synergy which relates to the group and/or assistance they receive from outside being able to maximise in a synergistic manner various group processes. For Hackman (1988, 1990) all of these lead to an output measure of group effectiveness within which he includes task output being acceptable to those who receive or review it, capability of members to work together in the future is maintained or strengthened and members needs are more satisfied than frustrated by the group. One can see within this group effectiveness the major theme of satisfaction both on behalf of whoever the customer is and satisfaction within the group to such an extent that they want to continue working together.

HACKMAN'S (1988) MODEL OF SMWT EFFECTIVENESS

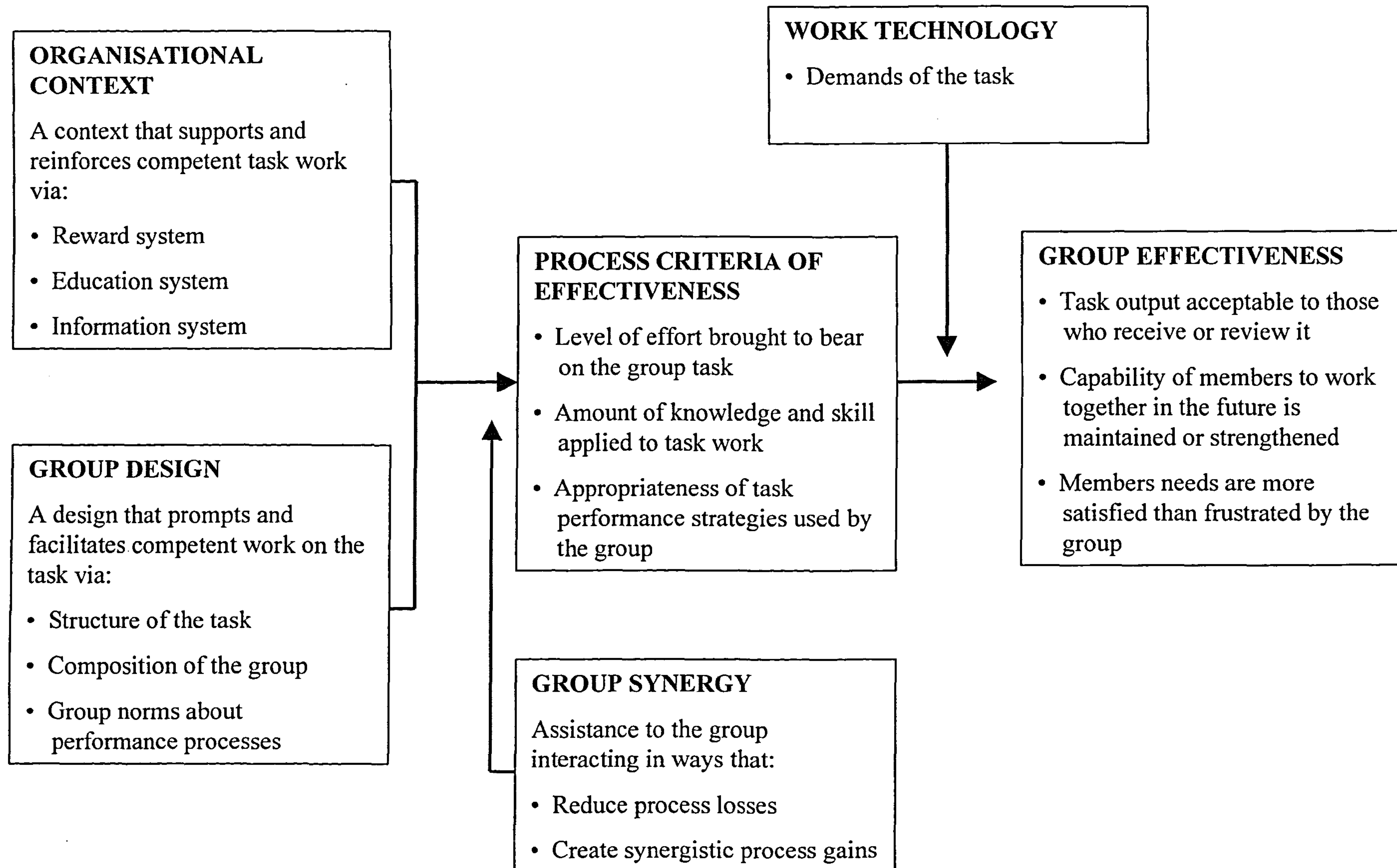


Figure 2.3

(c) Sunstrom – De Meuse – Futrell model of team effectiveness

Sunstrom et al (1990), as shown in Figure 2.4 below, take up similar effectiveness criteria to Hackman (1988, 1990) in respect of performance being acceptable to the customer and also what they refer to as team viability, being the team's ability to avoid burnout and stay together over the long term. Sunstrom et al (1990) avoid the idea of an input-output model but they do present their model in a non-temporal manner which highlights the inter-relationships between major sets of work team factors including organisational context, team boundaries and team development.

Organisational context for Sunstrom et al (1990) includes organisation culture, characteristics of the task, mission clarity, autonomy, feedback, rewards, training and the physical environment; they explain that these factors can augment team performance by providing the resources needed for performance. The organisational context therefore has ties not alone to the team performance that we have mentioned earlier but also to the team via team boundaries.

Team boundaries for Sunstrom et al (1990) are those conditions that separate and link work teams within their organisation. They point out that team boundaries are a link between organisational context and team development. This latter part of their model, team development, emphasises the fact that over time teams change and develop new ways of operating as they adapt to their evolving contexts. Factors such as inter-personal processes, norms, cohesion and roles are included within their meaning of team development. The authors viewed these as factors to be addressed in efforts to aid team development and process interventions.

SUNDSTROM ET AL (1990): ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING
WORK TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

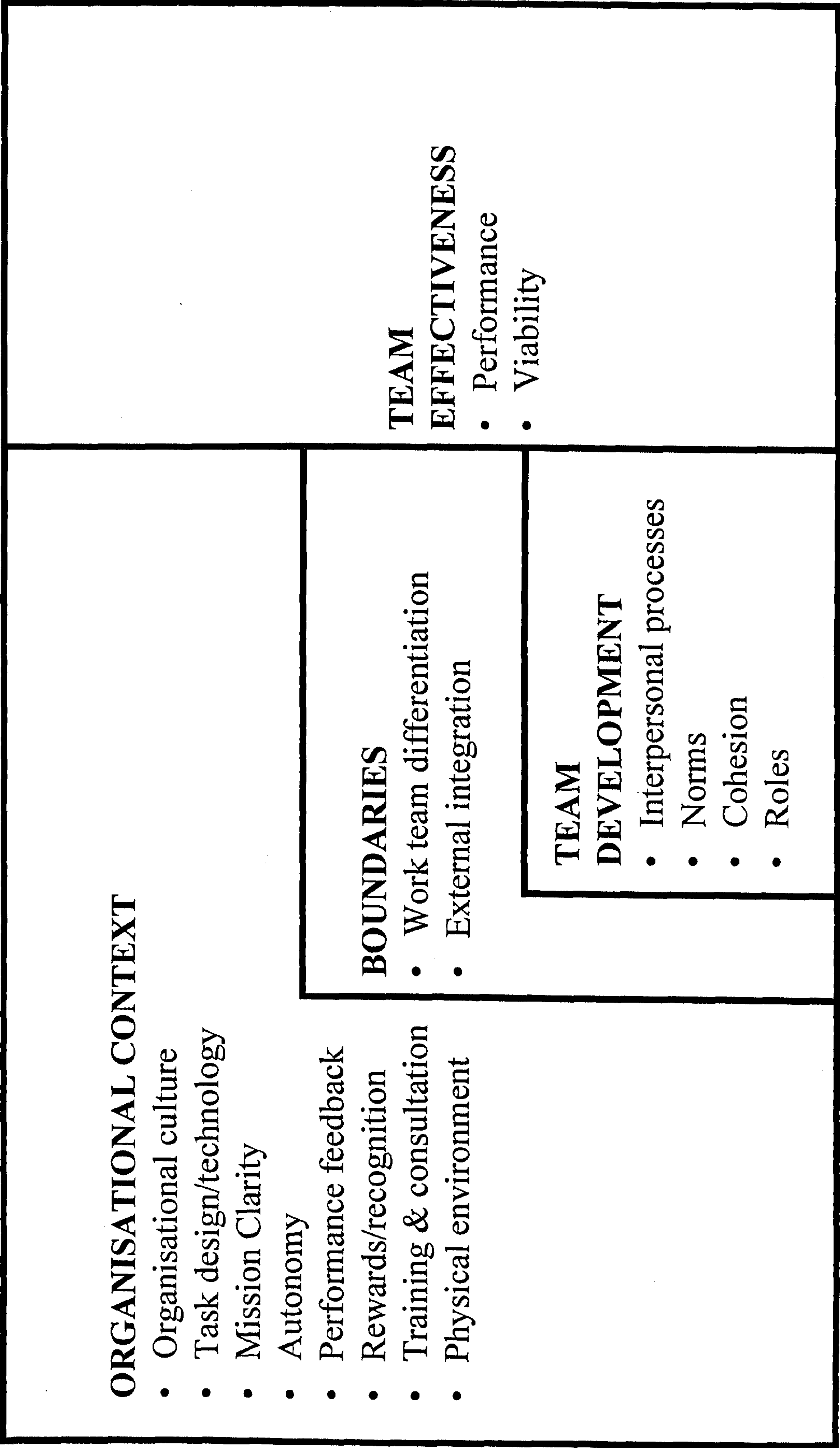


Figure 2.4

(d) Yeatts & Hyten's analysis of factors affecting self-managed work team performance

Yeatts & Hyten (1998) have proposed a model, as presented at Figure 2.5 below, that builds on some of the earlier models above and is, like some of the others, an input/process/output model.

On the input side Yeatts & Hyten (1998) talk in terms firstly of the environment and differentiating between external environmental issues and internal ones; within the organisation they refer to issues such as the organisation philosophy/culture, having a clear engaging mission for the team, reward, training, information and performance assessment systems, management roles and support, supplier/customer/union support and available appropriate resources. In respect of the external environment they indicate that the economy, technology, political/legal, demography, education and societal culture are also influencers.

The second category under the input side related to team member characteristics where they believe important issues are: existing talent (knowledge, skill & ability), personality and individual's values, interests, needs and prejudices. It is the belief of Yeatts & Hyten (1998) that these team member characteristics contributed a great deal to team performance.

The final input theme was team design characteristics which really related to job design, team size and composition, work norms and roles of team leader and team members; all of these things related to the functioning within the group and were also critical for team performance. Yeatts & Hyten (1998) included two processes within their model, inter-personal process and work process. In respect of the inter-personal process they indicated that the most important elements were communications, co-ordination, co-operation, conflict, cohesion and trust. The work process really related to the talent within the individuals, the resources given to them, the effort applied to the tasks and procedures used for carrying out the work.

TEAM PERFORMANCE

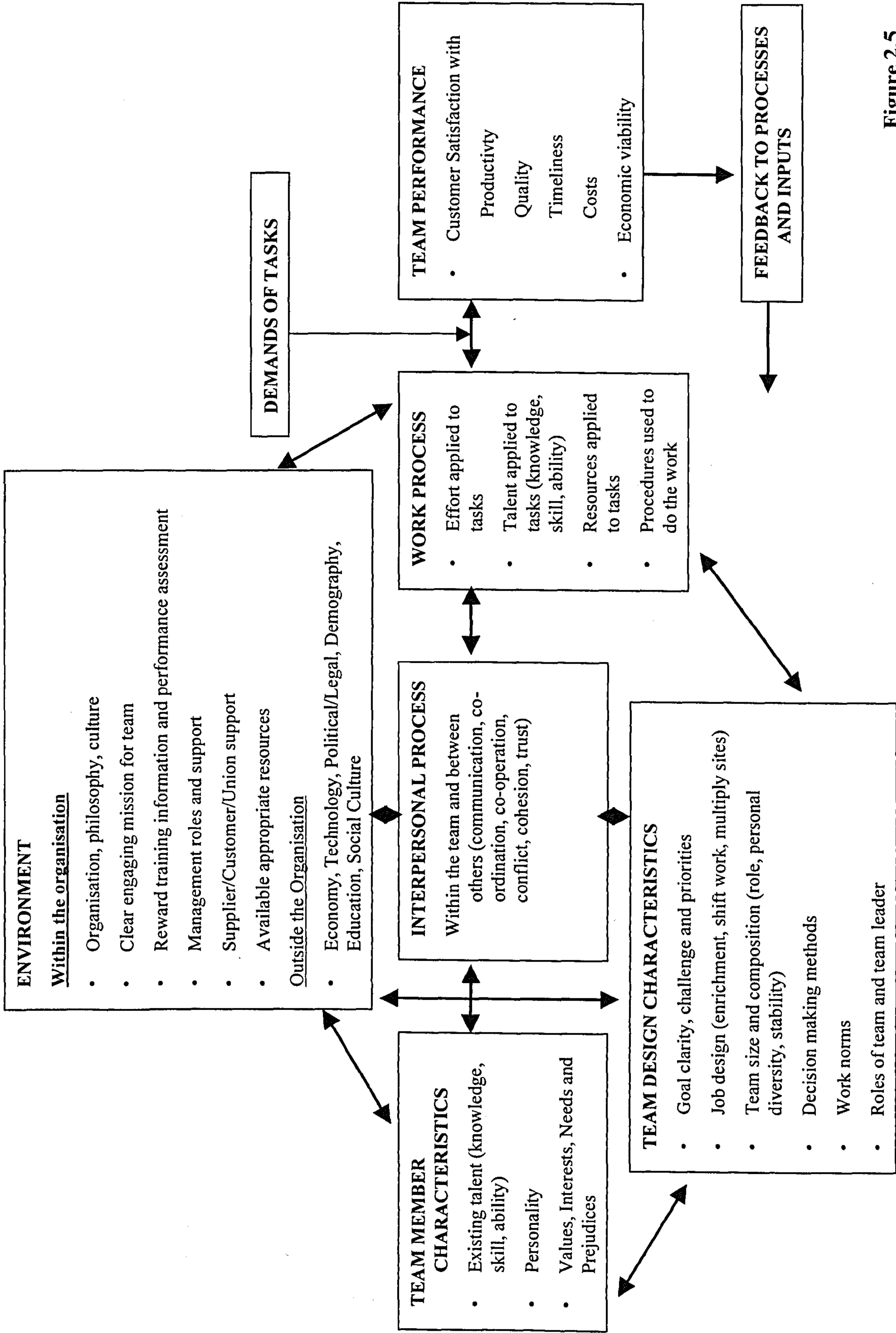


Figure 2.5

Yeatts & Hyten (1998) implied that each of these input and process aspects had effects on one another and they represent this in the model by showing a relationship in both directions between all of these issues. Yeatts & Hyten (1998) introduce the demands of the task as a moderating variable between work process and team performance and go on to indicate that team performance is related to customer satisfaction with particular reference to productivity, quality timeliness and costs but is also related to economic viability; for Yeatts & Hyten (1998) economic viability can either be in respect of a particular team or organisational viability.

Finally Yeatts & Hyten (1998) include feedback in their model as an output factor; feedback has not been included in any of the earlier models discussed - Pearce & Ravlin (1987), Hackman (1988 & 1990) and/or Sunstrom, De Meuse & Futrell (1990). Yeatts & Hyten (1998) indicate that it is a crucial factor that should be explicitly included and particularly cite that within their research feedback from customers was found to have direct effects on team's strategies for doing the work and on the knowledge held by team members.

2.7 THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

Through their insightful research Beer et al (1990) stress that successful change efforts focus on the work itself and that therefore change programmes need to be centred on the work situation and introduced through same.

Beer et al (1990) propose six steps for effective change, as follows :

1. Mobilise commitment to the required change through joint diagnosis of business problems; herein they stress that the starting point of any effective change effort is a clearly defined business problem
2. Develop a shared vision of how to organise and manage for competitiveness

3. Foster consensus for the new vision, competence to enact it and cohesion to move it along; on pointing out that such actions should take place through a teamwork culture they stress that teamwork actually asks more of employees than traditional approaches and therefore it needs more support from management
4. Spread revitalisation to all departments without pushing it from the top; the temptation to force newfound insights on the rest of the organisation only short circuits efforts
5. Institutionalise re-vitalisation through formal policy systems and structures; enacting changes in structures and systems at any earlier phase than this one tends to backfire
6. Monitor and adjust strategies in response to problems in the re-vitalisation process; the purpose of change for them is to create an asset that did not exist before – a learning organisation capable of adapting to a changing competitive environment, and the organisation has to be able to continually monitor this.

The enduring master class in change management has been provided by Lewin (1958) when he tells us that the first step of any change process is to unfreeze the present pattern of behavior as a way of managing resistance to change. This process of unfreezing is intended to make organisational members address the need for change, heighten their awareness of their own behavioural patterns and make them more open to the change process.

Lewin's second step is movement which involves making the actual changes that move the organisation to another level of response, striving to attain behavioural patterns that indicate greater inter-personal trust and openness and fewer dysfunctional interactions.

The third and final stage in the change process of Lewin (1958) is re-freezing which involves stabilising or institutionalising these changes by establishing

systems that make these behavioural patterns relatively secure against change.

Kilmann (1988) discusses why serious change interventions fail in most organisations. If a manager does not have the proper styles and skills to manage complex problems, group decisions will be made either by majority rule or by the dictates of the manager himself. If the culture pressures members to withhold information thus allowing individuals to protect their own territory then again the quality of decisions will be adversely affected. From the strategy viewpoint the organisation could be rooted in false assumptions about the consumer and the firm's competitors and consequently group decisions may well move in the wrong direction. If a structure of the organisation makes it difficult for members in various departments to join together on decisions that affect them all, then the expertise and information needed to make such high quality decisions will simply not surface within the group. Furthermore if the reward system encourages individual effort instead of team effort members will not be motivated to commit themselves to the group decision making processes in the first place. Indeed only if an organisation is composed of well functioning teams with minimal barriers to success in each category will it have a chance to bring off major significant change in the area of teamwork. Kilmann (1988) proposes a five stage model to assist organisations with major change as follows : initiating the programme, diagnosing the problems (where the barriers to success are located), scheduling the tracks, implementing the tracks and evaluating the results.

Schein (1993) places great emphasis on the directional input from a steering committee and also on the role of task forces as well as the leadership skills of the senior management in creating the correct conditions for major organisational change. Schein (1993) stressed that leaders must be open to learning new things and particularly must accept the responsibility of creating (i) the culture of change and (ii) a key change management group within the organisation, which he terms a steering committee. This committee must learn the new norms it needs to spread through the organisation and then set

about spreading those in a systematic way; in addition the steering committee must design the organisation learning processes. Task forces for Schein (1993) must learn how to learn (not just what to learn) and following this must create the specific change programmes that will ultimately be monitored and reviewed by the steering committee.

Jick (1995) indicates that there is no easy formula for accelerating change and getting humans to break habits and patterns but nevertheless emphasises that there are three areas that present the biggest opportunities for accelerating change and reducing bottlenecks, as follows:

1. The acceleration of people's understanding of and commitment to change, wherein he emphasises that organisations need to give much more attention than usual to developing an understanding of the required changes within individuals and teams. This to the extent that it should develop within those individuals and teams a strong commitment to making the change happen.
2. Accelerate the action and experimentation aspects of change wherein he talks of the responsibilities of the leaders to ensure that they are committed to the change and that they exercise good role modeling behaviours; additionally he stresses that it is important to get a number of even small actions going so that one can, as it were, create '1,000 points of light'.
3. Accelerating momentum, through keeping the spotlight on brightly and relentlessly wherein he emphasises that managers must put the spotlight on key levers of change and successes to the point whereby they become models and champions of future change.

Beckard & Harris (1987) present a relatively simple and straight forward framework where they suggest that large scale complex organisational change can be conceptualised as movement from a present state to a future state. However they emphasise that the most important phase is the in

between one that they label transition state. Organisation change then for Beckard & Harris (1987) is a matter of assessing the current organisational situation, determining the desired future and both planning ways to reach that desired future and implementing the plans.

Burnes & James (1995) present a cogent argument that the most appropriate approach to managing any form of organisational change has to be judged in the context of the organisation in which it is to be introduced rather than there being a generally applicable approach to change which is appropriate for all organisations at all times.

Maurer (1996) suggests that management teams approaching change do not sufficiently take into account the resistance throughout the organisation. He emphasises that those directing the change need to understand resistance much more deeply than heretofore and in fact in their words 'put resistance to work for you'. Maurer (1996) stressed that, whilst maintaining a clear focus on one's goal, one must embrace resistance, listen with an open mind to the common fears and interests of those resisting the change and build on those commonalities to find a solution that addresses the concerns of all parties.

A number of these researchers (Beer et al 1990, Kilmann 1988, Schein 1993 and Goodstein & Burke 1991) have all emphasised the important leadership role played by management in energising and conducting any major change programme. The importance of the leadership role in the process of change has already been highlighted earlier in our treatment of the literature review of the role of management.

2.8 THE GAP FOR THIS RESEARCH

The literature as examined above provides opportunity to assert that a clear gap exists for research work to be carried out in organisations that have to a large extent been ignored to date, that is *mature* organisations in *low-medium technology* environments which are *unionised* and have a *poor history of*

industrial relations. My focus then will be on these four criteria as I search for support within the literature for the existence of such a gap.

In attempting to justify that such a gap actually exists I would like to examine:

- (i) those researchers who have identified the organisations in which they were conducting their research, and
- (ii) those researchers who have commented on one or more of the criteria above when describing the organisations in which they conducted their research

Once this examination is completed I will, in conclusion, focus on the idea that no research to date appears to have focused on organisations embodying this *matched-set* of the above four criteria.

Much of the early work in the subject area of empowered teams, as exemplified below in the work of Bennis & Nanus (1985), Fisher (1986) and Lawler (1988), has been focused on blue-chip type organisations. Bennis & Nanus (1985), in their ground breaking study of leadership, focused on how successful leaders empowered others and their research was carried out in organisations such as: Frit-o-lay, CBS, Hewlett-Packard, Polaroid, Sears Roebuck & Co, RCA, UCLA, Apple and Beech Aircraft. Fisher (1986) examined management roles in participative management systems; he focused on Tektronix and Proctor & Gamble in particular but also used data from Cummins Engine, General Foods, Clark Equipment, Mead, Weyerhaeuser and Apple. In his study of team based approaches to involvement strategies Lawler (1988) focused on autonomous and semi-autonomous work teams; organisations in which he conducted this research included Proctor & Gamble and Mead.

In looking at issues such as Job Design, Pay Systems, Organisation Structure, Training and Management Style, among others, within the 'new plant revolution re-visited' and the 'high-involvement organisation' Lawler (1990 & 1992) focused on organisations such as: Proctor & Gamble, Mead,

TRW Inc., Sherwin-Williams, Cummins Engine, General Foods, Motorola, IBM and the Eaton Corporation. The work of the same researcher, Lawler (1991), when updating his 'new plant generation approach' focused on management practices at Digital, Volvo, Polaroid and again at Proctor & Gamble, IBM, Mead and TRW Inc.

Rayner (1993), when focusing on high performing work systems in attempting to identify how to achieve a truly empowered organisation, placed his research attention within Eastman Kodak, Northern Telecom, Goodyear, Tektronix, Allied Signal, IBM Canada, Proctor & Gamble, Sequent Computer and Rockwell. A study of organisational context and team design, with particular reference to beliefs of team efficacy, was carried out by May & Schwoerer (1994); they strove to identify the ingredients of team effectiveness in organisations such as: Corning, AE Staley, Square-D, Aid Association for Lutherans (an insurance organisation), Fisher Controls, Cummins Engine, Digital, General Foods and Diamond Fibre Products.

Jick (1995) in devising key steps in change processes similar to those to be studied in this current research gathered his data in organisations such as: General Electric, Xerox, Eli Lilly, Alcatel Bell, Cadbury Schweppes, Coca-Cola and AT&T. In his study of the potential pitfalls for empowerment programmes and participative management Heckscher (1995) included the following organisations: General Motors, AT&T, Pitney-Bowes, Honeywell, DuPont and IBM. Ford & Fottler (1995) studied the degrees of empowerment in General Motors, Chaparral Steel and WL Gore & Associates. Further research carried out by De Meuse & Bergmann (1996) focused again on the use of empowerment in giant corporations such as Boeing, Caterpillar, Ford, General Electric, Proctor & Gamble and Hewlett-Packard.

Much of the research cited above focuses then on blue-chip type 'glamorous' organisations and a summary of this research can be observed within Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1: Summary: Sector of Focused Research

Researcher	Sector of Focus Organisation
Bennis & Nanus (1985)	Total of 8 organisations; over 80% within the high-technology sector
Fisher (1986)	Total of 8 organisations; all within the high-technology sector.
Lawler (1988)	2 organisations; medium to high-technology sectors.
Lawler (1990 & 1992)	Total of 9 organisations; over 80% within the high-technology sector.
Lawler (1991)	Total of 7 organisations; all within the high-technology sector.
Rayner (1993)	Total of 9 organisations; over 80% within the high-technology sector.
May & Schwoerer (1994)	Total of 9 organisations; over 75% within the high-technology sector.
Jick (1995)	Total of 7 organisations; all within the high-technology sector.
Heckscher (1995)	Total of 6 organisations; all within the high-technology sector.
Ford & Fottler (1995)	3 organisations; over 60% within the high-technology sector.
De Meuse & Bergmann (1996)	Total of 6 organisations; all within the high-technology sector.

It should also be noted that a number of the above listed focused organisations have been studied by different researchers. This repetition can be observed from Table 2.2 below which indicates those organisations that are mentioned on more than one occasion as focus organisations by the researchers that have been listed above.

Table 2.2: Focus Organisations of various researchers

Organisation	Number of occasions on which the organisation is the focus of research by the listed researchers
Proctor & Gamble	5
Mead	4
Cummins Engine	3
General Foods	3
IBM	3
Hewlett-Packard	2
Polaroid	2
Tektronix	2
General Motors	2
Digital	2
TRW Inc.	2

So much then for the research that focuses on large well-known blue-chip type organisations in the high-technology sector, many of which are repeated as focus organisations in more than one piece of research; I would now like to turn my attention to the more specific gap that has been identified for this research.

It is our contention that a gap exists within the literature insofar as research has not to date focused on a matched-set of organisations with the following criteria:

Mature organisations

Low-medium technology

Unionised, and

Poor industrial relations history

We will examine each of the criteria in turn to see if the literature can support this contention; we initially follow this line of search even though the focus of our own study will be on a **matched-set** where each of the four are embodied in each of our case-study organisations.

With respect then to **mature organisations** we have found that most of the research fails to categorise whether or not the organisations under study are 'mature', which in our meaning would imply that they are more than 30 years in existence. One certainly would have a 'feeling' that the majority of organisations studied, as evidenced by those listed above, are mature but at no stage do the researchers seem to quantify this element of the context for their research. On the other hand, we have found three researchers who do quantify the age of the organisations within their study, as shown below, and each of these researchers focused on organisations that are not mature within our meaning of the term.

Kennedy (1996), in stressing that the actions of management within empowered initiatives are not the same as those of leadership, locates his research within two organisations – the GM-NUMMI plant at Fremont and in Atlantic Richfield, the first of which was well under 30 years in existence at the time of study. Manz & Sims (1987) carried out extensive research in a single case-study situation within an organisation that was less than 20 years old; this organisation was in a medium-technology environment and had operated on a semi-autonomous teambased approach from the outset. The focus of their research was on the 'un-leader' where they gathered organisation member views of the leadership behaviours of the managers/leaders of the semi-autonomous work teams. Manz, Keating & Donnellon (1990) focused their research on the managerial transition required in an organisational change to self-management. Their research was conducted in a single case-study organisation that was a US non-unionised wholesale distributor and

retailer of architectural, engineering and commercial art equipment and furnishings.

Table 2.3 below summarises the position with respect to our analysis of the literature related to our first criteria – organisational maturity.

Table 2.3: Summary of organisational maturity focus

Researcher	Focus organisations
Kennedy (1996)	GM-NUMMI (less than 30 years old) and Atlantic Richfield.
Manz & Sims (1987)	Unnamed manufacturing organisation of less than 20 years.
Manz Keating & Donnellon (1990)	Unnamed organisation of less than 30 years operating in wholesale distribution and retailing.

We can conclude from our brief examination of the organisational ‘maturity’ criteria above that very few researchers quantified the age of the organisations under study; those that we found to have done so emphasised that they were researching organisations that were not ‘mature’.

The second of our criteria is that of **technology** where it is our contention that most of the research to date has been conducted in high-technology organisations; thus our assertion that there is a gap at the low-medium technology level. Our examination of the literature again finds that many researchers do not formally allude to the technology level of the organisations that they are studying. [Notwithstanding this statement we did find that, as reported earlier, those researchers who had made known the organisations in which they had carried out their research permitted us to compile an impressive list of blue-chip organisations – see summaries at Table 2.1 and 2.2. We should now note when examining the technology criteria that almost all of those organisations were in fact in the high-technology sector.] The

researchers who did make reference to this criteria, and who are listed below, referred to the fact that they were carrying out their research in high-technology organisations.

Ancona & Caldwell (1992) focused their research on communication and other external activities in 38 new-product empowered teams within high-technology companies. Argyris (1998) carried out his research in Smith Kline, certainly a high-technology organisation. Barry (1991), when studying bossless teams in 15 organisations, identified that more than three-quarters of them were in the high-technology sector. Denton (1996) reports on an American Electronics Association Survey which focused on in excess of 300 high-technology electronics firms; the analysis of Denton (1996) was on the process of change in the context of team based approaches to the issue of quality. Drought & McLaughlin (1995) carried out their research in a single organisation case-study – the Bank of Boston – and focused on the high-technology area of computer assisted telecentres as the Bank attempted to empower customer service teams.

Continuing our technology focused examination Bushe et al (1996) charted the progress of empowered teams in a single high-technology organisation case-study, which they named TechCo. Kanter (1989a) argued that the old managerial order has changed and that there is a massive move towards distributed leadership and empowerment; she gathered the evidence for these assertions in high-technology organisations such as: American Express, Pacific National Bank, Digital, Bank One, Alcan, IBM and Eastman Kodak – all of which are described as being in the high-technology sector. Katzenbach & Smith (1993a) strove to find what makes teams work best, why different levels of performance exist and what top management can do to enhance the effectiveness of teams; they carried out their research in organisations such as: Burlington Northern, Hewlett-Packard, Knight-Ridder, Motorola, Operation Desert Storm and Eli Lilly – all of which are in the high-technology sector.

Our summary of the researchers who focused on high-technology organisations can be seen at Table 2.4 below:

Table 2.4: Summary of Technology focus

	Focus Organisations
Ancona & Caldwell (1992)	38 teams in high-technology organisations
Argyris (1998)	Smith Kline
Barry (1991)	More than 75% of the research organisations were in the high-technology sector.
Denton (1996)	High-technology electronic firms within an American Electronics Association Survey.
Drought & McLaughlin (1995)	Bank of Boston.
Bushe et al (1996)	High-technology organisation – TechCo
Kanter (1989a)	Total of 7 organisations; all in the high-technology sector.
Katzenbach & Smith (1993a)	Total of 6 organisations; over 80% in the high-technology sector.

It is possible then to conclude from an examination of the literature that again most of the researchers failed to identify the ‘technology’ level of the organisations under their study; our examination also convinces us that those who did identify their organisations were almost exclusively researching in the high-technology sector.

This statement is further collaborated by the earlier reported research, summarised at Table 2.1, research that did not identify the technology level of the organisations named but which organisations are predominantly in the high-technology sector.

The third criteria within our matched-set was **unionisation** and it is to this that we now turn. As for the earlier criteria, we again find that many researchers do not indicate whether or not the organisations they were studying were

unionised. We do find that those who did highlight this criteria were invariably indicating that the organisations were non-unionised, as shown in the research below.

Fulford & Enz (1995) studied the impact of empowerment on service workers within the hospitality industry and concentrated their research on 30 non-unionised private clubs in an executive education programme at a North Eastern University. Klein (1984) examined 8 manufacturing plants of four multi-national manufacturing companies in their search for the reasons for Supervisors' resistance to employee involvement in team based initiatives; 45% of the manufacturing plants were non-unionised. The research of Manz, Keating & Donnellon (1990) and that of Manz & Sims (1987), both earlier referred to under the 'mature' criteria, were carried out in non-unionised contexts. A non-unionised single organisation case-study was the setting for the research of Wall et al (1986) who focused on a sugar-confectionery company in England; their study was directed at identifying the contribution to the organisation of self-managed work teams.

Our summary of the unionisation criteria can be observed at Table 2.5 below:

Table 2.5: Summary of Unionisation focus

Researchers	Focus Organisations
Fulford & Enz (1995)	30 non-unionised private clubs
Klein (1984)	Total of 8 manufacturing companies; 45% of which were non-unionised
Manz, Keating & Donnellon (1990)	Non-unionised wholesale distributor and retailer.
Manz & Sims (1987)	Non-unionised medium-technology organisation.
Wall et al (1986)	Non-unionised sugar-confectionery plant.

Again we can see from this examination of the 'unionisation' criteria that many of the researchers do not allude to this issue; those that do invariably focus on organisations that are non-unionised.

Our fourth and final criteria was the quality of **industrial relations** within the organisations under study and it must again be pointed out that most researchers do not identify where the organisations under their study sit on this dimension of the criteria; those that did invariably indicated that the quality of industrial relations was good, as shown in the research below.

In examining the empowerment of service workers in a single organisation case-study at Harvester Restaurants, Ashness & Lashley (1995) indicate that good industrial relations existed prior to and during the initiative under study. Barry (1991), when researching distributed leadership across fifteen organisations, focused on organisations without any labour problems. When studying what they term 'true readiness to empower' in a single organisation case-study Bergmann & De Meuse (1996) researched in an organisation that was unionised but within which there were stable labour relationships. Bowen & Lawler (1992) studied the empowerment of service workers in organisations with relatively good labour relations, organisations such as – McDonald's, American Airlines, SAS, Marriott, Federal Express, Disney, Club Med and UPS. An analysis of the success of empowered approaches was carried out by Ehin (1995) at Johnsonville Sausage, Semco of Brazil and Asea Brown Boveri, all of which enjoyed good labour relations.

Goodstein & Burke (1991) in studying a single organisation case-study of change at British Airways focused on the change of moving to customer-facing teams; British Airways at the time had a history of good industrial relations. Another single unit case-study, focused on the part played by a teamwork initiative in a major productivity drive, was studied by Haasen (1996); the organisation – the Eisenbach GMBH Opel plant – enjoyed good labour relations. Piczak & Hauser (1996) searched for how well an empowerment initiative was being implemented within a single organisation case-study located at the Mississauga, Ontario plant of Boart Longyear,

where again good labour relations existed. Finally, in concluding that empowerment is not magic but requires a few relatively simple steps and a lot of persistence, Randolph (1995) focused on 10 organisations across the sectors of Utilities, Financial Services, Healthcare, Information Technology and Entertainment; all of the organisations within his study enjoyed good labour relations.

Our summary of the researchers who focused on industrial/labour relations can be seen at Table 2.6 below:

Table 2.6: Summary of industrial/labour relations focus

Researchers	Focus Organisations
Ashness & Lashley (1995)	Harvester Restaurants – good industrial relations
Barry (1991)	15 organisations – all with good labour relations
Bergmann & De Meuse (1996)	Unnamed organisation – stable labour relations.
Bowen & Lawler (1992)	Total of 8 organisations; all with good labour relations.
Ehin (1995)	Total of 3 organisations; all with good labour relations.
Goodstein & Burke (1991)	Single organisation case-study at British Airways which at the time had a history of good industrial relations.
Haasen (1996)	Eisenbach GMBH Opel plant - good labour relations
Piczak & Hauser (1996)	Boart Longyear – good labour relations.
Randolph (1995)	10 organisations across varied sectors, all with good labour relations.

Thus again we can conclude on this dimension of 'industrial relations' that most researchers do not comment on the quality of industrial relations, but those that do have carried out their research predominantly in organisations that have been on a continuum from no labour relations problems to a history of good industrial relations.

In looking at the focus organisations across the four criteria it should be noted that seven of those focus organisations are ones that have already been highlighted as focus organisations at Table 2.1 and 2.2, namely Digital, IBM, Eastman Kodak, Hewlett-Packard, Motorola, American Express and Eli Lilly.

In conclusion of this section of our examination of the literature across the four criteria it has been shown that most researchers have failed to quantify where the organisations they were studying stood with respect to each of the criteria in turn. We have also seen that those researchers who did locate the position of their focus organisations on some dimension of these criteria did so by identifying that such organisations were on the opposite end of the dimension than will be the focus of this study. This then, on the face of the limited information available when looking at each of the criteria *separately*, seems to indicate that there decidedly is a gap for this research.

However the argument is broader than the above summary insofar as the attention within this proposed research is on a 'matched-set', that is on organisations embodying all four of the criteria. In no instance within the literature have we found a situation where the proposed matched-set is focused upon in any one study. Yes a number of different studies highlighted one or two of the criteria but none focused on all four. It is thus this argument of the matched-set not existing in any study that gives the strongest weight to our assertion that a gap exists for the study of the process of implementing teamworking initiatives within mature organisations in low-medium technology environments, which organisations are unionised and have had a poor history of industrial relations.

It is then to this gap in the literature that we turn to find the context for the research within this thesis. We propose therefore looking at the process of introducing empowered teams in contexts that are quite different from those studied heretofore and which add the challenge of introducing a radically altered way of managing the organisation into a set of relationships that have been quite troublesome in the recent past.

We will thus now turn to examine some 'context' issues with a view to ascertaining whether or not some of the existing 'context' literature can enlighten our approach to the research in hand.

2.9 ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Ghoshal & Bartlett (1994) strongly suggest that organisational context is created and renewed through tangible and concrete management actions. The context, in turn, influences the actions of all those within the company. The development of their thought out of the longitudinal case-study of one organisation is interesting to us from the viewpoint of their determination that context influences actions. Ghoshal & Bartlett (1994) have shown that a key part of any major organisational change will then be to attempt to alter the organisational context so that the actions of those within the company can also be altered. They posit that shaping the organisational context is a central task of senior management in an organisation. They identified discipline, stretch, trust and support as the primary dimensions of organisational context and described how each of these dimensions in turn influenced the levels of individual initiative, mutual co-operation and collective learning within companies.

In a later study Ghoshal & Bartlett (1995) traced common threads in the transformation processes of successful companies– simplification, integration and re-generation. In an extensive study they discovered that carefully phased or sequenced processes were more effective than sudden frenzied commitment to the latest management fad. Along with a phased approach the successful companies recognised that the real challenge in transformation was to change peoples attitudes, assumptions and behaviours. Ghoshal & Bartlett (1995) found that only when managers committed to the long term effort required to establish the four characteristics necessary for a new behavioural context above were they able to create companies that could renew themselves.

Lawler & Mohrman (1987) examined the context that existed for organisations that had union representation and suggested that most relationships were in actual fact adversarial, with unions consistently taking the position that this is the best way to accomplish their objectives. Many management teams in

their view failed to break out of this adversarial relationship. Lawler & Mohrman (1987) however suggest that both management teams and trade union representatives need to work harder at collaborative approaches and ensuring that the context within organisations changes towards more collaborative approaches. That, in their view, is only going to happen if both sides learn to accept a new understanding of one another's positions, an understanding that recognises the other's view or aspirations and includes them in their search for collaboration.

Manz & Sims (1987) on analysing the role of external leaders in relation to self-managed work teams suggest that the uniqueness of the self-management leader's role lies in the commitment to the philosophy that teams should successfully complete necessary leadership functions for themselves. The dominant role of the external leaders then is to lead others to lead themselves. The creation of such a context is in the view of Manz & Sims (1987) quite different from the context in which the traditional role of leader was exercised.

The issue of altering the context in one case-study in Germany has been looked at by Murakami (1995) who studied the introduction of teamwork into a unionised motor assembly plant at Opel – Eisenach in Germany. In working through the works council and concluding a teamworking agreement with the unions management were able to create a team concept that was beneficial to both sides, despite the fact that teamworking had failed at the plant some 15 years earlier. A key element within this success, as reported by Murakami (1995), was the team members' ability to select what they called a team speaker who became the principal communicator from the team to the 'outside world'. On the basis of it being a single case-study it is not possible to draw many firm conclusions from Murakami's (1995) work but it is one of the few studies unearthed by this researcher which focus on attempting to alter a context in a unionised environment.

A second single organisation case-study in a union environment was undertaken by Wilms, Hardcastle & Zell (1994) when they studied the NUMMI

plant in Fremont, California. NUMMI was a joint venture between Toyota and General Motors and was located in a plant that had been closed down some two years earlier because of, among other things, poor productivity. While employing a number of the former staff the management and unions agreed a deliberate set of policies and practices that were aimed at establishing a new context exhibiting much of what has earlier been described within the ideas of Ghoshal & Bartlett (1996). Wilms, Hardcastle & Zell (1994) reported that as the company worked to fuse the Japanese and American beliefs into a single unit, it discovered principles without which little progress could have been made as follows :

- Both management and labour recognised that their futures were interdependent, committing them to a mutual vision
- Employees felt secure and trusted assurances that they would be treated fairly, enabling them to become contributors
- The production system formed interdependent relationships throughout the plant, helping to create a healthy work environment
- The production system has managed to transform the stress and conflict of everyday life into trust and mutual respect.

As reported by Wilms, Hardcastle & Zell (1994) management at NUMMI succeeded in living out these principles to such an extent that they greatly altered the context and culture from the prevailing traditional adversarial one to a radically altered context of co-operation and collaboration; the results of which were seen in greatly increased productivity and quality.

The research of Lawler and Mohrman (1987), Murakami (1995) and Wilms, Hardcastle & Zell (1994) does then address some issues that are relevant to our research. However their work is not specifically aimed at the process of introducing teamworking into organisations that are troublesome from the

employee relations/industrial relations climate viewpoint. It is therefore this inadequacy within the literature that motivates us to tackle this difficult area as the main focus of this research.

2.10 CONCLUSION

This research has focused on mature organisations in low/medium technology that are unionised and have had a poor industrial relations history; this has been the focus because we have determined that the gap described above exists in the literature in respect of the process of introducing empowered teams in such organisations.

There is extensive literature on empowerment as an entity but very little on empowerment as a process. It is proposed in this research that we will address empowerment as an evolutionary process and search for critical implementation processes in the particular contexts described above. It is to be hoped that we will be able to glean whether or not these processes are important in these contexts and perhaps as a further extension which are the critical ones.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODS

Within this chapter we will consider:

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

3.2.1 Philosophical Perspective

3.2.2 Practical Perspective

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.4 FIELD WORK PROCESS

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

3.6 RESEARCHER/CONSULTANT ROLE

3 1 INTRODUCTION

The search for a suitable methodological approach determined that methods along the nomothetic-ideographic spectrum should be examined.

At one end of this spectrum nomothetic methods offer the opportunity for a deductive approach using quantitative data in what is usually a highly structured method. At the other end are ideographic methods which offer the researcher the opportunity of an inductive approach using qualitative data with a minimum of structure.

Within this chapter we will explore the above options within the context of a clear philosophical and practical perspective. This will lead us towards a choice of design most particularly relevant to our enquiry, which in nature sets out to reach an in-depth understanding of process and sentiments expressed by participants in that process.

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

For this study there were two influences that affected the decision concerning research strategy. The first was the manner in which we view the world from a philosophical viewpoint and second were the practical pragmatic issues concerning the particular work under study. This basis for the selection of a research strategy is supported by Blaikie (1993). Morgan & Smirnich (1980) have also stated that "the choice and adequacy of a method embodies a variety of assumptions regarding the nature of knowledge and the methods used through which that knowledge can be obtained, as well as a set of assumptions about the nature of the phenomena to be examined".

This research studies the process of introducing empowerment/self-managed work teams (SMWT's) into five particular organisations. The research strategy chosen is based therefore on a view of the world which is 'realist' and I will use qualitative methods of enquiry.

Within the next section I will first deal with the thought process that brought me to the realist view.

3.2.1 Philosophical Perspective

There are two broad philosophical traditions from which research methods are generally derived, positivism and phenomenology. In the first instance positivism believes that the social world exists externally from the researcher and the properties of this world could be measured through objective methods rather than subjectively through sensation, reflection or intuition. As one can see from this statement there are a couple of assumptions therein:

- (i) that reality is external and objective, and
- (ii) that knowledge is only of significance if it has been based on observations of this external reality in an objective manner.

Easterby-Smith et al (1991) inform us that positivism arose as a reaction to metaphysical speculation and put forward a number of implications for methodology when one views the world from a positivist stance, as follows:

1. *independent*: the observer is independent of what is being observed;
2. *value freedom*: the choice of what to study, and how to study it, can be determined by objective criteria rather than by human beliefs and interests;
3. *causality*: the aim of social science should be to identify causal explanations and fundamental laws that explain regularities in human and social behaviour;
4. *hypothetico-deductive*: science proceeds through a process hypothesising fundamental laws and then deducing what kinds of observations will demonstrate the truth or falsity of these hypotheses;
5. *operationalisation*: concepts need to be operationalised in a way which enables facts to be measured quantitatively;
6. *reductionism*: problems as a whole are better understood if they are reduced into the simplest possible elements;
7. *generalism*: in order to be able to generalise about regularities in human and social behaviour it is necessary to select samples of sufficient size;
8. *cross-section analysis*: such regularities can most easily be identified by making comparisons of variations across the samples.

Within the past fifty years some social researchers have become dissatisfied with the positivist approach in respect of social studies. Thus a new approach that has been termed 'phenomenology' has emerged and is quite different from positivism. The starting point for this approach is that reality is socially constructed and that it is thus more difficult to objectively observe it than if it were in a laboratory. Researchers using a phenomenological approach therefore strive to make sense of social situations rather than just observe and record in a quantitative manner.

Easterby-Smith et al (1991) contrast some key features of the positivist and phenomenological paradigms, as shown below:

	Positivist Paradigm	Phenomenological Paradigm
Basic beliefs:	The world is external and objective Observer is independent Science is value-free	The world is socially constructed and subjective Observer is part of what is being observed Science is driven by human interest
Researcher should:	Focus on facts Look for causality and fundamental laws	Focus on meanings Try to understand what is happening
Researcher should:	Reduce phenomena to simplest elements Formulate hypotheses and then test them	Look at the totality of each situation Develop ideas through induction from data
Preferred methods:	Operationalising concepts so that they can be measured Taking large samples	Using multiple methods to establish different views of phenomena Small samples investigated in depth or over time

Most early social researchers adopted a positivist stance as it was believed that such an approach was the only true scientific method. Positivism however fails the social researcher insofar as it assumes that the social world is ontologically the same as the natural world; it thereby ignores the perspective of social actors themselves and the meanings they put on things. Later researchers have challenged this assumption and have indicated that it is difficult to separate social animals from their setting, transport them into a laboratory setting and study them as if they cannot have an effect on the field of study or an interaction with the researcher.

How then are we to gain knowledge about this world of human interaction? Certainly not in any perfect way by the positivist route. However we must carry out some interaction with the world if we are to gain knowledge from it; this raises the issue of whether we approach this search as interpretivists or realists.

One could readily agree with interpretivists as they argue that the meanings human beings give to their experience and understanding are an important part of social reality; also with their views that “knowledge” is a social and historical product and that “facts” come to us laden with theory (Miles & Huberman, 1994). However the view of interpretivists that objective reality does not in fact exist in itself (Neuman, 1994) is difficult to accept.

Realism, particularly the transcendental version described by Miles & Huberman (1994), transcends the interpretivist view and links it to the positivist view. Thus for Miles & Huberman (1994) realism suggests that “social phenomena exist not only in the mind but also in the objective world and that some lawful and reasonably stable relationships are to be found among them” (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

In our research therefore the methodological point chosen is one of realism. This because it confronts:

- (a) positivism for its neglect of social actors' meanings, and
- (b) interpretivists' view that no objective reality exists.

It therefore presents a more acceptable philosophical position from which to search for a particular methodology for this study.

However in searching for the most suitable methodology one must also examine issues from a practical perspective and it is to this that we now turn our attention.

3.2.2 Practical Perspective

From a practical viewpoint we have seen earlier that within the literature review there is a paucity of evidence about how the implementation of empowered teams actually works in organisations. There are several pieces of writing that relate to aspirations rather than specific results. Thus organisations are asked to travel hopefully, as it were, without detailed research on hazards or principles which would be of assistance to such organisations; this lack of direction from a research base is particularly evident in respect of the type of organisations that we have under study in this research.

As earlier stated this study is focused on the process of introducing empowered teams/ SMWT's. Building on the work of earlier researchers and their definitions of empowerment, as outlined earlier in my Literature Review, my working definition of these empowered teams is:

“Teams and/or team members to whom an organisation progressively devolves some meaningful work responsibilities thereby providing opportunity for the personal growth of said staff”.

Within the context of examining the process of introducing empowered teams in a number of organisations we need to be clear about the practical difficulties of gathering information on a topic such as this.

The most relevant information for this research will be the perceptions of individuals within these teams and on the fringes of the teams. This is so mainly because they are the individuals who are working in the real world under research and who are interacting with one another on a daily basis; thus in an ongoing manner they are forming perceptions about the organisation's journey towards empowered teams.

The evidence of these individuals in relation to their perception of key events is critical as the particular focus of this research is aimed at answering the research question:

What are the critical organisational enabling/disabling conditions that affect the process of introducing empowered teams into organisations with a poor industrial relations history?

In the light of this research question our search for data will be within the statements of the principal actors mainly on their perceptions of events and behaviours leading to progress/non-progress with the implementation of empowered teams in their organisations.

Neuman (1994) has argued that "qualitative methods are frequently used to address exploratory research questions because they tend to be more open to using a range of evidence in discovering new issues".

Gill & Johnson (1991) also point out that qualitative methods are "more likely to produce valid findings in an under-researched area". Because of the fact that this area currently under study is quite an under-researched area (particularly with our focus on organisations with a poor industrial relations history) it is believed that a qualitative method of data gathering will be more suitable to this topic; also it is likely that new issues will emerge through the data gathering phase.

A further reason for our concentration on qualitative methods is the fact that, as observed by Okely (1994), "people's beliefs, values and actions are not

necessarily revealed by head counting.” Gill & Johnson (1991) state that the use of quantitative methods could impede rather than aid the research process when one is trying to understand data through the perceptions of others.

Other researchers such as Silverman (1993) and Eisenhardt (1989) point out that qualitative methods may be particularly useful when participants' views on the research topic are relatively unformed. This is a similar idea to that put forward by Lofland & Lofland (1984) when they suggest that qualitative methods are most likely to be extremely useful when addressing the problems of exploring “inarticulated meanings”.

Another respected researcher Mintzberg (1979) suggests that organisational research has paid dearly for its' historical obsession with quantitative rigour in the choice of methodology.

The above considerations from a practical as well as the earlier philosophical perspective steer us towards realism and quantitative approaches. It is our belief that such a qualitative approach will best suit our wish to penetrate respondent views in the particular contexts under study.

We now turn our attention to issues of design.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Yin (1994) suggests that we could choose as a research strategy any one and/or combination of those listed below:

- (a) *experiment*
- (b) *survey*
- (c) *archival analysis*
- (d) *history*
- (e) *case-study.*

He suggests that experiment, history and case-study above have a research question form similar to “how” and “why”; survey and archival analysis above have research questions similar to “who, what, where, how many and how much”. With respect to the control that is required over behavioural events he indicates that experiment does require control, being an experimental design, but that survey archival analysis, history and case-study strategies do not require control. Finally, in respect of the focus on contemporary events he indicates that experiment, survey and case-study above do require one to focus on contemporary events whereas archival analysis may so do and history does not require one so to do.

In respect of any particular piece of research, choice of strategy will depend on the type of research question posed, the level of control the researcher has over the issues to be researched and the extent to which the research focuses on contemporary as opposed to historical events or data.

This research will focus on a form of question that is mainly aimed at how and why scenarios where the researcher does not require control over the events being researched and the focus is primarily on contemporary events. Thus following the analysis of Yin (1994) it appears that (a) *experiment* would be ruled out even though the formal research question suits and the focus being on contemporary events suits but the level of control required is not within the ambit of this research. (b) *survey* is suitable in respect of control and it being contemporaneous but does require more extensive research questions. (c) *archival analysis* requires more extensive questions as in survey methods above, again does not require control but has a strong focus on non-contemporaneous events. (d) *history* has the focus on how and why questions, requires no control but is also focused on non-contemporaneous events. (e) *case-study* is focused on how and why scenarios, does not require control over behavioural events and does focus on contemporaneous issues. Accordingly, following Yin’s framework above, the case-study method of research would appear as a most suitable strategy for the current research.

The question then arose as to the number of cases that should be within the ambit of this research. I wished to have more than one or two but did not want to have so many that the emerging data was unmanageable. I also believed that I needed to aspire towards some breadth but not to such a degree that it would prevent a good depth of analysis. In the selection of the number of case-studies I was guided by Eisenhardt (1989) who postulates that, although there is no ideal number of cases, a number between four and ten usually works well. She says that with fewer than four it is often difficult to generate theory with much complexity and with more than ten it quickly becomes difficult to cope with the complexity and volume of the data. The choice for this study was to look at five case-study organisations which would permit consistency with Eisenhardt's (1989) recommendation and also meets the criteria mentioned above.

Within the case-study method one must also decide whether or not one is going to have a *cross-sectional* or *longitudinal view*. Due principally to the fact that the current research project aims to look at the process of empowered teams over a period of time a longitudinal approach was the preferred option. Data is presented, therefore, in three of our case-study organisations in such a longitudinal mode. Although so intended in the other two, the data was collected at one point in time due to circumstances outside the control of this researcher; in one instance (Portco) a Trade Union request that the research be discontinued was honoured and in the second the organisation, in an earth-shattering move for the employees, actually closed down some two months after the collection of the data presented within this project.

3.4 FIELD WORK PROCESS

A key issue now presents itself for this research in relation to which comes first - the theory or the data. In a traditional experimental scientific approach the hypothesis would be formed after an extensive literature review but certainly prior to any interaction with the subject under research. Thus in such a mode it is much more likely that the researcher will make contact with the data in a laboratory or living world scenario after the hypothesis has been

formed; therefore the data gathering and analysis are to see whether or not the hypothesis stands up in the laboratory and/or real world.

An alternative approach, which in fact is being used in this study, permits the researcher to undertake an initial less exhaustive literature search which would allow the formulation of a research question and the establishment of boundaries around the research. Then without proceeding to the formulation of any hypothesis the researcher will gather data live in the field within the subject area under study. Such a method allows data to be gathered without the constraints of having to prove or disprove a theory and in fact will allow an analysis of the data to progress whilst theory is emerging from the data with clear lines of evidence into the data. This latter approach was first pioneered by Glaser & Strauss (1967) and has since then been termed "Grounded Theory".

I have chosen for the current research an approach similar to grounded theory (but not pure grounded theory a la Glaser & Strauss, 1967) for the current research project mainly because it is my belief that:

- (a) such a method is more suited to social research than the scientific method as it allows the theory to be shaped by the data gathered in our case-study organisations, and
- (b) as the field under study is reasonably new and therefore no great analysis of intervening variables has taken place, a form of grounded theory will be used so as to allow the importance of such intervening variables to 'emerge' as the data is both collected and analysed.

All research methodologies have built-in challenges in respect of validity, reliability and verification. Phenomenological approaches using a grounded theory method must pay particular attention to these problems and find

manufacturing, peat production and port management. Such atypicality will ultimately somewhat aid the generalisability of the conclusions of this study, a topic to which I shall return later.

A difficulty arises in respect of reliability as the ultimate test of which is whether or not similar observations could be made by different researchers on different occasions. Due to the nature of this research project it was not possible to involve other researchers at the data gathering phase, mainly due to the confidentiality of the issues being researched and their sensitivity to the management teams and team members in question. In addition it will be difficult to firmly assert that similar observations could be made by different researchers at different times; this on the basis that we are studying a moving reality. The setting will in fact never be the same again; it has come and past. Other researchers could historically check whether or not accurate information was taken from the case organisations but they could not in fact fully 'verify' similar observations. We will however return to this issue of reliability when commenting on the analysis of the data at a later stage in this review of our methods.

A further issue that required our attention at an early stage in planning the project was the generalisability of the conclusions which according to Yin (1994) is the issue of external validity. It is particularly difficult for a research study using a grounded theory approach and with a reasonably small number of case-study sites to ensure external validity; this study suffers from some of those disadvantages. However, as argued by Yin (1994), it may be that a research project only claims external validity in the sense that the work which has a narrow base may be the vehicle by which other cases are examined thereby leading to the situation where the theory from the narrow set of cases is eventually generalised by others. Some contribution however, may be made where one has a number of case-studies in the same research project; in such situations the analysis and theory formulation may be undertaken in respect of one case and in a cumulative manner this could build to a more acceptable validity if a substantial number of the findings hold good in the other case-studies that are analysed within the project. All the more so if, as

noted earlier, these case-studies have been chosen on the basis of atypicality. This research project searches for its external validity through the cumulative cross-case analysis of atypical case-studies and in later generalisations of our findings by other researchers.

In reviewing construct validity the researcher has to rebut accusations that the evidence drawn from the data is sufficiently strong and linked to that data thereby ensuring that subjective opinions/judgements are curtailed when the data is being collected and analysed. In order to rebut such arguments a researcher needs to be able to make a case for selection of the specific types of changes that are being studied and also to demonstrate that the selective measures of these changes do indeed reflect the type of change that has been selected. One cannot totally protect oneself from such a potential accusation but I have endeavoured to so do by:

- (i) Initially gathering the data in as objective a manner as possible, whereby this researcher made every effort to ensure objectivity, as required by several research methodology writers including Miles & Huberman (1994), Silverman (1993) and Lofland & Lofland (1984); thus at the outset of each interview I stated that my views were unimportant as I was particularly keen to gather the untainted and freely-given views of those being interviewed. Several opportunities were created during the interviews to re-inforce this value.
- (ii) Rigorously testing and re-testing emerging themes with the groups/individuals being interviewed in order to satisfy myself that they were accurate reflections of the data, as stressed by Strauss & Corbin (1990); thus at several points during and always at the end of the interview session I clarified with the groups any emerging consensus and also individual views held on particular topics discussed. As an example of such behaviour on my part I would instance the situation where a particular shift team was heavily critical of the role being played by the facilitator to their team. At the conclusion I re-stated my understanding of (a) the thrust of their

view and (b) the different views that were held by a minority of the group. This action gave opportunity to the respondents to correct my understanding, if necessary.

- (iii) Requesting one or two key individuals at each site to independently categorise and interpret some of the data and emerging themes and subsequently comparing their analysis with my own, as suggested by Yin (1994). A portion of the data emerging from each site was thus presented to one or two key senior individuals within each organisation. They were asked to identify themes emerging from the data and to interpret same within the ambit of their deeper knowledge of the organisational context. They were asked to do this without any knowledge of what might have been my own emerging or already completed interpretation of the data. Their view was then compared with my own analysis and in the vast majority of such situations their view was consistent with my earlier interpretation of the respondent data.
- (iv) Providing, at the data analysis stage, another respected researcher, Dr. Sarah Moore, with a body of the data, asking her to code same and then comparing same with my own coding. As a result of this process it became clear to Dr. Moore and this researcher that the data was being coded/categorised in a more than satisfactory manner.

Yin (1994) suggests that one can aid the building of construct validity by using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a clear chain of evidence and finally by requesting that key informants within the case-study sites review draft reports of the case-study analysis. During this research project – all three of these construct validity criteria have been met as the data was gathered from multiple sources, every effort was made to ensure that a clear chain of evidence is traceable back to the data and the draft analysis was, as already mentioned above, reviewed with key informants from some of the case-study organisations.

Internal validity, which Yin (1994) tells us, is a primary consideration at the data analysis stage and concerns the validity of inferences which are induced from the data, will be returned to later in the next section when dealing with data analysis.

Yin (1994) also argues that one needs to create a case-study data base of not alone the actual data but also a separate data base including the researcher's key report on the case visits in whatever form that has been maintained. This researcher has maintained detailed documentary evidence of all of the interviews conducted in the case-study organisations; additionally the initial categorising, coding and theorising notes which built on this researcher's analysis of the original data have been maintained in separate files.

When alluding to data collection problems I should examine the various methods by which data could have been gathered in these case-study organisations; these sources of evidence could be listed as follows:

- *archival records*
- *direct observations*
- *participative observation*
- *physical artefacts*
- *documentation*
- *interviews*

One can associate certain strengths and weaknesses with all of the above methods. This researcher analysed the usefulness of the above sources of evidence for this research project as follows:

- *Archival Records* did not exist in any of the organisations insofar as the practices being studied pertained to recent months/years.
- *Direct observation* of a team going about its work would have had too great an effect on the team.
- *Participative Observation* was totally inappropriate as the researcher could not have catapulted himself into existing teams to participate and observe.
- *Physical Artefacts* were not a feature of data collection except in a couple of cases where to assist the drive towards teamwork such organisations had mounted posters and notices highlighting the need for a continuing focus on teamwork.
- *Documentation* did provide some data particularly in the areas where (a) it was necessary to check the perception/memory of an individual or group about some event that had been recently recorded, and (b) where it was necessary to obtain a view of some historical development within the organisation such as, for example, the corporate history, internal contemporaneous management thought and trade union 'positions'.
- *Interviewing* was the principal method of data gathering and consequently will receive below more treatment than the other sources of evidence referred to above.

The particular strengths of interviewing are that in a reasonably relaxed scenario one can focus a discussion directly on the case-study topic and usually receive somewhat insightful comments from the interviewee(s) even up to the point where they may profer their perception of causal inferences. This research project primarily made use of group interviews and individual interviews. In an effort to ensure that those interviewed were not all of any particular orientation of mind with respect to teamworking I agreed the criteria

for selecting those for interview with the General Manager and/or Human Resource Manager and permitted them then to make the selection. The primary criteria were that those interviewed be individuals/groups who were directly involved in an empowerment/teamworking project with particular caution that we should have a cross-section of individuals/teams who were perceived as being somewhere along the spectrum from supportive to unsupportive in respect of their attitude to teamworking and their perception of the initiative; thus in selecting those for interview we strove to not have any data from a particular organisation biased in one direction or the other. Once the selection had been made this researcher re-discussed the criteria with the individual selecting the teams so as ensure that the criteria were followed; on two occasions it was necessary to achieve greater balance than was in the original selection.

Notwithstanding the above strengths there are some particular weaknesses in relation to the interviewing method against which one must guard oneself as a researcher. In this particular work interview bias could have been encountered from as early a stage as the design of the semi-structured questionnaire framework through to the various inflections by which one emphasised or de-emphasised certain questions right up to the point where the interviewer could in fact have created the cardinal sin of hearing that which he wanted to hear. Every effort was made during the interviews to ensure that a standard manner of asking the questions was maintained and that the interviewer's opinions were not creeping into the manner in which a topic was being approached or within the manner in which the data was being gathered, as earlier pointed out on pp 87 and 88 above. This researcher also extensively used summarising techniques throughout the body of the interviews to ensure that the views being recorded were in fact the views of the individuals and/or groups being interviewed; thus this researcher regularly throughout the interviews tested the understanding being taken from the discussion by reflecting back to the individual/group what was being said in the replies to questions and within the ensuing discussion.

It was decided that the nature of this research project required a semi-structured interview framework rather than a rigid questionnaire. This decision was taken on the basis that one was likely to obtain more rich information by allowing the interviewees the space to 'wander around' a sub-topic rather than have to respond to a very specific question. This semi-structured framework concentrated almost exclusively on open-ended questions which allowed opportunity for the interviewees/groups to commence with a broad treatment of the subject area and also permitted the interviewer to probe on issues of particular interest and/or intensity to the group/individual. The interview framework once initially designed was tested in an organisation that was not going to be included as a case-study organisation within this research. The framework was then slightly modified and used in all of the case-study organisations; a sample of the framework is attached as Appendix A.

The semi-structured interview framework was used as a guide rather than a rigid structure. Thus, for example, in answering a probing question about management's commitment to the empowered team approach an individual may have commented extensively on communications in the organisation; in such a situation then communications would have been further probed at that time. This alternative was invariably chosen rather than waiting for that part of the interview where it was planned to gather data on communications. A glance at the semi-structured framework later in the interview would then be sufficient to see if all of the intended areas for questioning on communications were covered; if not then further questions could be raised. The use of this semi-structured interview framework thus permitted open discussion with the groups/individuals about their perceptions of how the process of introducing teamworking into their organisations was progressing. Following Silverman's (1993) emphasis, it should be clearly stressed that it is these perceptions, as evidenced by the statements made by the respondents, that form the base data for this research project; these statements from respondents actively involved in the process of introducing teamworking into their organisations are extensively reported on and analysed within subsequent chapters of this thesis, particularly Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

The interviews that were conducted in the case-study organisations were thus the context in which the base data was gathered. These interviews were mostly team/group interviews and were conducted in an environment where the respondents were within or close to their workplace; thus they remained as physically close as possible to the work environment. In one organisation this was eminently possible where the organisation had provided a communications room within the immediate work area of the team; in others, however, we had to 'make do' with whatever facilities were available nearby even to the point of using some teams' tea/coffee area, however make-shift that was.

The interviews were conducted with as many as possible of the actual team that was being empowered at particular locations within the case-study sites. Thus, for example when we wished to obtain the views of a particular shift/departmental/sectional team we arranged to meet as many as possible of that team immediately prior to, during or at the end of their work period. These group interviews involved meeting with groups of between 4 -10 individuals and the interviews were conducted in as informal a manner as possible, an orientation advocated by Lofland & Lofland (1984) and Silverman (1993); indeed this informality increased in those organisations where the teams were met on more than one occasion. The tenor was set by modelling this informality at the outset by commencing with some comments about local issues/sport; even when getting to the topic for discussion this researcher more often than not contributed to the informal approach by ensuring that the opening foray/question in search of information was as open-ended as: "what gives now with the team-based approach at.....?"

Following the initial climate setting and the approach described above I informed each group that I would like to take some notes during the interview; at no stage did any group or individual express reservations about such notetaking. The taking of notes, as advised by Dey (1993) and Lofland & Lofland (1984), was undertaken in a manner designed to ensure that the conversations were not impeded by the process of taking notes; thus notes

were taken in as unobtrusive a fashion as possible. The process of notetaking was greatly aided by this researcher's focus on taking cryptic synoptic notes in addition to his facility with Gregg shorthand.

An earlier decision about not using recording equipment had been taken as it was deemed that it would have been perceived as too formal by the respondents and would be highly likely to adversely affect their perception of being able to freely express their views. This particularly on the basis that most of the individuals/groups being interviewed were coming from a history of poor industrial relations with all of the attendant feelings of lack of trust. This researcher therefore felt that the imposition of recording equipment would have made such respondents highly suspicious and would have therefore either seriously affected the data or in some cases may have prevented the interviews actually going ahead.

The interviews described above usually lasted 30-40 minutes; some were longer and a very few took slightly less time. The difference in time usage related to a combination of (a) group size, (b) the familiarity with the process, (c) the effectiveness of this researcher or the group in eliciting the required information, and (d) on some rare occasions the desire of some of the team members to end the process so that they could leave the plant or get back to work.

Immediately after each interview the data was written up whilst all of the note-taking was fresh in the mind. Opportunity was taken at this stage to add any relevant supplementary information that had not been recorded during the interview due to some particular sensitivity. The notes were therefore all written up contemporaneously so that none of the data could have been lost.

No attempt was made at this early stage to sort the data in any way, it was recorded mainly within the semi-structured framework and left for later analysis. The only occasions on which note-taking went outside this framework was when interviewees strayed onto topics not within the framework but which at the time I deemed to be relevant. An example of this

extra framework note-taking was in the area of some of the more open ended questions such as “what went well

At all stages during the data gathering this researcher took pains to disguise from interviewees his own view in respect of empowered teams or styles of management. This was in an effort to reduce and/or eliminate the amount of bias that could creep into the work through reflexivity, where the interviewees could have given the answers that they expected the interviewer wished to receive.

In conclusion of this section on field-work process I would repeat that:

- I have selected an approach similar to grounded theory, allied to a case-study approach.
- Validity and reliability tests have been built in.
- Multiple sources of evidence have been used and the basis for a clear chain of evidence has been established.
- Fair criteria were set for selecting those to be interviewed,
- A suitable semi-structured interview frame-work was used.

Having gathered the data with the above in mind we must now turn our attention to the analysis of the data.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In the natural sequence of this paper this analysis is presented here as if it occurred at a logical time immediately after the field-work and the recording of the data. In reality this was not the case as some degree of analysis was taking place at earlier stages of the research process. Thus some analysis

was being undertaken concurrent with data gathering that was then proceeding in other organisations. Such behaviour is supported by Bryman & Burgess (1994b).

Although I have earlier stated that this is a grounded theory approach I do not profess to be a purist in this regard. Thus I do not slavishly follow the method of Glaser & Strauss (1967) nor that of some of the later proponents of grounded theory. I did, however, gather data and move through categorising it and on to theorising, all the while ensuring that the concepts and theories evolving were rooted in the data.

The sequence that seems to have been most close to my own is that put forward by Ritchie & Spencer (1994) who delineated five stages, as follows:

- Familiarising oneself with the data
- Identifying a thematic framework
- Indexing
- Charting
- Mapping and interpreting.

When I say 'close to' I mean that Ritchie & Spencer's (1994) stages are the closest that I have seen in the literature to the actual process I followed during the data analysis stage of this research.

Once all of the data for any of the phases was gathered the notes were checked and then a dictaphone was used to ensure that the notes were satisfactorily recorded, ultimately appearing as a Word document. At a later stage these Word documents were transferred into a software package suitable for qualitative data analysis – NUD.IST.4. These documents were

then read again twice; on these occasions not just the individual cases but all of the cases. The purpose of this was purely to absorb the data, as it were, in the language of the interviewees. The overlapping of the five stages described above became apparent during this phase insofar as whilst one was making an effort during this reading not to commence integration nonetheless almost sub-consciously some categories were forming; whilst this was consciously resisted at this stage, it is a process that will need to come to the conscious level during a later stage of data coding and analysis.

The data coding and analysis was facilitated by the use of NUD.IST.4, a computer-aided qualitative analysis software package. The advantages of using such a package include: not having to use a paper-based filing system, ease of coding and storing of data at categories that can be developed as one works one's way through the data and it allows one to search the index system and cross-reference codes easily and quickly. In allowing one to carry out these processes on computer NUD.IST.4 assists in the preparation of a trail of evidence so necessary in the kind of qualitative research within this project. The tree-structured index helps the researcher consider broader categories within which the coded data may fit, and thereby aids the progression of the analysis process along the lines described above and supported by Ritchie & Spencer (1994). In addition NUD.IST.4 facilitates pulling together the data into emerging categories and aids the development of theoretical concepts from these categories. Thus it was possible to track an emerging theme, such as 'respondent attitudes to training', within a case-study and across case-studies. Sifting through the data was also much more manageable with the use of NUD.IST.4 as the software permitted one to move quite readily from case to case as issues/themes emerged.

I should stress, however, that claims that computer packages such as NUD.IST.4 can actually help users construct theory are in fact grossly overstated. While using NUD.IST.4 does assist greatly in the storage and

manipulation of data, codes and categories it cannot replicate the intellectual processes required to develop theoretical concepts. It was whilst working with NUD.IST.4 in the manner described that the major categories and sub-categories within my analysis of the data were formed. Thus early on in the analysis sub-categories such as 'visioning/directioning', 'communications', 'money/pay' and 'trust/mistrust/respect' emerged from the data rather than appear as some part of my own personal grand plan. The categories and sub-categories were constantly modified as the coding process continued. Each time that a statement appeared not to have a correct resting place a new category or sub-category was created by establishing a new node within the tree index system.

The system also allowed one to review the categories and sub-categories at any stage. Thus for example I would have regularly reviewed the 'miscellaneous' category, wherein I would have initially coded some sub-categories knowing well that I would have an opportunity to re-assign same at a later stage.

In continuing to be informed by rather than rigidly follow the Ritchie & Spencer (1994) model the next stage to consider was charting, which process required me to analyse the data as a whole to observe/sense what themes now emerged. This was the first time in this essentially qualitative analysis that raw basic counting became important, an unexpected quantitative approach. This arose as one focused on frequency of occurrence of certain items in the data when attempting see the relative weight put upon certain categories and sub-categories by the respondents. Thus for example at the early stage although there may have been very few comments at a particular category it was not discarded at that stage; rather it was held over to see whether or not it would re-emerge at the mid-or end-phase of the analysis.

In presenting this counting of categories and sub-categories I have chosen to use bar charts, except in a small number of instances where pie charts are used due to the multiplicity of factors.

3.6 RESEARCHER/CONSULTANT ROLE

I believe it to be correct that I should address the Researcher/Consultant role in the context that I had been in the past a consultant in three of the case-study organisations and was concurrently working in two of them. This was a great benefit in gaining the right kind of access in all of the organisations. The access was of quality insofar as due to my age and experience as a consultant I was able to relate to all levels of the organisation in a manner that was thoroughly acceptable to the individuals and teams with whom/which I was interacting. As a result of this each of the organisations were most interested in and co-operative with the project and the mode of my contact with those with whom I was working permitted direct and unfettered access to their views and feelings.

Once the project got under way and the above access was secured I had to be most careful in the first instance that my consultant role did not interfere in any way with the data gathering process. This I endeavoured to do by:

1. Being sensitive to the actual data being observed or heard by endeavouring not to read anything into the data that was not there. Working, as I oftentimes do, as an organisation development facilitator in an action research mode I had long since been sensitised to the critical aspect of not reading more into data than was actually there, particularly at the crucial data gathering stage. Strauss & Corbin (1990) inform us that this sensitivity required within the researcher is actually aided by personal and professional experience.
2. Regularly summarising for the individual or group what I believed I was hearing so that they had the opportunity to correct any misinterpretation of mine. I found this particularly necessary when discussing what some of the respondents felt were more sensitive areas, such as the sub-categories of 'trust/mistrust/respect' and 'non-deliverance by management' for example.
3. By suggesting opposite positions to individuals/groups so as to

encourage them to clarify their point.

4. By taking many verbatim notes on key issues.

The consultant role could also have impinged during the analysis stage if I had allowed my consultant role to pre-dominate. Dey (1993) stresses that experience in such a consultant role can in fact be of assistance during analysis. Notwithstanding that it was necessary for me to take steps not to allow my consultant role affect the manner in which categories were being established and/or themes extracted from the data through the following methods:

1. During the various stages of the analysis every effort was made not to limit the categories and sub-categories to those that had emerged from the initial analysis following the early phase of data gathering. Indeed much greater clarity was added to the early categories by the later phase data analysis.
2. By deliberately entertaining alternative views to one's own, as suggested by Dey (1993). My practical interpretation of this suggestion was to search behind what might have appeared obvious for rival explanations. Thus, for example, it could appear that lack of training was the reason for inadequate role clarity but rather than just accept that at face value I would search for a rival explanation such as the possibility that the issue might have been resources, lack of management support, fear of loss of control, perceived lack of skill, among many others. Practices such as this enabled me to test other explanations rather than just cascading down what seemed the 'obvious' one.
3. By using a technique reasonably similar to 2. immediately above and described as the 'flip-flop' by Strauss & Corbin (1990); within the 'flip-flop' technique I deliberately sought opposite explanations for an emerging concept as a means of testing same.

Thus in the manner described above I strove to maintain purity in the data gathering and analysis phases thereby accepting the benefits that the consultant mode brought to the process but not allowing the consultant role to in any way corrupt the research process; this therefore allowed me to accept that the dual role was actually going to benefit the research once I took the precautions outlined above.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF THE DATA EMERGING FROM THE CASE-STUDIES

CASE 1: KILYCRA

This sub-section contains the following information:

A: THE ORGANISATION

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT KILYCRA

C (i) The Planning Phase

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

C (iii) The Database

C(iv) The Data Gathering Process

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

C (vi) Respondent Data: Early Phase

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Early Phase

C (viii) Respondent Data: Mid-Phase

C (ix) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Mid-Phase

C (x) Respondent Data: Final Phase

C (xi) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Final Phase

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON KILYCRA

A: THE ORGANISATION

Kilycra was established within a medium sized town in rural Ireland in 1969. The organisation was set up initially to blend polyester and wool yarns for the

export worsted fabric weaving industry. In the intervening years the company also established a second and third plant at other locations within rural Ireland, in Donegal and Galway.

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

The organisation experienced extensive Industrial Relations (IR) difficulties particularly in the late 1970's and through the 1980's (Dowling, 1995). Many skirmishes between management and the workforce took place during that period and following is a sample list of issues that resulted in work stoppages:

- a supervisor dissatisfied with his bonus
- refusal of some operators to carry out normal duties
- refusal to transfer from one department to another
- dissatisfaction with bonus arrangements
- pay claim by warehouse staff because of increased weight in boxes
- changes to shift arrangements.

All of these issues gave rise to a variety of forms of industrial action from go-slows, sit-ins, walk-outs and unofficial one-man pickets, all the way up to a three-week stoppage. Some of the issues were conceded and some were not. In either event these skirmishes gave rise to a poor industrial relations climate which was characterised by adversarial relationships, extensive conflict and the development of a 'them and us' syndrome (CEO view, garnered during interview).

The relationship described above was further exacerbated by a bitter eight-month long dispute between February and October 1982. The original issue was a 'trivial' one but in the absence of mechanisms where either side could

listen to one another the issue cascaded into a major dispute (Dowling, 1995). Management would use the phrase that a strike was taking place during this period where the Union side would vehemently say that they were locked out. This disagreement arose from the fact that initially the dispute appeared to be an unofficial form of industrial action but the company temporarily closed down the plant in mid-March (Dowling, 1995). As a result of this the workers voted to return to work immediately but the company stated that this could not be done until all IR issues were resolved. Several unsuccessful efforts were made at trying to end the dispute but eventually in early July a new agreement was signed that had a phased start to work culminating in all employees being back at work in October (Dowling, 1995). This strike left a very bitter taste and is still sufficiently raw in the minds of some workers that they will refer to it quite regularly.

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT KILYCRA

C (i) The Planning Phase

In those earlier years the organisation was constantly under pressure to improve productivity but such pressure was greatly increased in the late 1980's and early 1990's particularly with the advent of a serious competitive threat from far-eastern countries (Management team discussion).

Accordingly management in the organisation began searching among themselves for ways in which they could try to move away from the adversarial type of relationships of the past and move forward in a more collaborative mode whereby they could harness greater commitment from the workforce and have less distractions concerning IR issues. It was believed that the management team within the organisation could look for such benefits through taking the supervisors back from their normal role and simultaneously trying to empower the various shift teams to do more and more for themselves of what was hitherto carried out by the supervisors.

Thus the management team set about exploring the issues for themselves and attempted to design the best way forward for such an initiative (CEO briefing).

The driving force behind this initiative was in actual fact the Chief Executive who had been with the company for in excess of 20 years and who himself spent a considerable amount of time out of the country principally endeavouring to keep markets open for the company. The initiative therefore was his vision and although he became, in the eyes of others in the organisation, the person who should have been in many senses driving it he was not present within the organisation for a sufficient amount of time during any working week to be able to be the complete 'champion' he himself wanted to be.

Once the Chief Executive had developed the idea of teamworking being an approach that he wished to utilise to secure the future of the company, he spread the message to other members of the management team in such a way that they were, in his view, to take up that vision and deliver against it. The process would then have required them to get from this vision to the implementation stage, with occasional input from him into the project.

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

The journey from conception to implementation was quite fast at Kilycra and only spanned a short number of weeks. During that time some members of the management team communicated the nature of the changes that were being made to the union and outlined the new role that supervisors would undertake. As earlier stated, the managers communicating this information had not really played a significant part in the development of the vision of where the organisation was heading with this new initiative. Thus the level of commitment and support that would normally be required at managerial level was not consistently evident across the senior and middle management team.

The next layer of management in Kilycra's traditional organisation were the supervisors who were now being asked to undertake quite a different role, in fact that of a facilitation role more so than a control role. It could be argued that from the outset these supervisors and indeed some of their managers

never really fully grasped the magnitude of this role change with particular reference to the different behaviours that would be required of them (Management Team discussion).

Within Kilycra communication between management and the employees within the organisation had never been well regarded by employees. There was a strong feeling abroad that management only communicated whenever bad news was brought to their attention and this invariably was oftentimes not communicated until after the event (Meeting with Shop Steward). Efforts were made during the process of introducing teamworking to improve the communication situation but management found themselves regularly failing to get messages consistently across shifts and departments down to shop floor level. Within the management team itself several efforts were made to try and improve communications down through line management and as these were not succeeding it was eventually decided to appoint a communications manager. This latter move initially met with some success but as time wore on communications again became a significant issue.

After several months the senior management of the organisation believed that insufficient progress was being made with teamworking, despite limited progress within one department, consequently it was decided to have a series of workshops involving all staff with each workshop having a mixture of management, employees and union representatives (CEO briefing). These workshops focused on trying to get consensus around what things were hindering the teamworking initiative bedding down more successfully and how these obstacles could be alleviated. Some of the issues mentioned above were clearly seen as obstacles and as a first step it was agreed that a steering committee would be put in place involving key members of management staff and employees, including union representation. The purpose of this steering committee was to monitor progress and endeavour to resolve difficulties in such a manner that they were creating the enabling conditions for success of the teamworking initiative.

At the same time and outside the ambit of the teamworking initiative on-going discussions were taking place between the management and employee representatives to try to re-negotiate wages, pensions and other conditions. Management believed at this stage within the teamworking initiative that it would not be possible to concede any cost increasing claims until such time as the benefits derived from the teamworking initiative could be secured and measured. Management were open to the idea that there would be some sharing of these savings further down the road but was not willing to make any up-front or interim payments to staff. Employees would have believed that management at this time were dragging their heels in respect of earlier commitments they believed were given in respect of wages and pensions.

In respect of union engagement it should be said that although some isolated personnel on either side talked in terms of a new collaborative non-adversarial type of approach being taken by management and unions to the process of introducing teamworking it is safe to say that within Kilycra all dealings between the union and the company were coloured by an adversarial approach (albeit less than the immediate past) and a 'them and us' mentality (CEO briefing; Shop Steward meeting). Even though the union at national level were saying that teamworking as envisaged at Kilycra was a good idea and should have full collaboration same was not delivered on the ground and thus the union did not get to a level of warmth about teamworking that would have facilitated such a radically new approach.

A further outcome from the workshops and the work of the steering committee was a renewed impetus within management to appoint a training officer who would initially conduct extensive training on the shop floor in respect of the new flexibility of skills required in the teamworking and the on-going new product arrangements. It was quite late in the initiative that the organisation thought seriously about the degree and level of training that was required both for operators and for facilitators. The steering committee had also encouraged sub-committees to look at other organisations.

C (iii) The Database

At Kilycra the individual respondents were staff at a variety of levels within the organisation, all of whom were intimately involved with the process of introducing teamworking.

The operator staff were drawn from across three shifts within three departments yielding 9 operator teams; the department team size varied between 5 and 9, yielding a total of approximately 60 operators. There were 2 additional teams comprising the same number of members as above, a week-end operator team and a warehouse team on day work. Thus the total number of teams at operator/warehouse level were 11 with approximately 75 staff involved.

In addition to the operator/warehouse staff the process of introducing teamworking directly involved the team of 7 Facilitators plus the management team of a further 8 individuals. The Facilitators and management staff brought the total number of individuals involved in this initiative at Kilycra to 95. All of these individuals were involved in the teamworking initiative at Kilycra on a daily basis. Data was also gathered from the Union representatives at local and official level.

A summary of the database can be seen at Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: Database summary

Focus teams/individuals for data gathering	Number of individuals within the teams
9 Operator teams on rotating shifts	60 Operators
1 Week-end Operator Team	8
1 Warehouse Team	7

Facilitators	7
Management	8
Steering Group	(15) – personnel drawn from above numbers
Union Representatives - Local - Official	4 1
Total number of individuals from whom data was gathered	95

C (iv) The data gathering process

Interviews were conducted with each of the above groupings (and on occasions with individuals) during three separate phases of data collection: early-phase: four months after the commencement of the teamworking initiative, mid-phase: five months after the early phase of data collection and final phase: five to six months after the mid-phase of data collection. The team meetings at Kilycra involved individuals who were working together on particular shifts in one of three production departments, a week-end team and the warehouse team; all of these groups were met by this researcher on one occasion within each of the three phases of data collection.

All of the team meetings within Kilycra were conducted in meeting rooms relatively adjacent to the factory area; the meetings invariably took place towards the end of a shift, where the operators from the next shift came in early to free up the time of the operators attending the meeting.

Those attending these meetings came to the meeting room 30 minutes prior to the end of their shift and remained in discussion with this researcher for approximately 30-40 minutes; the difference in length of the interviews reflected the effectiveness of data gathering and/or the anxiety to get away on the part of some of the team members.

Separate meetings were also held with the Facilitator group and the management team; these meetings, which oftentimes took over an hour were again focused on attempting to gather as much live data as possible on progress with the process of introducing teamworking. Once the data was gathered from these groups they engaged in some internal action planning resulting from the highlighting of issues during the data gathering phase. This researcher then stepped out of his research mode and facilitated this review by the two groups in question. On each occasion this action planning part of the meeting was left until the end so that it did not in any way conflict with the researcher role.

A similar process to that described above was adopted with the Steering Group, which group met with this researcher on five occasions through the process of introducing teamworking at Kilycra. The greater number of meetings with this group was due to the nature of their guiding role for the process. (Each member of the Steering Group had also been met as a member of one of the teams earlier described.)

An inherent value in the last three groups described (Facilitators/Management/ Steering Group) was that they were taking an overview across the organisation whereas the other teams were focusing almost exclusively on the functioning of their own team. This permitted not alone the emergence of the views of those groups themselves about what they believed was happening within their own group but also, as a valuable addition, it was possible to gather data that would be helpful at the later analytical stage; thus data provided by these groups was able to be used as a cross check, as it were, on data gathered from other sources.

Finally, valuable data was also gathered from the Trade Union Representatives who, at local and official level, were also met on three occasions during the process on introducing teamworking at Kilycra.

With all of these teams and individuals this researcher was rigorous in stressing that his own view of the process was unimportant at the data gathering phase. This was particularly important within this Kilycra case-study due to the fact that once the data gathering was completed the researcher changed role to that of facilitator with three of the teams/groups. Every effort was made to make a clear distinction between these two roles at each meeting with these teams/groups and it can be recorded herein that the teams/groups appeared to fully appreciate this distinction.

As indicated within the Research Strategy and Methods chapter arrangements were made at this data gathering phase to enlist key internal individuals who would help at the later data analysis; thus they were informed at this early stage that they would later be used as a check on our analysis. The individuals that were so chosen at Kilycra were the Chief Executive and the Production Manager.

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

Initially the respondent statements were separately coded to the emerging categories using NUD.IST.4 as described in the data analysis section of our earlier Research Strategy and Methods chapter.

The responses from the individuals involved in the teamworking initiative were then sorted and re-sorted within these categories, with some new ones being established during the process.

For the first stage of our analysis the data within the categories that is presented within the various phases below has been counted to ascertain the 'frequency of mentions' made by the respondents. This has allowed us to clearly see the emphasis placed by these respondents on the various categories.

Bar charts (and on two occasions pie charts) have been used to demonstrate the degree of emphasis that emerges from this 'frequency of mentions; thus

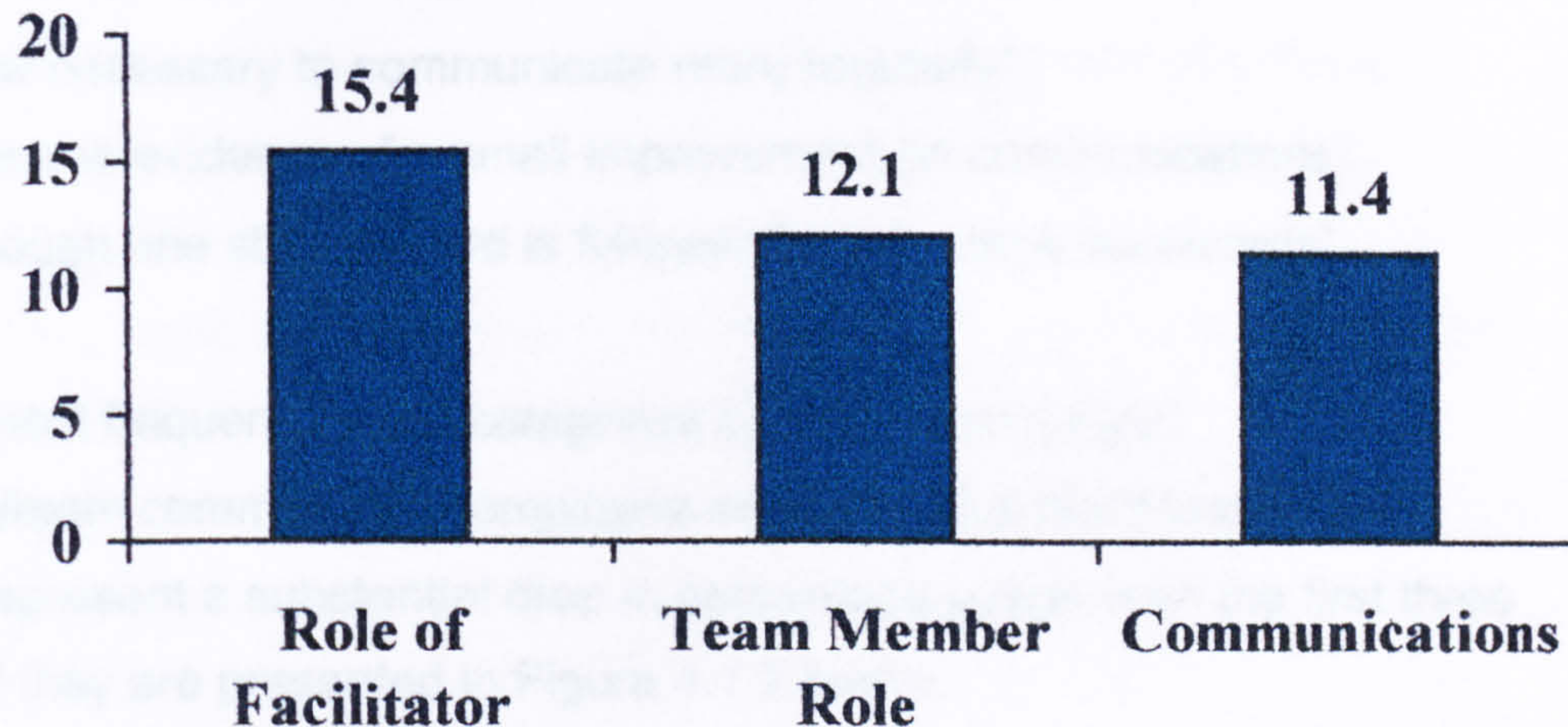
the charts presented should be seen as a graphical summary in percentage terms of the relative number of occasions on which respondents within the sample have made statements that have been coded at a particular category.

The analysis of the data collected at any particular phase is spread over up to six charts and where this arises the charts need to be seen as a whole within that particular phase. Thus for example within the analysis of the early phase data from Kilycra at C (v) below the charts 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.5 and 4.1.6 should be seen as a whole, with 4.1.4 being a breakdown of the 'other' category included at 4.1.3. The text associated with each chart explains in detail the content of that particular chart.

C (vi) Respondent Data – Early Phase (Data collected 4 months after the commencement of the teamworking initiative)

Within this section I wish to present the data gathered in the interviews with individuals and teams within Kilycra and I will first draw attention to Figure 4.1.1 which reflects the frequency with which respondent comments have been coded at the listed categories. All but 42 of the 149 coded statements are accounted for in Figures 4.1.1, 4.1.2 & 4.1.3. The mere counting of these statements will not in any way present the true richness of this data. However the counting will provide us with a basis for an initial examination of the more frequently used categories and will allow some comparison to be made with the data from the other four case-studies. The data shown in Figure 4.1.1 shows the top three most frequently used categories of 'role of facilitator', 'team member role' and 'communications'.

Figure 4.1.1
% of responses coded as:



With respect to 'role of facilitator' it is apparent throughout all of the respondent comments that they see it that they must concentrate on understanding the role of facilitator and how it affects their work; their comments portray that they see it as a critical part of the change process and one can see within those comments a lack of clarity about this role even at this early stage in the process, as indicated in the sample comments below:

"Do we still have to control as much as we did and do the police work".

"Haven't a clue what the word means or what difference there is between a supervisor and a facilitator".

There was an equal lack of clarity around the 'team member role' during this early phase, indicated by:

"I don't know the way in which the operator on the shift following me undertakes this particular job".

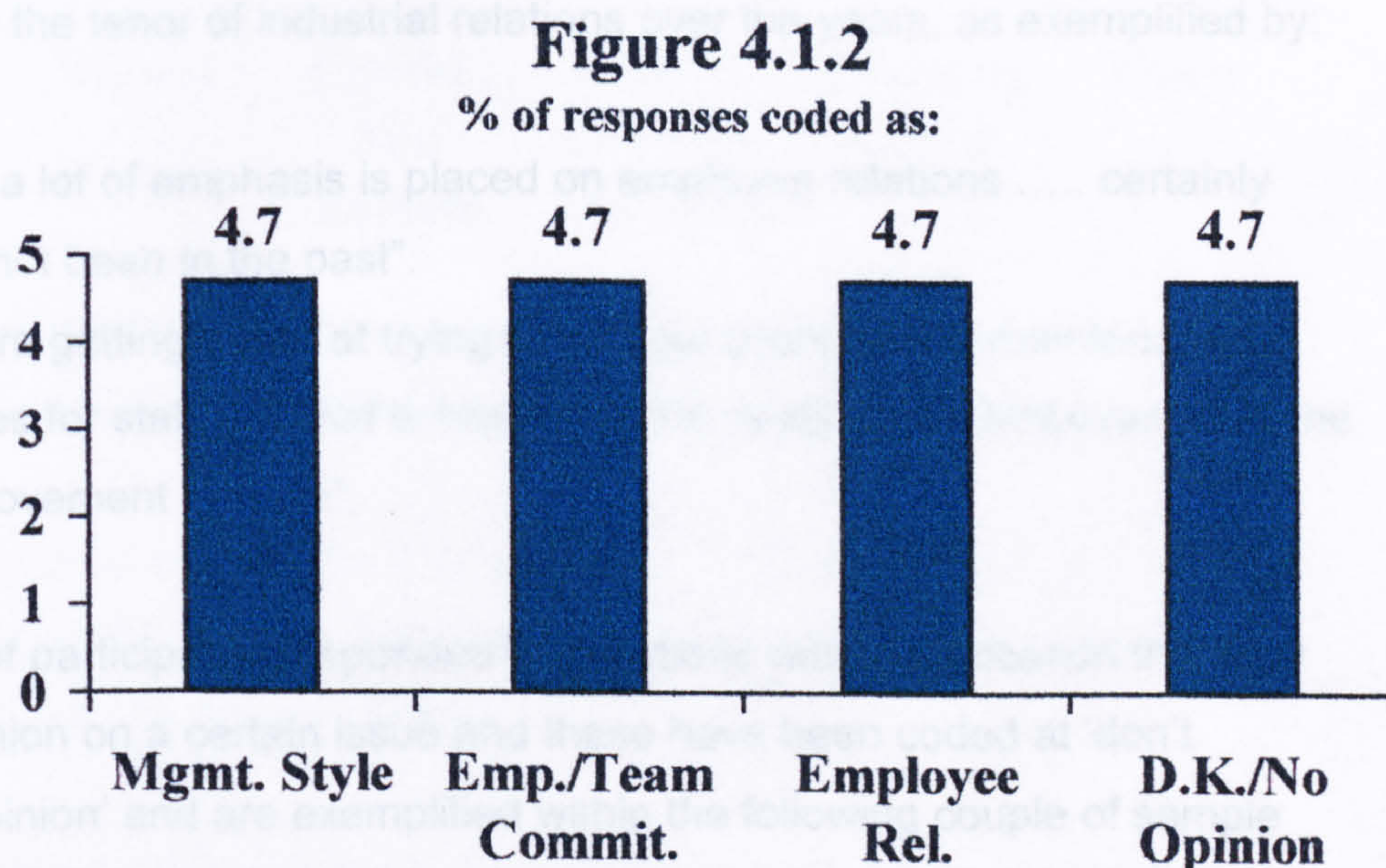
"We could be told more about the changing role within our own jobs and the supervisors".

As in the case of 'role of facilitator' above, there seems to have been within the respondents a clear understanding that communications was going to be a very important part in the process of introducing teamworking at Kilycra, as evidenced by:

"Now necessary to communicate more regularly".

"There is evidence of a small improvement (in communications) although one step forward is followed by two steps backwards".

The next most frequently used categories ('management style', 'employee/team commitment', 'employee relations' and 'don't know/no opinion') represent a substantial drop in percentage usage from the first three above and they are presented in Figure 4.1.2 below:



During the course of the data gathering it became apparent that 'management style' was both an issue for managers and shop floor workers; this because of the difficulty in transferring from what respondents believed was a traditional style to a more open and less controlling style. Most members of management found some difficulty with this transition as evidenced by several of the respondents' statements exemplified by the statements below:

“Management style has got to change”.

“The dictators among managers are still the same”.

The statements coded at ‘employee/team commitment’ indicate the importance with which respondents viewed this commitment and there is again a mixed response, as exemplified below:

“There is the beginnings of an interest in how one shift team can help another, particularly on the materials and cans issues”.

“No real change those that were committed are those that always were others don’t seem to be changing in any way”.

‘Employee relations’ was seen as an important area by a number of respondents and in some senses their view of employee relations has been coloured by the tenor of industrial relations over the years, as exemplified by:

“Not a lot of emphasis is placed on employee relations certainly has not been in the past”.

“We’re getting better at trying to sort our process and maintenance issues for staff and that is improving the relationship, however small the improvement may be”.

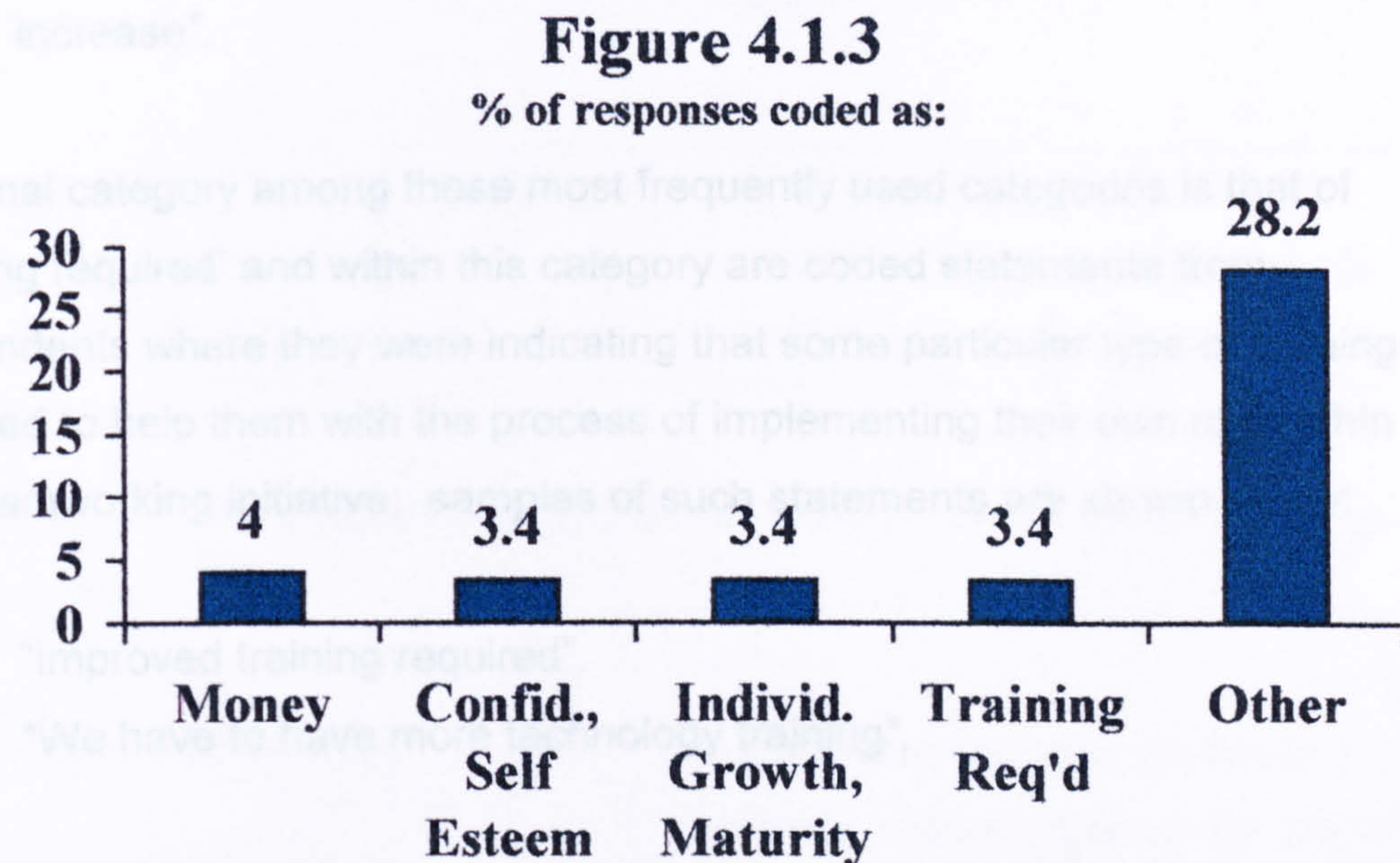
A number of participants responded to questions with an indication that they had no opinion on a certain issue and these have been coded at ‘don’t know/no opinion’ and are exemplified within the following couple of sample statements:

“Don’t know (what management are doing differently)”.

“Don’t know really too early to say (if the role of facilitator has changed)”.

The final group of more frequently used categories are ‘money/pay’, ‘confidence/self-esteem’, ‘individual growth/maturity’ and ‘training required’;

the frequency with which statements are coded thus is summarised in Figure 4.1.3 below:



The subject of 'money/pay' has been a pre-occupation with a number of staff during this early phase, as evidenced by the following statements:

- "By giving us some extra recognition for the increased effort".
- "By not asking us to do additional work without giving us some recognition, particularly money".

Some respondents also referred to the evident growth, however tentative, in confidence and self-esteem of some of the team members involved in the teamworking initiative, as evidenced by the statements below:

- "Some individuals more confident about their work if that's a maturity increase".
- "Some growth in confidence and self-esteem but limited to a few individuals".

A number of respondents also alluded to whether or not they saw 'individual growth/maturity' evolving from the teamworking initiative, as evidenced by:

"There is evidence that some of the people, particularly in Pin Drafting, have grown".

"Certainly no decrease not yet sure whether there has been much increase".

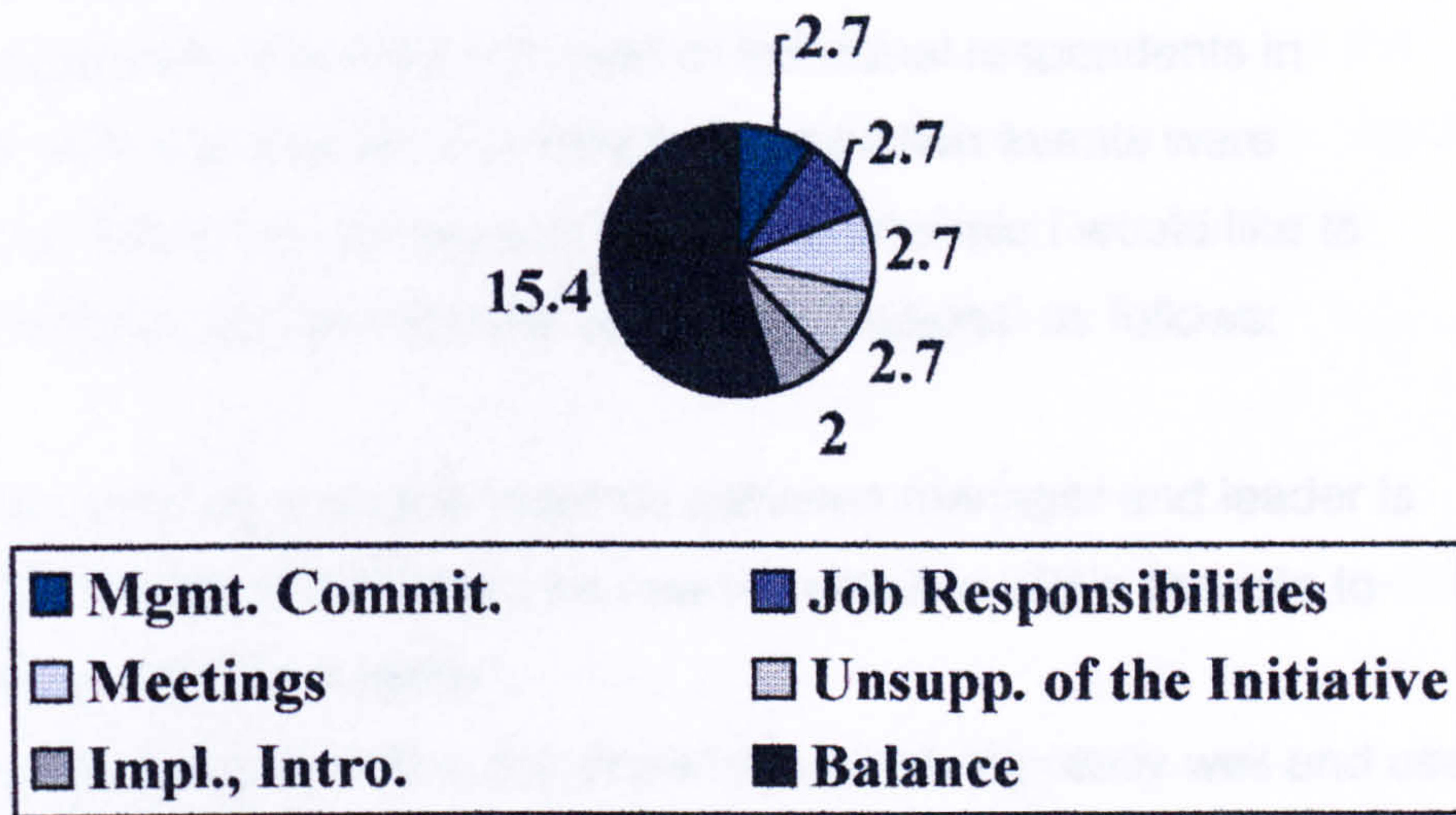
The final category among these most frequently used categories is that of 'training required' and within this category are coded statements from respondents where they were indicating that some particular type of training is required to help them with the process of implementing their own role within the teamworking initiative; samples of such statements are shown below:

"Improved training required".

*We have to have more technology training".

The grouping of statements above have accounted for all but 42 of the 149 coded categories; the distribution of the remaining 42 can be seen within Figure 4.1.4 below.

Figure 4.1.4
% of responses coded as:



A sample of some of these categories and the statements within them can be seen below:

'Management Commitment'	"Senior management, particularly Michael, seemed fired-up by this WCM approach".
'Job Responsibilities'	"In the teamwork approach it looks as though some of the planning is going to have to be undertaken by the team".
'Meetings'	"How do I get the team to take action at the end of meetings".
'Unsupportive of the Initiative'	"Not sure it (role of facilitator) matters I just want to do my job with little interference".
'Implementation/Introduction of Teamworking'	"The launch has gone very well mainly because all staff were spoken to by Michael".

C (vii) 'Explanations' Offered by Respondents – Early Phase

It should be noted that in addition to making what are relatively straight forward and/or single dimension statements, as shown throughout the above

analysis, respondents also took opportunity to make unsolicited 'explanations' between events as they occurred during the process of the introduction of teamworking in Kilycra. These 'explanations', even though taken from the early phase, portray the orientation of mind of individual respondents in respect of their efforts to explain why they believe certain events were occurring. Thus without proffering any theoretical analysis I would like to present some of these statements that show 'explanations' as follows:

"The role clarification that is required between manager and leader is somewhat apparent, although we need to practice within the role to perhaps understand it better".

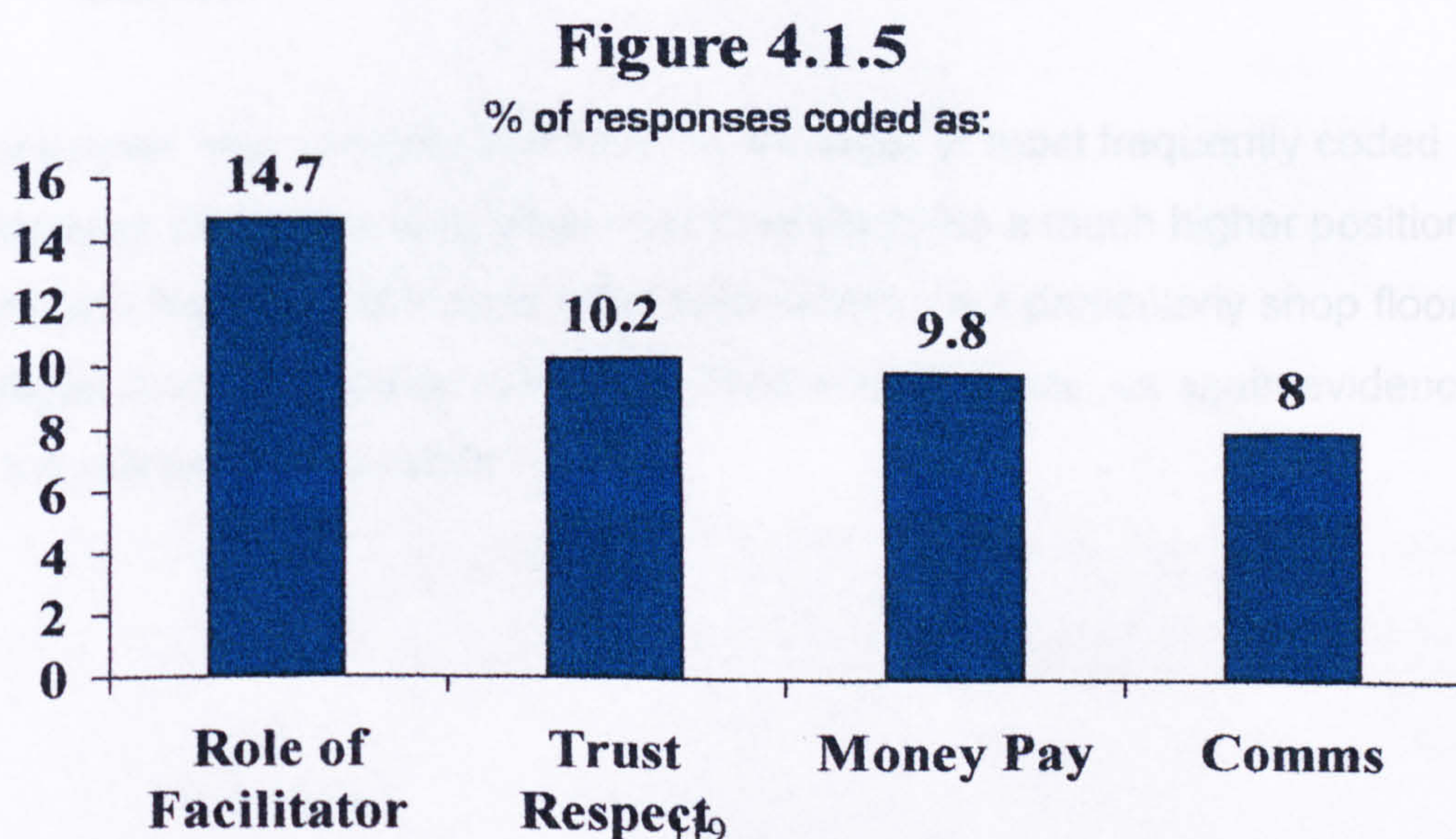
"We need to get one shift in the department working really well and use that as a role model".

"If you have to take on this new job someone has to tell me what we have to do and how to do it".

"Absenteeism is down slightly but I don't know if that is because of this initiative".

C (viii) Respondent Data – Mid-phase (Data collected 5 months after the data within the previous section)

Figure 4.1.5 below presents the most frequently coded categories within the mid-phase data and highlights 'role of facilitator', 'trust/mistrust/respect', 'money/pay' and 'communications'.



The 'role of facilitator' had been the most frequently coded category in the early phase data and again holds that position in this mid-phase data. Again confusion reigns in much of the data wherein the exercising of the role is unclear to team members and particularly so also to the facilitators themselves, as evidenced in the comments below:

"We need to know more about the role of the facilitator that could be included in some of our training courses".

"They seem to have withdrawn from direct supervision as it was in the past, less hounding of us at break-times and on the job".

A new entrant, as it were, is 'trust/mistrust/respect', which did not feature at all in the most frequently coded categories within the early phase data; it emerges in this phase however and immediately climbs to the position of second most frequently coded category. There are strong hints within the data of growing seeds of mistrust and lack of respect, as evidenced within the sample statements below:

"We need more education about this approach and greater one-on-one trust".

"Greater communication is a necessary route to greater respect for one another".

'Money/pay' was considerably lower in the order of most frequently coded responses during the early phase but now occupies a much higher position; it is evident from the comments of all respondents, but particularly shop floor workers, that 'money/pay' is a major issue in their minds, as again evidenced by the following statements:

“Somehow the company will have to bridge the gap between our expectancy that money will not be paid and the employees’ expectancy that they need money for this”.

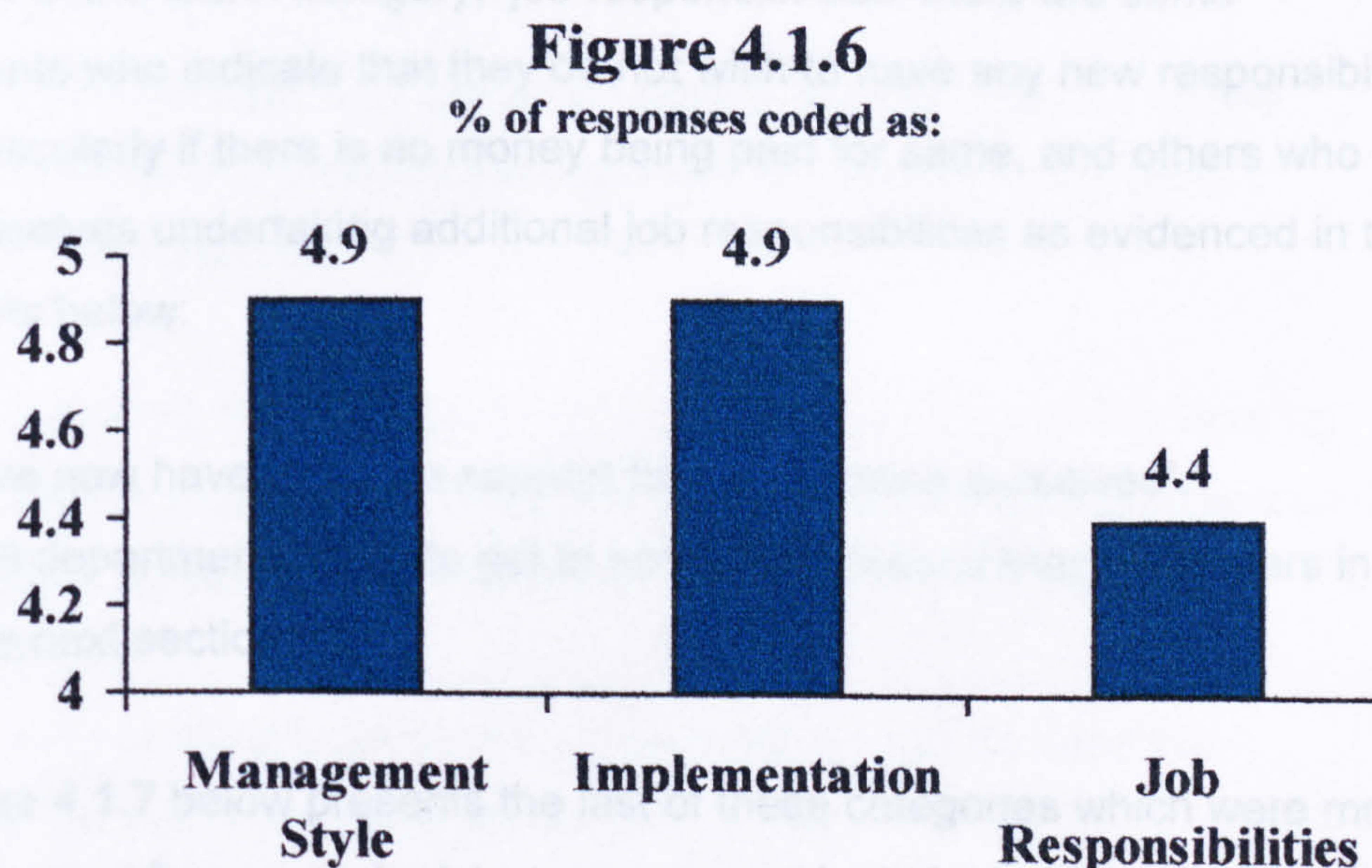
“All staff should share in an overall reward for WCM”.

‘Communications’ holds a very similar position during this phase of data collection to the last one but there is an increasing cynicism within comments of the respondents in respect of ‘communications’, as evidenced below:

“Communications seems to be from us to workers when it takes place at all, not between two groups of workers somehow we have not brought that latter type of communication into play”.

“Communication between BN and WP is a disaster and this is seen on the floor”.

The next three most frequently coded categories are those of ‘management style’, ‘implementation/introduction of teamworking’ and ‘job responsibilities’ as shown in Figure 4.1.6 below:



There is in respect of the first of these ‘management style’, a growing concern with inconsistency between the style that respondents believe is required for

teamworking and that which is being delivered by managers within Kilycra, as evidenced by the statements below:

“Same old approach is being used towards us by managers and facilitators”.

“Ownership of safety seems located at the desk of one manager needs to be broadened to have each operator more responsible for safety than at present.”

The category ‘implementation/introduction of teamworking’ has jumped forward in the table from the position it had in the early phase and there would be conflicting views of progress being made with the introduction of teamworking at Kilycra as evidenced by the comments below:

“For a while I thought there was a change but I now feel that there has not been any”.

“I hear some things are going well in Pin Drafting not much evidence of that around here in Winding and Twisting”.

In respect of the fourth category, ‘job responsibilities’ there are some respondents who indicate that they do not wish to have any new responsibility at all, particularly if there is no money being paid for same, and others who see themselves undertaking additional job responsibilities as evidenced in the statements below:

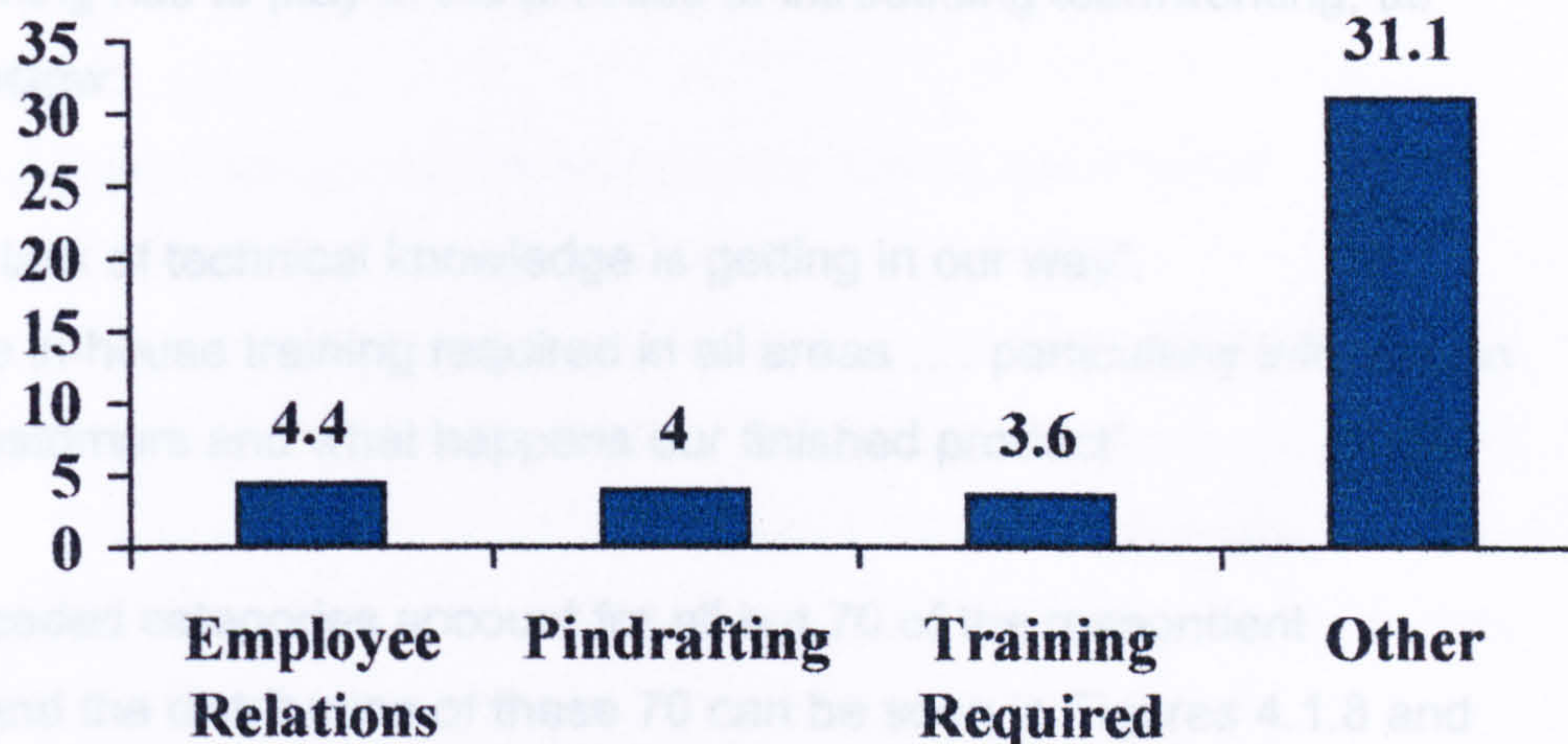
“We now have to chase support for breakdowns ourselves”.

“All departments have to get to know the needs of their customers in the next section”.

The Figure 4.1.7 below presents the last of these categories which were more frequently used for respondents’ comments and includes ‘employee relations’, ‘Pin Drafting’ and ‘training required’:

Figure 4.1.7

% of responses coded as:



In respect of the first of these, 'employee relations' all respondents comment on their feeling that employee relations has by no means improved, as shown below:

"No real change in the tenor of relationships between workers and management".

"A lot of emphasis here placed on getting the job done on the technology but not on the management issues that would build employee relations".

The one department that is singled out for positive comment is Pin Drafting and several of the respondents report the existence of and/or the appearance of substantial progress within Pin Drafting, as evidenced by the sample comments below:

"The Pin Drafting team certainly has matured and perhaps the facilitator has had a large part to play in that".

"In Pin Drafting our facilitator is the main channel of communication and a good one".

The final most frequently used category in this grouping is 'training required', occupying a similar position to that in the early-phase data. The category houses comments from respondents that indicate their awareness of the key part that training has to play in the process of introducing teamworking, as evidenced below:

- “The lack of technical knowledge is getting in our way”.
- “More in-house training required in all areas particularly information on customers and what happens our finished product”.

The above coded categories account for all but 70 of the respondent comments and the distribution of these 70 can be seen in Figures 4.1.8 and 4.1.9 below:

Figure 4.1.8

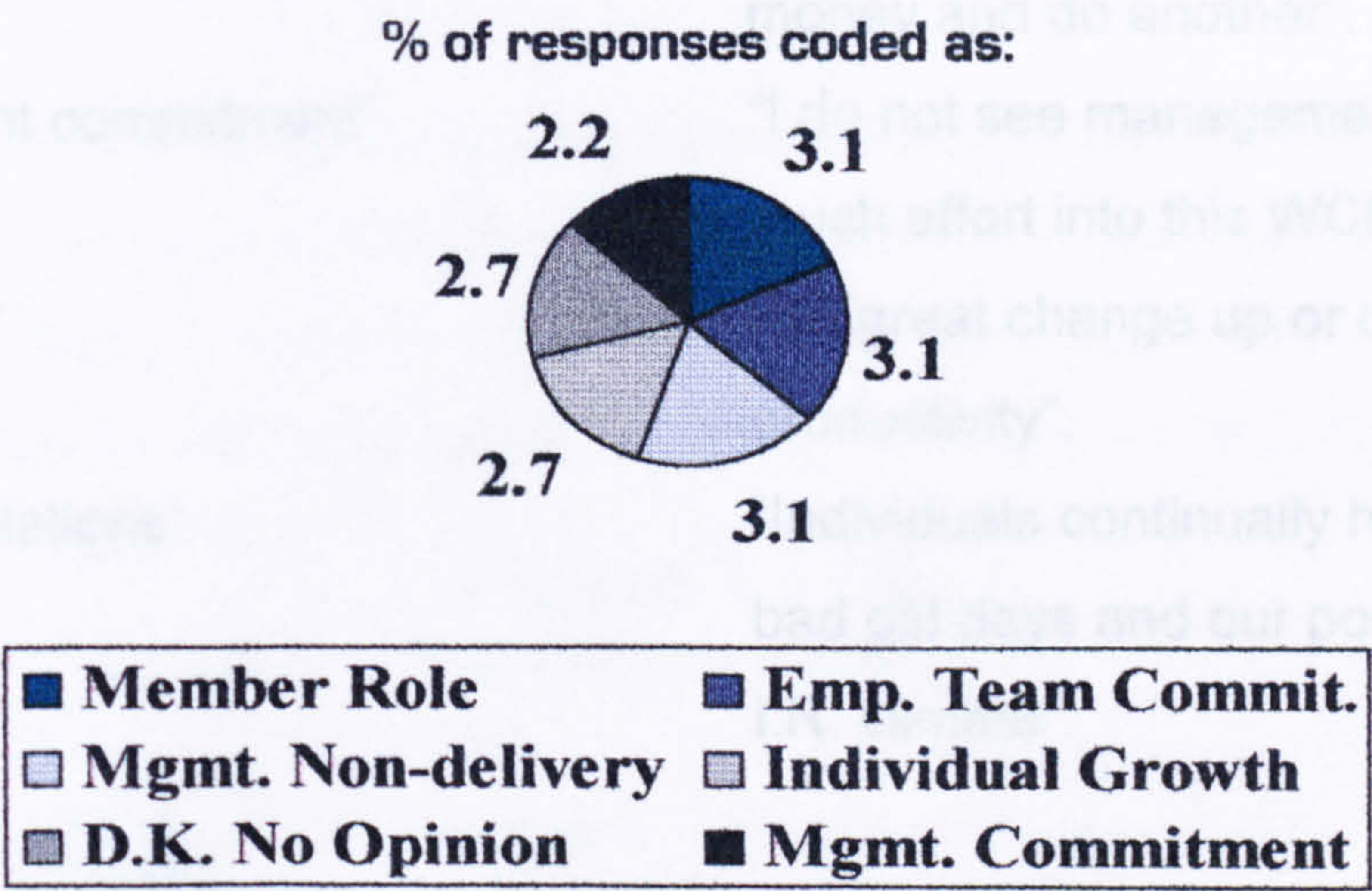
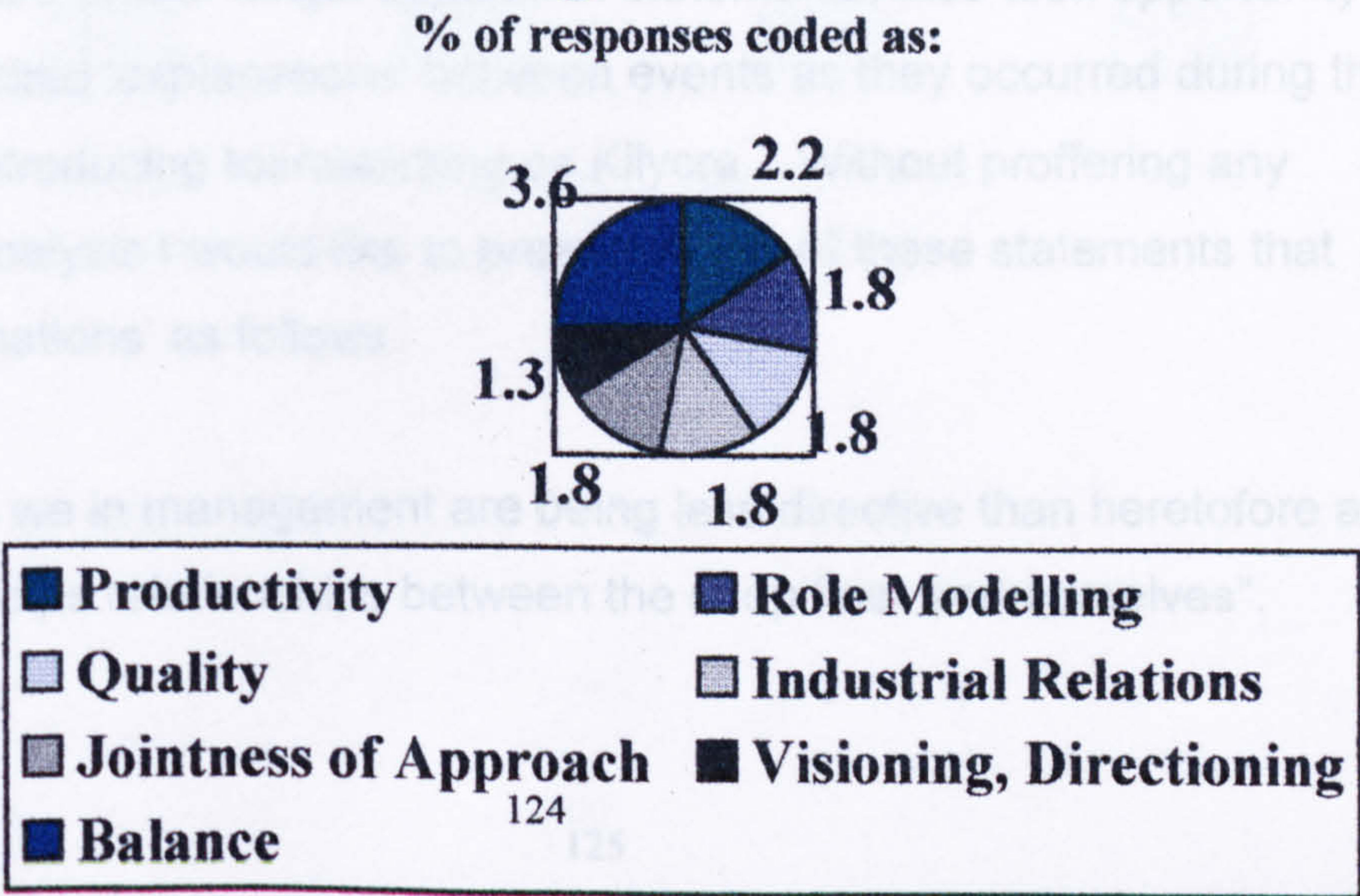


Figure 4.1.9



A sample of these categories and statements can be seen below:

'Team member role'	"Not sure if it is right that operators should assume more responsibility for quality until we get more of the technical knowledge down to their level".
'Non-deliverance by management'	"Management tell us one thing about money and do another".
'Management commitment'	"I do not see management putting much effort into this WCM".
'Productivity'	"No great change up or down in productivity".
'Industrial relations'	"Individuals continually harp back at the bad old days and our poor consequent I.R. climate".

C (ix) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents – Mid-Phase

As at the earlier phase participants, in addition to making what are relatively straight forward and/or single dimension statements, also took opportunity to make unsolicited 'explanations' between events as they occurred during the process of introducing teamworking as Kilycra. Without proffering any theoretical analysis I would like to present some of these statements that show 'explanations' as follows:

"I feel we in management are being less directive than heretofore and that helps relationships between the shop floor and ourselves".

"If we could find better ways to communicate we might build trust between us".

"Workers' views of the trust level probably prevent a wholehearted commitment".

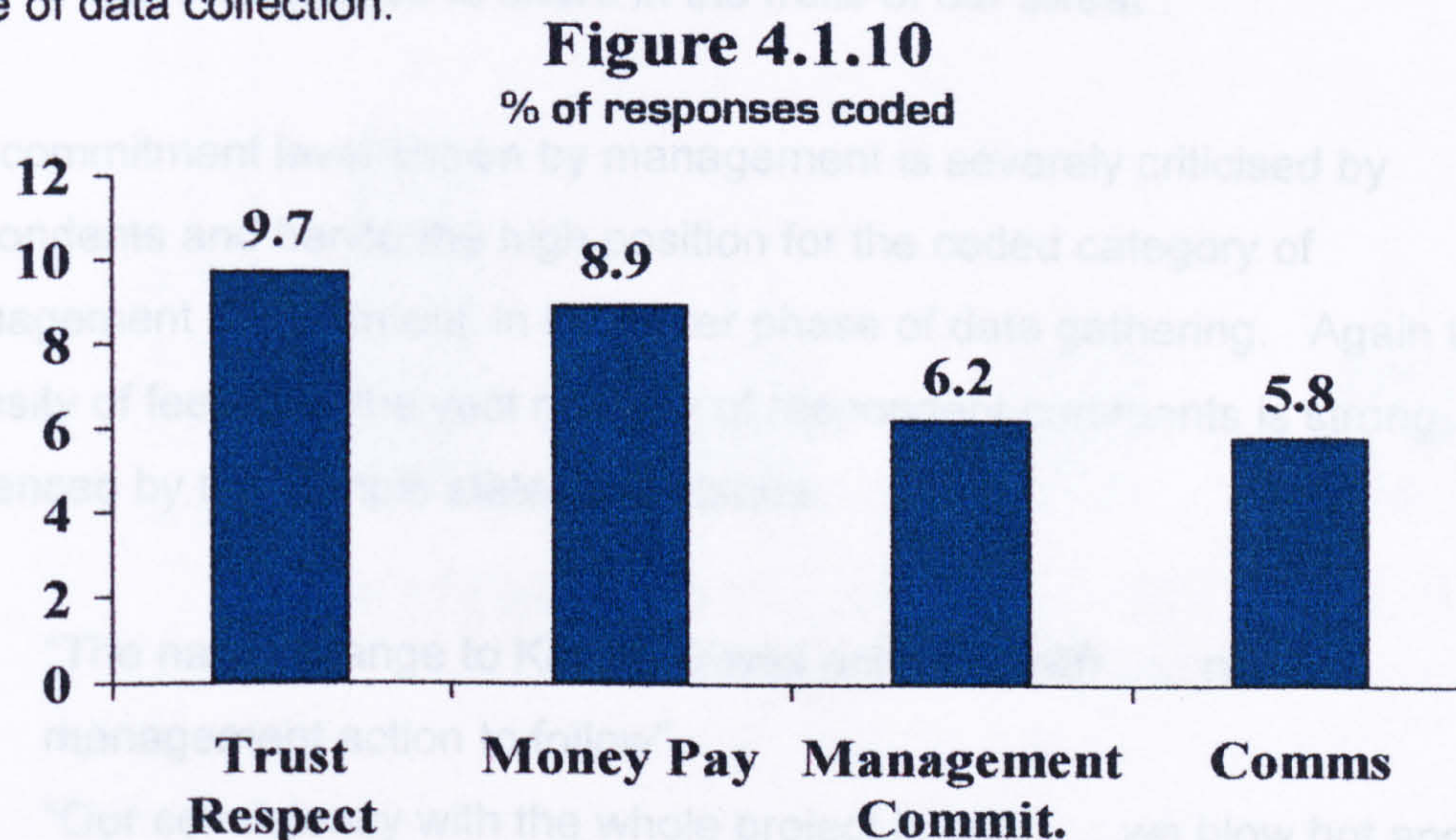
"The trust level needs to be addressed before there's going to be any radical improvement in employee relations".

"Many individuals talk in terms of the trust level getting in the way of any improvement in employee relations".

"The underlying belief that money must be paid for WCM is in my opinion holding back any extra productivity that could be gained from employees".

C (x) Respondent Data: Final Phase (Data collected 5/6 months after the data within the previous section)

Figure 4.1.10 highlights the most frequently coded categories within this final phase of data collection at Kilycra which are shown as 'trust, mistrust, respect', 'money/pay', 'management commitment' and 'communications'. All four of these have occupied positions well up the frequency table at the mid-phase of data collection.



The level of mistrust that was evident in the surge of concern around 'trust, mistrust, respect' in the early phase is maintained in this later phase where it has become the most major issue. All of the responses coded within this category express misgivings about the level of trust between employees and management, particularly within the former for the latter. Evidence of this movement is seen in the statements below:

"The employees on the ground keep saying that they are not interested because they do not trust management".

"They are still chasing us like they used to because they don't think we can be trusted".

'Money/pay' has become a major pre-occupation of all staff and it hangs like a pall over the introduction of teamworking at Kilycra; evidence for the strength of feeling is seen in the statements below:

"Expectations of money are high and our non-deliverance is shaping operators' views of us badly".

"Aren't we entitled to share in the fruits of our sweat".

The commitment level shown by management is severely criticised by respondents and hence the high position for the coded category of 'management commitment' in this latter phase of data gathering. Again the intensity of feeling in the vast majority of respondent comments is strong, as evidenced by the sample statements below:

"The name change to Kilycra Q was only a facelift no real management action to follow".

"Our consistency with the whole project is bad we blow hot and cold".

'Communications' which has featured strongly throughout all phases of the data collection at Kilycra again appears to be a major frustration point for the vast majority of respondents, as evidenced in the sample comments below:

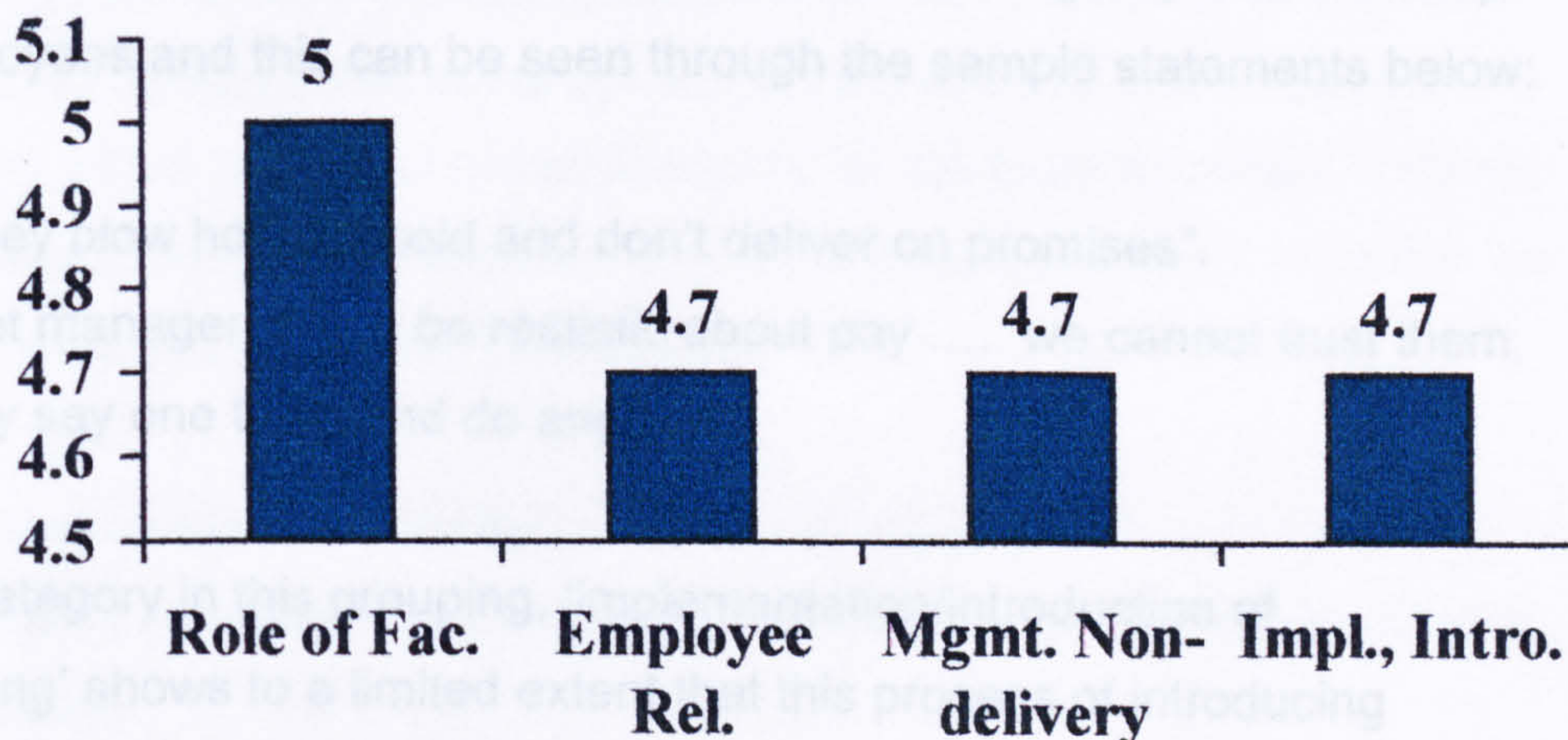
“Stop making gaffes like the way the possible short-time work was communicated”.

“Seems to me that we within management think that communications is about minutes/instructions and notice boards etc. rather than face-to-face”.

The second grouping of most frequently coded categories shown at Figure 4.1.11 below includes ‘role of facilitator’, ‘employee relations’, ‘non-deliverance by management’ and ‘implementation of teams’. Two of these have featured relatively strongly in each of the previous phases but neither ‘non-deliverance of management’ nor ‘employee relations’ were evident in the early phase but emerged gently as it were in the mid-phase but could be said to come thundering through in this final phase of data gathering.

Figure 4.1.11

% of responses coded as:



The lack of clarity concerning the ‘role of facilitator’ is evident in the earlier phases of data collection and is again repeated in this final phase; thus it

remains a cause of concern for staff at all levels, as evidenced by the comments below:

"Maybe some limited techniques were transferred but the operators and even the facilitators never really changed the way they did things their role did not change".

"Don't know what they (the facilitators) are supposed to be doing".

'Employee relations', which is the second in this grouping to have emerged strongly at the mid-phase, recurs here again and it is obvious from all of the comments that the intended improvement in employee relations did not materialise, as evidenced by:

"With I.R. as bad as ours, E.R. cannot be good".

"The union have ruined the possibility of building up good E.R. through their entrenched views".

The emergence of 'non-deliverance by management' referred to above appears to be a very emotive issue within the facilitator group and the shop floor employees and this can be seen through the sample statements below:

"They blow hot and cold and don't deliver on promises".

"Get management to be realistic about pay we cannot trust them, they say one thing and do another".

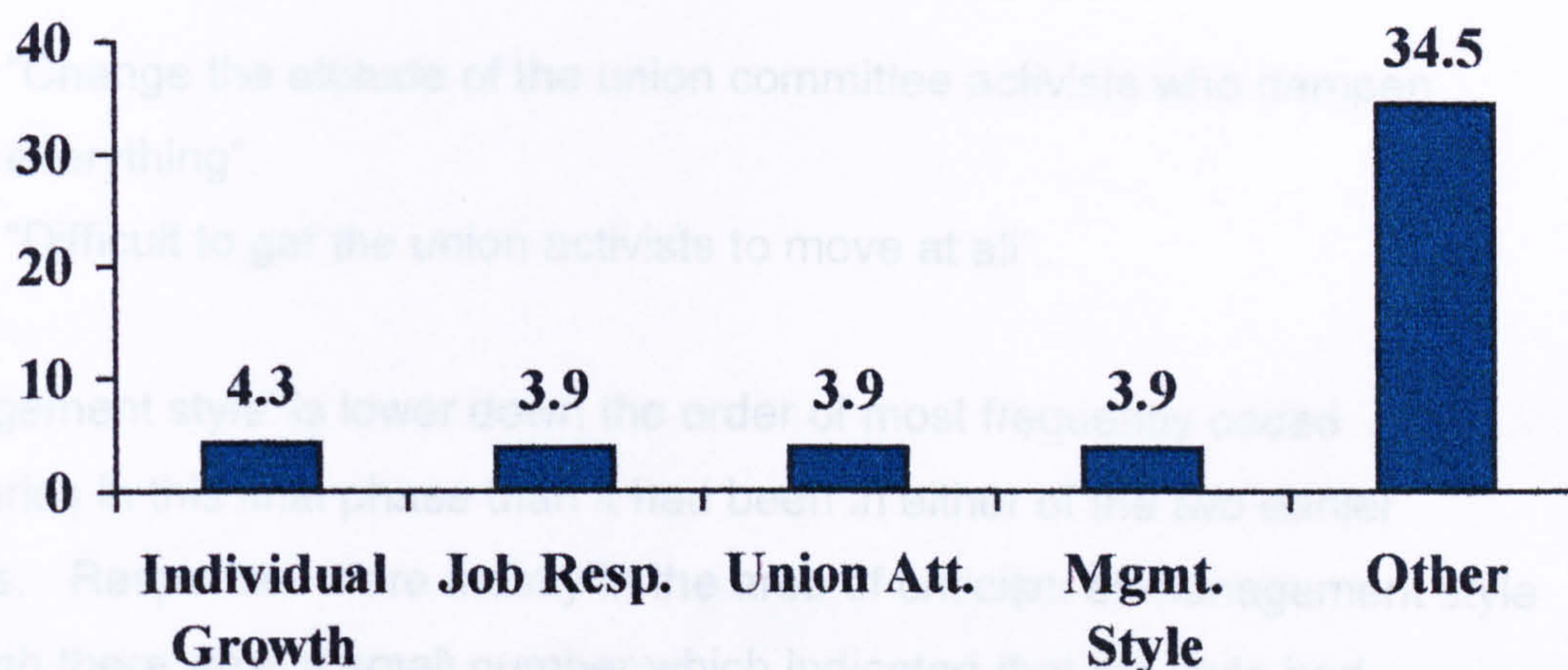
The last category in this grouping, 'implementation/introduction of teamworking' shows to a limited extent that this process of introducing teamworking commenced with some optimism but same had not been maintained as evidenced below:

"We got off to an OK start that's about all".

"WCM and teamworking have died in employee minds".

The final grouping in this treatment of the most frequently used categories is shown below at figure 4.1.12 and it includes references to 'individual growth', 'job responsibilities', 'union attitudes' and 'management style':

Figure 4.1.12
% of responses coded as:



With the exception of the Pin Drafting Department all references to 'individual growth/maturity' indicate that in the opinion of respondents there has been no development within 'individual growth/maturity' of the team members involved in this process of introducing teamworking at Kilycra; evidence for this can be seen in the attached respondent statements:

"No real change in maturity".

"An improvement in Pin Drafting looks as if that is down to JD (the facilitator)".

The statements coded at 'job responsibilities' include statements indicating the assignment of particular job responsibilities to team members and on occasions an expression of their willingness/unwillingness to undertake same. Examples of statements within this category are indicated below:

“Team involved in some problem solving”.

“Have tried with no real success to get the teams talking more regularly to one another”.

The category of ‘union attitudes’ has not appeared in the early phase or the mid-phase but as the process of introducing teamworking progressed awareness among respondents of union attitudes obviously increased; thus for the first time it appears in this phase within the most frequently coded statements. Sample comments are indicated hereunder:

“Change the attitude of the union committee activists who dampen everything”.

“Difficult to get the union activists to move at all”.

‘Management style’ is lower down the order of most frequently coded categories in this final phase than it had been in either of the two earlier phases. Responses were mostly in the area of criticism of management style although there were a small number which indicated that the style had improved within some managers. Sample statements coded at this category are shown below:

“One or two have changed and are less ‘bossy’”.

“If problems occur the managers get back into ‘boss’ mode”.

The grouping of categories above has accounted for all but 89 of the 258 coded categories; the distribution of the remaining 89 can be seen within Figures 4.1.13 and 4.1.14 below:

Figure 4.1.13
% of responses coded as:

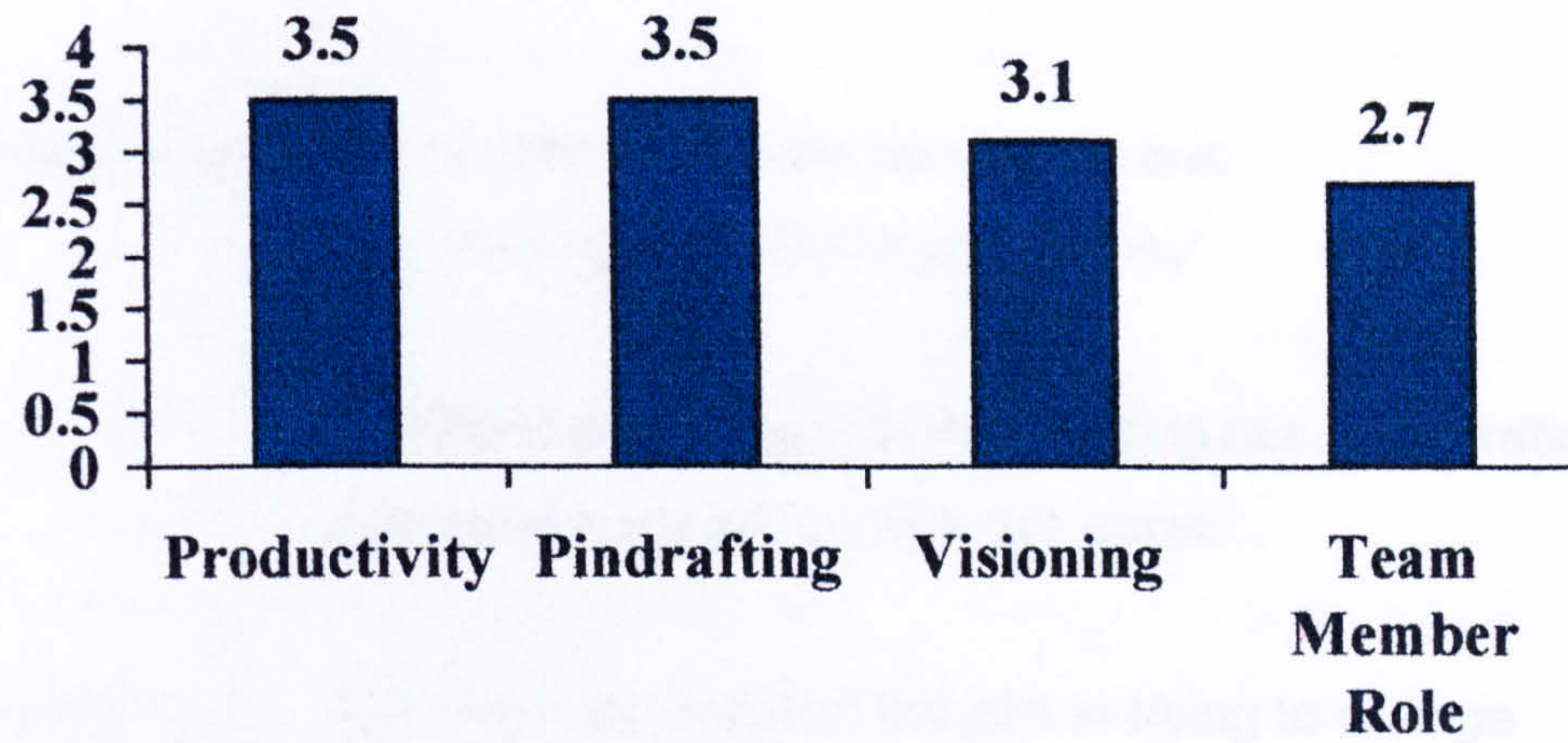
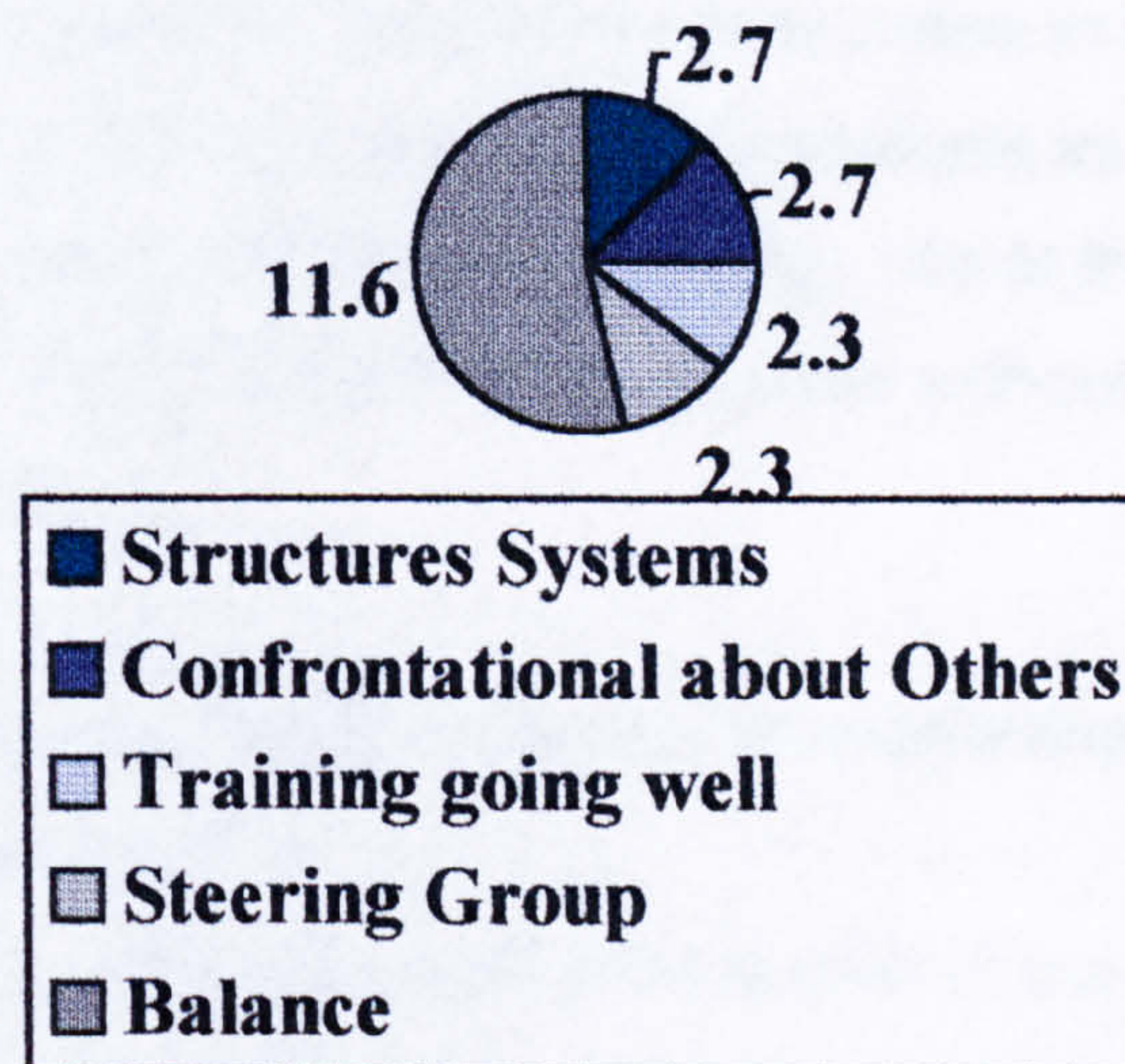


Figure 4.1.14
% of responses coded as:



A sample of these categories and statements can be seen below:

Productivity	"No real improvement in productivity".
Pin Drafting	"Definite improvement in Pin Drafting but co-operation everywhere seems to have got worse".
Visioning/Directioning	"We seem to have lost the plot in trying to change attitudes/behaviour".
'Them' confrontational about others.	"Their attitudes are no good as shown by their lack of full co-operation with Kilycra Q.
Steering Group	"Some sub-committees (of the Steering Group) have got staff in different sections listening to one another".

C (xi) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Final Phase

It should be noted within the data collected at this final phase in Kilycra that 'explanations' are again put forward by individual respondents as they attempt to explain why they believe certain things are occurring. As at the earlier stages I will present some of these statements hereunder without profering any theoretical analysis of same:

"We have gone backwards because we are not supporting the level of teamwork required for WCM".

"By not negotiating on money we have lost the trust of our operators and the union".

"We'll only make progress here with teamwork when management treat us with respect and trust".

"How can we trust them if they refuse to talk money".

"We should abandon this Kilycra Q initiative because we don't seem to be able to get the idea into practice".

"Follow-through on commitments the only way to build trust".

“Start delivering on money and we might be able to trust them then”.

“Management must see our issues, particularly money, if they are to get trust going and then push their empowered approach”.

“The earlier mistakes that management made re safety are again being made with ISO no real effort to mature individuals almost all the work is being done by one manager”.

“They are still chasing us like they used to because they don’t think we can be trusted”.

“Very little (individual growth/maturity) organisation-wide union hold everything back”.

“No trust so no real E.R.”

“The consistent stream of negativity from the activists leaves no room for manoeuvre so if anything E.R. are worse”.

“Had hoped for improvement but teamwork did not work, trust got worse and then productivity slowed down”.

“Trust or the lack of it seems to be dominating everything”.

A. INITIAL COMMENTARY ON KILYCRA

At this stage of the review of Kilycra the only initial observations that I wish to make are:

- 1 The data presented is reasonably positive in respect of the early phase of the process of introducing teamwork but there are some seeds of discontent even within the early phase which return quite strongly at the later phases. The pre-planning process was very short at Kilycra and it is safe to say that the visioning process was a non-inclusive one.
- 2 As will be the case in the other case-studies respondents put forward ‘explanations’ in respect of what they saw were critical issues during the introduction of teamworking at Kilycra. Some of these comments and overall trends within the participant data will be further analysed

when we undertake the cross-case analysis at a later stage in this thesis.

I have endeavoured in this Kilycra case (and will so do in each of the others) to present only the respondent data in this initial examination of Kilycra and not inject any judgemental interpretations of my own; the latter will emerge when I undertake the cross-case analysis.

CASE 2: HARVESTCO

This sub-section contains the following information:

A: THE ORGANISATION

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT
HARVESTCO

C (i) The Planning Phase

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

C (iii) The Database

C (iv) The Data Gathering Process

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

C (vi) Respondent Data: Early Phase

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Early Phase

C (viii) Respondent Data: Final Phase

C (ix) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Final Phase

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON HARVESTCO

A: THE ORGANISATION

Harvestco is the major producer of peat and peat related products in Ireland. Peat is a natural product of plant origin, comprised of decayed roots, stems, leaves and flowers forming in layers for centuries. The vegetation of peat bogs absorbs and retains water and as the peat layers increase, contact with the mineral nutritional soil is sealed off.

At the time of this study over 2,000 people were employed full-time with average numbers employed rising to over 2,500 at peak production. The

company is divisionalised into four distinct businesses. These include a peat energy division, which, as a core element, supplies peat for generation of electricity; solid fuels, which sells primarily to the Irish market; horticultural products and environmental products, which operate in worldwide markets (CEO briefing).

With a workforce which is almost totally unionised, the divisions have operated traditionally in rural communities, particularly in the midlands and to a lesser extent in the west of Ireland. Its employment creating role within these communities since its establishment in 1946 has been significant. Some villages and small communities, in fact, were created and thrived for over a generation due to the company's level of operations. The company's contribution to national, economic and social development has, therefore, been substantial (Management briefing).

Since the mid 1980's Harvestco has been transformed organisationally while maintaining its rural base and its identity with peat processing as a core business. It has taken on major changes in structure, work design and operations. In adopting these changes, it has become a group of distinct businesses with a common commitment to being customer focused, market lead and attractive in a commercial environment. Up to the mid-1980's the company was a traditionally bureaucratic, centralised semi-state organisation operating in over a third of the counties of Ireland and with a small base in the U.K. (Misteil & Lawlor, 1993). The main focus of its work was – as it had been for forty years – the production of different types of peat for sale to peat burning power stations, for peat briquette (solid fuel) factories and for horticultural products.

Government policy in response to the energy crisis of the 1970's included a major focus on peat as a native fuel. This led to major investment in a new expansion programme and in private enterprise bog development. The building of a new briquette factory and site development for a further (fifth) factory followed. Thus company borrowings increased at a time when volatility and energy prices were a fading concern.

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

Harvestco had suffered from some of the worst excesses of the poor industrial relations that pervaded in Ireland in the 1960's and into the 1970's (McCarthy, 1973). Staff and their union representatives would regularly hold up the commencement of the production season with a new set of demands that very often gave rise to unofficial/official industrial action. Indeed in the 60's following a series of damaging disputes a major enquiry into industrial relations at Harvestco was established. This enquiry among other things confirmed the very poor level of industrial relations and recommended that Harvestco should improve its personnel management and have a more centralised approach to negotiations.

The advent of a centralised personnel service did not in fact stem the rising tide of poor industrial relations. In fact in some senses it slowed down the pace at which issues were addressed and consequently could be said to have added to staff frustration. All of the industrial relations history referred to above gave rise to a very demarcation conscious workforce at individual Works level and an adversarial attitude to industrial relations at that level and also at corporate level (Misteil & Lawlor, 1993). This notwithstanding good high sounding statements regularly being made in respect of trying to change the climate of industrial relations.

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT HARVESTCO

C (i) The Planning Phase

Further difficulties followed. Adverse weather conditions and successive seasons of poor production led to a severe shortage of peat supplies and a failure to meet customer needs. At the same time, world energy prices continued to fall, depressing competitiveness in both solid fuels and peat

energy and reducing overall profitability (CEO briefing). Urgent action became necessary to save the company.

A crisis existed in the wake of this disastrous period. The threat of possible major redundancies and rising company debt provoked the board of the company into a radical examination of the need for change in the way Harvestco operated. The assumption of an executive role by the company chairman followed by the appointment in mid 1987 of a new managing director heralded a major redirection of the company to being market lead and customer driven. This new managing director proceeded to initiate a major examination of all options for the company and particularly looked at threats to the future viability of the company. It included an examination of new and revolutionary production methods which were observed in Finland.

The board also indicated that if the company were to continue unchanged it would not survive another five years. While staying in its core peat related business new products and markets would have to be found and developed and all operations would have to be upgraded.

To advance these decisions, a task force was adopted, actively involving line management and specialists in the process (Misteil & Lawlor, 1993). All aspects of the company's operations were scrutinised and evaluated. Reports were prepared based on the re-structuring or divisionalising of the company, changing production methods and assessing marketing, technical and financial services.

Following consideration of these proposals the managing director in the Autumn of 1988 addressed the group of unions. He proposed initiatives designed to radically increase competitiveness and reduce fixed overhead costs. These proposals included the creation of independent units and the contracting out of peat production – and provided for the bringing about of major increases in productivity and profitability.

Contract style working would be supported by a de-centralised organisation structure – more sensitive to market needs. A new framework of relationships would be sought with employees and their representatives, customers, banks and Government. From the outset agreement on new forms of harvesting and producing peat was identified as pivotal; without change in this one critical area, other changes proposed even if agreed unanimously would be relatively insignificant (CEO briefing).

The managing director launched his proposals with a direct communication to all employees, outlining the impact of – and a need for – the proposed changes. These proposals centred on operations such as production and transport as well as maintenance being carried out by enterprise units. The key change outlined by the managing director involved former employees, having availed of a voluntary redundancy package, setting up these units. Members of the unit would be required to invest in those units as would the company, both sharing risk and opportunity. A programme of work would then be agreed on a contractual basis with payment based on output and quality.

The group of unions in Harvestco represents all unions with membership in the company. Five main unions represent the workforce, from general workers to administrative, professional and technical grades. Faced with the challenges of revolutionary organisational change described in the managing director's communication the group of unions recognised the need for change – particularly through addressing the severe financial pressure facing the company. They realised the threat to the viability of company operations (Union Official briefing).

They were, however, unhappy with the raw realisation for their members that within Harvestco's idea of enterprise units their members would actually lose their jobs and thus sever links with the organisation that had employed them for many years; this notwithstanding the fact that they were to have a new contractual relationship with the same organisation in an on-going way. As a counter-proposal they put forward that they would be much happier with a

system of direct labour enterprise in which basic pay and conditions would be guaranteed and they sought the introduction of a direct labour system on a trial basis (Misteil & Lawlor, 1993). When negotiations eventually started, the approach adopted by senior management and the group of unions helped to ensure that at the highest levels the interests and concerns of employees regarding job security and losses would be addressed. It also provided for a *consensual approach* to major organisational change particularly in terms of its impact on traditional work practices.

Sustained and difficult negotiations took place over a period, which included intensive consultation with the affected employees. This culminated in April 1989 with a framework – known as the ‘partnership for progress’ – between Harvestco management and the group of unions. This framework provided for the introduction of ‘new work forms’ in the 1989 production season on a pilot or experimental basis (Misteil & Lawlor, 1993).

Initially, there were two types of unit or team proposed – a. employee enterprise units and b. autonomous work groups.

Employee enterprise units were a modification of the original proposals by management to encourage employees to sever formal links with the company, set up their own companies as independent peat producers and enter into a contractual agreement with their former employer. The main change in the original proposal was to allow for *secondment* of employees to this type of unit, thus addressing the key issue of security of tenure for employees

Autonomous work groups bore close resemblance to the proposal of the unions to introduce a direct labour system of production in an effort to reduce fixed costs while protecting wage levels – and also security of tenure.

C (ii) The implementation of Teamworking

In order to monitor the effects of the work forms a joint evaluation process was agreed, initially for a period of one year. In 1990 it was agreed to continue

the experiment initiated in 1989 and to move to team-based production across the organisation on a phased basis. This agreed process shaped the emergence of a third model – autonomous enterprise groups – introduced in 1991.

What has been introduced in Harvestco takes as its model or paradigm the *open socio-technical system* which has been applied in many other industrial contexts worldwide. What has been attempted in Harvestco, however, amounts to applying a socio-technical process in an agricultural setting (Misteil & Lawlor, 1993). The social needs of employees working on a task and the technical nature of the task in question were reflected in the enterprise concept put forward initially and in the compromise proposal that emerged from negotiations.

In all autonomous teams, a balance of both social and technical aspects of the work is required. As highlighted by Misteil & Lawlor (1993), three main aims which relate to socio-technical systems were brought into the agreed experiment:

1. That the work remain personally meaningful through a combination of skill and task variety in particular;
2. That each team be responsible for its own results – through a degree of autonomous working; and
3. That teams have satisfactory knowledge of their achievement of targets through speedy feedback of results.

Traditional work practices and large work groups shaped the old company culture. Introducing risk and reward, self-management and greater devolved responsibility meant changing roles, rules and relationships. It meant, in effect, a re-shaping of the identity with work itself and with the company. Significant for those employees entering autonomous groups was the fact that virtually all started their work lives with Harvestco and knew no other working

environment. Mobility to them, unlike urban workers throughout north western Europe, meant little more than distance to and from the work place. That work place was a dark expanse of land stretching many kilometres in all directions. They knew no other work place for up to 10 years before moving to another similar environment.

The main aim of bringing enterprise into peat production was to reduce the cost of production and to vary the operational cost base by linking payment of wages to results of production achieved (CEO briefing). That aim was and remains a fundamental element of the movement to autonomous/enterprise working. Technically the company needed to rationalise and manage its cost structure. Socially, it was necessary to ensure that team-based skills and the necessary level of commitment and motivation were present to meet its production targets within the standards set. Quantitative measures (e.g. tonnage and moisture content) would be standard factors in determining payment.

For employees the enterprise approach involved both risk and reward, measurable autonomy and control over an assigned area of operations. Given the common interest in success, autonomous working meant an opportunity for gainsharing – where the company and those in autonomous units shared the benefits of reduced costs and increased productivity.

Socio-technical work systems require a re-balancing of autonomy and control. In Harvestco this meant the supervisory role giving way to a support/facilitative function with the new teams being, effectively, self-regulatory. This transformation in the role of foremen and supervisors was ultimately to prove a difficult journey, albeit achievable.

For these teams other critical forms of support from outside would include management support and administrative, informational and technical services, especially at local level. There are many common features associated with all three types of group organisation mentioned above. The essential concept centred on a core group of between 3 and 6 people, drawn from the

workforce, based on their group cohesiveness, mix of individual skill and experience. This core group took responsibility for all operations within their own area of bog including production, drainage, silt control and plant and equipment maintenance. The local Harvestco works carried responsibility for support service such as fuel supplies, spare parts, training and administration and offered back-up maintenance. They also dealt with wages and with tax and other relevant deductions. These services were costed and provided for in the budget of each team.

The team members were selected by local management in consultation with the group of unions. Typically a core team would be composed of 4 or 5 team members – one a former supervisor, a crafts person and 2 or 3 semi-skilled employees. Thus provision was being made for a balance of experience and skills to sustain the new autonomous operation (Works Manager briefings). Each team had decision making responsibilities for its employment needs – ranging from the recall and lay-off of those employed on a seasonal basis, for working hours, for the allocation of work and the degree of operational flexibility required within that team. After the first year of operation during which the two types of groups were 'autonomous work groups' and 'employee enterprise units' year two saw the development of a third scheme – the 'autonomous enterprise unit'. An additional 26 groups of this type went into operation along with the original teams.

Typically an autonomous enterprise unit or team would be composed of up to 5 team members, supported by 15 to 20 seasonal employees, including a few permanent employees with craft or other skills. A production area of about 1,200 acres would be allocated to the team with a production target of say 120,000 tons of milled peat. Responsibilities for such issues as bog drainage, machine maintenance, safety management and the provision of protective covering for harvested peat would be specified for each team. This approach is now the dominant model of autonomous working/teamworking in peat production in Harvestco. The risk and reward involved lies somewhere in between employee enterprise and autonomous work groups and reflects

the most effective features of the other two schemes and the experience gained with them.

Significantly all participants in autonomous enterprise units remain employees of the company. Harvestco during this period radically re-aligned the work of their traditional foremen and supervisors in both their bogs and factories. Up until this period the organisation had approximately 300 foremen/supervisors. These individuals had responsibility for 40 or more employees under the traditional production system, with a large intake of seasonal employees during peat production.

The numbers involved in supervision almost halved over the two seasons of 1989 and 1990 with many ex-supervisors being absorbed into the new teams and many more taking redundancy. The elimination of a direct supervisory role which followed the introduction of autonomous groups or teams has been addressed in a number of ways. Foremen now have a liaison role with teams, providing guidance on team management issues, checking progress towards agreed targets and standards and acting as an information/two-way communication channel with local management. The 'partnership proposal' agreement involved a re-statement of the key responsibilities of local works management following the introduction of the enterprise concept. New administrative systems were devised, for example, relating to payment of wages, performance against team budget and team production records. Works management still remained accountable for property leased to teams and for security of stock.

The need for a coaching and advisory role in working with new teams was identified, particularly in relation to the effective use of team resources and the efficient application of equipment and machinery. These and other responsibilities were effectively devolved to the former bog foremen. This newly created role for them, since it covered a range of relationships between teams and the main organisation, was seen as a different one.

Some controls still remained for example, product quality checks on moisture content of harvested peat are a responsibility which must be exercised on behalf of the company. Monitoring of safety standards is another area where some degree of control and influence is involved.

Many foremen now liaise with up to 3 or more teams. Contact with teams is now more of once a day contact as opposed to the traditional permanent and highly visible presence of the bog foremen as supervisor.

The new role therefore could be summarised as a complex one. There is a facilitation role – active support for teams such as formal training, informal coaching and communication; a checking and controlling role - formal monitoring of operational agreements, standards and legal responsibilities on behalf of the company.

Extensive pre-planning and on-going planning was evident throughout all elements of Harvestco's approach, not alone centrally but also locally and within the enterprise units. The relative urgency within this planning was decidedly influenced by the survival instinct within the organisation at the time. This pre-planning also focused on endeavouring to have the right mix of people within the teams and also the functional support to those teams. The teams were characterised by a balanced blend of experience and skill, including supervisory, craft or technical and general operative.

As earlier indicated the process of visioning was exceedingly well practiced throughout the movement towards autonomous working. The initial impetus for this visioning process came from the chief executive but as earlier noted a significant number of internal working parties contributed to various elements of this vision. Thus it could be said that a number of other individuals throughout the organisation played a part in crafting this vision of a market driven competitive organisation with greater stability within its finances and continuity of employment (Misteil and Lawlor, 1993). It should also be noted that some other senior executives, notably the H.R. executive and one of the divisional managing directors (later to become the chief executive) played a

really important part in spreading the vision throughout the organisation. Thus not alone was the chief executive officer at this time visiting many of the work locations but so also were the above two individuals who were endeavouring to enhance the commitment of both employees and managers towards the type of support that would be required for autonomous working (Misteil & Lawlor, 1993). The on-going nature of the communication processes undertaken by these individuals was a significant factor in giving people the opportunity to express concerns and to shape the way in which autonomous working would be introduced and developed.

Great importance was laid on the need to provide additional skills for many of the people involved in the move towards autonomous working. Said individuals were consulted as to the type of training that they felt was necessary. Some teamworking skills training was provided but in the first year this was limited due to the fact that the initial teams were drawn from individuals who were well known to one another; in the second year when this was not as clear-cut a situation more detailed training around teamworking skills was provided (HR Director briefing). A significant amount of training was provided in the area of understanding budgeting and finance because financial modelling was so important in the move to autonomous working. In addition to this interpretation of financial data some training was also provided in the management of seasonal employees.

In the second year new teams were provided with training on how teams develop, team meetings, communications, quality, legal responsibilities in areas such as safety, as well as discipline and grievance handling procedures. Guidance on adapting to and coping with the change from traditional to autonomous arrangements was also provided. Problem solving and decision making in teams were also addressed.

Most of the training described above was provided by Harvestco's own internal resources, although some of the financial training was provided by an external consultant (HR Director briefing). Consultation was on-going with individual teams around their individual needs in respect of training and

specific additions were made to the plan as local needs dictated. One element of skill development that perhaps was not sufficiently emphasised in the early part of this initiative were the skill requirements of the foremen/supervisors, who were now to be known as facilitators. As earlier indicated their role was a mixed one between facilitator and controller and the full level of clarification that would normally have been required in respect of that change of role was not perhaps provided with the level of clarity that the situation required. This was further exacerbated by the fact that said facilitators did not receive as much training (which could have helped with role clarity) as other team members, leaving them with a sense of being in some way left out-in-the-cold (HR Director briefing).

Traditionally Harvestco would not have scored very well on any satisfaction level test in respect of communications. However, in respect of autonomous working the chief executive made it abundantly clear from the outset that he wished the communication process to be radically improved. He very much led from the front on this issue and visited all of the works throughout the country on several occasions interacting not alone with management and technical staff but with as many individuals as possible from all levels. Local and support management also contributed greatly to enhancing the communications and indeed forging a change in the language mix of all individuals within the Works. By this I mean that rather than just talking about being at work or the hour they were going to leave, employees became much more focused on productivity, tonnage, moisture content and targets. Because this type of language was being used regularly in communications people began to focus more regularly on these issues which were going to be critical in the move to autonomous working.

I have referred earlier to the fact that traditionally industrial relations had not been good at Harvestco. From the outset of this initiative it was seen that union engagement throughout the process was going to be exceedingly critical and thus every effort was made to engage as fully as possible with the group of unions and also with union representatives at local level (HR Director briefing). The scale of turnaround can be realised from the fact that when the

whole idea of enterprise working was first put to the unions it was wholeheartedly rejected. But within the spirit of partnership the organisation and the group of unions worked together over a lengthy period to devise the two forms of enterprise that were to be used during 1989, ie. *employee enterprise unit* and *autonomous work group*. These two approaches were quite different from the organisation's initial idea principally in the way in which it addressed the security of employment need within employees. During the Winter of 1989/1990 further extensive negotiations took place which brought about what became known as the *autonomous enterprise units*, which was to be the model for the future. None of this could have succeeded if the organisation had remained in its traditional stance towards the unions and vice versa; both needed to take bold and brave steps to emerge from the existing abyss.

In the light of their historical situation Harvestco realised that significant work needed to be undertaken within the group of unions and perhaps more particularly within the employees at Works level to develop a greater sense of trust than was the case in the past. Thus efforts were made to move beyond just making statements and to ensure that the organisation and its managers honoured all commitments that were given, with particular reference to the new form of working. Thus for example when it was identified that a particular team or teams in general had identified with management a need for training then it was going to be critical for the development of trust that said training was provided; the organisation worked exceedingly hard to develop said trust through being absolutely rigid about delivering against such commitments. A further element that helped to develop this trust was the extent to which employees could see management's willingness to let them have control over elements that were hitherto tightly controlled by management, such as decisions about the length of the working day, the bringing-in of seasonal workers, which machine should be maintained and in what order. Decisions such as these were never able to be influenced by team members and there was a strong feeling that they were now being trusted much more than they had been in the past.

C. (iii) The Database

At Harvestco, as with Kilycra, the individual respondents were staff at a variety of levels within the organisation, all of whom were intimately involved with the process of introducing teamworking.

The operator staff were drawn from across six autonomous enterprise units that were operating particular segments of bog. The core team in each of these cases was 5 or 6 yielding a total of approximately 33 core team members. Each of these teams ‘employed’ up to 20 seasonal workers but the data for this research was only gathered from the core teams. In addition 3 factory teams involved in the production of peat briquettes were involved in this study and this yielded a further 21 operators. Thus the total number of operators included in the study was approximately 54.

In addition to the operator staff the process of introducing teamworking directly involved 9 foremen/facilitators plus some 20 managerial and technical staff. Thus the total number of staff directly involved in this initiative amounted to just over 80. Additionally, data was also gathered from Union representatives at local and Official level and H.R. personnel.

A summary of the database can be seen at Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2: Database summary

Focus teams/individuals for data gathering	Number of individuals within the teams
6 Autonomous/Enterprise unit teams	33
3 factory teams of production workers	21
Foremen/Facilitators	9
Managerial/technical staff	20
Union Representatives	
- Local	2

- Official	1
H.R. Personnel	1
Total number of individuals from whom data was gathered	87

C (iv) The data gathering process

Interviews were conducted with each of the above groupings (and on occasions with individuals) during two separate phases of data collection: early phase: five years after the commencement of the teamworking initiative and final phase: ten months after the early phase data collection. The team meetings at Harvestco involved individuals who were working together within six autonomous/enterprise teams and three factory teams of production workers. All of these groups were met by this researcher on one occasion in each of the two phases of data collection.

All of the team meetings within Harvestco were conducted on the bogland within the immediate work area of the teams in very make-shift canteen huts. Meetings were held in predominantly off-season times or bad weather situations and such meetings were invariably add-ons to the team's breaktimes/lunchtimes. The meetings lasted approximately 30-40 minutes; the difference in length of the interviews reflected our effectiveness in data gathering and/or the anxiety on the part of some of the team members to get back to work as soon as possible.

Separate meetings were also held with the Foreman/Facilitator group and the management team; these meetings often took over an hour and were again focused on attempting to gather as much live data as possible on progress with the process of introducing teamworking at Harvestco.

An inherent value in the meetings with the Foreman/Facilitator group and the management team was that they were taking an overview across the organisation whereas the other teams were focused almost exclusively on

their own team. This permitted not alone the emergence of the views of both groups about their own situations/views but also, as a valuable addition, it was possible to gather data that would be helpful at the later analytical stage; thus data provided by these two groups was able to be used as a cross check, as it were, on data gathered from other sources. Finally, valuable data was also gathered from HR Personnel and the Trade Union Representatives who, at local and official level, were also met on two occasions through the process of introducing teamworking at Harvestco.

With all of these teams and individuals this researcher was rigorous in stressing that his view of the process was unimportant at the data gathering phase. He therefore also made repeated efforts during the interviews to clarify with the groups that he was absorbing their data in all of its richness through regular reflection back to them of his understanding of their input.

As indicated within the Research Strategy and Methods chapter arrangements were made at this data gathering phase to enlist a key internal individual who would help at the later data analysis stage; thus at this early stage he was informed that he would be used as a check on our analysis. The individual that was so contracted at Harvestco was the Management and Organisation Development Manager.

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

Initially the respondent statements were separately coded to the emerging categories using NUD.IST.4 as described in the data analysis section of our earlier Research Strategy and Methods chapter.

The responses from the individuals involved in the teamworking initiative were then sorted and re-sorted within these categories, with some new ones being established during the process.

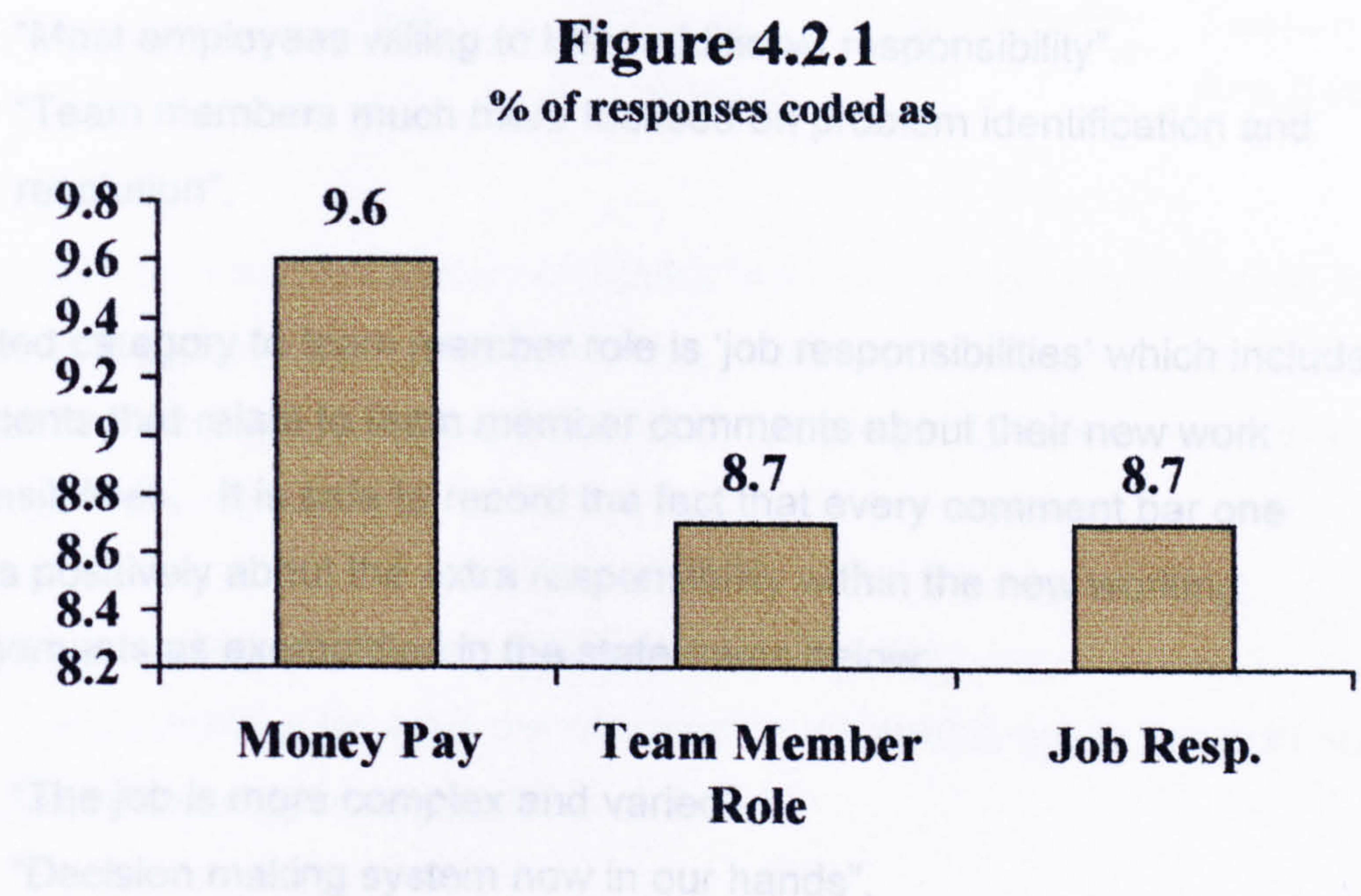
For the first stage of our analysis the data within the categories that is presented within the various phases below has been counted to ascertain the 'frequency of mentions' made by the respondents. This has allowed us to clearly see the emphasis placed by these respondents on the various categories.

Bar charts have been used to demonstrate the degree of emphasis that emerges from this 'frequency of mentions'; thus the charts presented should be seen as a graphical summary in percentage terms of the relative number of occasions on which respondents within the sample have made statements that have been coded at a particular category.

The analysis of the data collected at any particular phase is spread over up to six charts and where this arises the charts need to be seen as a whole within that particular phase. Thus for example within the analysis of the early phase data from Harvestco at C (v) below the charts 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4, 4.2.5 and 4.2.6 should be seen as a whole, with 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 being a breakdown of the 'other' category included at 4.2.3. The text associated with each chart explains in detail the content of that particular chart.

C (vi) Respondent Data: Early Phase (data collected approximately 5 years after the commencement of the teamworking initiative).

This section will provide an insight into the data gathered in the interviews with individuals and teams in the early phase data collection at Harvestco. All but 79 of the 208 coded statements are accounted for in figures 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 below. As mentioned earlier the counting of these statements provides us with a basis for an initial examination of the more frequently used categories and will allow some comparison to be made with the data from the other four case-studies.



The data demonstrated in Figure 4.2.1 above shows the top three most frequently used categories of 'money/pay', 'team member role', and 'job responsibilities'.

'Money/pay' has been an issue that has given rise to satisfaction within the employees insofar as almost all of the statements have indicated that they greatly welcome the change to where now their pay is affected by their output

and quality even if there is a certain risk therein; the statements below capture the tenor:

“We look to have opportunity to gain more but there is a risk”.

“An output incentive is definitely there but the tax system is poor”.

The category of ‘team member role’ has within it many favourable comments about the enhanced role that individuals and teams have been given within the new arrangements; notwithstanding the above, some suggestions are also made as to how the role can be further expanded by additional responsibility. Sample statements from this category are:

“Most employees willing to take additional responsibility”.

“Team members much more focused on problem identification and resolution”.

A related category to team member role is ‘job responsibilities’ which include statements that relate to team member comments about their new work responsibilities. It is safe to record the fact that every comment bar one speaks positively about the extra responsibility within the new working arrangements as exemplified in the statements below:

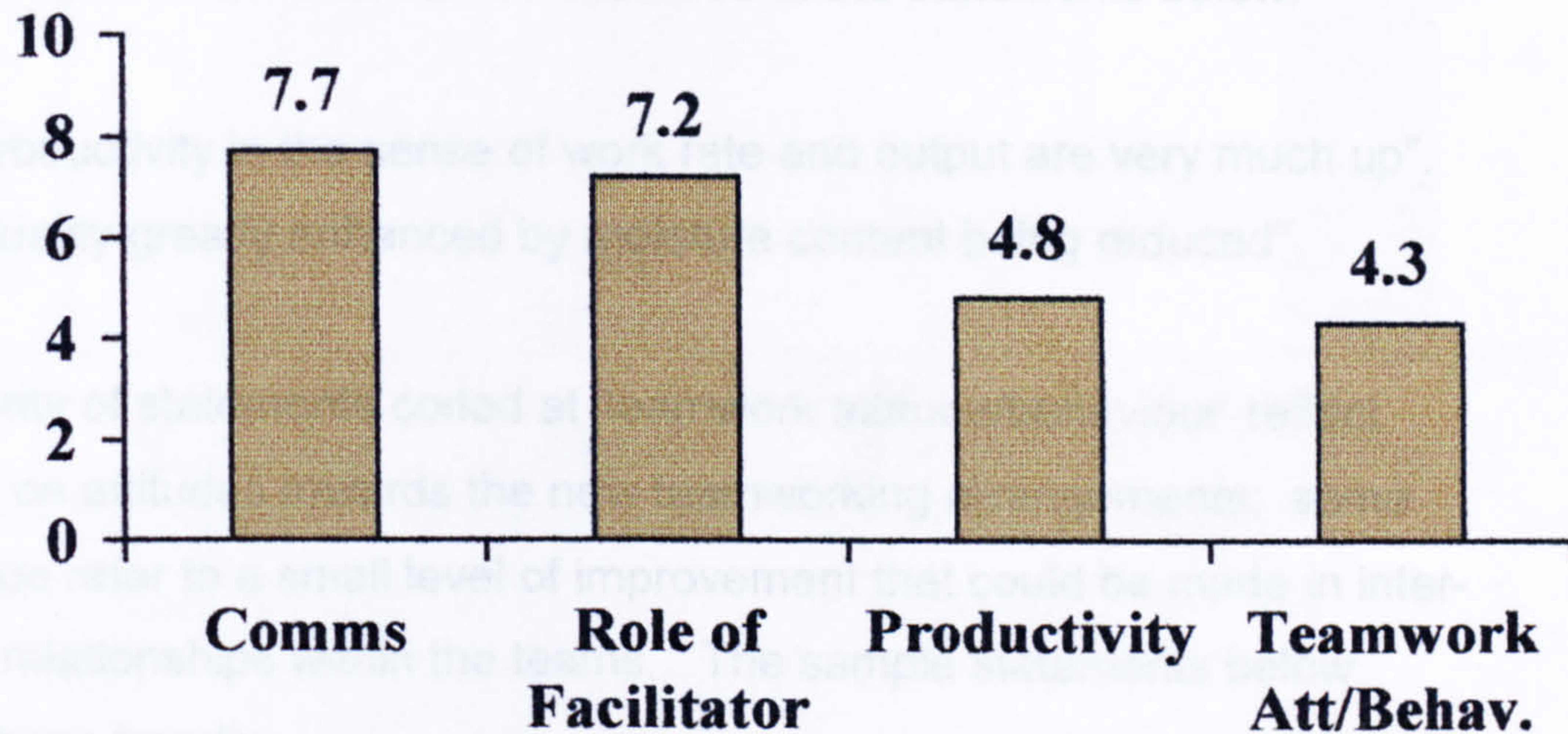
“The job is more complex and varied”.

“Decision making system now in our hands”.

The next grouping of coded categories is shown at Figure 4.2.2 and includes, ‘communications’, ‘role of facilitator’, ‘productivity’ and ‘teamwork attitude/behaviour’.

Figure 4.2.2

% of responses coded as:



Almost every comment on 'communications' talks of a radical improvement in same since the introduction of teamworking and in addition some team members are even suggesting ways in which they could further improve the new level of communications:

"Great improvement in communications all round".

"We still have to improve the communication getting out to non-core as well as core team members".

One of the few categories wherein most of the comments suggest improvement is required is 'role of facilitator' where again there appears misunderstandings about what the former foremen should now be doing as facilitators, as evidenced by:

"The new role for foremen needs to be understood and practised better".

"Help must be provided to get people through the changed role of foreman".

One of the immediate impactful gains for the organisation out of these new working arrangements were productivity gains, +where with decreased manning requirements output was substantially increased as indeed also was quality. These sentiments can be observed in the statements below:

“Productivity in the sense of work rate and output are very much up”.

“Quality greatly enhanced by moisture content being reduced”.

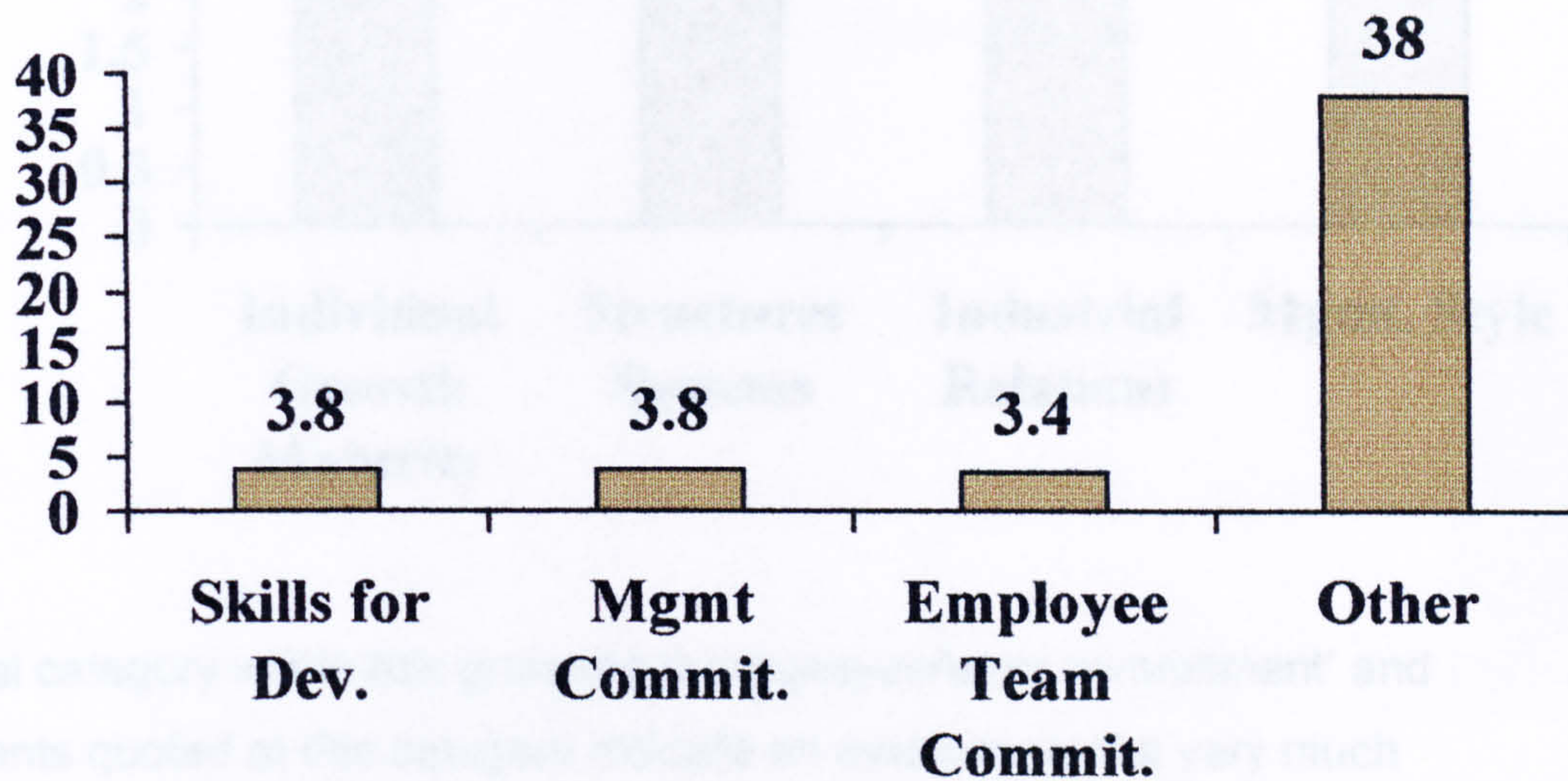
The majority of statements coded at ‘teamwork attitude/behaviour’ reflect positively on attitudes towards the new teamworking arrangements; some however do refer to a small level of improvement that could be made in interpersonal relationships within the teams. The sample statements below indicate these trends:

“Team focus has changed from conditions/toilet facilities etc. and now much more business oriented issues are raised”

“Maybe we need more help in understanding how to cope with stresses in our team”.

Figure 4.2.3 below highlights the next group of most frequently coded categories which includes ‘skills for development’, ‘management commitment’, ‘employee/team commitment’ and ‘other’.

Figure 4.2.3
% of responses coded as:



Respondents were keen to indicate that although the training undertaken at the commencement of their teamworking initiative had been extensive there were in fact still some additional skills that they believed were required for personnel within the new arrangements as indicated in their statements below:

“We need some more training in team skills”.

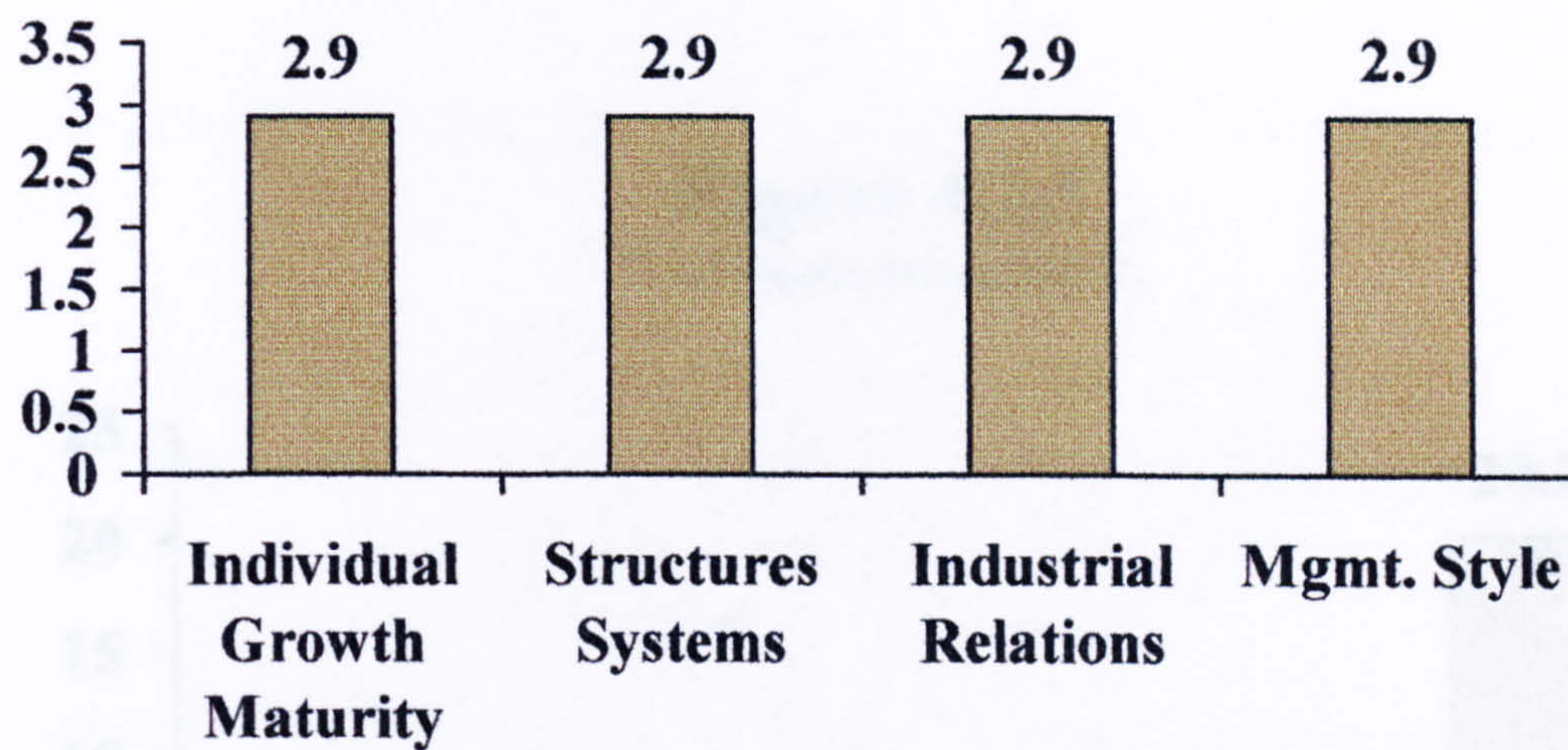
“Everything seems to be computerised and we need more training in computers”.

The majority of statements commenting on ‘management commitment’ indicated that the commitment and support from management for this initiative was excellent; some however point out ways in which that commitment could be expressed more positively by some additional behaviour on behalf of the senior management team. Evidence of these assertions can be seen in the statements below:

“Good support from top management from the early days”.

“The organisation should have worked harder at fostering relationships within the restructured teams”.

Figure 4.2.4
 % of responses coded as



The final category within this grouping is 'employee/team commitment' and statements quoted at this category indicate an awareness of a very much increased level of commitment within employees and team members, as evidenced in the comments below:

"Seems to be a high level of commitment to getting quality and quantity improvements".

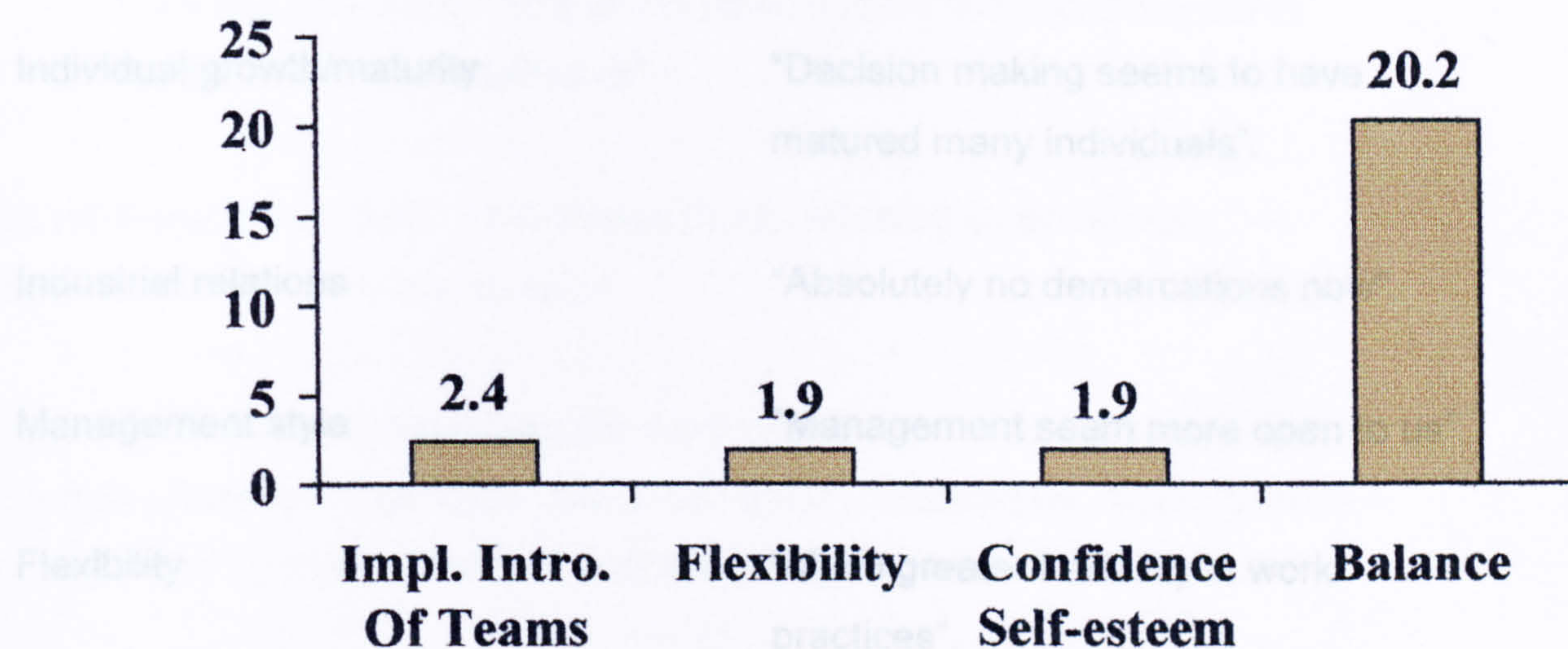
"Team members more aware of the plight of the company and that they can play a part in changing it".

The grouping of statements above, as mentioned earlier, accounted for all but 79 of the 208 coded categories; the distribution of the remaining 42 can be seen within Figures 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 below:

A sample of some of these categories and the statements within them can be seen below.

Figure 4.2.5

% of responses coded as:



C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents – Early Phase

As noted within the earlier Kityore case-study, respondents even at this early phase of data collection within Harvestco also proffered unsolicited 'explanations' between events as they occurred during the process of the introduction of the teamworking initiative at Harvestco. It appears to me that these statements are efforts on behalf of respondents to explain why they believed certain events were occurring and I would like to present some of these statements as follows:

"People seem to have grown through the whole process and particularly through improved communication about their role".

"As people's competencies have grown their self-image and confidence seems to grow".

"Being able to tackle problems within a team has been very developmental for most team members".

"The 'end as' is now non-existent and people feel much more free to communicate directly".

A sample of some of these categories and the statements within them can be seen below:

Individual growth/maturity	"Decision making seems to have matured many individuals".
Industrial relations	"Absolutely no demarcations now".
Management style	"Management seem more open to us".
Flexibility	"Much greater flexibility in work practices".

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents – Early Phase

As noted within the earlier Kilycra case-study, respondents even at this early phase of data collection within Harvestco also profered unsolicited 'explanations' between events as they occurred during the process of the introduction of the teamworking initiative at Harvestco. It appears to me that these statements are efforts on behalf of respondents to explain why they believed certain events were occurring and I would like to present some of these statements as follows:

"People seem to have grown through the whole process and particularly through improved communication about their role".

"As peoples' competencies have grown their self-image and confidence seems to grow".

"Being able to tackle problems within a team has been very developmental for most team members".

"'Them and us' is now non-existent and people feel much more free to communicate directly".

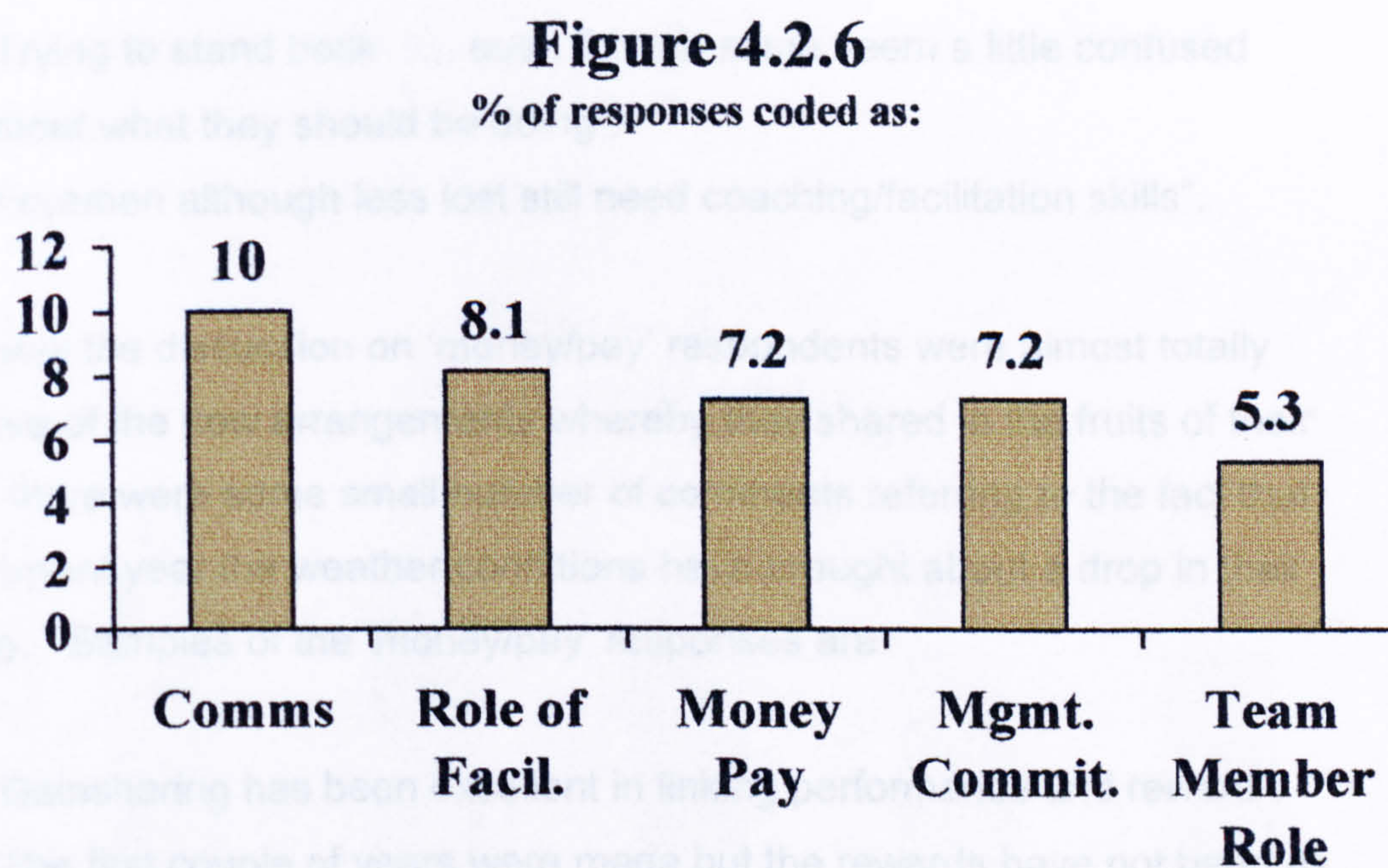
“Variety makes the job much more satisfying”.

“Less emphasis on now having to be a watch dog vis-à-vis absenteeism etc. because employees are watching these things themselves”.

“The fact that supervisors are in now as team members is a great builder of employee relations”.

C (viii) Respondent Data: Final Phase (data collected approximately 10 months after the early phase data)

Figure 4.2.6 below summarises the most frequently coded categories within the final phase and highlights ‘role of facilitator’, ‘money/pay’, ‘management commitment’, ‘communications’ and ‘team member role’.



All of these categories featured in the most frequently coded categories at the early phase of data collection, although the order has altered now in this final phase. The earlier reported improvement in communications is continued

and almost all comments indicate this position; a small minority of comments do suggest some small improvements that could be made in the communication process. Sample statements within this communications category are:

“We have worked real hard at communications and it has paid off”.

“Really great improvement not alone in the content of communication but in the manner in which various groups talk with one another”.

The role of facilitator appears to still require some clarification although progress is reported through several respondents as also are some suggestions about additional things that the facilitator could do for the teams, as evidenced in the comments below:

“Trying to stand back even though some seem a little confused about what they should be doing”.

“Foremen although less lost still need coaching/facilitation skills”.

Throughout the discussion on ‘money/pay’ respondents were almost totally supportive of the new arrangements whereby they shared in the fruits of their labour; there were some small number of comments referring to the fact that in this current year the weather conditions have brought about a drop in their earnings. Samples of the ‘money/pay’ responses are:

“Gainsharing has been excellent in linking performance and reward”.

“The first couple of years were mega but the rewards have not been as good this year”.

While the overwhelming number of responses in respect of management commitment were positive there were some that indicated additional ways in which management could provide additional commitment and support, as evidenced in the following statements:

“Management have certainly been supportive of the process”.

“Management need to crack down a bit harder on the few managers who cannot seem to get their head around the changed role required”.

Almost all of the comments in respect of team member role express willingness and indeed pleasure on some occasions in undertaking the extra responsibilities thrust upon the team members in their new role; some also implied a search for even greater role responsibility. A sample couple of statements within this category are shown below:

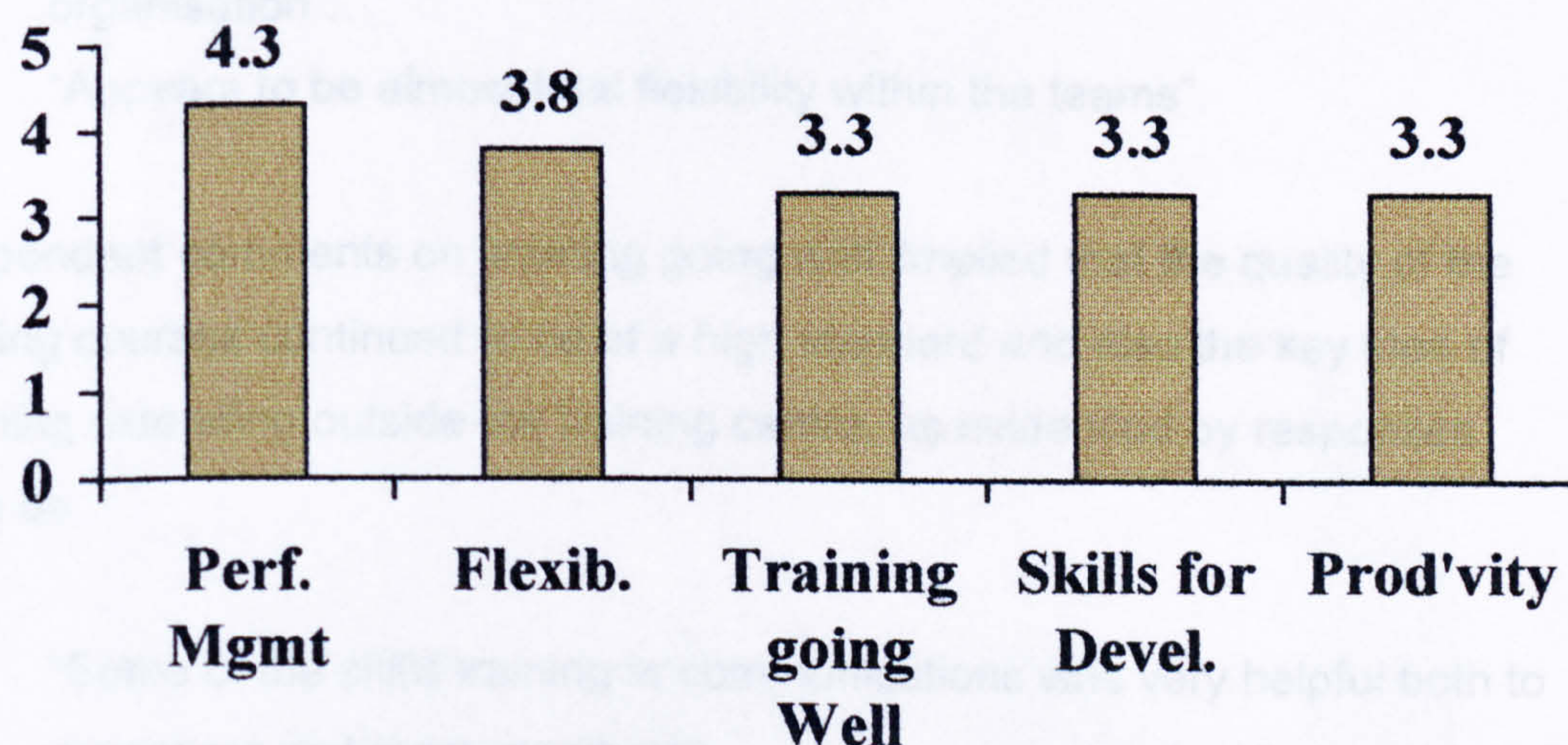
“They have given us much greater discretion”.

“We have proved ourselves now and we should be given greater autonomy”.

The categories highlighted within Figure 4.2.7 include ‘performance management’, ‘flexibility’, ‘training going well’, ‘skills for development’ and ‘productivity’.

Figure 4.2.7

% of responses coded as:



Two of these, 'skills for development' and 'productivity', were present among the more regularly used coded categories in the early phase whereas the other three, 'performance management', 'flexibility' and 'individual growth/maturity' were not within that group.

The comments made about 'performance management' reflect an emerging maturity about managing one's own performance in a positive manner as evidenced by the comments below:

"Have been able to push other team members to improve their performance because all our reward is affected".

"We need to review our progress in detail more regularly to see if we can learn from mistakes made".

All of the comments concerning 'flexibility' refer to the substantially more flexible working arrangements that exist within the teamworking approach and this trend can be seen in the statements below:

"Huge extra degree of flexibility which is a real bonus for the organisation".

"Appears to be almost total flexibility within the teams".

Respondent comments on 'training going well' implied that the quality of the training courses continued to be of a high standard and also the key idea of learning extending outside the training centre, as evidenced by responses such as:

"Some of the skills training in communications was very helpful both to managers and team members".

"The quality of on-going training from colleagues was superb".

One comment at this category of 'skills for development' in the early phase referred to the fact that the respondents were well able to identify areas that

needed further skill development. Likewise in this final phase of data collection respondents were also willing to put forward areas in which they could be developed, as follows:

"Technical skills can also be further enhanced".

"We need to improve our decision making process".

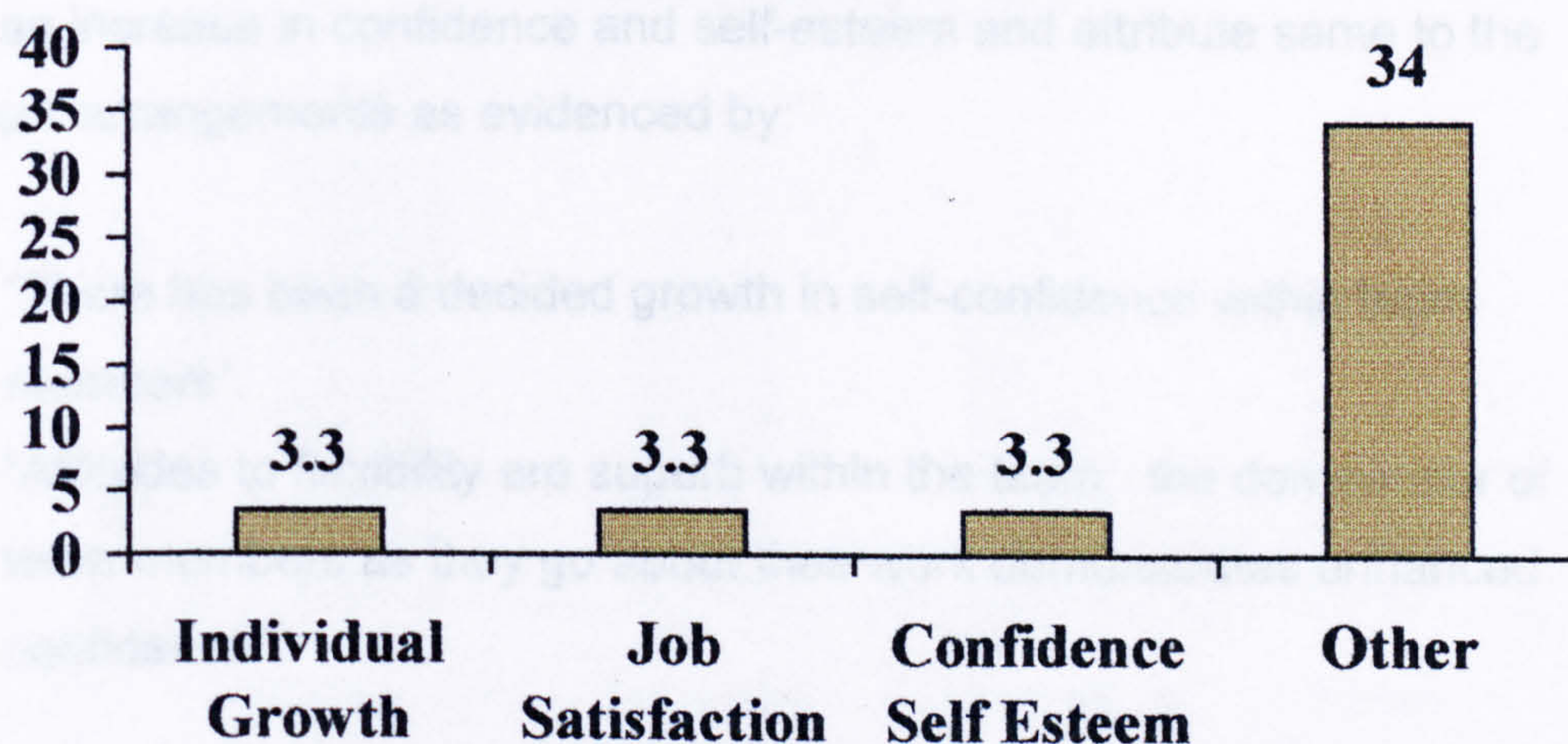
The comments regarding 'productivity' made at the early phase of data collection are substantially repeated in this later phase where respondents were fulsome in their praise of the increased productivity, as evidenced below:

"Huge increase in productivity".

"I don't think anyone around here knew the word productivity existed until these arrangements".

All three of the categories, 'individual growth', 'job satisfaction' and 'confidence/self-esteem' did not appear as high in the order during the early phase of data collection, but they do so now in the current phase which is highlighted in Figure 4.2.8 below:

Figure 4.2.8
% of responses coded as:



The statements made at the category 'individual growth' were all positive about personal growth experiences of individuals and teams through this period and they attributed same to the new working arrangements, as evidenced by the following statements:

"The process of having to pull together and all make an effort to ensure that each team member contributed has helped them grow".

"Facing up to problems and taking decisions about them has helped development".

The comments categorised under 'job satisfaction' indicate an acceptance within the individuals making the comments that some elements of the new work arrangements gave them more job satisfaction than the historical way of organising the work, as evidenced by:

"Management have allowed us a key role in decision making and that enhances job satisfaction".

"Looks like having greater autonomy, has decidedly been more motivating for team members".

All respondents whose comments are coded at 'confidence/self-esteem' report an increase in confidence and self-esteem and attribute same to the new work arrangements as evidenced by:

"There has been a decided growth in self-confidence within team members".

"Attitudes to flexibility are superb within the team; the demeanour of team members as they go about their work demonstrates enhanced confidence".

The grouping of statements above accounted for all but 71 of the 209 coded categories; the distribution of the remaining least accounted for categories can be seen within Figures 4.2.9, 4.2.10 and 4.2.11 below:

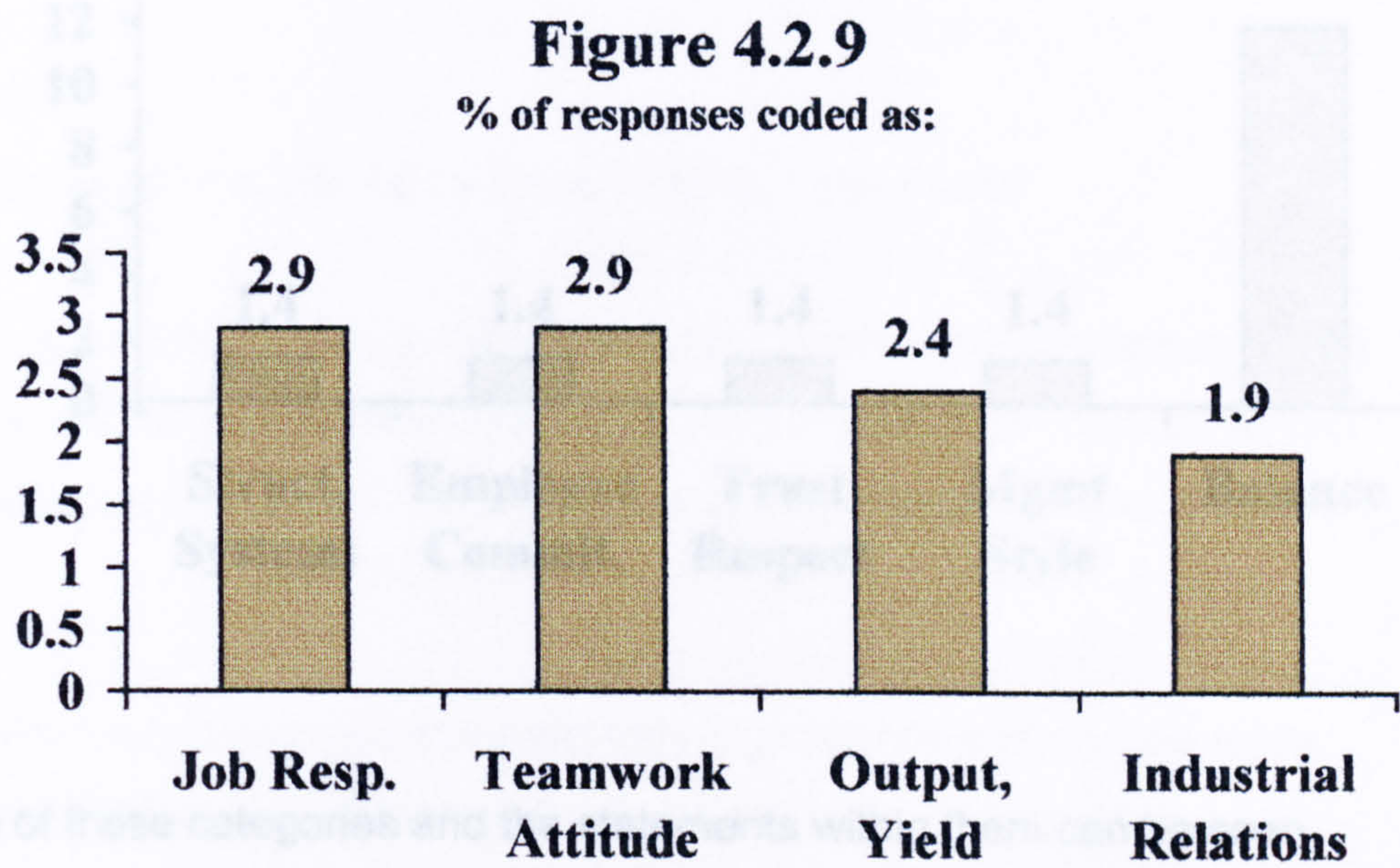
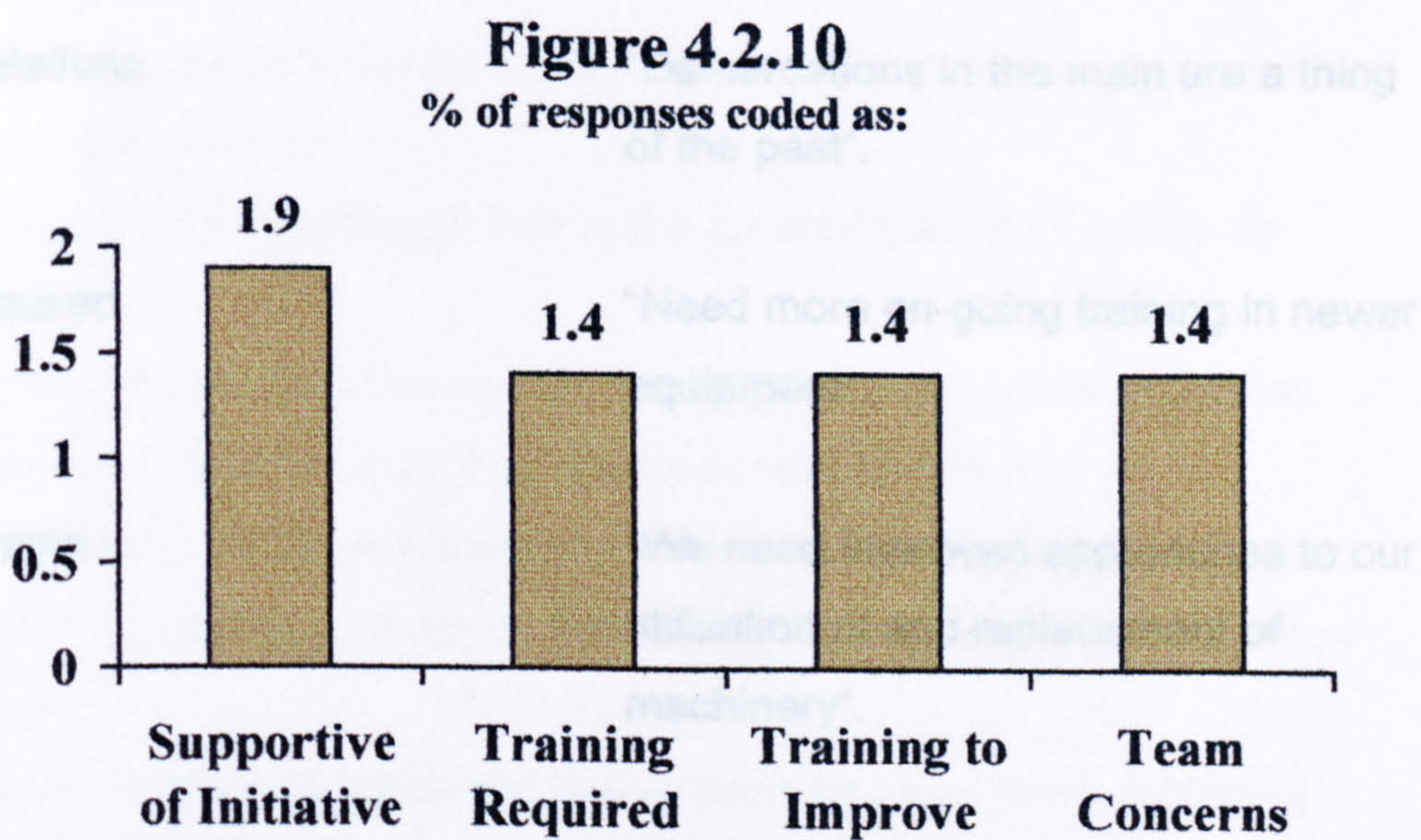
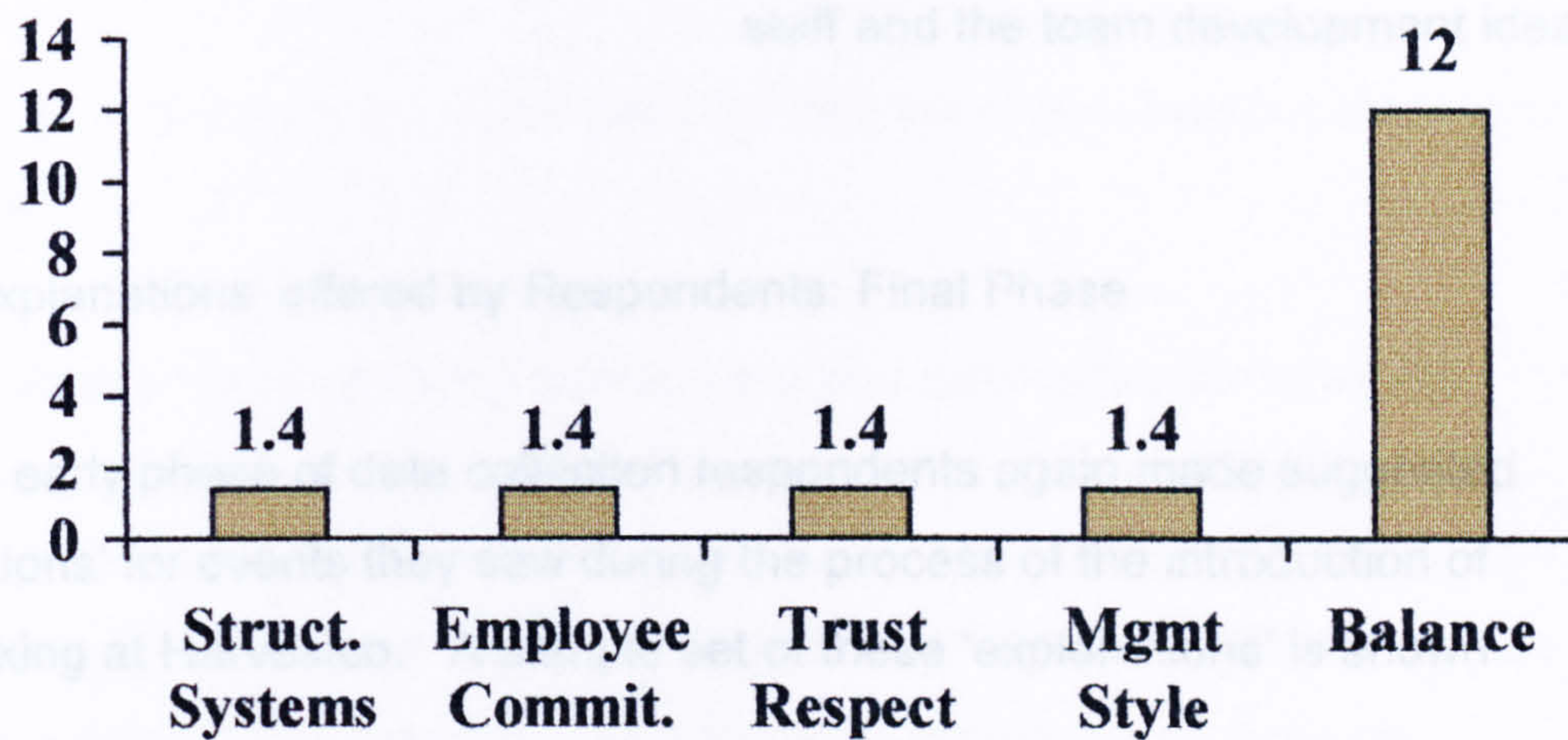


Figure 4.2.11
% of responses coded as:



A sample of these categories and the statements within them can be seen below:

Teamwork attitude/behaviour	"Truly working together as a team undertaking many more individual and team tasks than heretofore".
Industrial relations	"Demarcations in the main are a thing of the past".
Training required	"Need more on-going training in newer equipment".
Team concerns	"We need improved approaches to our utilisation of and replacement of machinery".
Employee/team commitment	"Much greater commitment from 85 per

cent of team members”.

Trust/mistrust/respect

“Management did place a lot of trust in staff and the team development idea”.

C (ix) ‘Explanations’ offered by Respondents: Final Phase

As at the early phase of data collection respondents again made suggested ‘explanations’ for events they saw during the process of the introduction of teamworking at Harvestco. A sample set of these ‘explanations’ is shown below:

“We have cut production costs very significantly and consequently almost doubled productivity”.

“A huge number of the team members would highlight that the additional responsibility afforded them is what gives them the biggest satisfaction”.

“It looks as if there are no real constraints on the teams and that has been a major part of the success of this teamwork”.

“The dispersed leadership has allowed people become more confident”.

“Working outside individuals traditional narrow skill base has improved individual maturity”.

“Much more satisfying job due to the amount that I can decide for myself”.

“One of the building blocks that has helped employee relations has been the increased level and quality of communication”.

“The teamwork approach seems to have enhanced productivity even within individuals who are outside the teams e.g. some maintenance crews”.

“Stated feelings of enhanced self-esteem for many team members as a result of changed work design”.

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON HARVESTCO

At this stage of the review of Harvestco the only initial observations that I wish to make are:

1. The process of pre-planning was lengthy and exhaustive at Harvestco within a process involving both the employees' representatives and the employees themselves. The process was also driven through 'visioning' by a very dynamic Chief Executive and through 'directioning' by some key line managers, also dynamic. All processes endeavoured to be as inclusive as possible in this introduction of teamworking at Harvestco.
2. As in the earlier case-study, respondents in Harvestco have put forward 'explanations' in respect of what they saw as important issues within the process of introducing teamworking. At a later stage when we undertake our cross-case analysis we will return both to these comments and the overall data gathered at Harvestco in the two phases of data collection. As in the case of Kilycra I have endeavoured to present only the respondent data in this initial examination of Harvestco and will return to many of the themes raised in the cross-case analysis where my own judgemental interpretation will be added.

CASE 3: CHEESEDEN

This sub-section contains the following information:

A: THE ORGANISATION

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT
CHEESEDEN

C (i) The Planning Phase

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

C (iii) The Database

C (iv) The Data Gathering Process

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

C (vi) Respondent Data: Early Phase

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Early Phase

C (viii) Respondent Data: Final Phase

C (ix) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Final Phase

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON CHEESEDEN

A: THE ORGANISATION

Cheeseden is part of a very large food company whose origins were as an exceedingly small co-operative society. The society had been set-up in the early 1920's with the explicit objective of serving the interest of local milk producers better than the arrangements then in place in the immediate locality, which had private ownership running all milk processing plants.

The co-operative society grew organically over the first two decades of its existence but in the 1940's it extended its reach to acquiring other co-

operative societies which enabled it to diversify over time into products other than just milk processing. It was the volume of milk supplies, which had radically increased within the area, which prompted the organisation, in later years, to move into ancillary products such as cheese, whey and yogurt. Moving to these products transformed the company from being a production orientated one to a market-led organisation (Brophy, 1985). The co-operative society continued its expansion with the acquisition of a number of food processing companies both in the U.K. and the U.S.

All the while through this expansion the organisation remained a co-operative society with its ownership and strategic direction from the board clearly in the hands of local farmers. This situation was radically altered during the early 1990's when the co-operative modified its ownership structure, providing itself with the opportunity of becoming a publicly quoted company. The need to make this change was driven by the organisation's need to generate substantially more money for expansion than could be obtained from the existing shareholder base.

The organisation has been beset by a relatively poor industrial relations climate. This has manifested itself in the quite recent development of increasing militancy among the workforce. This militancy has not been confined to either Cheeseden's parent organisation or other food co-operatives, but had also been prevalent in wider industrial society from perhaps an earlier stage. The original farmer co-operative ethos did not have employee and/or industrial relations problems, but gradually such organisations did become affected by disputes about pay and working conditions, discipline and other issues between workers and management. We are not asserting that the parent organisation of Cheeseden was in any way worse than others in the agri-food sector; the only real point being made is that there has been quite a significant change across this sector from the more engaging relationships that had existed in the co-operative days to somewhat more confrontational stances being taken in the modern era with its changed market orientation and ownership structure.

Cheeseden had been acquired as a division in the 1960's and as indicated above was specifically acquired as a cheese-making plant to utilise the excess milk supply that the co-operative was at that time developing. Cheeseden was in the years immediately after acquisition to become perhaps the premier bulk manufacturing site for cheddar cheese in Ireland. In the early years its production methods were quite unsophisticated but within the last 15 years the plant would have become advanced technologically.

Cheeseden was to become sufficiently well known internationally that it forged links with a Dutch company to manufacture under licence leading international cheese brands, all of which were for export on behalf of the Dutch company. In an effort to separate the production processes, and to further improve quality it was decided to have a 'green field site' hopefully without any industrial relations history or hassle. Cheeseden thus chose to build a separate cheese plant on the same site; staffing for this plant was drawn predominately from the cheddar plant.

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

The new cheese plant known as the WCC (World Class Cheese) soon became embroiled in some of the industrial relations troubles that existed in the Cheddar plant and also in the parent company. The initial manifestation of this was the negotiation by incoming staff of a comfort agreement that would allow them return to the Cheddar plant to their old jobs if for any reason they wished so to do in the future. It is an indication of the climate of the time within this particular organisation that this issue was conceded and indeed was to haunt future relationships for a considerable time (GM briefing).

The organisation had an extensive job grading system and because of the belief that the technology was so very different in the WCC plant the operators felt that they would have an opportunity for the re-grading of most of their jobs. This was to cause considerable difficulty for the organisation insofar as to concede to same would in fact disturb existing relativities and/or give rise to extensive knock-on claims (HR briefing). Consequently the early years of the

WCC plant were marred by sporadic rows over grading and pay. Some of these, like those within the wider organisation, were referred to the industrial relations institutions such as the Labour Court and Rights Commissioner. However the employees lost faith over time in these institutions on the basis that they did not seem to ever be able to absorb their viewpoint, but rather took the side of the company in the vast majority of these disputes (Shop Steward briefing). There had been a number of rationalisations within the wider organisation around the period of the establishment of the WCC plant. Some of these rationalisations resulted in additional money being paid to operators on the basis of they giving additional productivity. Such payments were made in the situation whereby the benefit to the co-operative was that they lowered their manning levels. Such a possibility did not present itself within the WCC plant where they had started out with a much leaner structure and consequently did not need to have such a rationalisation. Thus the employees within the WCC plant saw their colleagues elsewhere in the wider organisation receiving substantial rationalisation/ productivity payments (upward to £1,500.00 on basic) whereas they themselves did not have opportunity to partake in same.

Furthermore a festering sore had developed over a recent agreement with the fitters' union whereby they had been paid, in the eyes of the operators in WCC, a 3% increase to give up their right to be the only ones that were able to grease machines; operators were then asked to undertake this work but believed they should be paid at least the 3% for taking on the work.

Allied to the above issues there existed within the Cheeseden site (in both the Cheddar and WCC plant) a perception among the workforce that communications were decidedly poor and that, on the basis of they not getting the money they perceived they wanted and in some cases felt they were promised, there also existed a low level of trust in management (Shop Steward briefing).

A new general manager was appointed to the site, heading up both plants, and after about one year decided in consultation with other members of

management that the WCC plant needed to be the subject of a 'revitalisation' which would allow greater responsibility to be given to the workforce and a clear stepping back of supervision. This general manager discussed the said plan with the rest of the management team and it was their belief that this 'rescue plan', as it became known, was the most feasible way forward in respect of the WCC plant.

Accordingly a detailed plan was put together which would focus on reducing costs, improving quality, giving additional responsibility to operators and allowing self-supervision of said operators. All of the management personnel knew that the implementation of such a plan would be difficult, but were fully committed to implementing same.

The plan was fully tested with the Head Office and, in particular, the human resource and operations directors were fully behind the effort to try and improve the situation at WCC.

The general manager was therefore authorised to proceed with the implementation of teamworking at the WCC plant.

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT CHEESEDEN

C (i) The Planning Phase

The WCC plant was operated on a round-the-clock basis, with 3 shifts utilising 8 operators per shift. Two of these operators were what are referred to as 'upstairs men' insofar as they are control room operators and are located at a level physically higher than the plant operators. These upstairs men are a grade above the operators and all of those individuals would have graduated from the floor either in the original Cheddar plant or in the current WCC plant. All of the operators are members of the same general union and are

represented by one trade union official, assisted by a local shop steward and local representatives.

Discussions were commenced between local management and the union concerning the implementation of teamworking and implications for staff. It was made clear by the management representatives at an early stage in the discussions that this was a crunch time for securing the future of the WCC plant and that it was necessary to alter responsibilities, achieve efficiencies, improve quality and bring about a situation where the plant became more competitive, with a higher quality output. Management outlined the proposals whereby supervision would be withdrawn, increased responsibility afforded to operators, renewed emphasis on training and a focus on trying to improve the production process at every stage. The management team pointed out that most of these gains would be possible through the goodwill and co-operation of the operators who knew more about the operation than those in leadership and managerial positions.

The union representatives and indeed the wider staff initially were enthused by the proposed new arrangements, but particularly wanted to know the amount they were going to be paid to take on these additional responsibilities; such a stance was consistent with the normal position of the unions in such situations and also was consistent with management conceding such claims in the past (Shop Steward briefing). On this occasion management however indicated that there was absolutely no possibility of money being paid to enter such an arrangement. They did however hold out a carrot that at some time in the future if the significant hoped-for gains were achieved that then there could be some share-out in respect of money. They did stress however that they did not want to enter into any binding commitment in this regard.

Interestingly, despite the strength of the management's position outlined above, the unions agreed to go into a twelve-month trial period to see how teamworking would bed down, on the clear basis that they had believed management indicated that there would be extra money available to them within that period.

C (ii) Implementation of Teamworking

The discussions described above took place over a six-week period and thus the management and team members launched into their new working arrangements on the basis of the work done during this period. The general manager met with all personnel from each shift on two occasions in the run-up to the commencement of teamworking. On the basis of these discussions the initiative got under way without any further intervention by management.

A newly arrived ‘internal consultant’ from a sister company in the group commenced meeting with all affected staff with the objective of listening to their concerns about teamworking and putting in place some training. These sessions seemed to be well received and some technical training was arranged with a commencement time of some weeks away.

C (iii) The Database

At Cheeseden, as at the earlier case-studies, the individual respondents were staff at a variety of levels within the organisation, all of whom were intimately involved with the process of introducing teamworking.

The operator staff were drawn from across 3 shifts of 8 yielding a total of 24 operators involved in the teamworking initiative. In addition to the operator staff there were 3 Facilitators and some 7 managerial/technical staff involved in the teamworking initiative at Cheeseden, yielding an overall total of 34 staff involved in this initiative. All of these individuals were involved in the teamworking initiative on a daily basis and data was collected from them and also gathered from local Union representatives and the H.R. director at group level.

A summary of the database can be seen at Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3: Database summary

Focus teams/individuals for data gathering	Number of individuals within the teams
--	--

3 production shift teams	24 operators
Facilitators	3
Managerial/technical staff	7
Union Representatives	
- Local	2
- Official	1
H.R. Personnel	1
Total number of individuals from whom data was gathered	38

C. (iv) The data gathering process

Interviews were conducted with each of the above groupings and individuals during two separate phases of data collection: early-phase: four months after the commencement of the teamworking initiative and final phase: five months after the early-phase of data collection. The team meetings at Cheeseden involved individuals who were working together on a particular shift as members of three production shift teams. Each of these teams were met by this researcher on one occasion within each of the two phases of data collection.

All of the team meetings within Cheeseden were conducted in a meeting room that was relatively adjacent to the factory floor area; meetings invariably took place towards the end of a shift, where the operators from the next shift came in early to free up the time of the operators attending the meeting.

Those attending these meetings came to the meeting room some 30 minutes prior to the end of their shift and remained in discussion with this researcher for approximately 30-40 minutes; the difference in length of the interviews reflected the effectiveness of data gathering and/or the anxiety to get away on the part of some of the team members.

Separate meetings were also held with the Facilitator group and the managerial/technical team; these meetings, which oftentimes took over an hour, were again focused on attempting to gather as much live data as possible on progress with the process of introducing teamworking at Cheeseden. Once the data was gathered from these groups they engaged in some internal action planning resulting from the highlighting of issues during the data gathering phase. This researcher then stepped out of the research role and facilitated this review by the two groups in question. On each occasion this action planning part was left until the end so that it did not in any way conflict with the researcher role.

An inherent value in the meetings with the Facilitators and the managerial/technical group was that they were taking an overview across the organisation whereas the production teams were focused exclusively on the functioning of their own team. This permitted not alone the emergence of the views of those groups about their own functioning but also, as a valuable addition, it was possible to gather data that would be helpful at the later analytical stage; thus data provided by these groups was able to be used as a cross check, as it were, on data gathered from other sources.

Finally, data was also gathered from H.R. personnel and the Trade Union Representatives who, at local and official level, were also met on two occasions during the process of introducing teamworking at Cheeseden.

With all of these teams and individuals this researcher was rigorous in stressing that his view of progress with the teamworking initiative was unimportant at the data gathering stage. This was particularly important at Cheeseden due to the fact that once the data was gathered the researcher changed role to that of facilitator with two of the teams/groups. Every effort was made to forge a distinction between these two roles at each meeting with these two groups and it can be reported that the teams/groups appear to have fully appreciated the distinction.

As indicated earlier within the Research Strategy and Methods chapter arrangements were made to enlist an internal individual who would help at the later analysis stage; thus at this early stage he was informed that he would be used to check on our analysis. The individual involved in this process at Cheeseden was a senior H.R. executive.

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

Initially the respondent statements were separately coded to the emerging categories using NUD.IST.4 as described in the data analysis section of our earlier Research Strategy and Methods chapter.

The responses from the individuals involved in the teamworking initiative were then sorted and re-sorted within these categories, with some new ones being established during the process.

For the first stage of our analysis the data within the categories that is presented within the various phases below has been counted to ascertain the 'frequency of mentions' made by the respondents. This has allowed us to clearly see the emphasis placed by these respondents on the various categories.

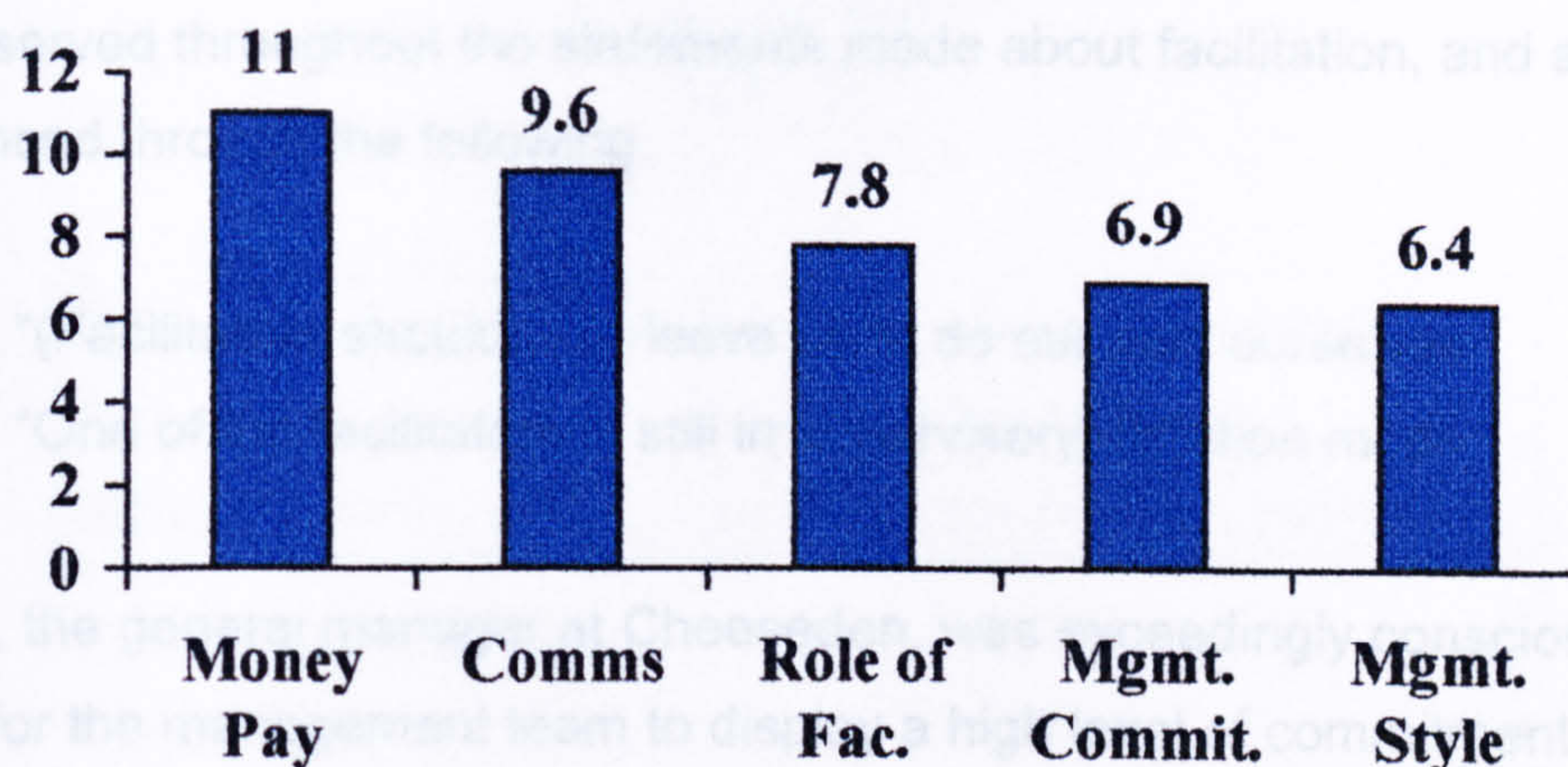
Bar charts (and on one occasion a pie chart) have been used to demonstrate the degree of emphasis that emerges from this 'frequency of mentions; thus the charts presented should be seen as a graphical summary in percentage terms of the relative number of occasions on which respondents within the sample have made statements that have been coded at a particular category.

The analysis of the data collected at any particular phase is spread over up to six charts and where this arises the charts need to be seen as a whole within that particular phase. Thus for example within the analysis of the early phase data from Cheeseden at C (v) below the charts 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4, 4.3.5 and 4.3.6 should be seen as a whole, with 4.3.4, 4.3.5 and 4.3.6 being the breakdown of the 'other' category included at 4.3.3. The text associated with each chart explains in detail the content of that particular chart.

C (vi) Respondent Data: Early Phase (Data collected about 4 months following the introduction of teamworking)

Again an initial quantitative summary is presented below in Figure 4.3.1, of the number of occasions in which particular statements are coded within a particular category. I will first comment on the grouping of the five most popular categories of: 'money/pay', 'communications', 'role of facilitator', 'management commitment' and 'management style'.

Figure 4.3.1
% of responses coded as:



In respect of 'money/pay' it perhaps is not surprising that the respondents should make so many observations within this category particularly in the light of what has been referred to above as the different understandings that both sides had in respect of pay whilst entering this teamworking initiative. The emerging frustration within team members with money/pay is exemplified by:

"A County Council worker gets more than we do".

"When will they sort out the money for us".

It is evident from the majority of statements made about communications that almost all within the organisation had renewed hope about a possible improvement in communications in the early days of teamworking, as can be seen in the following statements:

“The number of meetings launching teamworking got much better communications going”.

“New operator information system (OIS) has been a great vehicle for improved communications”.

Within Cheeseden the role of facilitator remained unclear and it appears that not alone were team members unaware of the duties of the facilitator, but more poignantly perhaps the facilitators themselves had a poor understanding of how this role was to be exercised in the organisation. These dilemmas can be observed throughout the statements made about facilitation, and are evidenced through the following:

“(Facilitators should) leave us to do our jobs ourselves”.

“One of the facilitators is still in supervisory/dictation mode”.

Donal, the general manager at Cheeseden, was exceedingly conscious of the need for the management team to display a high level of commitment to the process of introducing teamwork and this is evident from the majority of statements made about managerial commitment, but particularly through the two examples below:

“Donal seems totally fired-up for this”.

“Dungarvan management are in support mode”.

Management style is recorded in the data, particularly in the responses from team members, as being in a mode that is not supportive of the teamworking initiative, as evidenced by:

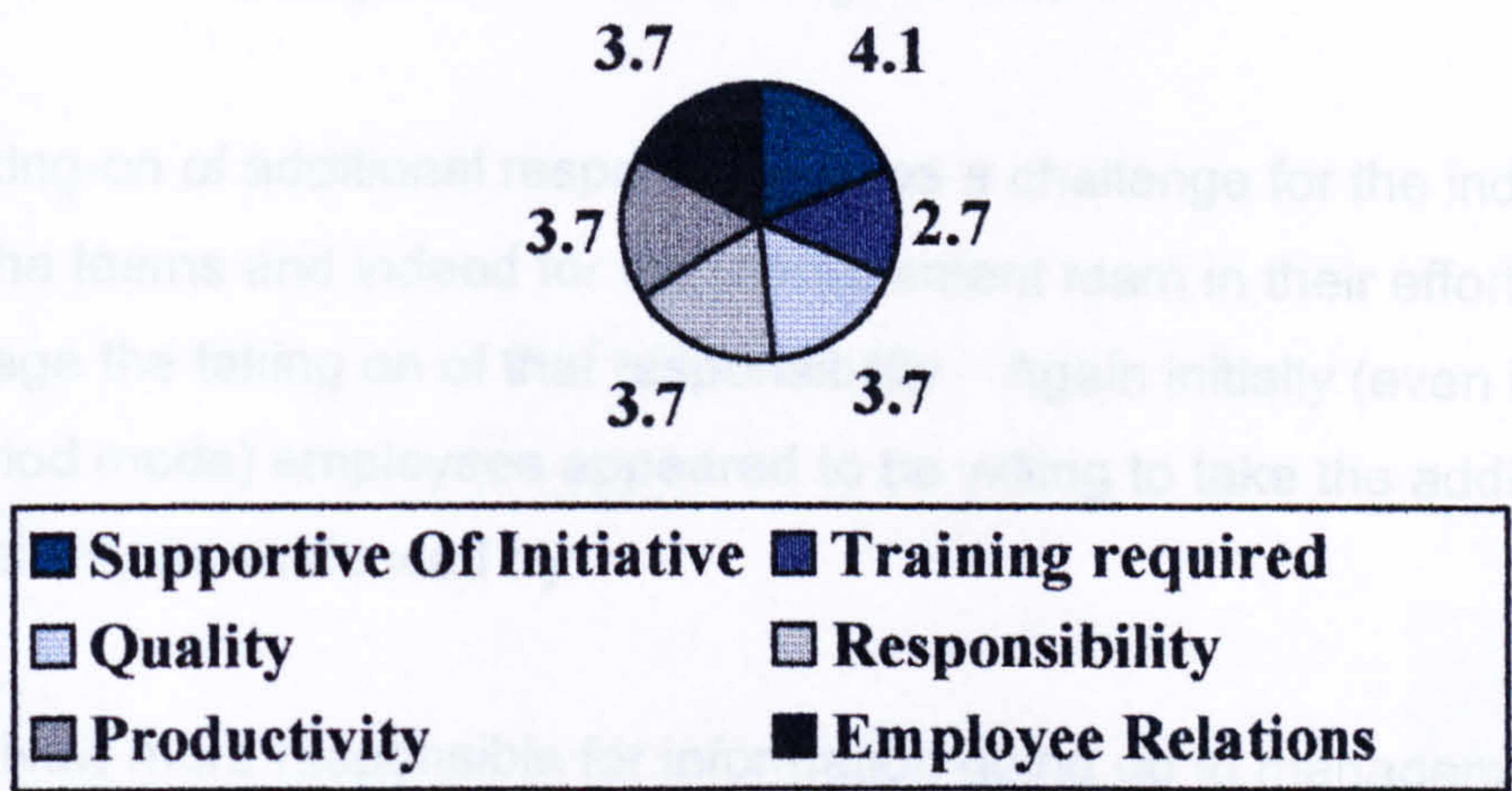
“Management are supposed to be leading differently”.

“We still have TJ and MC jumping on top of us”.

The next 6 most frequently coded categories are those of: ‘supportive of the initiative’, ‘training required’, ‘quality’, ‘responsibility’, ‘productivity’ and

‘employee relations’. The distribution of same can be seen in Figure 4.3.2 below:

Figure 4.3.2
% of responses coded as:



A generally positive outlook is portrayed by respondents in their supportive statements with regard to the teamworking initiative and these are evidenced by the examples below:

“Should be OK with the new energy in the team”.

“Think management are a bit more open now”.

A significant initial impact for the process of introducing teamwork at Cheeseden was provided by a detailed training analysis and the initial training provided; this training was favourably received by the vast majority of respondents, as evidenced through statements such as:

“Initial quality course was good”.

“The new fellow looks like planning training better”.

The introduction of the teamworking approach at Cheeseden laid particular emphasis on trying to improve quality throughout the process and certainly in the early months quality awareness was heightened and improvements reported; some evidence of this is seen in the comments below:

“Hygiene is an issue within the teams”.

“Greater quality awareness among the lads”.

The taking-on of additional responsibility was a challenge for the individuals within the teams and indeed for the management team in their efforts to encourage the taking on of that responsibility. Again initially (even if in the trial period mode) employees appeared to be willing to take the additional responsibility as evidenced by:

“Now more responsible for information going up to management”.

“Contacting maintenance guys ourselves immediately after breakdowns”.

Without having specific measures in place for productivity the view expressed in the majority of respondents is such that it appears productivity has increased, as seen in:

“If we view the renewed interest in quality as productivity then it has improved somewhat”.

“Productivity should increase as training programme develops”.

Although there were some comments that indicated that employee relations was showing some improvement there were a greater number that were dissatisfied with the level of employee relations. Some comments from respondents are highlighted below:

“Employee relationships within themselves (the teams) have improved..... some efforts at building employee relations”.

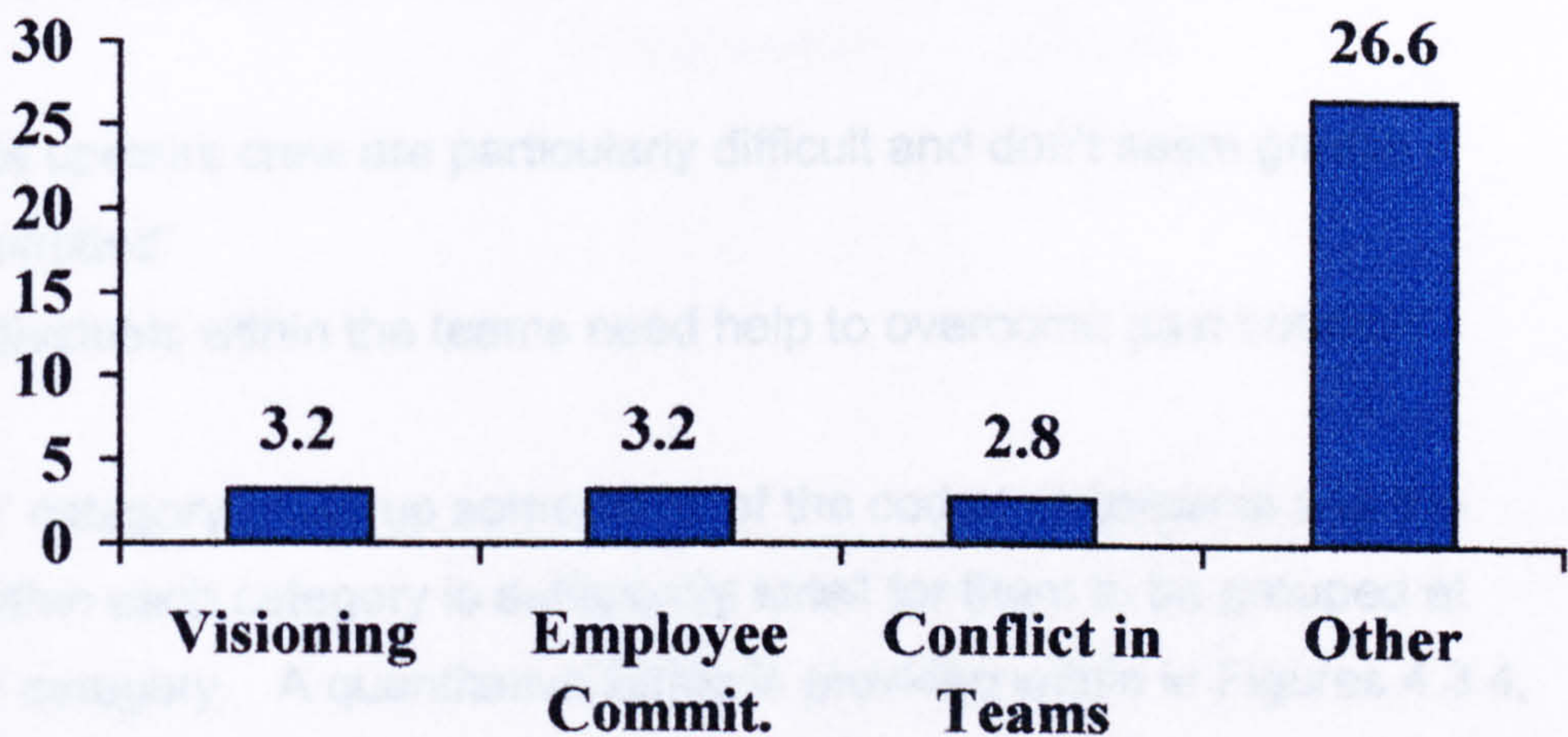
“Some of the initial communications efforts helped employee relations”.

Within the comments coded as 'employee/team commitment' there were

Our continuing analysis of the most frequently used categories next highlights 'visioning/directioning', 'employee/team commitment', 'conflict within teams' and 'other', as shown in Figure 4.3.3 below:

Figure 4.3.3

% % of responses coded as:



There is absolutely no doubt in the minds of all of those involved in the process of introducing teamworking at Cheeseden that the individual who put together the initial vision at the beginning of the initiative and who attempted to drive it most strongly through the organisation was the general manager. It is obvious, from a number of comments, that not alone did he see a key role for himself in formulating the initial vision, but also saw a dynamic role in continuing the 'directioning' that was required in the early months of the initiative. He is credited as such by several people, as evidenced in the sample statements below:

"Donal shows great vision and energy".

"Donie has met all the staff twice in the last 3 months".

Within the comments coded at 'employee/team commitment' there were mixed feelings as to whether or not the required commitment was to the level that it should be, as evidenced in the contrasting sample statements below:

"Most employees seem willing to give teamworking a try".

"Not sure about the commitment of guys to overcome long-standing personal squabbles among themselves".

The second of the two statements immediately above has within it the seeds of some discontent within the teams and indeed that is what has been coded at 'conflict within teams', particularly when it is expressed quite strongly, as evidenced in the two statements below:

"The upstairs crew are particularly difficult and don't seem greatly committed".

"Individuals within the teams need help to overcome past conflicts".

The 'other' category make up some 26 % of the coded statements and the number within each category is sufficiently small for them to be grouped at this 'other' category. A quantitative listing is provided within in Figures 4.3.4, 4.3.5 and 4.3.6 below:

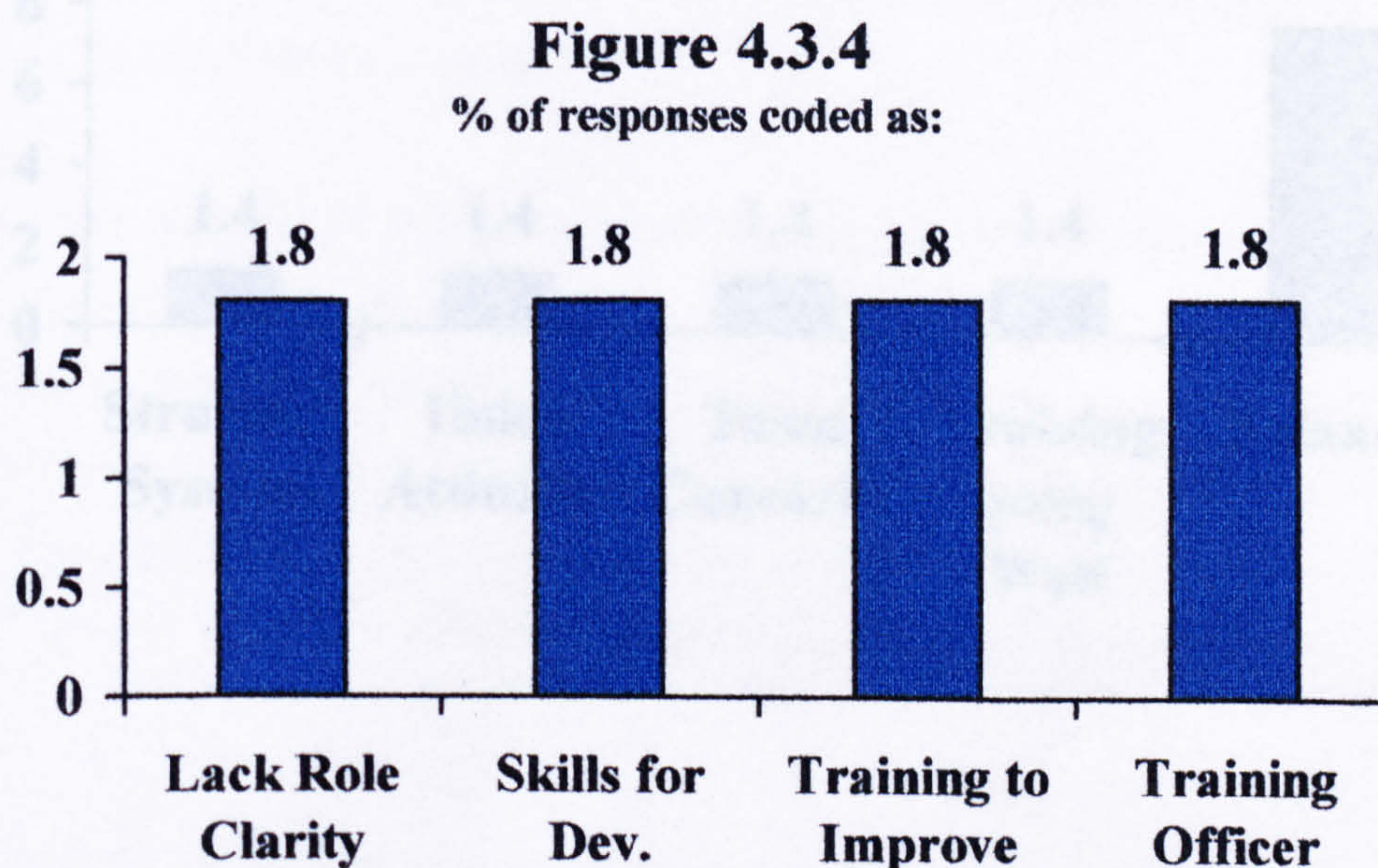


Figure 4.3.5
% of responses coded as:

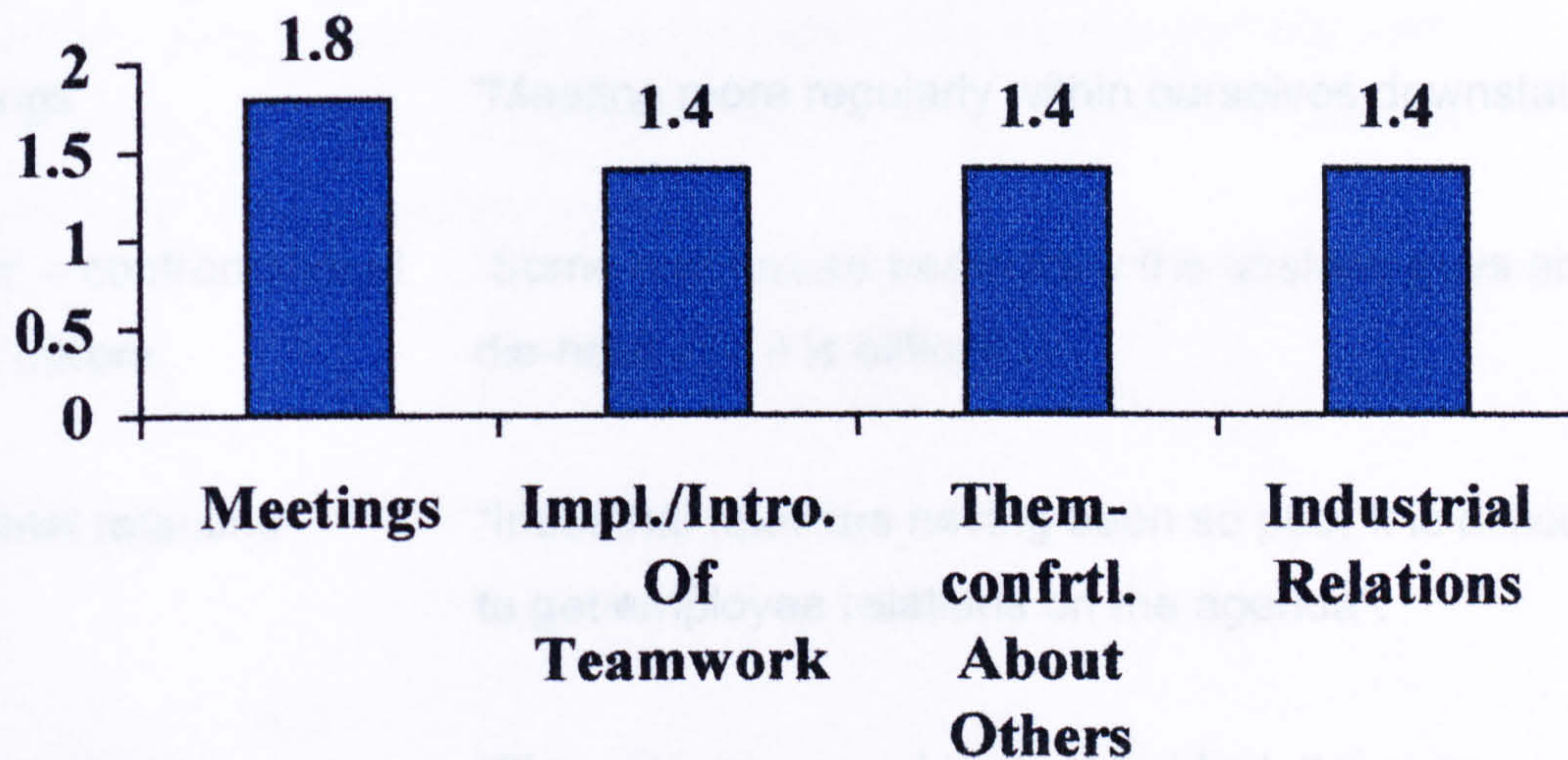
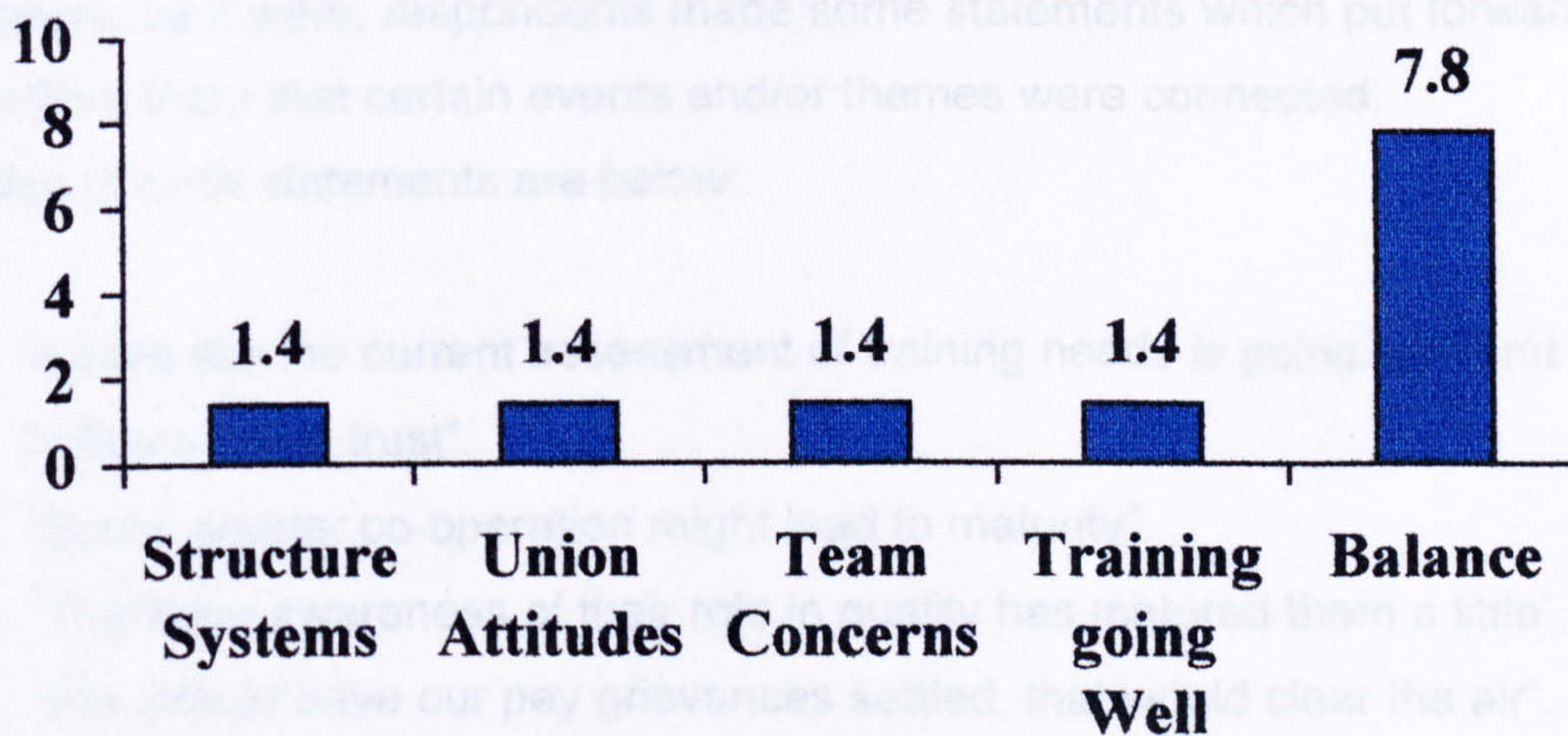


Figure 4.3.6
% of responses coded as:



A sample of the statements from within this category is as follows:

Lack of role clarity	“(having) no supervisors means a different kind of management not sure what that is”.
Meetings	“Meeting more regularly within ourselves downstairs”.
‘Them’ – confrontational about others	“Some employees particularly the upstairs guys are die-hard and it is difficult”.
Industrial relations	“Industrial relations having been so poor it is difficult to get employee relations on the agenda”.
Union attitudes	“The unions seemed to want to block the company on employee relations”.

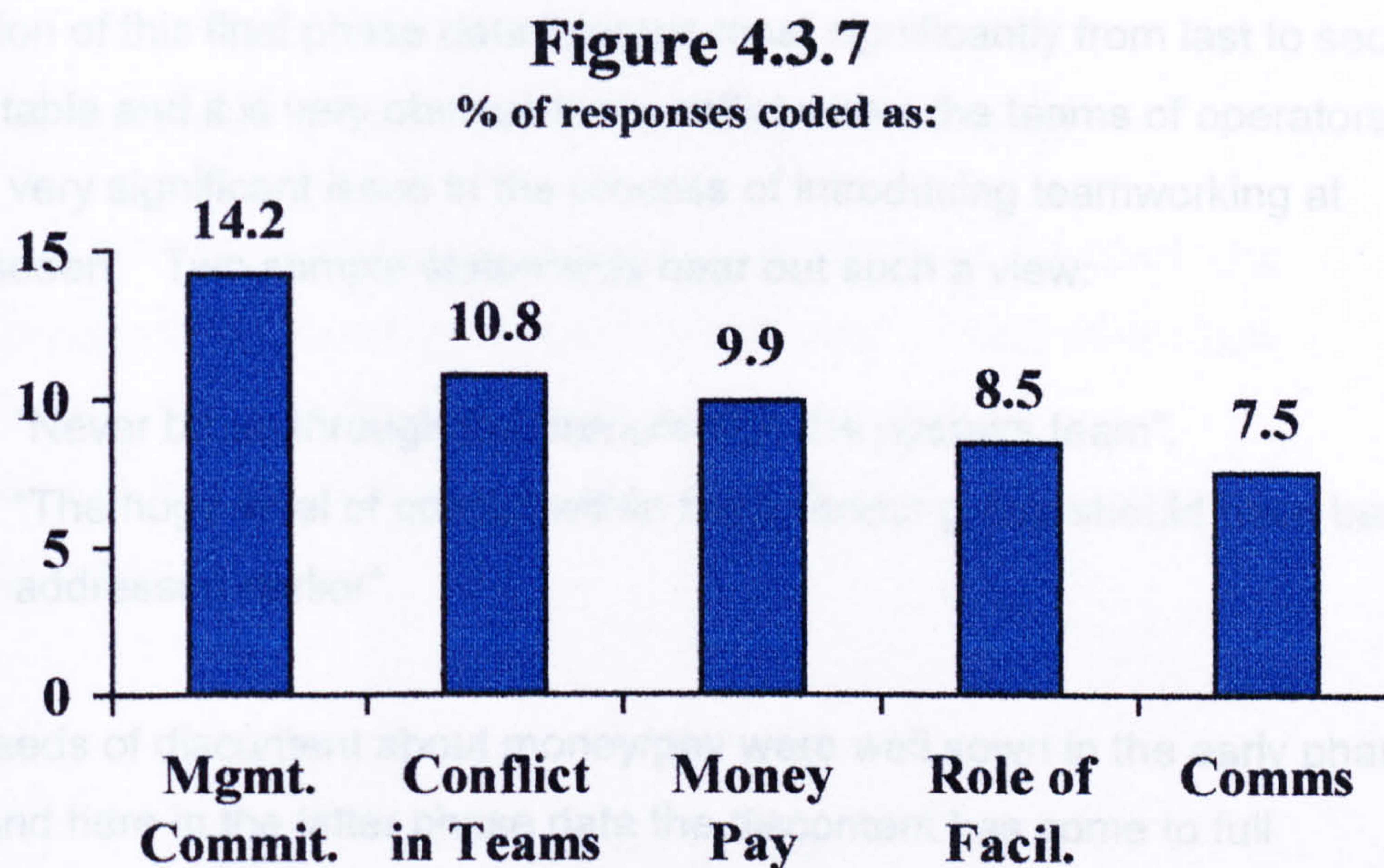
C (vii) ‘Explanations’ offered by Respondents: Early Phase

As well as making the above statements which are by no means overlaid with theory, as it were, respondents made some statements which put forward a view from them that certain events and/or themes were connected. Samples of such statements are below:

- “Looks like the current assessment of training needs is going well and building some trust”.
- “Some greater co-operation might lead to maturity”.
- “The team awareness of their role in quality has matured them a little”.
- “We should have our pay grievances settled, that would clear the air”.
- “Some of the initial communications efforts helped employee relations”.
- “No hard measures in productivity but looks like greater throughput and improved quality”.

C (viii) Respondent Data: Final Phase (Data collected some 5 months after the early phase data above)

We will now proceed to examine this new data in much the same manner as we examined the early phase of Cheeseden data. The more frequently used categories are listed at Figure 4.3.7, which indicates their relative percentage of the total number of categorisations.



As shown above 'management commitment' is the most frequently used category in this collection of data at the final phase. As in the early phase, 'management commitment' thus occupies a high position in the ranking, but the tone is quite different from the early phase. On this occasion it was found that the larger proportion of references were to management commitment not

being what is required for the process of the introduction of teamworking, as evidenced by statements below:

“Dungarvan were supposed to be behind this and they have not sorted out our problems”.

“Once Donal had left it became obvious that commitment was not being delivered”.

In the early phase data the last separate category to make it into the grouping of most frequently used categories was ‘conflict within teams’. On the occasion of this final phase data it jumps most significantly from last to second in the table and it is very obvious that conflict within the teams of operators was a very significant issue in the process of introducing teamworking at Cheeseden. Two sample statements bear out such a view:

“Never broke through the barriers with the upstairs team”.

“The huge level of conflict within the operator group should have been addressed earlier”.

The seeds of discontent about money/pay were well sown in the early phase data and here in the latter phase data the discontent has come to full flowering, as evidenced by:

“Management could have sorted out the grading issue long ago”.

“If the money issues had been sorted we might have been able to move forward”.

The role expected of the front-line facilitators, who in the past had been in a traditional management mode, was initially of concern; as the process of introducing empowered teams progressed, however, the exposure became even more obvious to many. It simply appeared to the majority of observers within the organisation that this critical role was not capable of being carried out as intended, which can be seen within the two sample statements below:

“Totally under-estimated the role struggle for ex-supervisors”.

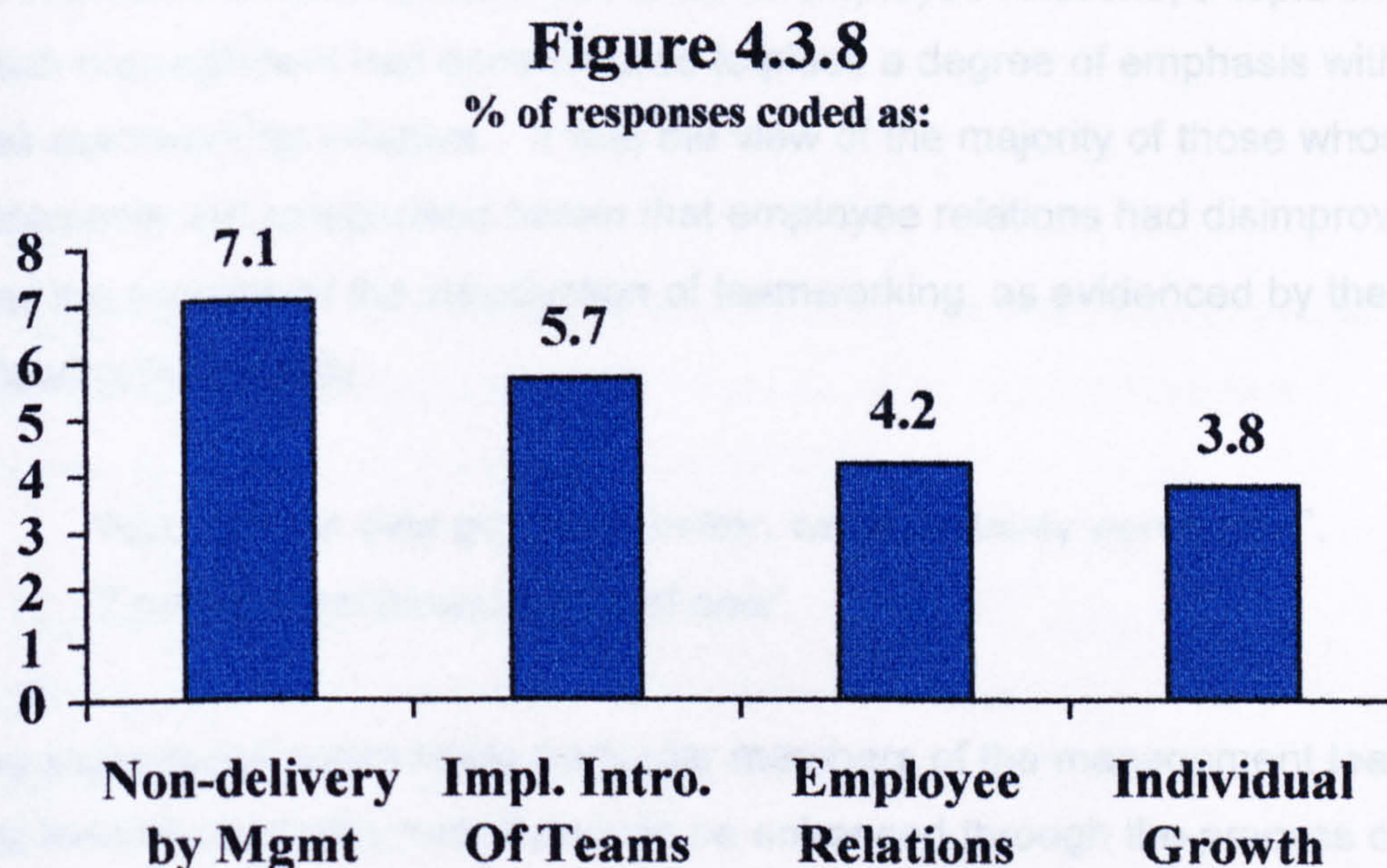
“Some of the facilitators seemed lost”.

Communications had also been the most frequently referred to category in the early phase, but a goodly proportion of those references were in fact positive. In this latter final phase the tenor of comments on communications has totally turned around and almost all of the comments are quite negative about communications within the organisation, as evidenced by:

“After a reasonable start communications got confused about 6 months ago”.

“Decidedly poorer communication now than at the outset”.

Within Figure 4.3.8 below the second grouping of categories are displayed, with the usual indication of their percentage of the total number of codings made at the categories of ‘non-deliverance by management’, ‘implementation/introduction of teamworking’, ‘employee relations’ and ‘individual growth/maturity’.



Like 'conflict within teams' above, which made a dramatic move up the table, as it were, so also has 'non-deliverance by management', emerged from nowhere to rate as the sixth highest category. Several of the references to non-delivery portray a frustration at a pattern of non-delivery that has bedeviled the initiative; some of this frustration can be observed within the statements below.

"Don't know why management said they would train so much when they weren't going to deliver".

"Management never really gave us the power they spoke of".

Of those statements that were categorised at 'implementation/introduction of teamworking' the greater percentage were again exhibiting such frustration with the process of the introduction of teamworking that they believed that the initiative should in fact be terminated, as evidenced by:

"Nothing could be improved, it should be scrapped now".

"No way forward for management as both management and employees changed attitudes during this process".

No improvement took place in the tenor of employee relations, a topic on which management had endeavoured to place a degree of emphasis within their teamworking initiative. It was the view of the majority of those whose statements are categorised herein that employee relations had disimproved over the process of the introduction of teamworking, as evidenced by the following statements:

"Not sure if it ever got much better, we're certainly worse now".

"Employee relations quite bad now".

The expectation within some particular members of the management team that individual growth/maturity would be enhanced through the process of the teamworking initiative was to be frustrated by the final phase of data gathering, as evidenced by:

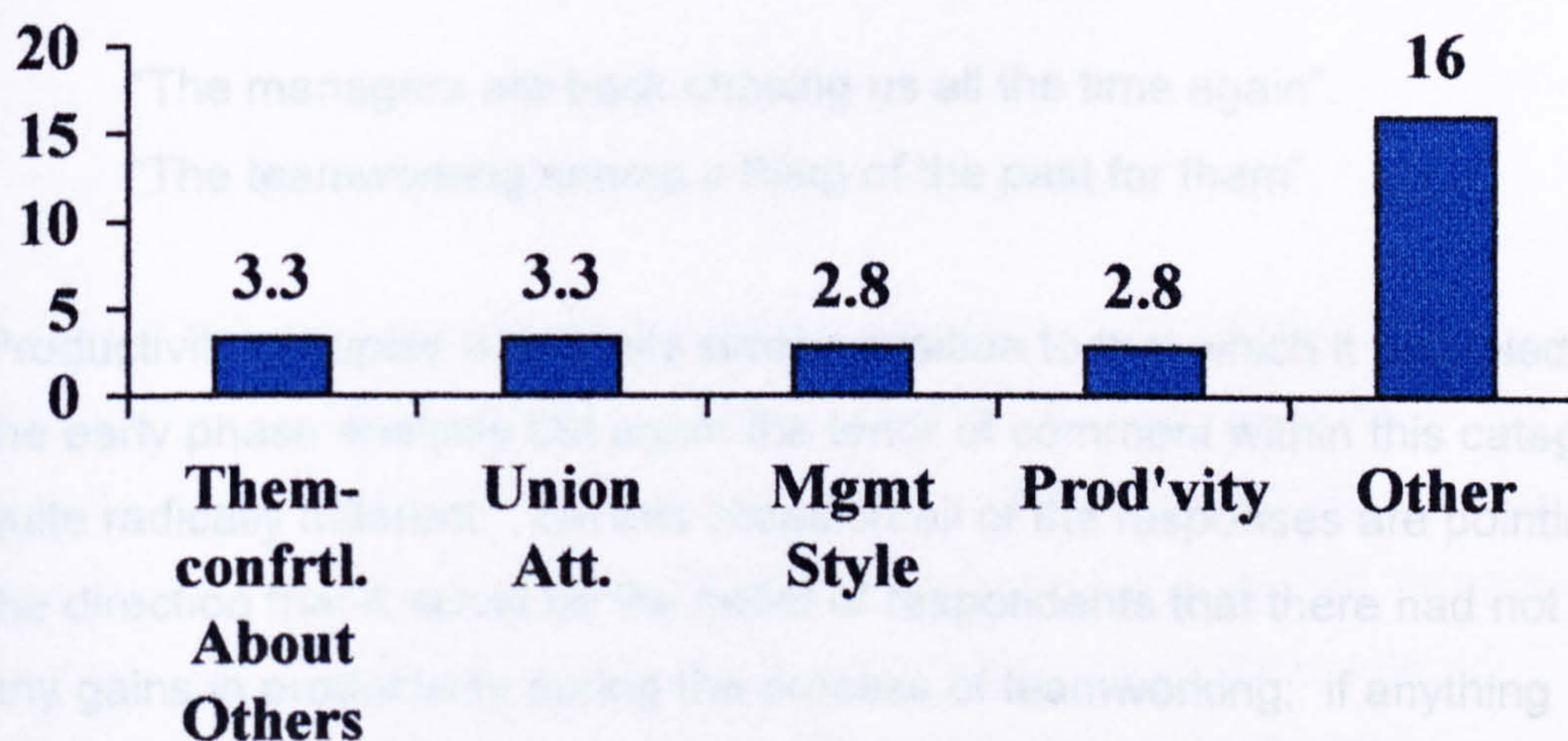
“Certainly no evidence of increased maturity within teams”.

“When things started to go wrong any element of increased maturity evaporated”.

“The union really never got behind teamworking”.

The final group of most frequently used categories are shown at Figure 4.3.9 and include: ‘them – confrontational about others’, ‘union attitudes’, ‘management style’, ‘productivity’ and ‘other’.

Figure 4.3.9
% of responses coded as:



This category of ‘them – confrontational about others’ recorded less than half of the comments at the earlier phase than they do now. Again there is a stronger feeling of alienation within the statements as evidenced by:

“They always play the poor mouth”.

“We try to have structures different but we’re thwarted by circumstances, particularly employee and union attitudes”.

The above reference to union attitude is taken up under the category of 'union attitude' where a number of respondents indicate that the union were not fully behind the teamworking initiative, as evidenced by:

"The union really never got behind teamworking".

"The union lost interest when the money wasn't sorted".

The earlier discussion above in respect of the 'role of facilitator' is quite intricately tied up with the category of management style wherein several managers would appear to be in some senses 'reverting to type' and exhibiting a style that is certainly more authoritarian and traditional than would be required within a teamworking environment; evidence for this reversion can be seen in:

"The managers are back chasing us all the time again".

"The teamworking seems a thing of the past for them".

Productivity occupies a relatively similar position to that which it occupied in the early phase analysis but again the tenor of comment within this category is quite radically different. On this occasion all of the responses are pointing in the direction that it would be the belief of respondents that there had not been any gains in productivity during the process of teamworking; if anything perhaps productivity had gone backwards - evidence for this view can be seen in the following statements:

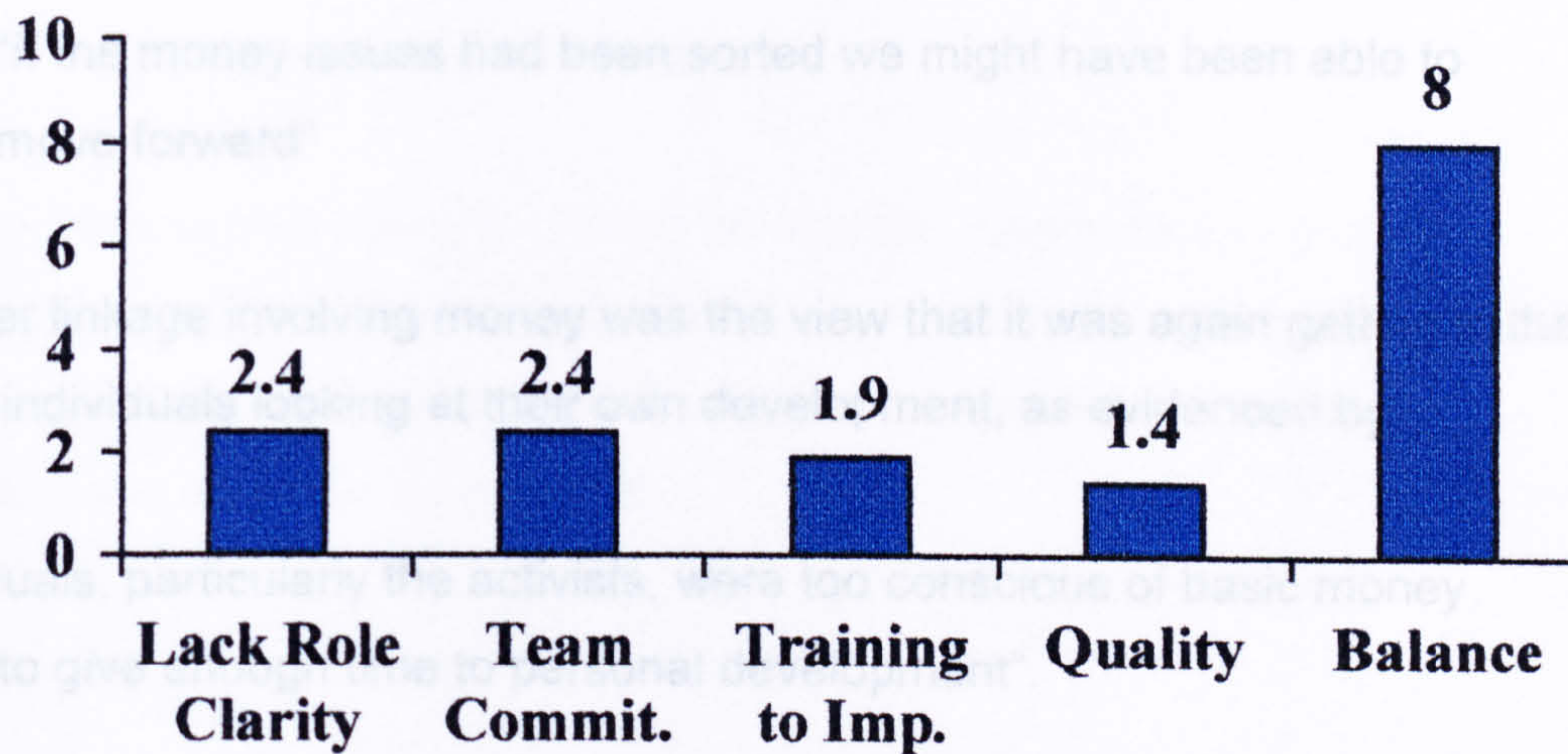
"Despite initial appearances no improvement in productivity".

"Productivity definitely down evidence our throughput now".

The number within 'other' is quite small, at 34, and the top three therein are 'lack of role clarity', 'employee/team commitment' and 'training to improve', as shown in Figure 4.3.10 below.

Figure 4.3.10

% of responses coded as:



C (ix) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents: Final Phase

At this final stage of data gathering respondents were more forthcoming in their analysis as to what gave rise to certain events and/or themes within the process of introducing empowered teamworking. One of the strongest links that respondents made was concerning the departure of the general manager, Donal, and on more than one occasion his departure was linked to some negative aspect of the process of introducing teamworking, for example:

"Once Donal left support seems to have been lost".

"The loss of Donal meant that leadership was again unclear".

Some operators believed that the initiation of teamworking was in fact a device to try and take their attention away from the pay claims that were so important to them; this linkage can be seen in the following statement:

"It was a smoke screen to stop our pay claims".

An absolutely key piece of linkage by several respondents was the link between the money issue not being solved and the consequent effect that this had on the teamworking initiative, as evidenced by:

“If the money issues had been sorted we might have been able to move forward”

A further linkage involving money was the view that it was again getting in the way of individuals looking at their own development, as evidenced by:

“Individuals, particularly the activists, were too conscious of basic money issues to give enough time to personal development”.

Communications, which pre-occupied the attention of many respondents, drew forth another link which implied that communications were hampered by the in-fighting that took place within the teams, as evidenced by:

“The relationship difficulties within the teams caused problems with communication”.

The earlier referred to difficulties within the teams was, in the view of some respondents, a reason for the lowering of commitment to the process of introducing teamworking; one of the statements making such linkage is as follows:

“Their internal squabbling within teams seriously hampered overall commitment”.

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON CHEESEDEN

At this point I would like to present only initial short observations on Cheeseden as follows:

1. The data is quite overwhelming in its view of the non-inclusive aspects of the pre-planning process and also the delivery of management commitment once the process had started. The lack of role clarity is very often referred to as indeed is the 'money/pay' issue, which ultimately becomes a very sizeable obstacle.
2. In addition to their straight-forward comments, respondents have put forward some 'explanations' in respect of what they saw as important issues. I will return to examine these and the overall data within the cross-case analysis in Chapter 5.

CASE 4: SEPTIRE

This sub-section contains the following information:

A: THE ORGANISATION

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT SEPTIRE

C (i) The Planning Phase

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

C (iii) The Database

C (iv) The Data Gathering Process

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

C (vi) Respondent Data

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents

D. INITIAL COMMENTARY ON SEPTIRE

A: THE ORGANISATION

Septire was established in Ireland as the manufacturing subsidiary of a world-leading tyre production company of the same name based in Austria. The original company had commenced manufacturing with a concentration on rubber boots and raincoats but soon commenced production of tyres for carriages and bicycles. The rapid development of the emerging automobile industry at the beginning of the last century saw Septire assume a leading role in the production of tyres in Europe (CEO briefing).

In the year that Septire manufactured its first radial tyre the Dublin company was established and it continued in the ownership of Septire until 1985 when it was taken over by the Conti Group of Germany.

From a product point of view Septire in Dublin which had originally commenced as a single product organisation had by the mid 1990's a range of approximately 120 products. The proliferation of products arose from the organisation's desire to continually meet customer demands and particular order specifications were a feature of such demands.

B: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

Throughout the 1970's and 1980's the organisation had a turbulent industrial relations climate. Relationships were characterised by extremely adversarial relations between management and employees (O'Connor, 1995).

Management's attitude towards the unions in the mid 1970's was to avoid as much as possible any contact with the trade unions. Management would, where possible, by-pass the unions (CEO briefing). However, union militancy was more pragmatic than ideological and settlements tended to be negotiated and fully accepted by the unions. The company was extremely strike-prone with official and unofficial strikes occurring regularly throughout the 1970's and early 1980's (O'Connor, 1995). Some of these unofficial disputes were one-man pickets placed in pursuance of an individual grievance; unfortunately for the company most of their employees would not pass any picket in those years.

The organisation also used third-party mechanisms to help resolve disputes and were regular visitors to the Labour Court and the Rights Commissioner Service. Work practices were restrictive and many disputes arose over issues of demarcation (O'Connor, 1995); said disputes were very prevalent in Irish industry in the 1970's and 1980's. Competitive pressures in the 1980's were gradual and incremental, as indeed was the change that followed from such pressures.

In 1989 however, the very survival of Septire was threatened by competitive pressures and the uncompetitiveness of the organisation (CEO briefing). Proposals for a major re-structuring programme were tabled by the management of the organisation and after a long and bitter set of negotiations

an agreement was eventually hammered out involving a move from 5 day shift working to a 7 day working week with increased flexibility of working practices and manpower reductions as new technology came on stream. The Conti organisation invested some £25 million in technology bringing the Dublin factory to a state-of-the-art technology site. Flexibility and mobility of labour were critical and agreement was reached on the buying-out of several of the previous demarcation problems and an uneasy truce in the pattern of industrial relations ensued.

Following the introduction of all of these changes the unions, primarily SIPTU, became aware that change really could not be halted and consequently adapted their strategies to cope with it. Both parties came to recognise that their interests did not in fact always have to be in conflict and that in the long term the success of the company depended on them being able to change over time some of the behavioural pre-dispositions that emanated from the stances taken by either side. Although the movement described herein brought the company to the commencement of a journey, it by no means immediately developed a high level of trust – too much water had gone under the bridge in the past for trust to be an instant deliverable.

In 1992 the company attempted to introduce autonomous working groups but negotiations with the union broke down on a number of issues such as:

- The reward system
- Methods of performance assessment
- Expectations of both parties in areas of productivity improvements
- Training and personal development skills

The union saw this attempt by management as another 'flavour of the month' initiative and did not believe the management were fully committed to it (Union

Official briefing). Management on their side were very pre-occupied during 1992 with turning around through traditional methods a potentially disastrous production performance with a consequential huge financial implication; their full attention was directed to this rather than the Autonomous Work Group (AWG) initiative.

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING AUTONOMOUS WORK GROUPS (AWG'S)/TEAMWORKING AT SEPTIRE

C (i) The Planning Phase

Further competitive pressures ensued and Conti on a worldwide basis issued a directive to all manufacturing plants to work towards the concept of 'lean production'. Lean producers were seen to employ teams of multi-skilled workers at all levels in the organisation and to use highly flexible manpower and increased automation to produce greater volumes of product to quality. While other group companies were struggling with the problem of flattening their management hierarchy the management in Septire recognised that the company already had a very flat structure and that it was more important to go deeper into the concept of AWG/Teamworking. To this end the subject was formally introduced to the unions in January of 1994 culminating in a year-long series of steps in preparation for the launch of a pilot project in February, 1995.

The AWG/Teamworking model being pursued by Septire was based, according to O'Connor, 1995, on three assumptions, as follows:

1. *Operational experiments are being carried out in selected parts of the organisation as a means of introducing this system to the whole organisation.* Septire followed this strategy by selecting their mixing department as a trial unit. Once AWG/Teamworking was successfully introduced into this department it was envisaged that it would be extended to every other department throughout the company. The company had

adopted the value that AWG/Teamworking would be fully implemented through the factory by the end of 1996.

2. *Socio-technical experimentation requires an organisational climate that is responsive to innovation and change.* Septire has since 1989 tried to cultivate this kind of climate within the company by making information widely available to workers about the company's ideas for the future and its financial performance. Also all workers have received extensive information about all aspects of the introduction of AWG/Teamworking into the company, so that they would understand their purpose and see the benefits that the new systems would bring to them and the company. Workers realised that since the re-structuring programme in 1989 the company had come under very severe economic pressure and that it had to utilise any resources at its disposal to help keep it viable; this knowledge had made them more responsive to change than in the past because they now saw change in a somewhat positive light.
3. *Socio-technical experimentation involves organisational members directly in the change process, i.e. those involved in the production process collaborating in the experiment.* Septire included workers in every aspect of the decision making process regarding AWG/Teamworking to ensure that no-one was isolated. The organisation was anxious to avoid the mistakes of their first attempt to introduce AWG/Teamworking one of which was the exclusion of key individuals. Septire held extensive monthly meetings with the workers involved where their fears and worries about the new system were discussed. Any problems that were encountered at these meetings were acted upon and eliminated if possible.

The area in which the experimental group was set-up was chosen carefully in the main because it had the following attributes:

- It was a relatively self-contained unit

- Inputs and outputs in the area could easily be measured
- The unit had a high probability of success with an AWG/Teamworking
- Positive results in this experimental unit should be transferable to other parts of the organisation
- Only those operators with a genuine interest to participate should be used; no-one should be forced to participate.

With these attributes in mind management at Septire picked the Mixing Department as the area to commence the pilot project scheme. As well as having the above attributes this department also had some positive advantages for introducing teamworking as follows:

- It had a relatively good number of operators to begin forming work-groups, approximately 10 people per shift
- There was already a certain degree of autonomy in place in the department
- Some of the operators were multi-skilled
- It had stable production
- It had good potential for change
- It had a good quality control system already in place
- There were approximately 10 different jobs in the area, which allowed for job rotation etc.

Key to the planning process was the early establishment of a Steering Group which included the chief executive, the human resource manager and the project team leader on the management side but also included four SIPTU No. 12 Branch representatives. This Steering Group had an overseeing role in relation to the preparation for AWG/Teamworking at Septire and it delegated many of its responsibilities to the project team. The project team was composed of an industrial engineer, a production planning officer, an industrial relations officer, a training officer, four members of SIPTU, one member of the Manufacturing Services Union and one Craft Union individual. In both of these committees therefore the majority representation was from the union side and this was a new departure for the organisation to allow such majority representation to the union side.

A training group was also established which followed the earlier committees in composition insofar as it included the training manager, a line manager and 4 SIPTU No. 12 Branch personnel, again giving the majority composition on the committee to Union activists.

Once the general rules and safeguards for AWG/Teamworking were established by the Steering Group and agreed by the unions the way was clear to negotiate a draft enabling agreement between the company and the workforce. This agreement set down the terms and conditions for the introduction of AWG/Teamworking into the organisation. Once this document was drawn up it was given to the SIPTU section committee to review its contents and after a few minor changes in the terms used acceptance was forthcoming. In respect of the particular pilot project the workers in the mixing department were consulted and gave their agreement in full to this enabling agreement.

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

The mixing department consisted of 46 operators, 6 of whom worked days and were not on shift. These 6 operators worked with whichever shift happened to be working the day shift. Each shift had its own foreman and

therefore the total workforce in the mixing department was 50. Each member of the shift teams of 10 had a specific task to perform and there was little direct communication between management and workers as the foreman acted as the liaison between the workers and the divisional and the deputy divisional managers. The existing Mixing Department operated in a top-down approach where management gave 'orders' and these were implemented down along the line by employees.

The new work arrangements under the autonomous work group organisation had 4 teams of 10 on each of 4 shifts with again 6 support day-workers working with whichever shift was on day-work. The radical difference was in the rotational element of the different tasks within the group, the teamwork engendered with the team members, the election from among their group of a contact man (whose task was to liaise with other support functions and management) and critically the role of the foreman changing to that of facilitator.

The role of what was the foreman and now the facilitator in this new structure was a radical change from directing operators to one of facilitating and training. Under the old system much of the foremen's time was spent filling out report sheets and dealing with manning problems in the department. Little of the foremen's time was spent out on the floor dealing with quality issues and dealing with operators. Under the new AWG system however, this all changed and the foremen became facilitators and their role included the following:

Communicator: Using a variety of communication skills, presenting information, ideas and attitudes, clearly and effectively to teams, management and suppliers.

Interpreter: Able to communicate the meaning of management messages, market trends in the business environment to team members.

Teacher/Trainer: Train the teams in the technical/administrative or inter-personal skills necessary to become more effective. Develop and use other resources to train team members, maintain a training monitoring system and monitor the performance of teams with respect to their use of proper team orientated skills.

Resource Person: Had sufficient knowledge of the department and its processes to provide requested assistance to team and management.

Collaborator: Was effective at working with other people with task-orientated activities and stimulated group efforts to accomplish department goals.

Inspires Confidence: Displayed confidence in goals, methods and systems; followed systems and philosophies established within the department and was able to explain 'why' with conviction when asked by a team-member or peers.

As mentioned earlier the role of operators also radically changed under the new system and instead of each operator having a particular job all group members were expected to be multi-skilled and therefore be able to perform any job within the department. Extensive training was provided in the technical skills required of the varying jobs into which the team-members had to rotate.

The position of 'contact man' within each group was also significant. The purpose of the contact man was to co-ordinate activities by liaising with all group-members, the facilitator for problem solving on shift and for back-up from the support system i.e. maintenance, technical, planning and training. He reported on all data required by the company through report sheets and the PC database. He was also responsible for collecting and issuing wages and bonus sheets as well as dealing with all queries about wages. He decided in conjunction with the facilitator the placement of workgroup members for production requirements i.e. priority mixes, supplementing manning and covering operators who were late/absent. The contact man co-

ordinated the training requirements of the team and set the time for team meetings. He organised overtime and holiday cover with the agreement of team-members and the divisional managers. Finally, he controlled the issuing of all protective clothing and equipment. It should be noted that each team had its own contact man and that the position rotated among team-members every six months. All contact men were encouraged to involve the team as much as possible in the way in which they were going about their temporary duties.

From the point of view of support systems it should be noted that a number of new systems were initiated within the company to facilitate the introduction of AWG/Teamworking:

Production Engineering Maintenance System (PEMS)

This was a brand new networked system which had been set-up in the company to coincide with the introduction of AWG/Teamworking. The new system replaced the need for operators to have job cards filled out every time a machine needed maintenance following break-down. With the new system the operator keyed in the relevant information into a computer which was networked to all of the engineers and fitters offices throughout the factory. Once information reached these offices an engineer and fitter were assigned to the problem immediately. This new system eliminated the need for operators to go searching all over the factory for engineers and fitters. All members of the work-groups received training on how to operate this system.

Reporting Systems

A new shift reporting system was set-up within the Mixing Department. This consisted of a database which had been designed by the industrial engineering department to meet all the report needs of the work-groups. Before this system was set-up, all reports on production and down-time had to be written up by the foremen and handed in to the planning department at the end of every shift. With this new system the operator could key in the

relevant figures into a computer for the work-group without having to spend time writing up reports. The information was stored in the database and the planning department could download it each day. Also this system allowed the operators to print graphs to show how they were performing against the schedule they had been set for the day, week or month. All operators in the department also received training on how to use this system.

Communications Centre

A communications centre was built for the AWG/Teamworking so that they had a place to hold their team meetings and their breaks. This room was also used for training and as a place to store each group's equipment. This centre was used only by the AWG/Teamworking from the mixing department. It contained a computer which held the shift reporting database as well as a printer. It also contained a computer which was linked up to PEMS system. It contained showers for the operators as well as a catering area and a fully equipped communications room. This was a new innovation aimed at trying to provide a focal point for the enhanced communication that would be required in teamworking.

Gainsharing

The key aspect of the approach to AWG/Teamworking was the agreement reached on gainsharing. Without going into the complications of the precise formula for calculating savings it will suffice to indicate that the calculation was based on the difference between the 94 actual costs and the 95 actual costs. A quality index factor was also built in to the process but once the savings were established 25% of same were available on a monthly basis to members of the mixing department. The rest of the savings were divided as follows: 25% to the shareholder, 25% for re-investment in Septire and 25% for the start-up cost of introducing AWG/Teamworking. As evidence of the degree to which the company and the unions were willing to share savings it should be noted that the team were now in charge of purchasing some small supplies of overalls, gloves and small tools; 25% of any savings made on actual '95 costs

over budgeted '95 costs for supplies was allocated to the mixer groups (Joint management/union briefing).

From an early stage in introducing AWG/Teamworking the management of the company took the view that:

- Openness and involvement were necessary to alleviate employee and unions fears about the impact of the initiative
- The Steering Committee facilitated the breakdown of 'them and us' attitudes
- It made sense to involve all of the people who would be responsible for implementing the initiatives, including union representatives
- Direct contact with employees and their representatives reduced filtering of information by supervisors and middle management

Most of this union involvement took place at the level of local representatives and shop stewards. Officials of the various unions were involved in the negotiation of major issues around the introduction of AWG/Teamworking, such as the conclusion of the enabling agreement and other changes in conditions from-time-to-time.

C (iii) The Database

At Septire, as with the previously reported cases, the individual respondents were staff at a variety of levels within the organisation, all of whom were intimately involved with the process of introducing AWG/Teamworking. The operator staff were drawn from the mixing department across 4 shifts with 10 staff on each shift, yielding a total of 40 shift staff; these operating teams were supported by 6 operators on day work. In addition to these operating staff there were 4 foremen/facilitators and 6 managerial/technical staff

involved yielding a total of 56 staff directly involved in the AWG/Teamworking initiative at Septire. Data was collected from all of these individuals and also from Union representatives at local and Official level and the H.R. Officer.

A summary of the database can be seen at Table 4.4. below:

Table 4.4: Database summary

Focus teams/individuals for data gathering	Number of individuals within the team
4 production shift teams	40
1 day-work group	6
Foremen/Facilitators	4
Managerial/technical	6
Union Representatives	
– Local	2
– Official	1
H.R. personnel	1
Total number of individuals from whom data was gathered :	60

C. (iv) The data gathering process

Interviews were conducted with each of the above groupings (and on occasions with individuals) during the data gathering phase. This data was gathered some ten months after the commencement of the initiative. The initial intention had been to gather data in at least one and possibly two further phases but unfortunately due to circumstances totally outside the control of the Irish management the whole of Septire was closed down suddenly within two months of the data collection, thus precluding the possibility of further data collection.

The team meetings at Septire involved individuals who were working together on four separate production shift teams and one day-work group. All of these teams and groups were met by this researcher during the data gathering process.

Each of the team meetings within Septire were conducted in the communications room which had been specially designed and installed at the time of commencing their teamwork initiative; the meetings invariably took place towards the end of a shift, where the operators from the next shift came in early to free up the time of the operators attending the meeting.

Those attending the meetings came to the communications room some 30 minutes prior to the end of their shift and remained in discussion with this researcher for approximately 30-40 minutes; the difference in the length of the interviews reflected the effectiveness of the data gathering and/or the anxiety to get away on the part of some of the team members.

Several meetings were also held with the Foreman/Facilitator group and the managerial/technical team; these meetings, which oftentimes took over an hour, were again focused on attempting to gather as much live data as possible on progress with the process of introducing teamworking at Septire.

An inherent value in the last of these groupings described above (Foremen/Facilitators and managerial/technical) was that they were taking an overview across the organisation whereas the other teams were focused almost exclusively on the functioning of their own team. This permitted not alone the emergence of the views of these groups about themselves but also, as a valuable addition, it was possible to gather data that would be helpful at the later analysis stage; thus data provided by these groups was able to be used as a cross check, as it were, on data gathered from other sources.

Finally, data was also gathered from H.R. personnel and the Trade Union representatives who, at local and official level, were also met during the data gathering phase at Septire.

With all of these teams and individuals this researcher was rigorous in stressing that his view of the process was unimportant at the data gathering phase. He therefore also made repeated efforts during the interviews to clarify with the group that he was absorbing their data in all of its richness through regular reflection back to them of his understanding of their input.

As indicated within the Research Strategy and Methods chapter arrangements were made at this data gathering phase to enlist a key internal individual who would help at the later data analysis stage; thus at this early stage he was informed that he would be used as a check on our analysis. The individual that was so contracted at Septire was the Project Team Leader.

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

Initially the respondent statements were separately coded to the emerging categories using NUD.IST.4 as described in the data analysis section of our earlier Research Strategy and Methods chapter.

The responses from the individuals involved in the teamworking initiative were then sorted and re-sorted within these categories, with some new ones being established during the process.

For the first stage of our analysis the data within the categories that is presented below has been counted to ascertain the 'frequency of mentions' made by the respondents. This has allowed us to clearly see the emphasis placed by these respondents on the various categories.

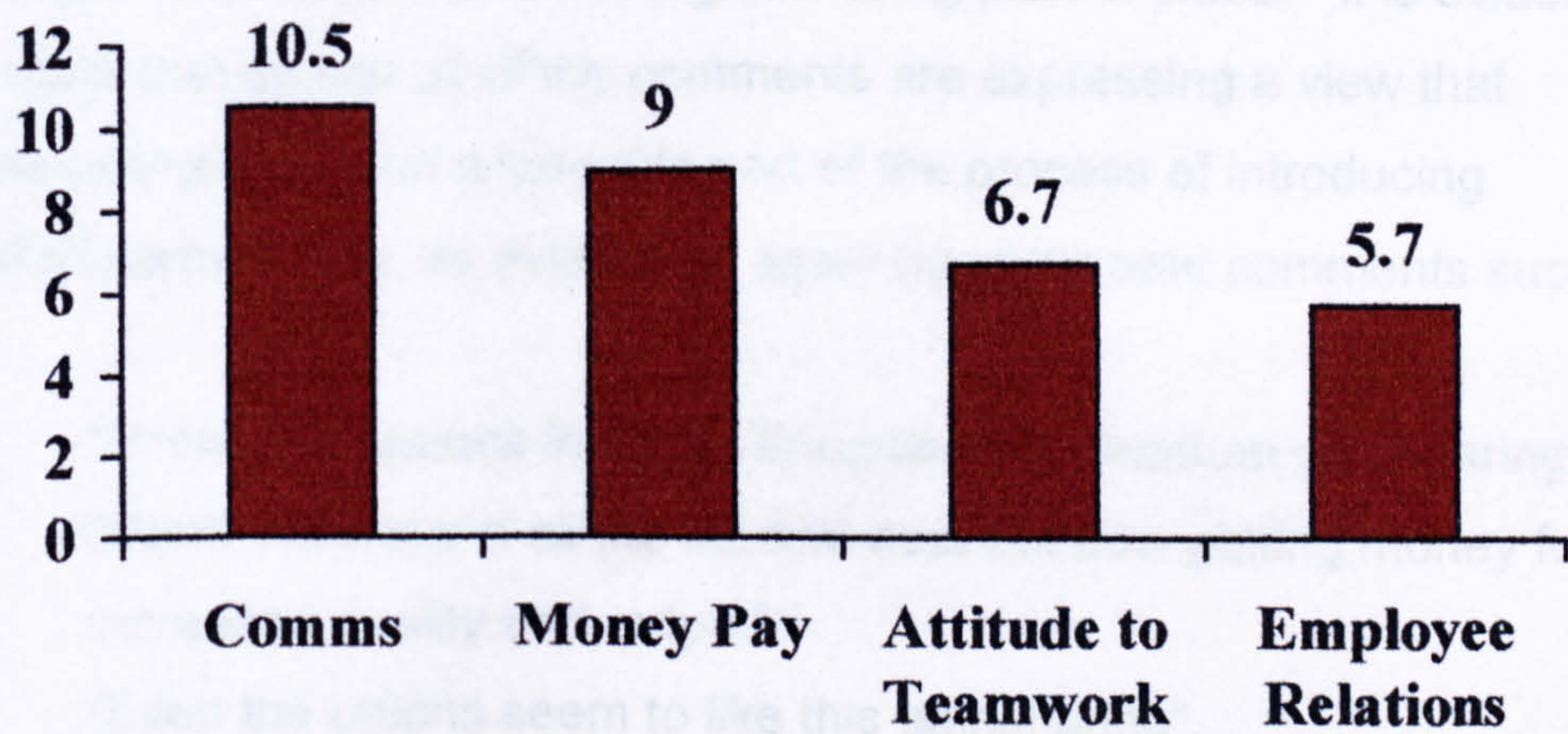
Bar charts have been used to demonstrate the degree of emphasis that emerges from this 'frequency of mentions; thus the charts presented should be seen as a graphical summary in percentage terms of the relative number of occasions on which respondents within the sample have made statements that have been coded at a particular category.

The analysis of the data is spread over up to six charts and where this arises the charts need to be seen as a whole. Thus within the analysis of the data from Septire at C (v) below the charts 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.5 and 4.4.6 should be seen as a whole, with 4.4.4, 4.4.5 and 4.4.6 being the breakdown of the 'other' category included at 4.4.3. The text associated with each chart explains in detail the content of that particular chart.

C (vi) Respondent Data (Data collected some 10 months after the commencement of the AWG/Teamworking initiative)

Within this section I wish to present the data gathered in the interviews with individuals and teams within Septire. All but 69 of the 214 statements are accounted for in the three Figures below 4.4.1, 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 each of which reflects the frequency with which respondents' comments have been coded at the listed categories. The mere counting of these statements will, as mentioned earlier, not present the true richness of this data. However it will provide the basis for an initial examination of the more frequently used categories and will also allow some comparison to be made with the data from the other 4 case-studies.

Figure 4.4.1
% of responses coded as:



Within the data shown in Figure 4.4.1 above we see that the top four – ‘communications’, ‘money/pay’, ‘attitudes/ behaviours towards teamwork’ and ‘employee relations’ have the greatest amount of mentions during the data gathering. Of greater significance than the amount of mentions is the clear orientation of mind in almost all of those statements; this orientation demonstrates an exceedingly positive view of how the process of introduction of empowered teams had been supported by ‘communications’, ‘money/pay’, expressed ‘attitudes/behaviours towards teamwork’ and ‘employee relations’. For example both management personnel and team members found a dramatic improvement in communications through the introduction of AWG/Teamworking. In particular comments about communications, for example, participants regularly gave credit to the newly established communications room and to the ‘link-man’ who was elected from among their own group. Evidence of such feelings emerge through statements such as:

“The communications room is just brill”.

“Communications room gives us our space”.

“The fact that the communications room was built in the middle of the department”.

“Our ‘link-man’ is great”.

The feelings that the vast majority of informants have about ‘money/pay’ at Septire display that they are very positively disposed towards the new arrangements which have put a gainsharing plan in place. It is evident from the data that almost all of the comments are expressing a view that gainsharing has been a valuable part of the process of introducing AWG/Teamworking, as evidenced again by participant comments such as:

“Great discussions in the build-up to agreement on gainsharing”.

“Don’t understand all the ins and outs but now getting money for increased quality and output”.

“Even the unions seem to like this gainsharing”.

“Our ability to share in the fruits of our work is great”.

The statements that have been coded at 'attitudes/behaviours towards teamwork' are exceedingly positive in respect of both employee/team member attitudes and those of management. Indeed one of the features of the comments in respect of such attitudes is that individuals regularly stated that they found it difficult to understand how the organisation did not move towards teamworking at an earlier stage; secondly, they were looking forward to it being extended to other areas of the factory outside their own mixing department. Again evidence of such sentiments can be observed in the data through the following statements:

"Good to see some management getting behind team working".

"This was a joint experience not really had that here before".

"H.R. very supportive. Giving us more control was totally new".

Within the fourth coded category – 'employee relations' - every comment that has been categorised speaks of a radical improvement in employee relations in a variety of ways, as indicated by the following comments:

"Much less grievance and discipline issues around the place".

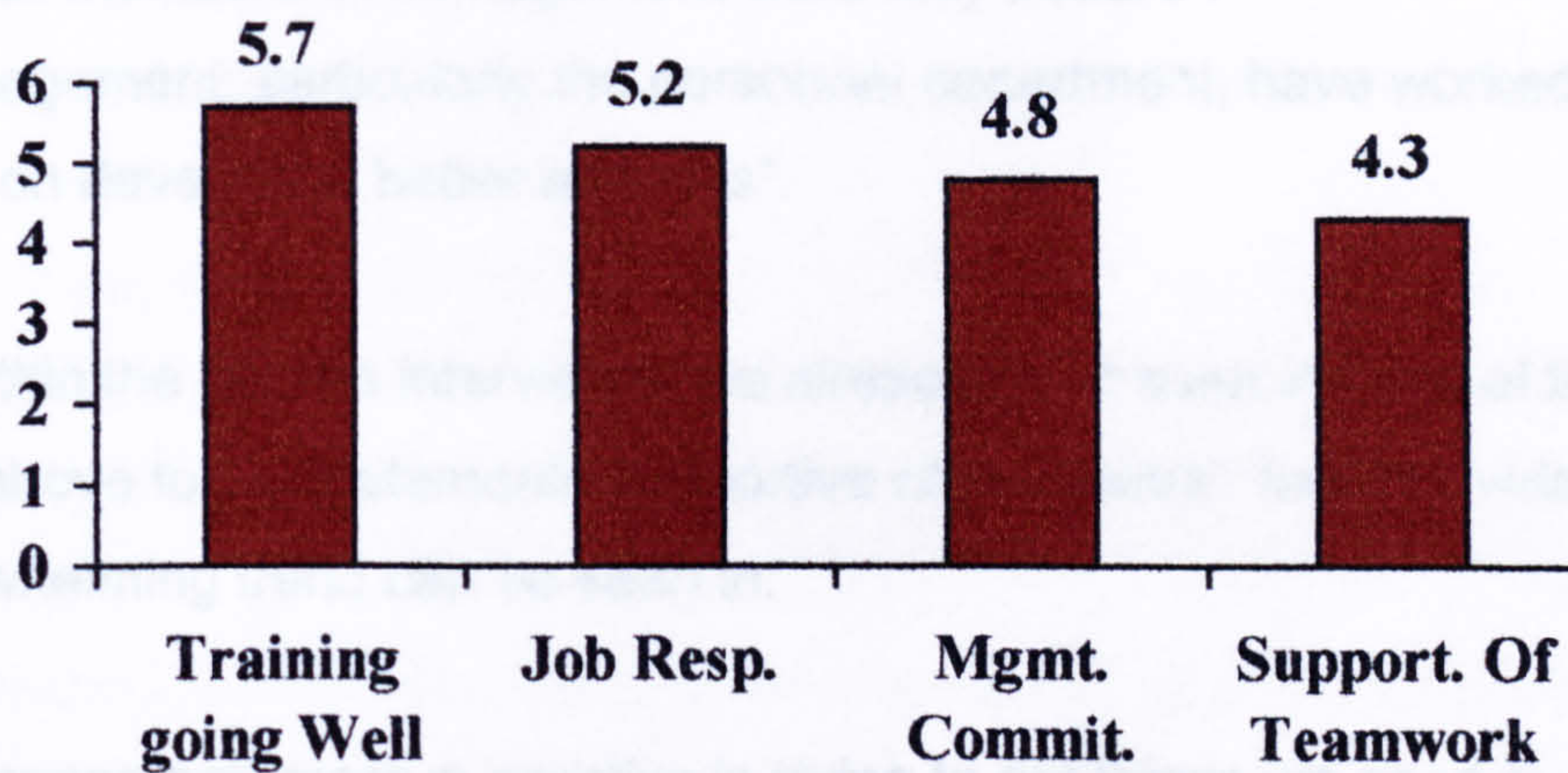
"The guys seem so focused on the job that there doesn't seem to be the time for industrial relations nit-picking".

"All the old industrial relations issues generated so regularly seem to have evaporated."

The above comments are all the more poignant bearing in mind the industrial relations history of this organisation.

The next four most frequently referred to categories were those of 'training going well', 'job responsibilities', 'management commitment' and 'statements supportive of teamwork', as shown in Figure 4.4.2 below:

Figure 4.4.2
% of responses coded as:



The extent of the pre-planning that had taken place and which was applied to the analysis of training needs and the structure and delivery of training is very well rewarded within the 'training going well' statements:

"Technical training excellent".

"They listened to what we said were our needs".

"Communications training, just the job".

No negative statements were made with respect to additional 'job responsibility'.

Some strong statements were made in this connection in which the participants highlighted that they were pleased to receive additional job responsibility in a number of areas, as shown below:

"Recording all of the throughput and quality data".

"Getting straight to maintenance through the new computer system".

"We're really supervising our own work".

Almost all of the comments in respect of management commitment indicate that the required level of commitment to AWG/Teamworking was delivered by management:

"The critical functions of operations and engineering support threw their weight behind teamworking".

“Not all members of management were fully aboard”.

“Management, particularly the personnel department, have worked real hard on developing better attitudes”.

“Leadership role has changed, now leaving them at it more”.

The data within the Septire interviews has already been seen in most of the quotations above to be ‘statements supportive of teamwork’; further evidence of this overwhelming trend can be seen in:

With respect to ‘individual growth/maturity’ almost all of the statements made

“(Management) more supportive in trying to get things we need to function better”.

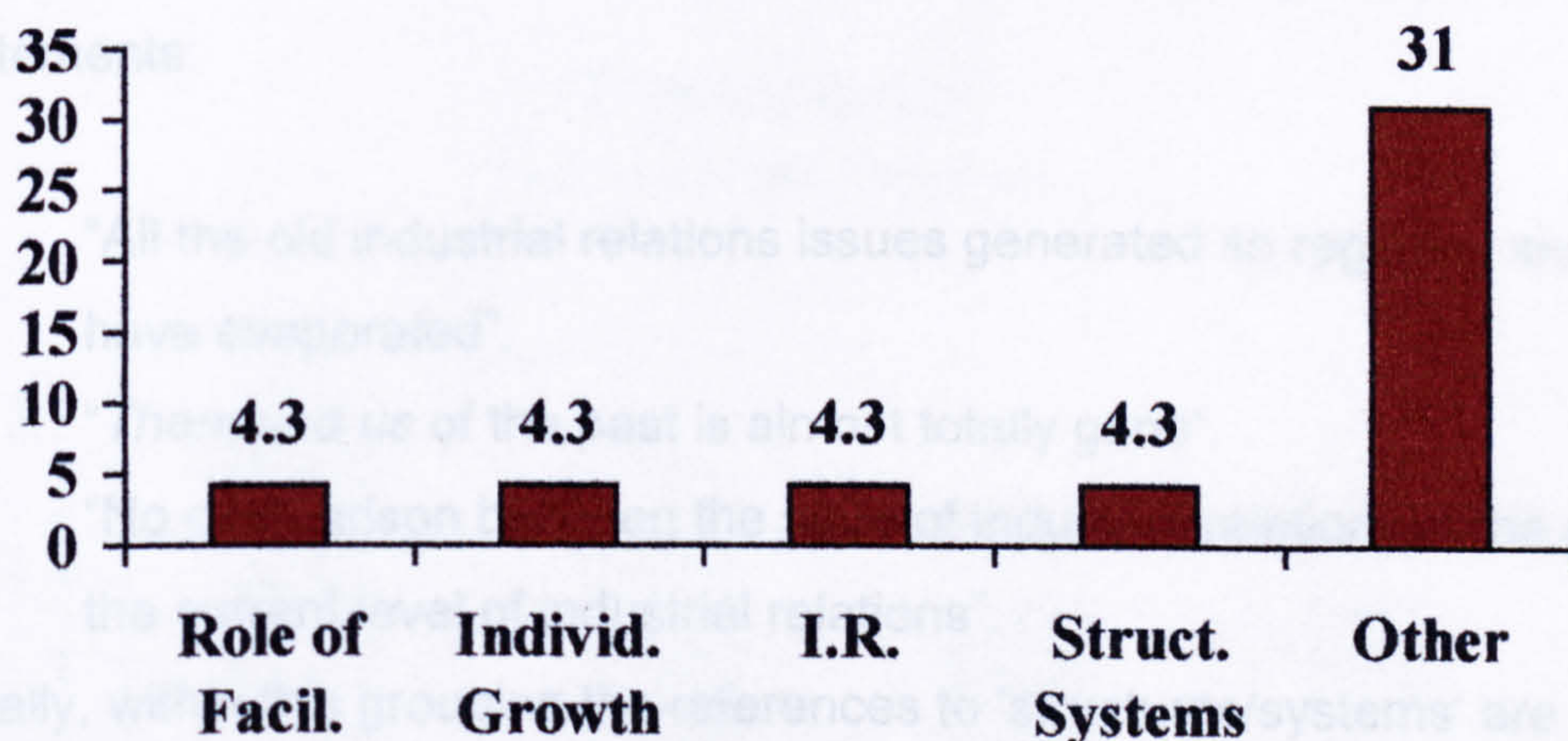
“In the main managers are standing back and letting us get on with it”.

“Seeing ourselves as a team responsible for having the place right for the next shift”.

improvement in maturity”.

The next grouping of categories, listed at Figure 4.4.3 below, include ‘role of facilitator’, ‘individual growth/maturity’, ‘industrial relations’ and ‘structures/systems’:

Figure 4.4.3
% of responses coded as:



The first set of responses within this grouping related to the ‘role of facilitator’, wherein respondents indicated that the exercising of this new role was still requiring development – as indicated below:

Systems of training and communication are much, much better”.

"Not sure if the role of team leader was fully understood from the beginning but it worked itself out".

"Leadership role has changed, now leaving them at it more".

"They (the facilitators) are trying to leave to us some of the things they used to do, such as quality checks".

With respect to 'individual growth/maturity' almost all of the statements made reflect strong feelings indicating that there has been an increase in individual growth/maturity, as indicated by the following examples:

"Yes, certainly an improvement from the past".

"One or two people much the same but in general a decided improvement in maturity".

"The way in which the shift team work together speaks volumes in respect of maturity".

'Industrial relations' was a category within which there was extensive overlap to the earlier reported category of 'employee relations'. Specific references to the 'industrial relations' category were usually alluding to the poor state of industrial relations historically, as indicated in the following sample statements:

"All the old industrial relations issues generated so regularly seem to have evaporated".

"*Them and us* of the past is almost totally gone".

"No comparison between the state of industrial relations in the past and the current level of industrial relations".

Finally, within this grouping the references to 'structures/systems' are exemplified by the sample below:

"Rotational aspects within shifts and teams is very different".

"The overall management system has been greatly modified".

"Systems of training and communication are much, much better".

The grouping of statements above have accounted for all but 69 of the 214 statements made; the distribution of the remaining 69 can be seen within Figures 4.4.4, 4.4.5 and 4.4.6 below:

Figure 4.4.4
% of responses coded as:

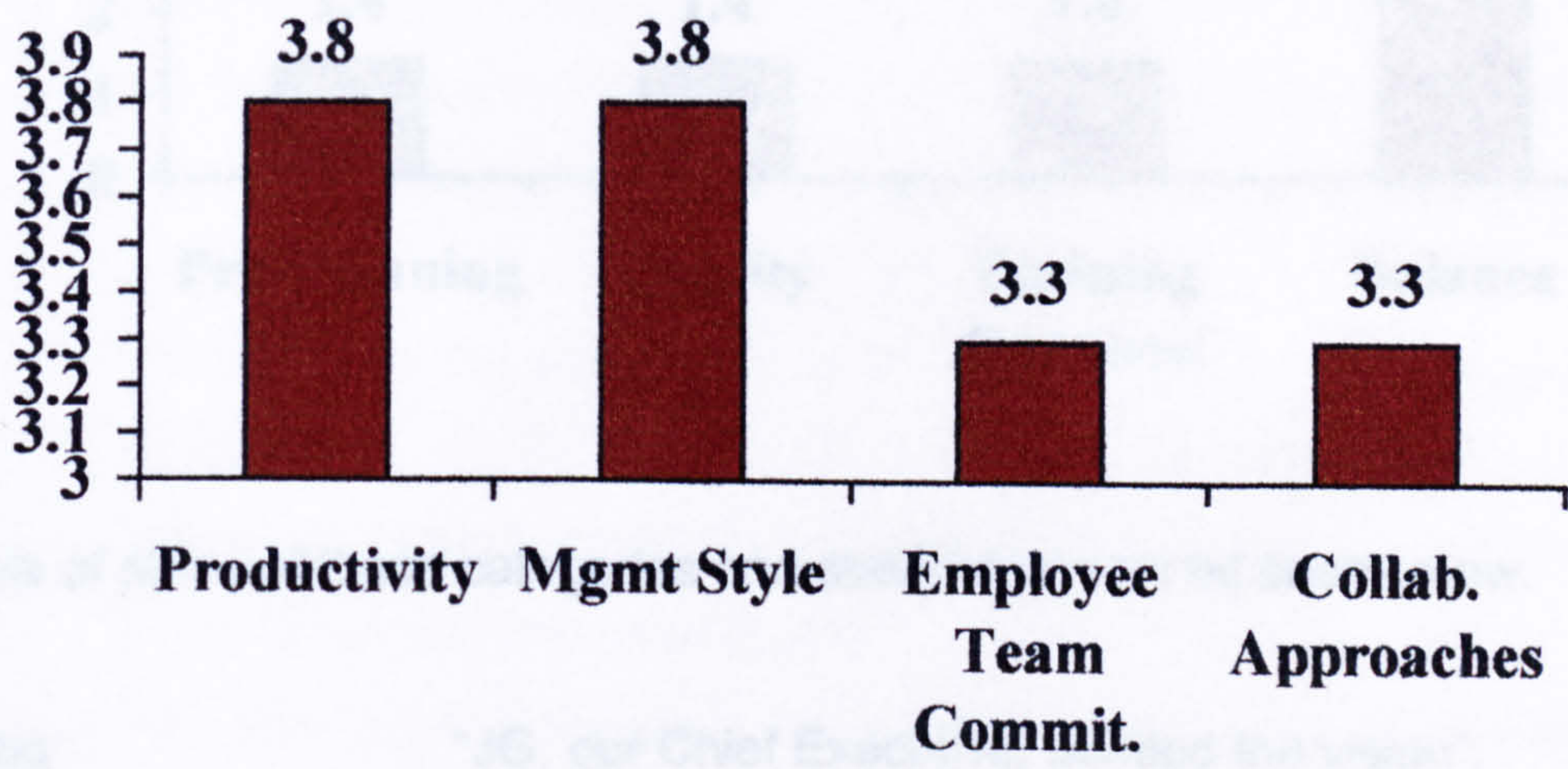


Figure 4.4.5
% of responses coded as:

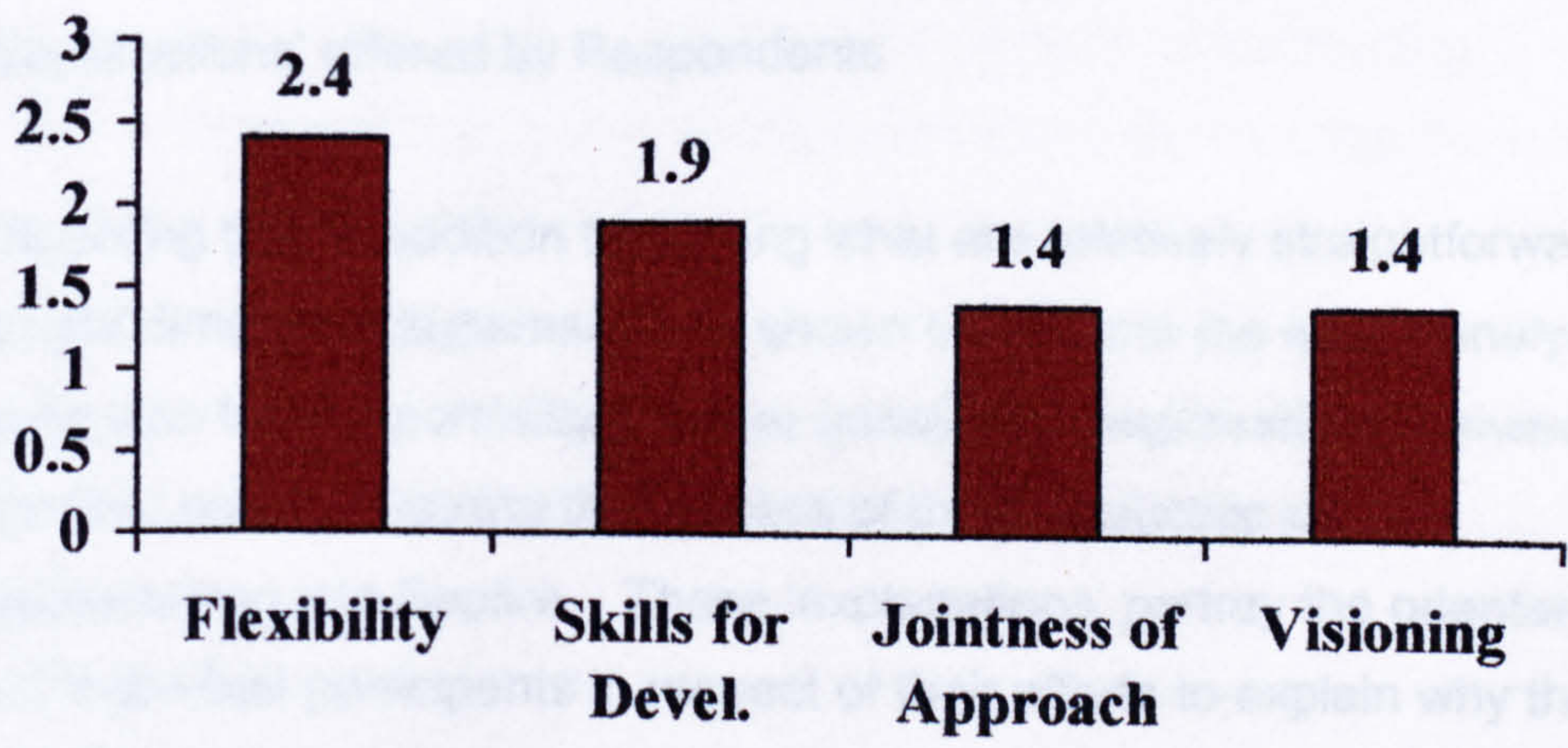
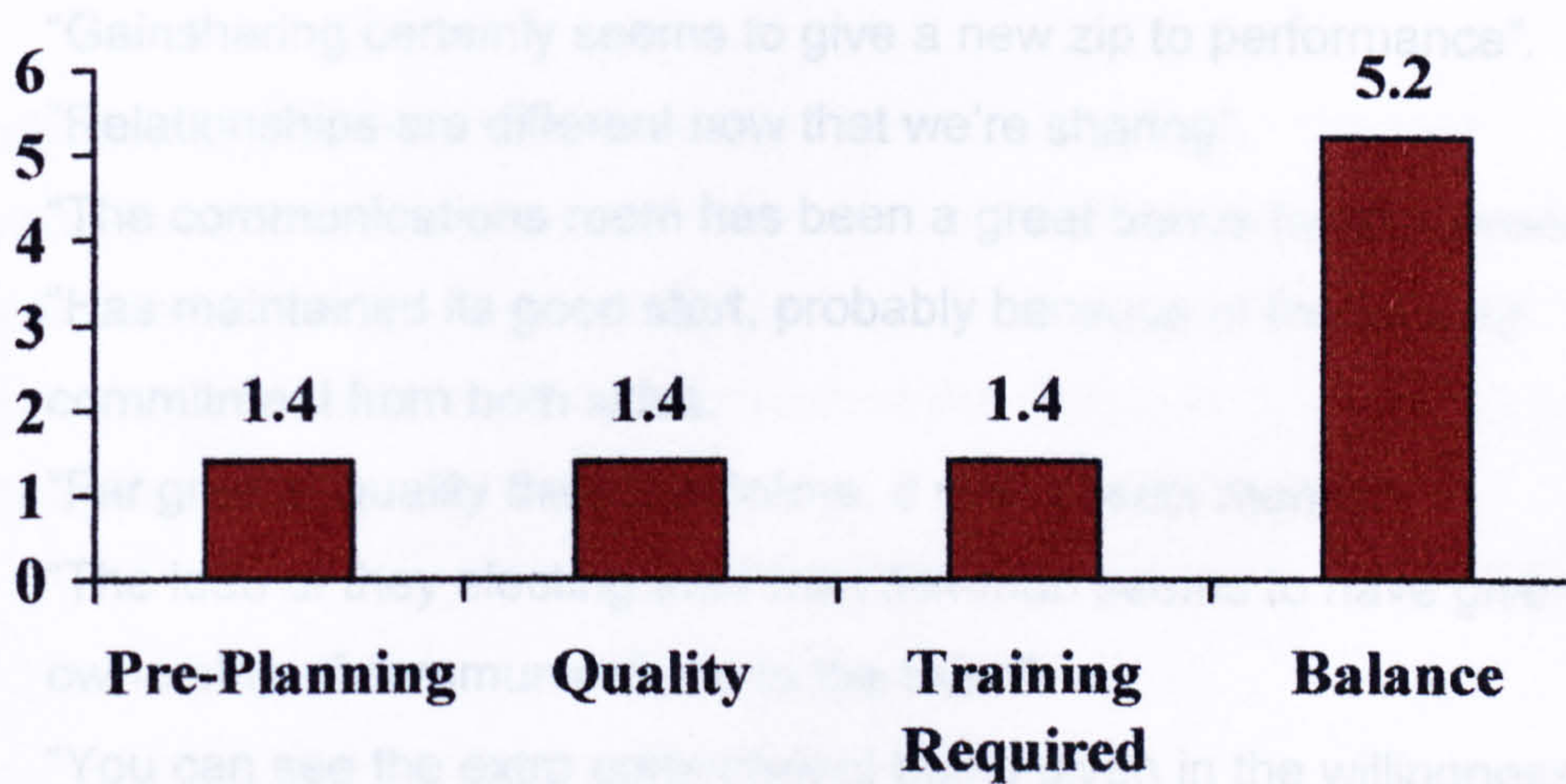


Figure 4.4.6
% of responses coded as:



A sample of some of these categories and statements can be seen below:

- 'Visioning': "JG, our Chief Executive, painted the vision".
- 'Management Style': "Most managers were interested in our experiment".
- 'Collaborative Approaches': "We had to work together to survive".
- 'Directioning': "PD (H.R. Manager) and H.R. (Department) ran strongly with this vision".
- 'Pre-planning': "(Went well because of) all the early pre-planning and training".

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents

It is worth noting that in addition to making what are relatively straightforward and/or single dimension statements, as shown throughout the above analysis, participants also took opportunity to make unsolicited 'explanations' between events as they occurred during the process of the introduction of AWG/Teamworking into Septire. These 'explanations' portray the orientation of mind of individual participants in respect of their efforts to explain why they believe certain things were occurring. At this stage without proffering any

theoretical analysis I would like to present some of these statements that show such 'explanations' as follows:

"Gainsharing certainly seems to give a new zip to performance".

"Relationships are different now that we're sharing".

"The communications room has been a great bonus for teamworking".

"Has maintained its good start, probably because of the level of commitment from both sides.

"Far greater quality than heretofore, it now affects money".

"The idea of they electing their own *link-man* seems to have given ownership of communications to the team".

"You can see the extra commitment being given in the willingness and flexibility".

"Not alone is productivity up but the means of achieving that are, waste being down and improved quality".

"The way in which the guys go out-of-the-way to help one another is evidence of radical change in attitude and behaviour".

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON SEPTIRE

At this stage of the review of Septire the only initial observations that I wish to make are:

1. The data is positively overwhelming in respect of its support for the manner in which Septire undertook the process of introducing AWG/Teamworking, giving strong credence to the fact that the extensive pre-planning undertaken and perhaps particularly the inclusion from an early stage of the union in all stages of this pre-planning was a key contributor to the AWG/Teamworking being bedded down to the organisation's satisfaction within Septire.
2. The participants have put forward 'explanations' in respect of what they saw as critical issues within the process of introducing AWG/Teamworking well. When we undertake our cross-case analysis at a later stage in this

thesis we will return to the orientation of the statements within Septire and to the tentative conclusions that participants made in their development of their own personal understanding of why things were going well.

As indicated in the earlier case-studies I have endeavoured to present only the participant data in this initial examination of Septire and will return to many of the themes raised by these participants in the cross-case analysis within which my own analysis and interpretation of the data across all five cases will be presented.

CASE 5: PORTCO

This sub-section contains the following information:

A: THE ORGANISATION

B: THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING INTO THE
CLEANING DEPARTMENT AT PORTCO

C (i) The Planning Phase

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

C (iii) The Database

C (iv) The Data Gathering Process

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

C (vi) Respondent Data

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON PORTCO

A: THE ORGANISATION

Portco owns and operates one of Ireland's major ports which in this year will handle in excess of 14 million passengers.

The period since the 1970's has seen significant capital development at its major port within the Dublin area as it struggles to provide facilities for handling a burgeoning number of passengers.

The organisation is also involved in additional commercial activities in the areas of the retailing, catering and hotel industries.

The organisation also undertakes substantial business overseas where it has joint ownership of and management contracts within several other ports.

B: THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CLIMATE

Over the last three decades Portco, a semi-state organisation, has experienced a certain degree of turbulence in its industrial relations. Much of this would have arisen from the viewpoint that various categories of staff would from time-to-time perceive their bargaining position as strong when attempting to pursue particular claims (Operations team briefing). It would have been their belief that the organisation would not have been in the strongest position to stand up to very militant action at any particular time. Thus over those decades there were a number of incidents that brought reasonably significant gains to certain sections of the work force.

The organisation did adopt quite a reasonable stance at negotiation and endeavoured where at all possible to use all of the industrial relations machinery in the country to try and get different issues resolved. Thus extensive use would have been made of the Conciliation Service of the Labour Relations Commission and the Labour Court as well as Rights Commissioners.

The organisation also in recent years invested heavily in attempting to bring about a partnership approach to the way in which its relationships with staff were conducted. For example there is a very extensive constructive participation programme currently running at Portco (HR Manager discussion).

One of the areas where there had been consistent industrial relations problems was the cleaning section at Portco; this is a section that is charged with maintaining in a clean and tidy manner all buildings within the complex.

Management faced a situation where costs were escalating within the cleaning department and were aware that the service could be provided by a private contractor at a much lesser cost and perhaps to a higher standard of quality (Operations team briefing). This realisation focused the minds of both management and staff within the section in respect of endeavouring to come up with different forms of working that might address the issue of costs and quality, as evidenced in Treacy (1993) and SIPTU (1991).

C: THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING TEAMWORKING AT PORTCO

C (i) The Planning Phase

Portco conducted protracted negotiations with union representatives concerning a re-organisation of the cleaning department. These discussions extended over several months and almost broke down on a number of occasions but were eventually brought to a successful conclusion.

Running simultaneously with the negotiations Portco ran a number of workshops for all staff in the Cleaning Department to endeavour to clarify as much as possible the issues facing the section and how they were grappling with trying to surmount the obstacles.

C (ii) The Implementation of Teamworking

Historically the cleaning department at Portco was managed by some 29 supervisors running shifts with each supervisor running a shift crew who would be pulled from place to place as different crises arose, in addition to having their own regular work on shift (Daly, 1991). The management process however could best be described as a situation where the supervisor controlled each individual on a one-on-one basis.

Within the new arrangements agreed with the union the supervisory positions would be reduced to 12 and those individuals would float when on shift across

different departments, the intention being that they would behave in a more facilitative mode than in a directive mode and the shift team would be given increasing responsibilities for the areas to be cleaned including equipment, materials, the scheduling of their work and the quality of the work.

The whole company hoped to gain from the cost savings in respect of the rationalisation of positions and also was hopeful that the new teamworking arrangements would further enhance the quality of work and be able to absorb the extra work load that would arise as planned new buildings became operational (Daly, 1991).

The union, for its part, negotiated strongly on behalf of the members of the cleaning department and succeeded in having a wage increase paid at the outset of these arrangements with the possibility of a further payment if the arrangements were to work satisfactorily.

It is within this context that the respondent data was collected some 7 months after the commencement of the initiative.

C (iii) The Database

At Portco, as with the earlier case-studies, the individual respondents were staff at a variety of levels within the organisation, all of whom were intimately involved with the process of introducing teamworking. The operator staff were drawn from the Cleaning Department where there were approximately 25 per shift across 2 shifts yielding a total number of 50 operators. Additionally there were some 6 supervisors/facilitators and 3 management staff involved with the initiative yielding an overall total of 60 working directly with the teamworking initiative. Data was gathered from these groups and also from the Union representatives at local and Official level in addition to H.R. personnel.

A summary of the database can be seen at Table 4.5. below:

Table 4.5: Database summary

Focus teams/individuals for data gathering	Number of individuals within the team
2 cleaning operator shift teams	50
Supervisor/Facilitators	6
Management staff	3
Union Representatives	
- Local	2
- Official	1
H.R. Representatives	2
Total number of individuals from whom data was gathered:	64

C. (iv) The data gathering process

Interviews were conducted with each of the above groupings (and on occasions with individuals) during the data collection phase. It had been intended to have at least one further phase of data collection but due to internal difficulties within the Trade Union involved they put forward a request that the data collection cease; the internal difficulties within the Union had no connection at all with the research project.

The team meetings at Portco involved individuals who were working together on two particular shift teams within the Cleaning Department. Both of these teams were met by this researcher during the data gathering phase.

Both of the team meetings within Portco were conducted in a meeting room within the terminal building which was relatively adjacent to the work area of most of the team members; the meetings took place towards the end of a shift where the operators from the next shift came in early to free up the time of the operators attending the meeting.

Those attending these meetings came to the meeting room 30 minutes prior to the end of their shift and remained in discussion with this researcher for approximately 30-40 minutes.

Separate meetings were also held with the Supervisor/Facilitator group and the management team; these meetings, which oftentimes took over an hour, were again focused on attempting to gather as much live data as possible on progress with the process of introducing teamworking within Portco.

An inherent value in the last two groupings described (Supervisors/Facilitators and management staff) was that they were taking an overview across the organisation whereas the other teams were focused almost exclusively on the functioning of their own team. This permitted not alone the emergence of the views of those groups about themselves but also, as a valuable addition, it was possible to gather data that would be helpful at the later analysis stage; thus data provided by these groups was able to be used as a cross check, as it were, on data gathered from other sources.

Finally, valuable data was gathered from H.R. personnel and the Trade Union representatives who, at local and official level, were also met during the data gathering process at Portco.

With both of these teams and individuals this researcher was rigorous in stressing that his view of the process was unimportant at the data gathering phase. He therefore also made repeated efforts during the interviews to clarify with the group that he was absorbing their data in all its richness through regular reflection back to them of his understanding of their input.

As indicated within the Research Strategy and Methods chapter arrangements were made at this data gathering phase to enlist a key internal individual who would help at the later data analysis stage; thus at this early stage he was informed that he would be used as a check on our analysis. The individual that was so contracted at Portco was the former Cleaning Department

Manager, who had been heavily involved in the planning and implementation phases of the teamworking initiative.

C (v) Respondent Data: Mode of Presentation and Analysis

Initially the respondent statements were separately coded to the emerging categories using NUD.IST.4 as described in the data analysis section of our earlier Research Strategy and Methods chapter.

The responses from the individuals involved in the teamworking initiative were then sorted and re-sorted within these categories, with some new ones being established during the process.

For the first stage of our analysis the data within the categories that is presented below has been counted to ascertain the 'frequency of mentions' made by the respondents. This has allowed us to clearly see the emphasis placed by these respondents on the various categories.

Bar charts have been used to demonstrate the degree of emphasis that emerges from this 'frequency of mentions'; thus the charts presented should be seen as a graphical summary in percentage terms of the relative number of occasions on which respondents within the sample have made statements that have been coded at a particular category.

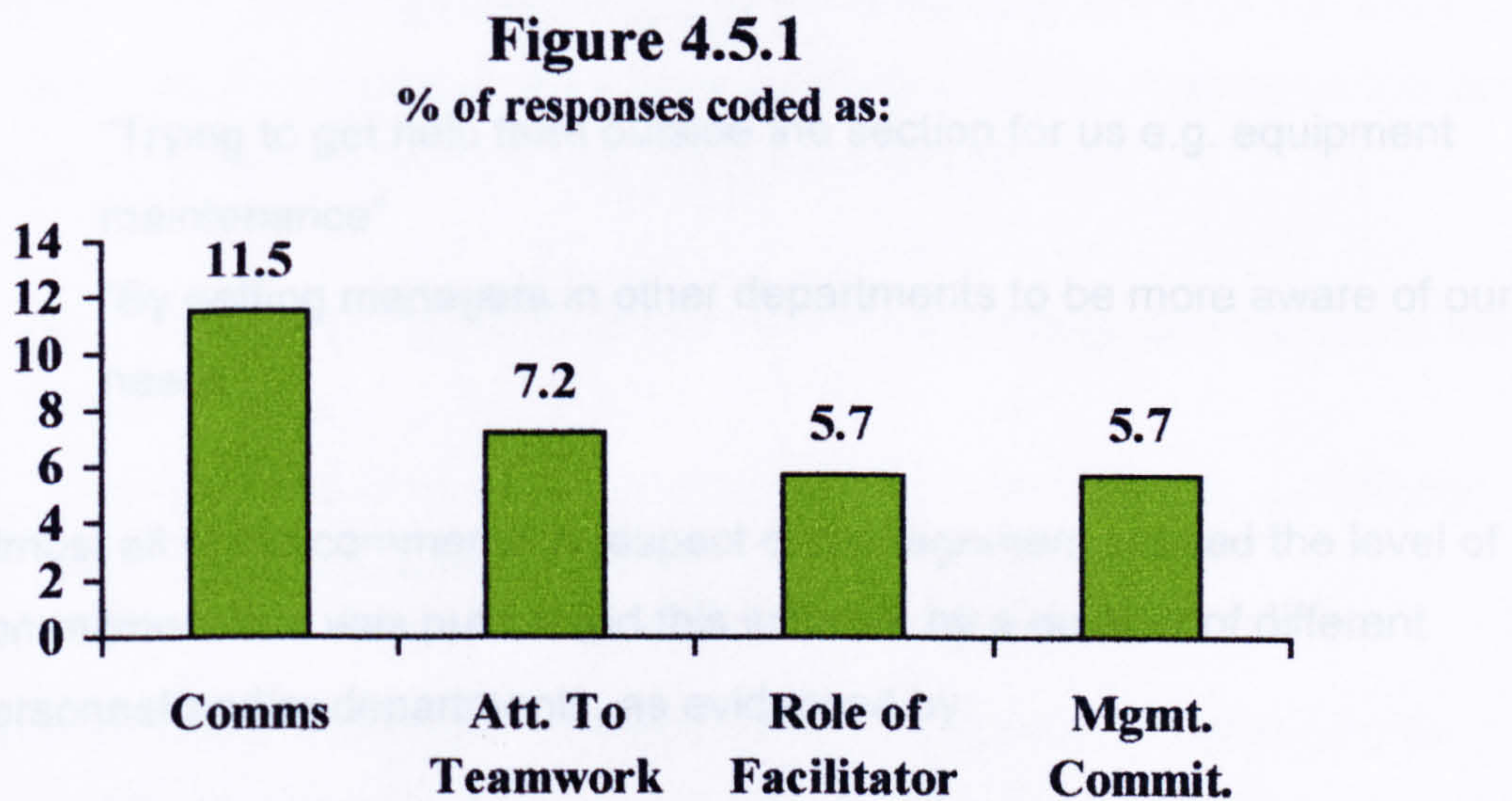
The analysis of the data is spread over up to six charts and where this arises the charts need to be seen as a whole. Thus within the analysis of the data from Portco at C (v) below the charts 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.5.4, 4.5.5 and 4.5.6 should be seen as a whole, with 4.5.4, 4.5.5 and 4.5.6 being the breakdown of the 'other' category included at 4.5.3. The text associated with each chart explains in detail the content of that particular chart.

C (vi) Respondent Data: (Data collected 7 months after the commencement of the Teamworking Initiative).

I would draw attention initially to the data contained within Figures 4.5.1, 4.5.2 and 4.5.3 as highlighting the most frequently used coded categories.

As stated at this juncture in the earlier case-studies this frequency count will provide us with the basis for an initial examination of the more frequently used categories.

The highest frequency categories of 'communication', 'teamwork attitudes/behaviours', 'role of facilitator' and 'management commitment' are highlighted in Figure 4.5.1 below:



As can be seen from Figure 4.5.1 above the issue of communications comes through very strongly in this analysis of the most frequently used categories. All of the respondents talk in very favourable terms about the huge improvement in communications, as evidenced by:

“Definite improvement in communications”.

“Now we can all for the first time talk without antagonism towards one another”.

Teamwork attitude and behaviour merits many favourable comments from respondents about teamworking at Portco demonstrating their happiness with the new work designs as evidenced by:

“Less hassle from management”.

“Shout about this small success from the rooftops so the rest of the organisation can learn”.

With respect to the ‘role of facilitator’ it should be noted that there are a small number of comments about the role being unclear but the preponderance of comments are around suggesting further ways in which the role can be of benefit to the team members as evidenced by:

“Trying to get help from outside the section for us e.g. equipment maintenance”.

“By getting managers in other departments to be more aware of our needs”.

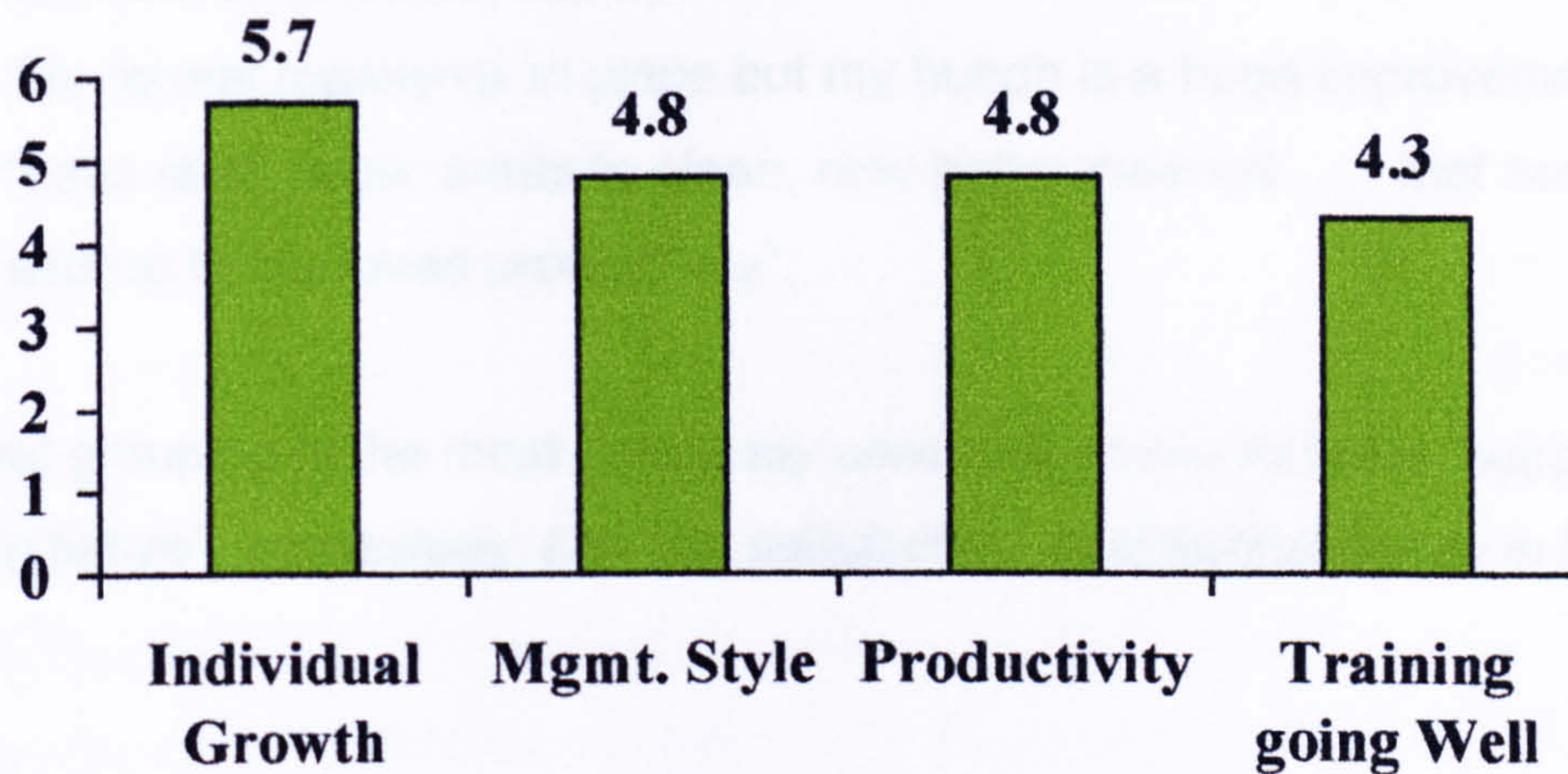
Almost all of the comments in respect of management praised the level of commitment that was put behind this initiative by a number of different personnel and/or departments, as evidenced by:

“Line management here in cleaning were fully on board but a lot of scepticism in the wider operations management group”.

“Personnel, for a change, seemed to get behind this idea”.

The frequency of coding at ‘individual growth/maturity’, ‘management style’, ‘productivity’ and ‘training going well’ is our next grouping and is highlighted below within Figure 4.5.2:

Figure 4.5.2
% of responses coded as:



During the data gathering phase it was very obvious that there was a renewed enthusiasm within employees and this is evidenced by the statements that are coded at 'individual growth/maturity' examples of which are:

"Guys are decidedly more confident in their 'territory' and this looks like maturity to me".

"The operators themselves talk so well of this experience you can almost see them maturing daily".

Some of the comments under 'management style' are more challenging for the management team insofar as not alone are there a majority of comments supporting the management style but there are also comments indicating changes that would be required in same such as:

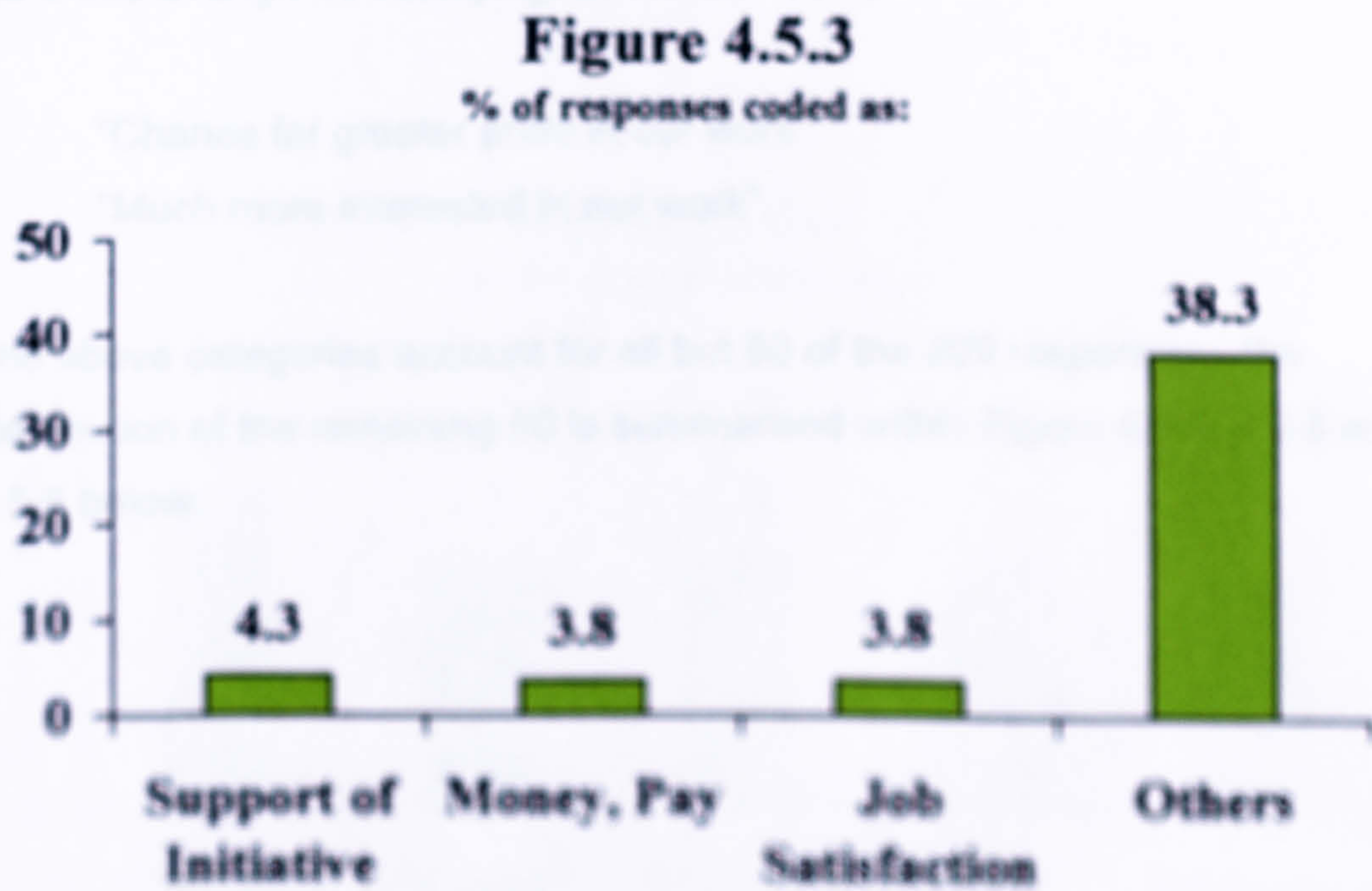
"Individual managers do give more and more encouragement to all of the operators".

“One of them, JS, needs to be sheep dipped, he behaves like a little Hitler”.

Most of the statements categorised at ‘productivity’ show that the prominent view of respondents is that productivity has increased within the cleaning section at Portco, as evidenced by:

- “No formal measures in place but my hunch is a huge improvement”.
- “Less staff, larger areas to clean, now better cleaned that has to add up to improved productivity”.

The final grouping in the most frequently used categories includes ‘supportive of the initiative’, ‘money/pay’ and ‘job satisfaction’, highlighted below in Figure 4.5.3:



Coded at the ‘supportive of the initiative’ category were several comments indicating that the teamworking initiative was worthwhile for the organisation, as evidenced by:

- “I don’t see how we could get back to the old system”.

“Invite the shop stewards from the other areas in to see what’s happening in cleaning”.

‘Money/pay’ is not seen as a contentious issue as arrangements were made at the beginning with the possibility of additional money in respect of this initiative; these sentiments can be seen within the statements of the respondents, such as:

- “Got extra money for going along with this new arrangement”.
- “Looks like we’ll get a little more money if this whole thing goes well”.

Consistent with some sentiments expressed within the ‘individual growth/maturity’ category highlighted above, statements now coded at the category of ‘job satisfaction’ indicate that employees are finding their work more interesting and satisfying, as evidenced by:

- “Chance for greater pride in our work”.
- “Much more interested in our work”.

The above categories account for all but 80 of the 209 responses; the distribution of the remaining 80 is summarised within Figure 4.5.4, 4.5.5 and 4.5.6 below:

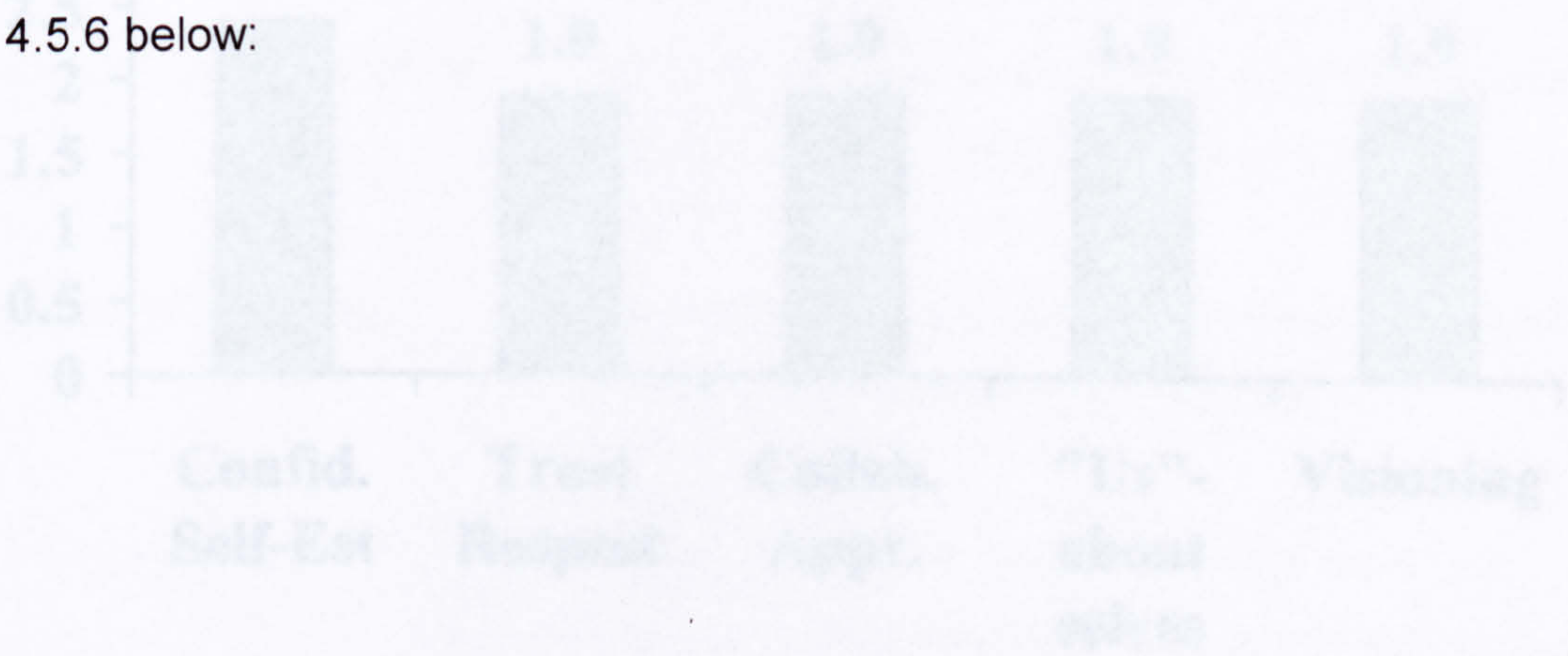


Figure 4.5.4
% of responses coded as:

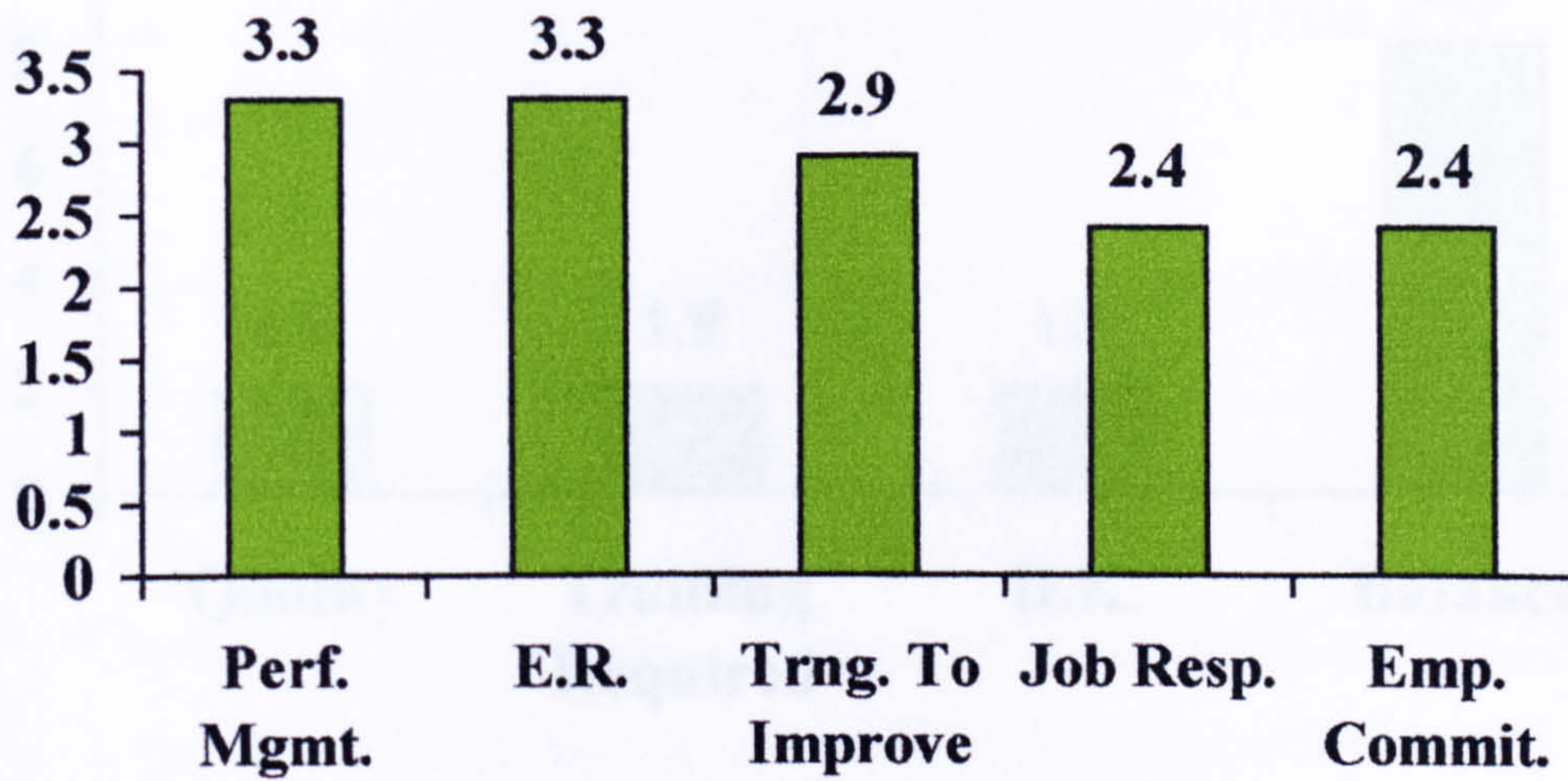


Figure 4.5.5
% of responses coded as:

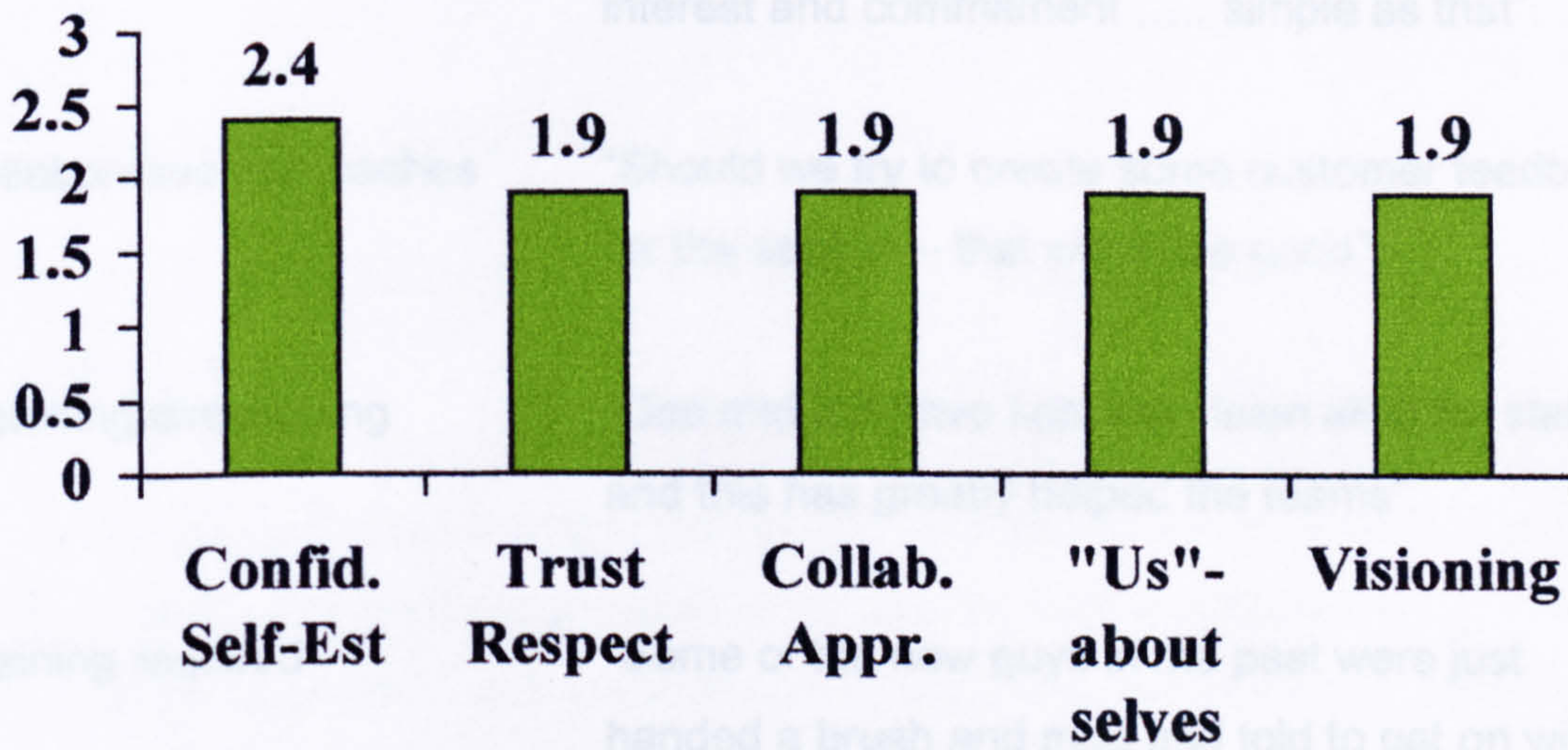
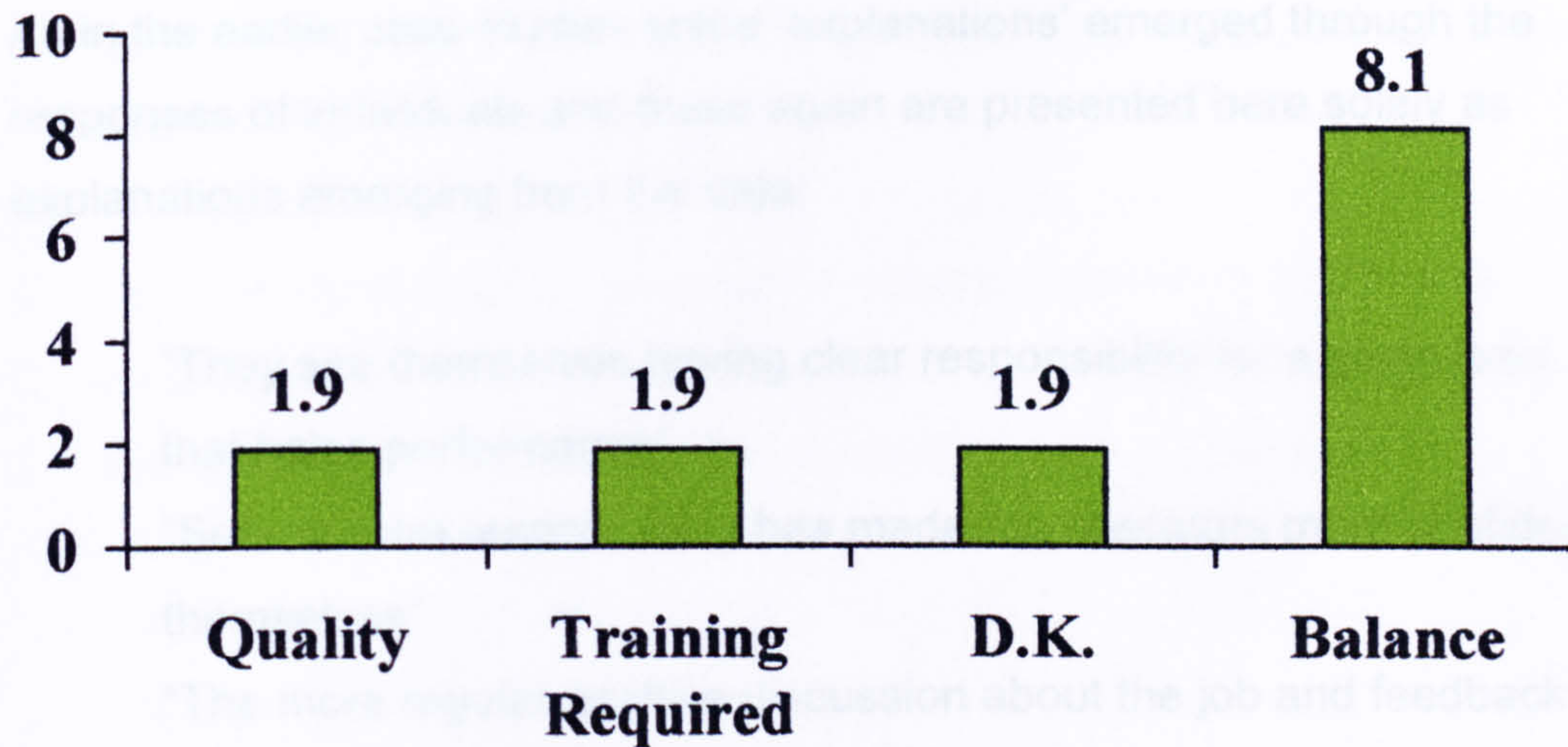


Figure 4.5.6

% of responses coded as:



A sample of some of these categories and the statements can be seen below:

Employee relations	"Complete turnaround from very poor employee relations in the past".
Employee team commitment	"Huge improvement I think it comes from giving them their head more and generating interest and commitment simple as that".
Collaborative approaches	"Should we try to create some customer feedback for the section – that would be good".
Visioning/directioning	"Don and BD have kept the vision alive for staff and this has greatly helped the teams".
Training required	"Some of the new guys in the past were just handed a brush and mop and told to get on with it".

C (vii) 'Explanations' offered by Respondents

As in the earlier case-studies some 'explanations' emerged through the responses of individuals and these again are presented here solely as explanations emerging from the data:

"They see themselves having clear responsibility for a given area that helps performance".

"Seems extra responsibility has made the operators more confident in themselves".

"The more regular positive discussion about the job and feedback from managers has helped the maturity level of most of the group".

"Communications, a great help in delivering employee commitment".

"Playing a part in purchasing equipment and materials makes me feel a bit more important".

"Giving greater responsibility and freedom has enhanced employee commitment".

"Dare I say it but the new approach to teamworking is building trust with the employees to a level I didn't think would ever exist".

D: INITIAL COMMENTARY ON PORTCO

At this stage of the review of Portco the only initial observations that I wish to make are:

1. The data is quite strong in expressing its support for the manner in which Portco undertook the process of introducing teamworking which at this stage appears to give credibility to among other things the pre-planning that took place and perhaps as a part of that to the strong managerial commitment and the inclusive nature of the discussions with the unions and staff.

2. The respondents also put forward their explanations in respect of some of the issues that they saw as critical during the process of introducing teamworking. At a later stage we will examine all of this data when we undertake a cross-case analysis.
3. This sub-section, as the previous 4 sub-sections within this chapter has endeavoured to present only respondent data in, as it were, its raw state and has wished not to present any interpretative judgements by the researcher at this stage.

CHAPTER 5: CROSS-CASE INTERPRETATIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter will include treatment of the following:

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.2 THE FULL DATABASE

5.3 THEMES/ISSUES WITHIN THE DATA

5.4 INTERPRETATION AND INITIAL EXPLANATORY MODEL

5.4.1 Shared Vales

5.4.2 Key Processes

5.4.3 Role Clarity

5.4.4 Training Initiatives

5.4.5 Employee-Centred Systems

5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

5.6 THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE: THE COMPLETION OF THE PROPOSED EXPLANATORY MODEL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

On examining the case-studies in a cross-case manner and focusing particularly on the process of introduction of their particular teamwork interventions it can be seen that the data provides us with some similarities and some differences, as discussed below.

From the point of view of similarities it should be noted that all of the organisations have traditionally had a poor industrial relations environment. They have all equally had a keen business reason for wishing to embark on their teamwork initiative, this reason being either raw organisational survival or competitive pressures threatening same; each of the case-study organisations came to the view that they could not continue in their existing mode of

management of the organisation. They also made a definite attempt at some visioning process and all realised from the outset that there were critical variables in the process of introduction of their teamwork initiative.

On an initial examination of the differences it is apparent that the degree to which the initial visionary leader stayed involved varied from organisation to organisation. Equally there was a wide variety in the attention that the organisations gave to particular variables. Some of the organisations worked hard at what they perceived were key variables for their organisation, for example training was perceived by many as such a key variable. Another key variable across the case-studies was the degree to which the union at either official and/or local level was enjoined in the process and it has already been observed that some organisations gave this critical variable more attention than others.

Prior to developing any theory about the process of introduction of teamworking it should be noted that there is then this degree of difference between the case-study organisations. Thus it could be postulated that a possible truth in this whole area is that there may be no such thing as an overriding process that works in all circumstances; this even in the situation where the organisations being compared started out with a fair degree of similarity. I would propose to explore the themes/issues emerging from the cases to see if a pattern exists across the cases.

5.2 THE FULL DATABASE

At earlier stages within each case-study the number of staff involved in the teamworking initiative was specified. At this stage within the cross-case analysis I wish to pull together the numbers involved in the total research project. At the operator level the total involved across all of the cases was 249. At Foreman/Supervisor/Facilitator level there were a further 29 people involved and within the Managerial/Technical group there were 44, yielding a total directly involved in the teamworking initiatives across all of the case-studies of 322. In addition some 22 Union and HR personnel were

interviewed, bringing the total database across all of the case-studies to 344, the detailed breakdown of which can be seen at Table 1 below:

Organisation	Operators	Foreman/ Supervisor/ Facilitator	Managerial/ Technical	Union/ HR	Total
Kilycra	75	7	8	5	95
Harvestco	54	9	20	4	87
Cheeseden	24	3	7	4	38
Septire	46	4	6	4	60
Portco	50	6	3	5	64
Grand Totals	249	29	44	22	344

5.3 THEMES/ISSUES WITHIN THE DATA

The case data has already identified some of the key variables as follows:

Pre-planning, Visioning/'Directioning', Managerial commitment & support, Role clarity, Communications, Union engagement, Skills (technical, communicative, facilitative), Training, Reward and Trust; a summary analysis of same is shown at the Table 2 below:

Themes/Issues	Kilycra	Harvestco	Cheeseden	Septire	Portco
Pre-planning	Very short & sketchy	Lengthy & detailed	Very short & sketchy	Lengthy & detailed	Somewhat lengthy & detailed
Visioning (V)/ 'Directioning' (D)	V: Non-inclusive D: Poor	V: Excellent D: Good	V: Not fully inclusive D: Poor	V: Excellent D: Excellent	V: Very Good D: Fair
Managerial Commitment	Weak	Quite strong	Weak	Strong	Strong
Role Clarity	Not Achieved	Substantially achieved	Not Achieved	Substantially achieved	Substantially achieved
Communications	Very poor	Good	Poor	Very good	Fair
Union Engagement	Not inclusive	Very inclusive	Not inclusive	Very inclusive	Inclusive
Skills: Technical (T) Comms (C) Facilitative (F)	T: Good C: Fair F: Poor	T: Good C: Fair F: Fair	T: Fair C: Poor F: Poor	T: Good C: Very good F: Good	T: Fair C: Good F: Fair
Training	Good but slow	Good	Fair	Excellent	Good but slow
Reward	Unsupportive – an obstacle	Very supportive	Unsupportive – an obstacle	Very supportive	Supportive
Trust	Very low	High	Low	High	Medium-high

Pre-Planning

The evidence within the case-studies clearly demonstrates that the pre-planning process was only sketchily undertaken in Kilycra and Cheeseden;

both of those organisations moved towards teamworking within weeks of their initial examination of the idea and decision to proceed.

All of the other three organisations, particularly Harvestco and Septire, spent many months negotiating framework agreements, clarifying roles, overcoming resistance and in ensuring that as many as possible were 'on the bus' for this critical journey.

Visioning/'Directioning'

The 'visioning' process was not fully inclusive at Cheeseden where it was undertaken by one individual and only got as far as some members of the management team during the course of its development. The 'directioning' process was in the eyes of many of the participants quite poor, not unassociated with the additional responsibilities given to the General Manager which had him out of the plant for a considerable amount of time and ultimately replaced. The manner in which the visioning and initial 'directioning' had taken place had an effect on the later requirements of 'directioning' insofar as the managers remaining in the team did not have the General Manager's fired-up enthusiasm for the project and consequently there was not the required level of follow-through in the 'directioning' process.

An almost precisely similar picture presents itself at Kilycra where the Chief Executive was again the main architect of the vision; he enjoined a small number within the management team into the vision, but because of his regular absence from the plant the 'directioning' thrust was not strong enough to maintain the initial momentum.

In Portco the initial visioning by the head of operations and the head of the cleaning department was very good and a sufficient level of 'directioning' existed; there were some managers within operations who were not sufficiently fired-up by the initial visioning process and this prevented their full and active participation in the process of 'directioning'.

At both Harvestco and Septire the initial visioning process was very inclusive and carried out in quite a charismatic manner not alone by the Chief Executive in each organisation but also by some key lieutenants therein. These people, through the visioning process, harnessed a sufficient amount of interest in the other managers that they in turn carried on the 'directioning' process to an excellent/good level.

Managerial Commitment

Managerial commitment can bring another influence to bear on the 'directioning' process described above. Again we see at Kilycra and Cheesden that there was substantial evidence within the cases to indicate that managerial commitment was weak in both organisations. In Harvestco it was quite strong but in Septire and Portco it was strong.

It appears to this researcher that there is a direct connection between the visioning/'directioning' above and the managerial commitment being discussed at the moment and the degree to which all within the organisation are interested/not interested in the process of introducing teamworking. I am not suggesting that these are sufficient conditions but I am suggesting that they are necessary ones; further evidence is seen in the much weaker movement towards teamworking in Kilycra and Cheeseden.

Role Clarity

Elsewhere in this research the data speaks loudly of the lack of role clarity across a number of roles, notably those of facilitator, team member, management and structure. On the basis of overwhelming data it is quite clear that role clarity across all four of these areas was certainly not achieved in Kilycra and Cheeseden. In the other three case-study organisations role clarity on the lines described was substantially achieved.

Again it appears that failure to establish clarity of role for the functions described above is a serious obstacle to the successful bedding down of a teamworking initiative.

Communications

Communications at Cheeseden and Kilycra are deemed by respondents to be poor and very poor, at Portco as fair and Harvestco and Septire respectively good and very good. Again it is the data that is making these assertions, most particularly at Kilycra and Cheeseden.

Union Engagement

The manner in which the unions both at official and local level were engaged in the pre-planning and introduction of teamworking would seem to be a critical factor. The attempted union engagement at both Kilycra and Cheeseden were not inclusive; by this I don't mean that there were no discussions with the union about this topic but in comparison with the other case-study organisations such discussions were very much at arms length. In Portco this union engagement was inclusive and in both Septire and Harvestco very inclusive.

Based on the evidence within the case-studies it appears to this researcher that if one is setting about a teamworking objective with a unionised workforce then it is imperative that one seeks wholly inclusive discussions with that grouping to ensure that, at the very least, any fears they may have would be highlighted; all the more would this be a requirement within organisations that had poor industrial relations histories.

Skills

A further critical factor is the area of skills, which I have divided into technical, communicative and facilitative; there is quite a spread, both across the cases and within each case in respect of how individuals saw their skill development in relation to the process of introducing teamwork.

Technical skills were seen to be well catered for in Kilycra, Harvestco and Septire whereas they were just fair in Cheeseden and Portco. In respect of communications they were very good in Septire, good in Portco, poor in Cheeseden and fair in each of Harvestco and Kilycra. Lastly facilitative skills ranged from poor in Kilycra and Cheeseden to fair in Harvestco and Portco and to being perceived as good in Septire.

Training

The only organisation among the five case-study organisations that has anything below good for training is Cheeseden where the training was perceived as only fair. Two of the organisations, Kilycra and Portco, indicated that the training provided was good but slow in coming but Harvestco described the training as good, Septire was sufficiently buoyed up by the training which to them was perceived as excellent.

Reward

In relation to rewards/money quite clearly the data is devastating in respect of the attitudes to rewards and pay in Kilycra and Cheeseden which they categorise, not alone as unsupportive but a definite obstacle. Pay was seen at Portco to be a slight bone of contention but there was the possibility of additional money later during the process.

Harvestco and Septire both reported through respondents within their organisations a great deal of satisfaction with rewards/pay principally on the

basis that they could now see that extra effort would imply that they would get additional money in respect of they reaching or exceeding targets/standards.

Trust

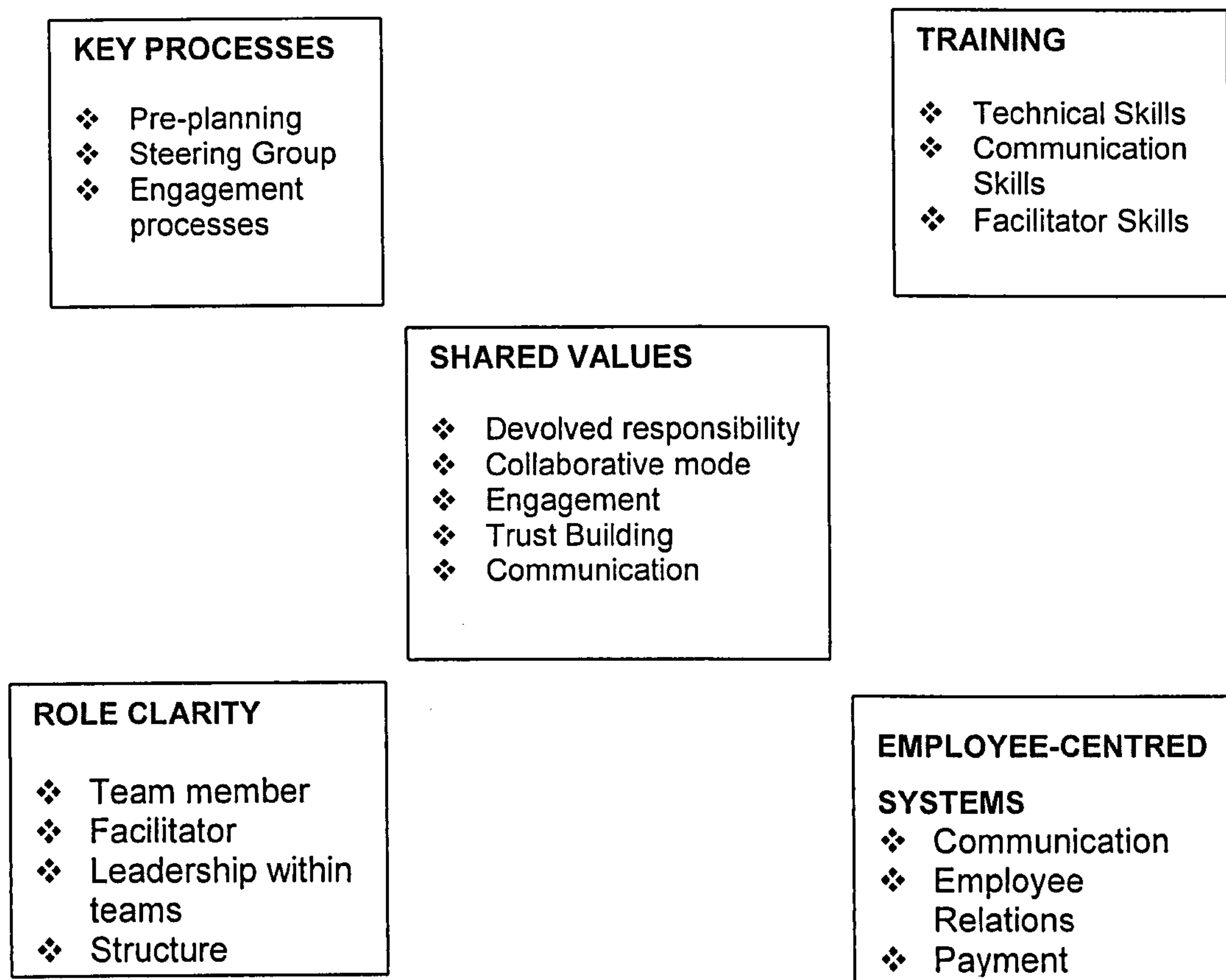
Trust levels were low and very low at Cheeseden and Kilycra respectively, the latter particularly on the basis of respondents' belief that managers had not honoured commitments vis-à-vis money. The respondents' views in respect of trust at Portco were medium to high whereas it was high in both Harvestco and Septire.

In an overall sense looking at the comments above and in particular at the table it can be seen that in Kilycra and Cheeseden there was a substantially weaker performance across the issues/themes described; there was a much better picture at Portco and an extremely better picture at both Harvestco and Septire. The evidence provided in the table and the discussion above indicate that these issues/themes are important variables within the process of introducing teamworking.

5.4 INTERPRETATION AND INITIAL EXPLANATORY MODEL

I propose now to attempt to interpret this data and see if some of the themes could be drawn together. This search may lead towards some commonality of approach to these themes/issues, but the manner in which such themes/issues are treated differs from organisation to organisation. Our search is to explain the reasons behind such differences.

In my attempt to build a model that may provide some insight into this process of introducing teamwork I would first like to group the above variables under the five headings of SHARED VALUES, KEY PROCESSES, ROLE CLARITY, TRAINING INITIATIVES and EMPLOYEE CENTRED SYSTEMS, as shown below:



I would now like to treat each of these groupings in turn as I commence the process of building a model that will provide my theoretical explanation of the critical elements within the process of introducing empowered teams into organisations that have had a poor industrial relations environment.

5.4.1 Shared Values

SHARED VALUES

- ❖ Devolved responsibility
- ❖ Collaborative mode
- ❖ Engagement
- ❖ Trust building
- ❖ Communication

The concept of shared values is an important one in a change process as significant as that being contemplated in each of the case-study organisations. By shared values I mean some meeting of minds between employees and management across a number of key values that would be important in the ultimate delivery of the vision of teamwork for that organisation. The literature through the eyes of Lawler (1992), Bartlett & Ghoshal (1994) and Ulrich (1997) is most supportive of the need for shared values within a change process as major as being contemplated within the case-study organisations. The shared values that I believe received most significant comment from the team members and managers within the case-studies are as follows :

A shared aspiration around *devolving responsibility* and finding the most appropriate way for that organisation to express same, as supported by Ulrich (1997), Pfeffer (1994) and Kanter (1989a).

A *collaborative mode* rather than what might have been a more traditional adversarial mode that existed historically within the organisations. Kanter (1989a), Walton (1985) and Lawler (1992) have been seen in our literature review to be very supportive of the need for this collaborative mode.

An *engagement process* as advocated by Walton (1985), Piczak & Hauser (1996) and Lawler (1992) that allowed employees and their union representatives a clear voice in the shaping of the teamwork initiative and the manner of its introduction.

A desire to build greater *trust* between management and employees which is extensively supported in a significant amount of the literature and in particular within Baillie (1995), Randolph (1995), Heckscher (1995), Lawler (1992) and Bartlett & Ghoshal (1995a).

A *shared view* that communications were going to be exceedingly important throughout at least the introductory phases of this initiative; several researchers, such as Covey (1992), Ulrich (1997), Pfeffer (1994) and Mills (1991), stress the importance of communication at and beyond the introductory phases.

Thus we can see that within the comments from team members and managers in the case-study organisations and within the literature cited above shared values in the areas of devolving responsibility, collaborative mode, engagement process, trust and communications are critical issues in the process of introducing empowered teamworking into organisations.

It has been shown above in our detailed analysis of each of the case-studies that these shared values received significant attention in Harvestco, Septco and to a slightly lesser extent in Portco; at Kilycra and Cheeseden, however, none of these issues were raised to the level of being values fully shared between employees and management. It is the opinion of this researcher that the distinction made between the case-studies on this basis was to have a clear bearing on the manner in which the differing organisations went about trying to introduce their approach to teamworking. As highlighted above those that gave attention to this practice of shared values and maintained that focus in an on-going way appear more satisfied with their process of introducing empowered teams than those organisations that did not give due attention to the shared values approach.

5.4.2 Key Processes

KEY PROCESSES

- ❖ Pre-planning
- ❖ Steering group
- ❖ Engagement processes

It appears from the data within the cases that *pre-planning* was a critical feature in all of the case-studies. We have already seen in Portco and particularly in Harvestco and Septire that extensive pre-planning was undertaken. Indeed in the case of Septire and Harvestco almost a full year was put into planning the way in which the organisation was going to approach their teamwork initiative. Within Septire and Harvestco the planning process was very extensive and involved all levels of the organisations and in particular involved those members of the particular teams which were introducing teamworking. In the case of Kilycra and Cheeseden some pre-planning did take place but it was much more hurried and it perhaps grossly underestimated the detail required in the planning process and/or the effect that gaps in same would have at later stages in the process. Within the literature pre-planning is strongly advocated by Fisher (1993) and Yeatts & Hyten (1998).

As a further key process some of the organisations placed great emphasis on utilising a *steering group* as a key shaper of the implementation process. Several authors, in particular Fisher (1993), Beer et al (1990) and Harshman & Phillips (1994), concur in respect of the vitality of having a focused and active steering group during the implementation process leading to empowered teams. Thus at Septire and Harvestco in particular a strong role from the outset was given to a steering group and indeed at Septire, as we have seen earlier, the trade union representatives were in the majority at the steering group. No such steering group existed at Cheeseden or Portco, although the latter did have a planning body analogous to a steering group even though it did not bear that name. At Kilycra a broadly based steering

group was constituted about halfway through their process but, as evidenced in the data, it did not appear to ever really get to grips with its role.

There were also key processes in some of the organisations around *the union engagement*, both at official and local level. Undertaking such processes within organisations such as those under study here is entirely consistent with the views of respected researchers such as Lawler (1986), Lawler & Mohrman (1987) and Piczak & Hauser (1996).

As discussed earlier all of these organisations had strong unions within them and a history of somewhat confrontational approaches. As can be noted from the key shared values above it appears from the case-studies that some of the organisations took the engagement process a little more seriously than others. Thus the approach to teamworking at Harvestco was radically reshaped following union negotiation, once the initial vision had been put to them; the approach adopted was also openly and fully negotiated with the Unions at Septire and Portco. Notwithstanding the fact that this engagement did include the relevant trade union officials it should be stressed that the significant part of this engagement really took place at local level through employees, local representatives and union committees. It is true to say that in Kilycra and Cheeseden the engagement primarily took place with the trade union officials involved but the local union representatives were never fully engaged in any collaborative way.

Thus it appears that from within these case-studies the degree of attention given to these key processes is of critical importance and that the literature supports this view from the case-studies' data. We have seen that those organisations that allocated time, resources and energy to these key processes bore the fruits of same; on the other hand those organisations that did not do so were struggling from an early stage.

5.4.3 Role Clarity

ROLE CLARITY
❖ Team member
❖ Facilitator
❖ Leadership within teams
❖ Structure

The third major grouping in the development of this model is role clarity. The huge shift that organisations attempt to make when introducing teamworking requires that team members are given sufficient information and support to clearly understand the new role that is required of them; this is not making reference to whether or not they have the skills or are willing/not willing but is only referring to the clarity required about this specific role of team member within a teamworking arrangement. The necessity for this role clarity has been supported in the literature by among others Kanter (1989a), Manz, Keating & Donnellon (1990) and Burke (1986). Within our study it was seen that such clarity was substantially achieved for team members within Harvestco, Septire and Portco.

Leadership from outside the team from a facilitator was evident in Septire and Harvestco in particular, notwithstanding the fact that this role was decidedly the most difficult one for which to provide clarity and which clarity really only emerged over time. As earlier reported within the individual cases the role of facilitator is an exceedingly difficult one. The importance of this role is emphasised by Lawler (1992), Fisher (1993) and Belasco (1990). Again one is talking initially about knowledge and a mindset vis-à-vis this role of facilitator, the acquiring of which demands a shift of major proportions for people who have been operating for some time as traditional supervisors/managers. Once the role has been clarified it still is a difficult role to execute since the behaviours required in the new role are quite different to those exercised at an earlier stage in a more traditional management structure. Notwithstanding the fact that the carrying out of the role is usually difficult, and was indeed so in Septire and Harvestco, both of these organisations did in fact sufficiently clarify the role over time to ensure

the facilitator role was not in itself an obstacle to progress. The data speaks loudly and clearly in respect of Cheeseden and Kilycra where it is reported by the vast majority of respondents that the role of facilitator was never sufficiently clarified to allow even partially adequate exercising of that role.

Leadership within the teams also provides us with a contrast, again breaking down on the organisational divisions outlined above. Thus in Harvestco and Septire, the team themselves made arrangements internally for one of their number to be in a leadership role, many of these teams indicating that such a role would rotate between other team members. This distributed rotating form of internal team leadership is greatly supported in the literature particularly by Manz & Sims (1987) and Barry (1991). No such arrangements were in place for internal team leaders at Portco, Kilycra or Cheeseden.

It may seem odd to be including structure under role clarity but I believe that it is useful to include it here because the clarity required about who does what and more importantly perhaps, in what manner extends beyond team member, facilitator and/or leadership within team roles; this extension for me is to an understanding of all roles within those elements of the structure that are involved in teamworking. This can best be envisaged by viewing almost in an organisational chart manner the many support services that are required to assist the various teams involved in teamworking. It appears within the literature that this thought is supported by Fisher (1993) and Lawler (1992), among others. It appeared that within the Kilycra and Cheeseden case-studies this clarity between varying support roles was never achieved and consequently the distinction that should have been very evident to all between the older management approach and this new approach did not in fact materialise. In Harvestco, Septire and Portco the distinction between old and new was obvious and therefore one could say that the role clarity within the wider structure was to a sufficient level that it was supportive of the teamworking initiative. With respect to structure it appears, as found earlier in the analysis of the separate cases, that there was a clear differentiation between the old structure and the new structure at Harvestco, Septire and Portco. Notwithstanding the fact that there were structural changes taking

place at Kilycra and Cheeseden it is abundantly clear from employee comments in particular that there was not a sufficiently clear distinction between the old structure and the new and that consequently a lack of clarity existed.

5.4.4 Training Initiatives

TRAINING

- ❖ Technical Skills
- ❖ Communication Skills
- ❖ Facilitator Skills

As already seen within the literature review, particularly within the work of Lawler (1990), Piczak & Hauser (1996) and Yeatts et al (1992), *training* is an issue of serious concern for organisations embarking on the introduction of empowered teamworking. All of the organisations within this study seemed to realise the emphasis that should be placed on training at an early stage. Not all however followed up this initial realisation with the same degree of enthusiasm.

All of the organisations spent some time diagnosing the training needs of team-members/facilitators and subsequently provided varying degrees of training for same, although Kilycra was late into the field in this regard. Again the greatest degree of training was undertaken at Harvestco and Septire and it was particularly focused on the training needs that were expressed by team-members. Portco and Cheeseden also undertook training from the outset but perceptions as to its suitability were not as strong as in the other organisations. The training in all of the organisations took account of technical skill requirements, communication skills and facilitation skills, the latter in the particular case of managers/supervisors/foremen. The extent and content of the training differed in each organisation but the aspects of training most commonly recurring were technical skill requirements and communication skills in respect of all staff, particularly for team members; the main emphasis for managers/supervisors/foremen was in the area of facilitation skills.

5.4.5 Employee-Centred Systems

EMPLOYEE-CENTRED SYSTEMS

- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Employee Relations
- ❖ Payment

The literature is replete with references to the need for very much improved communication systems within organisations contemplating an empowerment process, as evidenced by the work of Blanchard (1995), Covey (1992), Piczak & Hauser (1996), Lawler (1992) and Murakami (1995) among others.

All of the case-study organisations had historically poor *communication processes* within their companies and indeed Kilycra, despite some effort at turning this around, did not greatly improve their processes. Cheeseden on the other hand made some initial improvement but substantial gains were made, as earlier recorded in the separate case analysis, in the cases of Harvestco, Septire and to a lesser extent in Portco. Two of these organisations Harvestco and Septire gave particular emphasis to the communication role and elected an individual from within their teams to be the principal communicator from their team to the outside support services and management.

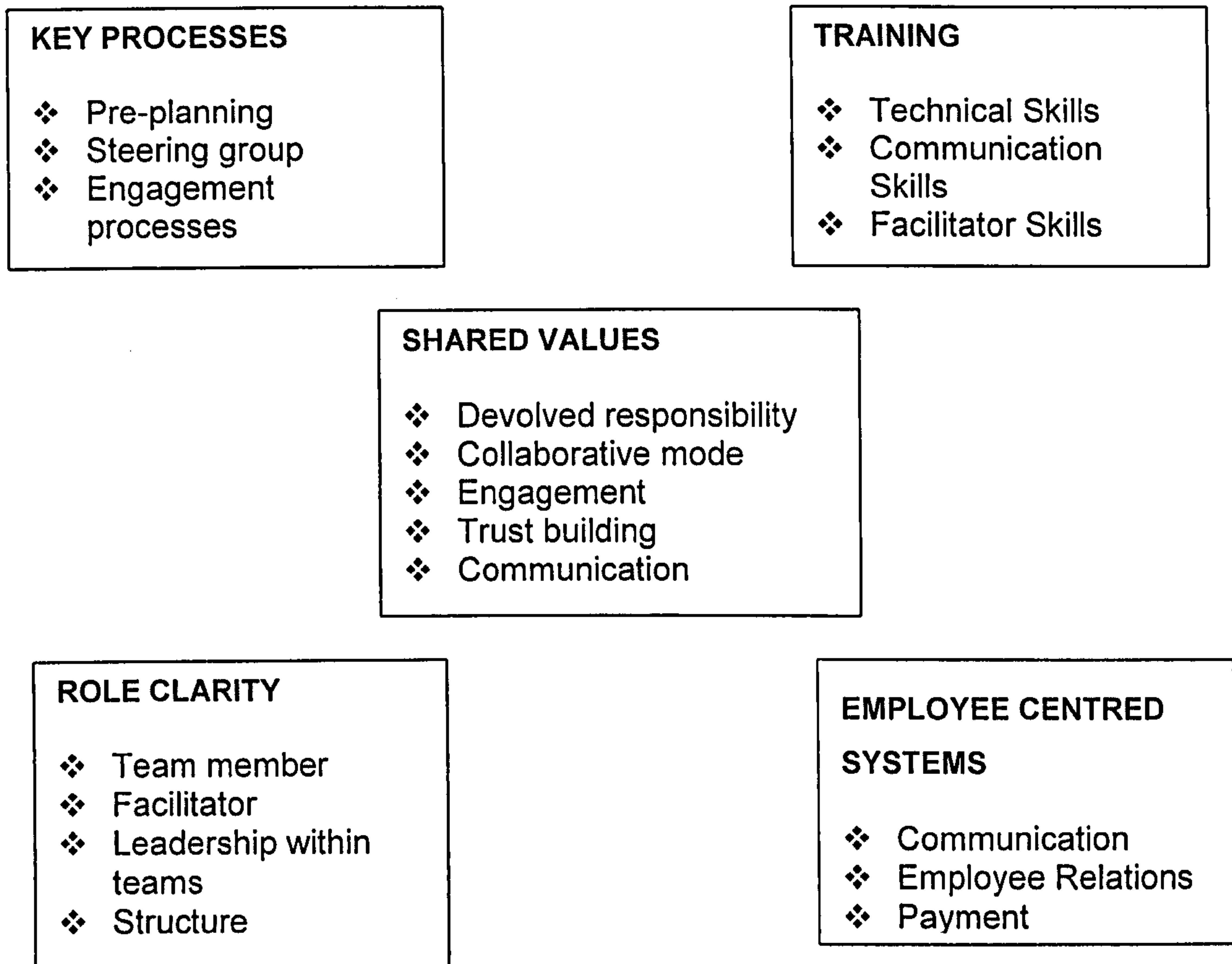
All of the case-studies within this research have come from a situation where poor industrial relations prevailed and part of their teamworking initiative had been centred around trying to reverse this process; one could have expected this to have pushed the organisations much more towards an employee relations orientation rather than a continuation of their hitherto inadequate focus on institutionalised industrial relations. Such organisations would be greatly encouraged by a significant amount of previous research in the area of this need to improve employee relations as evidenced by Walton (1985), Ulrich (1997), Lawler (1986), Lawler & Mohrman (1989) and Scott-Lennon (1992). All of the case-study organisations made some initial improvements on this issue of employee relations but the most dramatic improvements, as

seen earlier in the case-study data, were seen at Harvestco, Septire and Portco.

Organisations contemplating the implementation of teamworking initiatives are encouraged by several writers including Piczak & Hauser (1996), Yeatts & Hyten (1998) and Scott-Lennon (1985) to find ways in which performance can be jointly monitored and evaluated; in addition organisations should provide team members with the opportunity to share in some of the financial gain that the organisation achieves as a result of teamworking, highlighted in the work of Lawler (1990) and Yeatts et al (1992).

The opportunity to *share in some of the financial gain* that the organisation achieves as a result of teamworking has been an issue in all of the organisations. At Kilycra and to a lesser extent at Cheeseden the fact that the organisation was not paying any additional money to team-members and operators was a bone of contention throughout the introduction and early operation of teamworking. Both of these organisations adopted the stance with their unions that they perhaps might be willing to make a payment at a later stage, measured in years rather than weeks or months, once the benefits deriving from their teamworking initiative had become clear; it has been extensively highlighted in respondent comments in both of these case-studies that this issue of payment became an increasingly emotive issue as the teamworking initiative developed. Portco awarded an immediate increase to staff for their altered responsibilities on the introduction of their teamworking initiative. Both Harvestco and Septire adopted a gainsharing approach from the outset and employees could clearly see that if they achieved greater gains for the organisation as a result of the teamworking approach then they stood to share in those gains. Both organisations went about implementing this gainsharing in different ways but the essential financial gain was there for all to see.

In summary form, then, parts of the model already treated are again highlighted below:



It should be stressed that this model encourages us to see that organisations serious about maximising the process of introducing teamworking should focus on all of these groupings, not just one or two of them. This statement is supported by many of the earlier references within the case-study organisations and also in the literature particularly within the work of Bartlett & Ghoshal (1994) and Kilmann (1988). These researchers have argued that the creation and maintenance of momentum within a change programme is increased by focusing on a number of integrated aspects rather than single dimension change. It is to this concept of creating momentum within a change programme involving the introduction of empowered teamworking that I now wish to turn my attention.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

A key question that must now be addressed is: how within the contexts of our case-study organisations have some management teams succeeded and others not in putting a degree of emphasis on each of the elements already highlighted within our explanatory model? It is our belief that it will be worthwhile to examine the leadership processes within those organisations to see if a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from that source. In this regard I would propose to first examine the visioning process as it took place in these organisations; not to examine however just the formulation of that vision but to also observe how that vision was spread across the organisation.

Several researchers in the area of organisational leadership have emphasised the visioning process, notably Bennis (1989), Bass & Avolio (1994), Kanter (1989a) and Lawler (1992). These authors and others have stressed that the process of visioning the future embodies the idea of carrying out the visioning in an inclusive manner whereby as many as possible within the organisation are included in the process, thereby bringing them to a high level of commitment to the vision.

On the basis of the data gathered within the case-studies it can be asserted that within Kilycra and Cheeseden the initial vision was that of the Chief Executive but its crafting was not extended to other levels in the organisation. Consequently not all those who should have been fired-up by his vision were in fact so fired. This situation was exacerbated in Kilycra by the regular absence of the Chief Executive on other elements of organisation business throughout the process of the introduction of teamworking. In the case of Cheeseden the Chief Executive assumed greater responsibilities mid-way through the process and he too was extensively absent from the factory from then on. In both of these cases the person with whom the initiative was associated in the eyes of other employees was not available to maintain the impetus of that original vision, however inadequate the crafting process.

Harvestco, Septire and Portco, however, succeeded in crafting the vision with a sufficiently large circle that ensured others in the organisation were enlisted in the vision; these individuals in turn became committed to the vision and to delivering it within the organisation.

For the purpose of the on-going development of the proposed model I have termed this process as one of *articulation* which for me implies that the directional crafting of the vision was undertaken in such a manner that it enlisted other champions and followers. Within the literature Bass & Avolio (1994) also use the term 'articulation' to describe this process. I postulate that when this *articulation* is carried out successfully it does deliver its required commitment from others in the organisation as evidenced in Harvestco, Septire and Portco.

A second process that I wish to highlight is that of *promulgation*, the spreading of this vision and commitment to successive layers of the organisation. Although I have not come across the term 'promulgation' within the literature, the idea behind the meaning of the word is evident in much of the work undertaken within the transformational leadership literature and particularly in the work of Bass (1985 and 1990), Bass & Avolio (1994), Bennis (1989), Bennis & Nanus (1985) and Bolman & Deal (1991). So the essential part of promulgation for me is the spreading of the directional message across the organisation and that this 'directioning' is what fires up a sufficient number of key people in the successive layers/departments/sections of the organisation.

We are not here talking about words as embodied in statements, addresses or booklets; we are however talking explicitly about managerial actions that are clearly supported through behaviour. It is critically important that those in the organisation who might be somewhat cynical about the initiative see clear messages in the behaviour and responses of key influencers who will in their own way promulgate the earlier inclusively crafted vision. *Promulgation* also requires the top team and other members of the management team to demonstrate in an on-going manner this commitment and support in practical organisational ways.

As seen in the case-studies this required managerial commitment and support was decidedly not present in Kilycra and Cheeseden where not alone was the *articulation* process inadequate but neither was the *promulgation* process taken seriously. Whilst the evidence from Harvestco, Septire and Portco does indicate that the promulgation process was not perfect it was sufficiently good to greatly enhance the earlier *articulation* process. Thus the fact that *articulation* and *promulgation* processes had been carried out well in these organisations created a sufficiently committed group of managers and employees to drive the required behavioural supports for the initiatives.

A further key question emerges: What then are the *leadership skills* required within the organisation to facilitate good *articulation* and *promulgation* ?

5.6 THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE: THE COMPLETION OF THE PROPOSED EXPLANATORY MODEL

The requirement then, as stated above, is for leaders who are capable of active behavioural support for a visionary thrust, be that their own or one crafted with others, but so doing in a manner that is inclusive of others, not exclusive. Such leaders must be capable of overcoming any fears that they may have about how others might shape 'their' idea. Such an attitude would allow others in, as it were, to the *articulation* and *promulgation* processes. This inclusive aspect is what transforms other managers/leaders in the organisation to themselves become the agents of *articulation* and *promulgation* within their own divisions/departments/sections; these managers/leaders then, in an on-going way, facilitate the 'directioning' of the organisation in a practical focused manner. Throughout this 'directioning' process such leaders also need to be comfortable with the idea of openly searching with staff for values that can be embraced by both management and employee groups.

In addition such extended champions within the organisation need to sufficiently well understand the process of change that they will be willing to

work hard at providing the *enabling conditions for the success* of the initiative. They will want to put in place the required building blocks in behavioural, structural and systems ways, as supported within the literature by Beer et al (1990), Kilmann (1988) and Fisher (1993). They will need to be champions for the cause of the new initiative and particularly to be also seen as champions.

The 'Personal and Organisational Leadership Skills' within the complete model are that which pull together the various other parts of the model. The skills described above are critical if the enabling conditions are to be put in place for the successful introduction of empowered teamworking into organisations with a poor industrial relations history or context. The altering of such a context implies key leadership responsibilities for top management; they are the ones who in their key leadership role must chart the course and maintain the momentum for such a major change within an organisation. Several researchers, notably Bennis (1989), Ulrich (1997), Kakabadse (1991), Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) and Bass & Avolio (1994), re-inforce the thoughts expressed here and represented in the now complete model below:

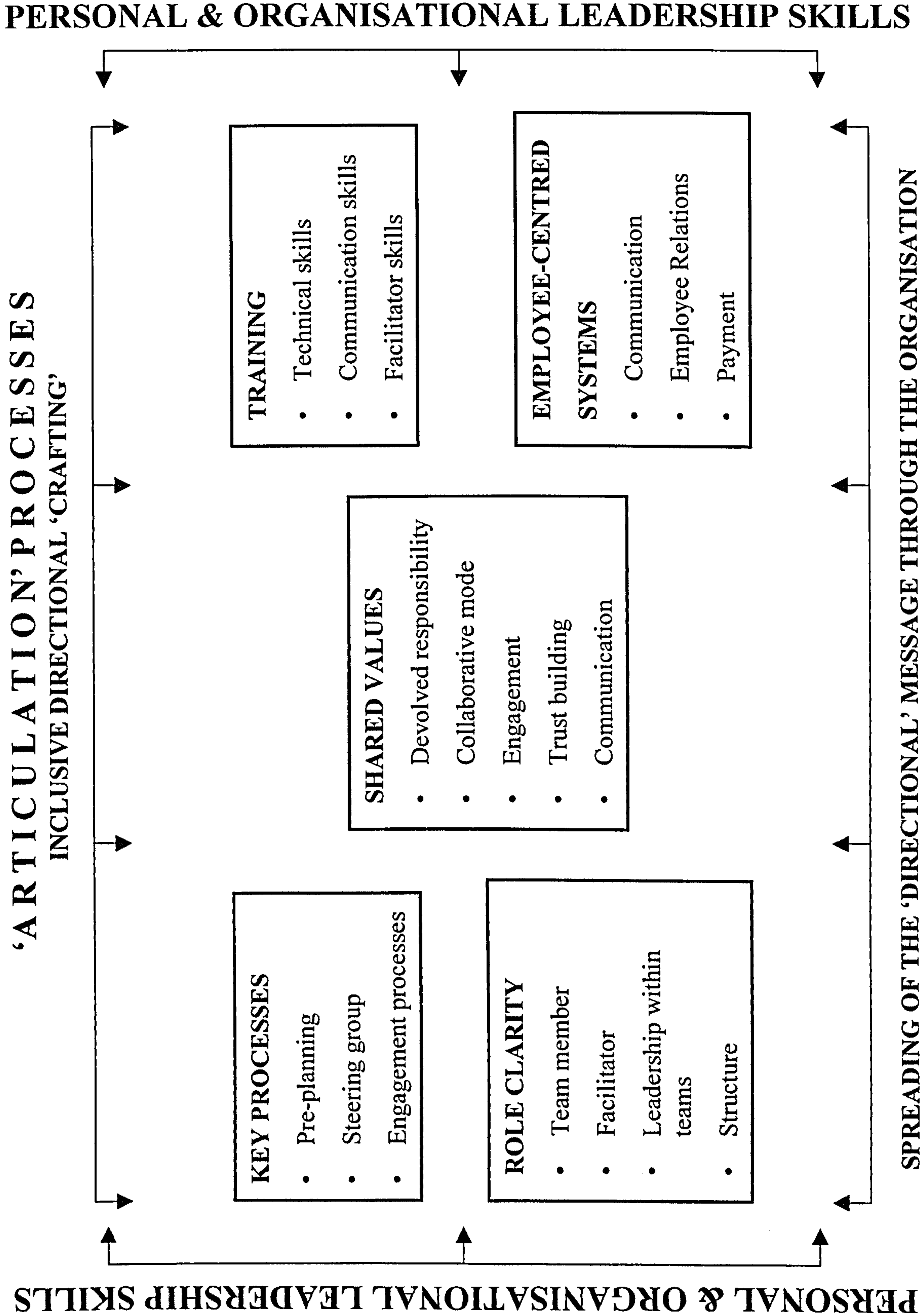


Figure 2.6

A final word from the data gathered within the case-study organisations. The leadership attitude, behaviour and skill requirements outlined above clearly emerge through the data of these cases as crucial skills. Such leadership was not provided in Kilycra and Cheeseden but was present in more than sufficient quantity in Harvestco, Septire and Portco. Consequently, in the view of this researcher, the required movement towards teamworking was evident in the latter, but not in the former.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will include treatment of the following:

- 6.1 INITIAL LINKS BETWEEN THE LITERATURE AND THE CASE-STUDY DATA
- 6.2 'FINDINGS'
- 6.3 SUMMARY: CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE
- 6.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 INITIAL LINKS BETWEEN THE LITERATURE AND THE CASE-STUDY DATA

This research has focused on a particular context across five case-study organisations, a context that was quite deliberately chosen to capitalise on a gap in the research literature to date. This gap was perceived to occur because no systematic rigorous study has, to our knowledge, yet been undertaken of the process of introducing empowered teams in a context that embodies:

- Mature organisations
- Low/Medium technology
- A unionised environment and
- A history of poor Industrial Relations

This study has sought to analyse respondent comments about their perception of how the teamworking initiative was proceeding along its intended path in their organisation. Through the eyes of these respondents we have been privileged to learn their view of the key critical themes/issues involved in the process of introducing teamworking.

I have interpreted and drawn together these respondent views to formulate the model earlier outlined and which involved the five enabling conditions of *Shared Values, Key Processes, Role Clarity, Training and Employee-Centred*

Systems. A further two organisational processes are added to the model in the concepts of ARTICULATION, the inclusive directional 'crafting' usually associated with the visioning process, and PROMULGATION, being the spreading of the message in a thoroughly motivating way through the successive layers of the organisation. Considering from whence the case-study organisations had come in their Industrial Relations contexts the five enabling conditions above were seen to be critical if the organisations were to create movement towards a true teamworking context.

What then has been the differentiator within these case-study organisations that allowed some of the organisations achieve and others not achieve their objective of said movement towards a teamworking context. We have said above that those that attained their objective did so because they concentrated on the enabling conditions and the two key processes of ARTICULATION and PROMULGATION; this view is supported in the literature by Bass & Avolio (1994), Beer et al (1990) and Latham (1995), among others. But these leaders did more, they possessed and exercised a degree of personal and organisational leadership also referred to in the literature through Bennis (1989), Bass (1990) and Conger & Kanungo (1988). These leadership skills left them equipped to carry out more competently than in other organisations the key ARTICULATION and PROMULGATION processes, all the while maintaining their clear focus on the enabling conditions. In a recent series of articles Bartlett & Ghoshal (1994 and 1995a) have advocated this role of altering context through exercising key leadership skills, as also have the same two authors within Ghoshal & Bartlett (1995).

These enabling conditions, in addition to the processes of ARTICULATION and PROMULGATION and the key skills of personal and organisational leadership, have been previously graphically illustrated within the model already shown as Fig. 2.6 on p 265.

6.2 'FINDINGS'

The 'Shared Values' within the model can find roots within the literature in the work of, among others, Kanter (1989a), Lawler (1992), Walton (1985), Randolph (1995), Piczak & Hauser (1996), Mills (1991) and Ulrich (1997). All of these researchers have in different ways laid great emphasis on the keys to fully shared values being found in:

1. The devolving of responsibility
2. A collaborative mode between all levels of the workforce
3. A clear engagement process
4. The critical importance of open communications, and
5. The processes of engendering trust.

Within our case-studies we have seen that some of the organisations under study failed in varying degrees to establish 'Shared Values' along the lines of the five criteria from the literature identified above. These were the organisations (Kilycra and Cheeseden) which may have shown some initial improvement in approaching 'Shared Values' on the above lines but the said organisations failed to continue the watering over time of this delicate flower of 'Shared Values'; thus not alone were 'Shared Values' on these dimensions not fostered but things were to get worse on these same dimensions within those organisations.

On the other hand, the remaining three organisations in our study paid great attention to ensuring that values could be shared right across the organisation on these self same dimensions. As postulated within the literature these organisations put a supreme effort into bringing together hitherto 'opposing' sides of a divide through the use of 'Shared Values.'

In the eyes of the respondents within our case-study organisations this investment bore fruit and put in place the central enabling condition of 'Shared Values.'

The 'Key Processes' within the model have earlier been extensively rooted in the literature within Chapter 2 and in the case analysis within Chapter 5. The 'Key Processes' referred to are those of:

Pre-Planning

Steering Group

Engagement Processes

With respect to 'Pre-Planning' Fisher (1993) and Yeatts & Hyten (1998) emphasise the need to proceed with caution and certainly not rush headlong into such a major change as contemplated by each of our case-study organisations. The authors extol the benefits of taking plenty of time at the front end to hopefully surmount all obstacles that could get in the way of the successful implementation of teamworking.

As earlier reported in our cross-case analysis three of our case-study organisations carried out protracted pre-planning and thus work done at this planning stage within Portco and particularly within Harvestco and Septire bore fruit at the implementation stage. The same cannot be said of the remaining two case-study organisations, Kilycra and Cheesden, where inadequate pre-planning was seen to have been the order of the day.

The establishing of a Steering Group has been seen within the literature to have been an important factor in the process of implementation of teamworking. Such a guiding group has received the attention of many researchers, particularly Fisher (1993), Beer et al (1990) and Harshman & Phillips (1994); all of these researchers stress that a Steering Group should be broadly based and many indicate that such a Steering Group should have the benefit of some external facilitation.

Our earlier analysis of the case-study data has clearly demonstrated that the case-study organisations laid varying emphases on this idea of an active Steering Group. At Septire and Harvestco the role of a Steering Group was clearly influential from the outset. This was somewhat less the case at Portco

but at Cheeseden and Kilycra there was no such group from the outset; Kilycra did initiate such a group later on but it was never effective.

We have earlier referred to an 'Engagement Process' when treating 'Shared Values' but at that stage the issues related to whether or not the organisations saw it as important that they would value some common themes/attitudes. At this juncture when referring to 'Key Processes' we are talking of the follow-on processes whereby the management team either did or did not engage from an early stage the principal internal stakeholders, the staff and the Union; this was or could have been done through a variety of informative and/or consultative fora aimed at trying to ensure that all relevant stakeholders felt a key part of the process.

Researchers such as Lawler (1986), Lawler & Morhman (1987) and Piczak & Hauser (1996) have all strongly advocated such an engagement process and have suggested that it is one of the keys to the success of initiatives such as those being contemplated in our case-study organisations.

Within those organisations the data clearly shows alternative approaches to the 'Engagement Process'. Harvestco, in particular, carried out an extensive process of consultation and negotiation from the very outset of their initiative; so also did Septire and Portco. Whilst there were some initial efforts to engage staff and Unions within Kilycra and Cheeseden it is fair to say that this petered out over time.

Thus in closing this discussion of 'Key Processes' we can state that 'Pre-Planning', 'Steering Group' and 'Engagement Processes' were differentiating factors within the case-studies, as could indeed have been earlier foreseen from within the literature. Thus those organisations that gave due attention to 'Key Processes' appeared to have borne the fruit of such attention.

The issue of 'Role Clarity' also received much attention in the literature and also from the respondents within the case-studies. Within our explanatory model there are four areas in which this 'Role Clarity' should be discussed:

Team Members

Facilitators

Leadership within Teams

Structure

Taking 'Team Members' first, the task of ensuring that 'Role Clarity' is provided is taken up by Kanter (1989a), Manz, Keating & Donnellon (1990) and Burke (1986). Their emphasis in this context is on providing clarity about the different job tasks and behaviours that are required of team members so that they are not left in a 'limbo'-like situation. The data from within the case-studies demonstrates that such clarity was not provided in Kilycra and Cheeseden, but was indeed provided over a period of time at Harvestco, Septire and Portco.

The second focus for 'Role Clarity' relates to the new and emerging understanding about the job of Facilitator, as it was called in most of our case-study organisations. Among other researchers, Lawler (1992), Fisher (1993) and Belasco (1990) have emphasised the need for this role not alone to be well clarified at the outset of a teamworking initiative but they also stress that there needs to be an on-going clarification of this difficult role; this is especially true if those carrying out this role had been in a traditional managerial role for some years beforehand.

Within the case-study organisations this on-going clarity was provided at Harvestco and Septire, despite some early difficulties in this regard. Portco were a little less successful on this issue but the Cheeseden and Kilycra case-study data speaks loudly and clearly of the required clarification re this external leadership of teams never really being achieved within those two organisations.

The third focus then, within this broad area of 'Role Clarity', is on leadership within the teams. Manz & Sims (1987), Sims & Manz (1996) and Barry

(1991) have highlighted the need not alone for distributing leadership among the team members but also of making team members into self-leaders.

This focus on developing self-leaders within teams was apparent in the approach at Harvestco and Septire; alternatively an approach to self-leadership was not pursued within Portco, Kilycra or Cheeseden.

The fourth and final focus within this area of 'Role Clarity' is on 'Structure'; as described earlier, this involved the clarity of role required of the various other parts/sections of the structure of the organisation that should be supporting the teamworking initiatives. Within the literature the vitality of such structural clarity is advocated by Fisher (1993) and Lawler (1992).

In focusing on our case-study organisations we have seen that the clarity between support roles referred to in the literature was never really provided at Kilycra and Cheeseden. At Portco, Harvestco and Septire, however this clarity regarding differing structural approaches under the old traditional system and the new teamworking approach was provided.

Taking an overview of 'Role Clarity', as we close our discussion of this topic, it is again evident that the provision or non-provision of 'Role Clarity' on the above four dimensions was a differentiating factor across the case-studies. Thus those organisations that gave due attention to clarifying roles in a systematic manner ran into less complications than did those organisations which failed to provide such role clarification.

The 'Training' section of our explanatory model referred to organisations implementing teamworking as needing to ensure that adequate training is provided, particularly in the areas of:

- Technical Skills

- Communication Skills

- Facilitation Skills

The need for the provision of such training is well supported in the literature, particular by Lawler (1990), Piczak & Hauser (1996) and Yeatts & Hyten (1998).

Within the case-study organisations under study all place some degree of emphasis on training, but the greatest degree of training on the ground across all five of the case-studies above took place in Harvestco and Septire. The other three organisations, Cheeseden, Kilycra and Portco, appear to have carried out some training across all three dimensions but not to the same degree as within Harvestco and Septire.

As the final comment on this theme of 'Training' it is apparent from both the literature and the case-study organisations that it is a key enabling condition for the process of introducing teamworking. Again it is also apparent that the fruits of greater and persistent training efforts were seen by those organisations that fully realised that a sustained effort was required.

'Employee-Centred Systems' is the final component of what have hitherto been referred to as enabling conditions and included:

- Communications
- Employee Relations
- Payment

The literature on communications in teamworking environments is extensive and researchers such as Blanchard (1995), Covey (1992), Piczak & Hauser (1996), Lawler (1992) and Murakami (1995) have been to the forefront in this regard.

Whilst coming from a context of poor communications all of the case-study organisations attempted to improve their 'Communications', the first focus of our examination of 'Employee-Centred Systems'. Substantial progress was achieved at Harvestco, Septire and Portco but again progress was very slow

at Kilycra and Cheeseden and ultimately there was no really significant improvement in these latter two case-study organisations.

The second component of our 'Employee-Centred Systems' is 'Employee Relations' and it is very evident from the literature that the provision of a good employee relations climate is a central enabling condition with respect to the process of introducing teamworking. This emphasis on a good Employee Relations climate has been the focus of attention for a number of researchers notably Walton (1985), Ulrich (1997), Lawler (1986), Lawler & Mohrman (1989) and Scott-Lennon (1992).

In the context from which the case-study organisations were coming, with particularly bad Industrial Relations histories, it would appear that the development of good Employee Relations would have been seen by each as a critical enabling condition. All of the case-study organisations did in fact make initial improvements on their Employee Relations but the most lasting improvements were at Harvestco, Septire and Portco; the initial improvements seen at Kilycra and Cheeseden were ultimately seen to disimprove.

'Payment', the third issue within our 'Employee-Centred Systems', is also an important enabling condition and has been treated within the teamworking literature by writers such as Piczak & Hauser (1996), Yeatts & Hyten (1998), Scott-Lennon (1985), Lawler (1990) and Yeatts et al (1992). These researchers have emphasised the joint approach that is required in evaluating performance and also the requirement for the organisation to find improved ways of relating pay to performance.

Portco made a lead-in payment to staff but several problems arose for both Kilycra and Cheeseden where there was an expectancy for an early payment but same was not forthcoming. Harvestco and Septire, on the other hand, provided a gainsharing approach where employees could clearly see a link between their performance within the teamworking initiative and the money they were to receive.

Thus in looking across each of the three dimensions of 'Employee-Centred Systems' it is again clear from both the literature and the case-study data that we are dealing with an important enabling condition. Those organisations which in the lead-up to and during the process of the implementation of their teamworking initiative had taken account of the importance of 'Employee-Centred Systems' through consultation/negotiation with staff/Union removed them as issues of contention; those that did not were left with some festering sores which in turn became serious obstacles to the process of introducing teamworking.

As we have examined the five enabling conditions we have seen that within the literature, which almost exclusively examines 'glamorous' organisations, all of these five enabling conditions are continually referred to by respected researchers. Not alone do such researchers assert that these enabling conditions are significant in the process of introducing teamworking but they also stress that it is insufficient to focus on only one or two of them; it is, on the contrary, necessary to attend to all of them in the process of introducing teamworking into organisations. This thread of the need to concentrate on a multi-faceted approach is supported by Bartlett & Ghoshal (1995b) and Kilmann (1988).

We in this research examined organisations that were 'not-so-glamorous', organisations that were/had:

Mature

Low Technology

Unionised

Poor Industrial Relations

As shown earlier in the raw data and in our case-study analyses these same five enabling conditions were also significant in those organisations that were the focus of our study. They have been shown to be key differentiating variables in the approach of the case-study organisations to the process of

introducing teamworking. This then clearly leads us to our first 'finding' within this research project as being:

The five enabling conditions ('Shared Values', 'Key Processes', 'Role Clarity', 'Training' and 'Employee-Centred Systems') found within the literature to be of significance in the process of introducing teamworking are also of significance in the process of introducing teamworking within the 'not-so-glamorous' organisations under study, those mature organisations with a unionised workforce and poor Industrial Relations within a low-technology environment.

There is perhaps one distinguishing difference between the 'glamorous' and the 'not-so-glamorous' organisations with respect to one of the dimensions of 'Shared Values', that of 'trust building'. As earlier shown, the need for trust building is referred to within the literature, notably by Ulrich (1997), Randolph (1995) and Lawler (1992). However it would appear that within the case-study organisations this issue of trust building being a 'shared value' assumes even greater importance in the poor Industrial Relations environments under study. This seems to stem from the fact that these organisations were operating at a lower level of trust prior to the process of introducing teamworking than were any of the organisations that were highlighted within the literature. Thus there was going to be a bigger challenge for such organisations as they strove to turnaround the feelings within the organisation on this issue of trust.

It is our view that all of the case-study organisations were keenly aware at management, staff and Union level of the road that they had been on in the past in respect of trust and also of the difficult journey that they now had to make as they strove to build trust. Notwithstanding the fact that these realisations were alive and well within these organisations it appears to me that the principal actors within these organisations did not realise the extent to which their efforts at trust building could be damaged by their actions and reactions on some of the other key enabling conditions.

Thus for example 'Payment' was within the key enabling condition of 'Employee-Centred Systems' and we have already seen a difference in response to employee expectations in this regard within the case-study organisations. At Portco, Septire and Harvestco the expectations of employees were to a large extent satisfied, at least to the extent that pay did not become in any way an impediment to progress within the teamworking initiative. Within Kilycra and Cheeseden there was a spiralling effect from on-going arguments between management and employees over pay. In both of these organisations the staff, as shown in our earlier analysis, became embittered as a result of what they saw as the organisation's failure to resolve the pay issue. These employees also felt that this failure took place in the context of their belief that an earlier commitment by management was in fact not being honoured. This realisation turned the pay issue into one of management not doing, in the eyes of employees, what they said they were going to do, thereby raising the trust issue again. Accordingly at the early stages of this realisation employees were indicating that trust could be affected but after some months the same employees were indicating that the trust level had now been so damaged that it was a serious impediment to progress with the process of introducing teamworking.

Similarly there were issues within Cheeseden in respect of the 'Training' enabling condition, which was initially approached quite well at the diagnostic and planning stages. Thus there were many expressions of satisfaction with training during the early phase of data collection but by the final phase many employees were indicating that the promised training did not in fact take place. This in turn led those same employees to make the link between promises not being fulfilled and the damage that this was doing to the trust level.

Finally on this trust issue a further example could be seen in the approach to and the work of the 'Steering Group' at Kilycra. This steering group was established some way into the process and started to make an initial impact on the process of introducing teamworking within the organisation. However, as was seen in the earlier data analysis, the employee representatives on the

steering group began to lose faith in the ability of the steering group to be a meaningful force when they saw that management were not delivering on commitments given at earlier meetings of the steering group. This then brought about a situation where the steering group became log-jammed as it developed into an argumentative forum rather than the collaborative directional forum intended – a direct result of allowing trust to be damaged.

These three examples have served to show how sensitively this delicate flower of trust must be handled. It can be damaged by actions and events that may not appear to be directly connected and such damage can be either difficult to repair or indeed may in fact be irreparable.

This evidence from the case-study organisations about trust focuses our attention on this link between trust and deliverance/non-deliverance within some of the other key enabling conditions. We therefore put forward that an important differentiator between the 'glamorous' and 'not-so-glamorous' organisations may well be at our finger tips and we would put our 'finding' as follows:

Failure to deliver on promises made earlier in respect of some of these enabling conditions in our 'not-so-glamorous' organisations led employees to the realisation that commitments were not being honoured and thereby to the conclusion that they could not trust the other side to the extent that they should if they were to have an alive-and-well 'Shared Value' of trust building.

At no stage has a 'finding' such as this emerged from the literature with respect to the process of introducing teamworking and therefore we postulate that it is a valid and unique conclusion emerging from this research.

A further insight emerging from this research is in the area of how well the leaders in our case-study organisations undertook the process of crafting and spreading the directional vision for the process of introducing teamworking.

Within the literature we have observed the key role that has been played by this visioning process in 'glamorous' organisations, through the writings of researchers such as: Bennis (1989), Bass & Avolio (1994), Kanter (1989a) and Lawler (1992). In their turn all of these writers have emphasised that the crafting of this directional vision should be undertaken in an inclusive manner and not in an isolated way by any one person within the organisation; such an inclusive process is intended to obtain commitment from the wider group that have been involved.

We have seen in our case-study organisations that inclusive directional visioning, which we have termed ARTICULATION, was carried out by the Chief Executive (and in the case of Portco the Head of Division). Consequently each of these organisations were well set on their path as it were by such inclusive directional visioning, leading us to 'find' that:

The need for inclusive directional crafting of the vision for organisational teamworking that had been highlighted within the literature also existed within the case-study organisations and the need was met by the most senior relevant executive to the point where the requisite initial direction, enthusiasm and momentum were created within the organisations.

As a further development of the above ARTICULATION process this research project has highlighted the further critical process of spreading the directional message down the hierarchical layers and throughout the organisation, a process which we have termed PROMULGATION. We find no evidence within the literature of the use of this term or indeed any direct reference to this process but there certainly are threads of the idea within some of the transformational leadership researchers such as: Bass (1985 & 1990), Bass & Avolio (1994), Bennis (1989) and Bennis & Nanus (1985). It is to this area of PROMULGATION that we look for our next 'finding'.

Within our case-study organisations platforms for successful PROMULGATION were laid by competent approaches to ARTICULATION.

However PROMULGATION goes further in so far as it places 'follow-through' demands on those who have engaged in the ARTICULATION. It is the 'follow-through' actions that give credibility to the direction of the initiative and seem to be particularly needed if the wider group of management and staff are to have the initial momentum sufficiently oiled over time to maintain the wheels of such momentum.

Our case-study organisations clearly demonstrated that this PROMULGATION was a vital process. At Cheeseden and Kilycra, as we have shown in our earlier analysis, the Chief Executive in each case became very deflected from the process by other business responsibilities. Consequently the degree of enthusiasm and follow-through that was required to maintain enthusiasm and momentum was not provided. Nor in either organisation was there any other individual who assumed responsibility and took over the task of injecting those thrusts that would have re-generated this fading momentum. It appears to us that this was a really important factor in the failure of those organisations to meet their own objectives/expectations out of teamworking.

At our other three case-study organisations, Harvestco, Septire and Portco, quite a different scenario evolved, as earlier analysed through the eyes of our respondents within these organisations. Within those three organisations the PROMULGATION process appears to have been taken much more seriously although it may not have been totally perfected. The Chief Executive (or Head of Division in the case of Portco) stayed with the task and was clearly seen to have done so within the organisation. These individuals ensured that they were 'there' for the Steering Group, teams, facilitators, managers, Union officials and individuals. Their availability was not just a reactive one as needs were expressed by such groups or individuals but it was a proactive one where they initiated contact with such groups/individuals as they sought opportunity to demonstrate their on-going commitment to the overall project. Such behaviour had the critical effect of further positively influencing these other actors towards renewing their own commitment to the process of introducing teamworking.

A particular group that are critical to this process are the managerial group insofar as they also need to become key influencers of others so that they in turn can further enhance the sustaining of the required momentum. These managers in their turn could become PROMULGATORS in their own way but would only do so if the Chief Executive has sufficiently well understood this PROMULGATION process that he/she *lives it out* in daily organisational life.

Thus within our case-study organisations we can clearly see from the respondent data that this PROMULGATION process, as described above, was not undertaken well at Kilycra and Cheeseden, with the consequence that this was a significant contributor to the negative course of the teamworking initiative in those organisations. Conversely we have seen that the meaningful carrying-out of this PROMULGATION process within Harvestco, Portco and Septire had a very positive effect on the teamworking initiative. All of which leads us to the 'finding' that:

Within our case-study organisations the process of PROMULGATION is a key differentiator between effective/ineffective processes for the introduction of teamworking.

The final insight in respect of the content of this explanatory model is related to the skills that are required within organisations to successfully effect the process of introducing teamworking. This issue arises as we observe both the literature and the case-study organisations. The literature has many examples of researchers, notably Beer et al (1990), Kilmann (1988) and Fisher (1993), who indicate that key leadership skills are required within the organisation to bring off major change such as that envisaged for the case-study organisations. In addition much of the transformational literature, as evidenced in Bass (1985 & 1990) and Bass & Avolio (1994), has also suggested the key role for leaders of themselves being 'champions of the cause' and also, critically, of creating other 'champions' down through the organisation.

The case-study organisations under study have clearly demonstrated that these personal and leadership skills were evident in Harvestco, Septire and Portco but were not present to the required extent within Kilycra or Cheeseden, leading us to the 'finding' that:

Key personal leadership and championing skills that enabled/disabled the case-study organisations to carry out the processes of ARTICULATION and PROMULGATION are a key differentiator in the process of introducing teamworking.

Having completed the 'content' findings I would now like to turn to a 'process' finding within our methodology. It appears that our chosen methodology, that of an ethnographic mode similar to 'grounded theory', may also have been instrumental in allowing us to develop some of the 'findings' within our conclusions above. This in itself raises the question as to whether or not there may be a research 'finding' emerging here also.

The key question facing us is whether or not our earlier 'finding' of.....

Within our case-study organisations the process of PROMULGATION is a key differentiator between effective/ ineffective processes for the introduction of teamworking

.....could have 'emerged', as it were, with a more traditional positivist approach. It is our view that this would not have been likely due to the fact that the positivist mode would have pushed us much more towards:

- A situation where the observer/researcher would have to be much more independent of the process due to that methodology demanding that we see the world as external and objective.

- Our search would have been focused on ‘causality’ and might not therefore have allowed us to gather such sensitive socially constructed data as that which emerged from the case-studies.
- Our focus within the positivist mode would have been on trying to formulate hypotheses early on and then test them in the field; it would have been unlikely that any hypothesis similar to the finding under discussion could have been foreseen at the outset of this study.

Thus, in our view, the positivist route would not have facilitated such an insight, leading us to the ‘finding’ that:

The methodology chosen for this study was the most suitable one and perhaps the only one that would have allowed our PROMULGATION ‘finding’ to emerge.

This, then, concludes our ‘findings’ section wherein we have (a) confirmed that the enabling conditions found within the literature were again found in our case-study organisations, (b) highlighted the critical aspect of trust building within those enabling conditions in the context of our study, (c) identified ARTICULATION as an important variable within the literature and the case-studies, (d) highlighted a key insight from this research with regard to PROMULGATION – not located within the literature, (e) identified within the literature and the case-study organisations the key personal and organisational leadership skills required of those driving this process of introducing teamworking and, finally, (f) our methodology insight where we have indicated that some of the earlier findings could not have ‘emerged’ without using our ethnographic mode of enquiry and analysis.

6.3 SUMMARY: CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This research has focused on the ‘not-so-glamorous’ organisations, those that were mature organisations in low/medium technology with a unionised environment and a poor history of Industrial Relations.

In summary, the analysis of the data has contributed to knowledge as shown within the table below:

FOCUS OF ‘FINDING’ WITHIN THE EXPLANATORY MODEL	‘FINDING’
The ‘enabling conditions’	<i>The five enabling conditions (‘Shared Values’, ‘Key Processes’, ‘Role Clarity’, ‘Training’ and ‘Employee-Centred Systems’) found within the literature to be of significance in the process of introducing teamworking are also of significance in the process of introducing teamworking within the ‘not-so-glamorous’ organisations under study, those mature organisations with a unionised workforce and poor Industrial Relations within a low-technology environment.</i>
‘Honouring Commitments/Trust building’	<i>Failure to deliver on promises made earlier in respect of some of these enabling conditions in our ‘not-so-glamorous’ organisations led employees to the realisation that commitments were not being honoured and thereby to the conclusion that they could not trust the other side to the extent that they should if they were to have an alive-and-well ‘Shared Value’ of trust building.</i>

'Articulation'	<i>The need for inclusive directional crafting of the vision for organisational teamworking that had been highlighted within the literature also existed within the case-study organisations and the need was met by the most senior relevant executive to the point where the requisite initial direction, enthusiasm and momentum were created within the organisations.</i>
'Promulgation'	<i>Within our case-study organisations the process of PROMULGATION is a key differentiator between effective/ineffective processes for the introduction of teamworking.</i>
'Key personal leadership and championing skills'	<i>Key personal leadership and championing skills that enabled/disabled the case-study organisations to carry out the processes of ARTICULATION and PROMULGATION are a key differentiator in the process of introducing teamworking.</i>
Methodology	<i>The methodology chosen for this study was the most suitable one and perhaps the only one that would have allowed our PROMULGATION 'finding' to emerge.</i>

All of the above 'findings' have been firmly grounded within the case-study data.

6.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

With respect to the five key enabling conditions it would be possible to carry out further research which could examine the applicability of these enabling conditions to similar 'not-so-glamorous' organisations in particular or to organisations in different sectors/groupings.

In addition future researchers could examine the ideas of ARTICULATION and PROMULGATION to ascertain whether or not they are key differentiators within the process of introducing teamworking in other similar organisations.

The PROMULGATION 'finding' in particular could be tested in similar or dissimilar organisations; this is particularly so because the 'finding' related to PROMULGATION is put forward as a key new 'finding' within this research.

Finally in respect of our explanatory model, the 'finding' of there being key leadership skills related to individual and organisational ability to ARTICULATE and PROMULGATE does need further research to see if this 'finding' holds up in similar or dissimilar organisations; further examination of specific behaviours within these leadership skills could also be undertaken.

It is further asserted as a result of this research that one could view the model in input-process-output terms if one saw the inputs as the five enabling conditions; the processes would in such a view be the articulation and promulgation processes along with the associated leadership skills to deliver same. The output could be viewed as movement towards the tangible achievement/non-achievement of the principal objectives that the organisation had in mind for the process of introducing teamworking.

On applying this 'input-process-output' model to the case-study organisations one could see that the following results were obtained by those organisations:

ORGANISATION	INPUTS & PROCESSES	OUTPUT
Kilycra	Inadequate focus on inputs and poor processes	Non-movement towards teamworking objective
Harvestco	More than adequate inputs focus and excellent processes	Movement towards teamworking objective
Cheeseden	Inadequate focus on inputs and poor processes	Non-movement towards teamworking objective
Septire	More than adequate inputs focus and excellent processes	Movement towards teamworking objective
Portco	Adequate focus on inputs and good processes	Movement towards teamworking objective

Movement is a soft qualitative measure but one which is eminently traceable back to respondent statements within the data collected at the case-study organisations. The use of such a process model permits us to offer some further advice concerning possible lines of future research.

A search for outcomes along the lines described above could examine the 'input-process-output' model in operational terms or opportunity terms. The former would be much more a quantitative approach than the latter, which

would indeed be more qualitative; individual researchers should choose the mode of inquiry suited best to their research question.

It should then be possible to check the outcomes (movement/non-movement) that an organisation or group of organisations is/are achieving as a result of using the 'input-process-output' model described above. They should be particularly able to test the relationship between the effect of leadership skills being exercised (or not) in the altering of an organisational context.

It has been argued during our Research Strategy and Methods chapter that a phenomenological approach was the most suitable one for this research. It can now be suggested that perhaps the most suitable approach to the suggested areas for future research will also be a phenomenological one; I would, however, not like to rule out the possibility of some elements of the said future research being pursued in a positivist mode, or even in both modes simultaneously.

Thus, for example, one could approach the replication of our finding about the enabling conditions.....

The five enabling conditions ('Shared Values', 'Key Processes', 'Role Clarity', 'Training' and 'Employee-Centred Systems') found within the literature to be of significance in the process of introducing teamworking are also of significance in the process of introducing teamworking within the 'not-so-glamorous' organisations under study, those mature organisations with a unionised workforce and poor Industrial Relations within a low-technology environment.

.....in a positivist mode whereby one could search through a number of organisations to ascertain whether or not the said enabling conditions existed and/or were of significance in a large number of other organisations. In such a situation, i.e. with a large number of organisations, it might prove difficult to conduct such research in a phenomenological mode.

Alternatively, both the positivist and phenomenological modes could be adopted, for example, in future research that could focus on the enabling conditions as above but which research might also aim to gather some very qualitative information in respect of obtaining more specific behavioural data for a 'finding' such as:

Key personal leadership and championing skills that enabled/disabled the case-study organisations to carry out the processes of ARTICULATION and PROMULGATION are a key differentiator in the process of introducing teamworking.

All of the above suggested areas for further research in respect of the process of introducing teamworking could also be extended outside this area and into other subject areas. Thus the model in all of its dimensions or in any of them could be further tested in respect of its applicability to the implementation of major organisational change in specific situations other than the process of introducing teamworking or in the context of managing the introduction of organisation change in general.

It is our hope that this study has laid the foundations for these approaches and that future researchers will take up this meaningful challenge as it is the view of this researcher that organisational leaders would be most interested in the result of their labours.

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Appendices

A. Semi-structured questionnaire

B. Categories

C. Sample of respondent data and coding
(Cheeseden early phase)

Appendix A

Semi – structured questionnaire

Appendix A

Semi-structured Interview Framework

Q. 1: Level and Quality of Training ?

Q. 2: Attitudes/behaviours of top management group towards empowered teams?

Q. 3: Are the performance management and reward systems. compatible with empowered teams?

Q. 4: Within the empowered approach describe : Leadership/Teamworking

Q. 5: What has gone well with the empowered team programme? And why?

Q. 6: What could be improved about empowered teams ? And how ?

Q. 7: Anything that can be done by the organisation to better support empowered teams?

Q. 8: Has individual/team maturity increased/decreased though the empowered team process? If so how?

Q. 9: Why do you think this organisation has undertaken the empowered teams initiative?

Q. 10: Comment on the level of communications between management and employees post the empowered team initiative?

Q. 11: What are you/the team doing differently post the empowered team initiative?

Q. 12: What are the managers/ supervisors doing differently post the empowered team initiative ?

Q. 13: How does or could the role of facilitator help you/your team?

Q. 14 How do you see employee commitment post the empowered team initiative?

Q. 15: What is the quality of employee relations post the empowered team initiative?

Q. 16: How do you view the current level of productivity post the empowered team initiative?

Q. 17: What is your view of employee attitudes/behaviours post the empowered team initiative?

Q. 18: In your view are structures/systems any different post the empowered team initiative?

Appendix B

Categories

Q.S.R. NUD.IST Power version, revision 4.0.
Licensee: cranfield school of management.

PROJECT: comerqep2, User Frank Scott Lennon, 1:32 pm, Oct 3, 2000.

- (1) /ROLE
- (1 1) /ROLE/Clarity of role existing
- (1 2) /ROLE/Lack of role clarity
- (1 3) /ROLE/Clarity existing but unwilling
- (1 4) /ROLE/Role Modelling
- (1 5) /ROLE/Role of Facilitator
- (1 6) /ROLE/Clarity exist...but difficult
- (1 7) /ROLE/Team Member role
- (2) /SKILLS, TRAINING
- (2 1) /SKILLS, TRAINING/Skills Developed
- (2 2) /SKILLS, TRAINING/Skills for development
- (2 3) /SKILLS, TRAINING/Training Required
- (2 4) /SKILLS, TRAINING/Training going well
- (2 5) /SKILLS, TRAINING/Training to improve
- (2 6) /SKILLS, TRAINING/Training - difficult aspects
- (2 7) /SKILLS, TRAINING/Training Officer
- (3) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES
- (3 1) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Communications
- (3 2) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Quality
- (3 3) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Money...Pay
- (3 4) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Management Commitment
- (3 5) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Team Concerns
- (3 6) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Involvement eg Prob Solv
- (3 7) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Job Responsibilities
- (3 8) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Meetings
- (3 9) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Productivity
- (3 10) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Performance Management
- (3 11) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Pre-planning

(3 12)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Work more interesting
(3 13)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Output, Yield
(3 14)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Visioning..Directioning
(3 15)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Union Attitudes
(3 16)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Steering Group
(3 17)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Individual Growth..Maturity
(3 18)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Employee Relations
(3 19)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Structures..Systems
(3 20)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Industrial Relations
(3 21)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Jointness of Approach
(3 22)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Employee..Team Commitment
(3 23)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Union Inclusion
(3 24)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Work design, flow
(3 25)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Conflict within teams
(3 26)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Flexibility
(3 27)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Change Process
(3 28)	/CONTEXT,	PRACTICES/Job Satisfaction
(4)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES
(4 1)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Supportive of the initiative
(4 2)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Unsupportive of the initiative
(4 3)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/"us" - about ourselves
(4 4)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/"them" - confrontational about others
(4 5)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/"we" - collaborative approaches
(4 6)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Teamwork Attitude...Behaviour
(4 7)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Trust..Mistrust..Respect
(4 8)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Management Style
(4 9)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Confidence..Self-esteem
(4 10)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Non-deliverance by Mgmt
(4 11)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Implementation..Intro of Teams
(4 12)	/VALUES,	ATTITUDES/Despair of Teamwork
(5)	/MISCELLANEOUS	ISSUES
(5 1)	/MISCELLANEOUS	ISSUES/Change...No change
(5 2)	/MISCELLANEOUS	ISSUES/Dont know...No opinion

(5 3) /MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES/Working Conditions
(5 4) /MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES/PinDrafting experiences
(5 5) /MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES/Maintenance Dept
(6) /RESOURCES REQUIRED
(6 1) /RESOURCES REQUIRED/Available now
(6 2) /RESOURCES REQUIRED/Not available now
(6 3) /RESOURCES REQUIRED/Availability planned
(6 4) /RESOURCES REQUIRED/Availability planned...not delivered
(D) //Document Annotations
(F) //Free Nodes
(T) //Text Searches
(T 1) //Text Searches/TextSearch
(T 2) //Text Searches/TextSearch190
(T 3) //Text Searches/TextSearch191
(I) //Index Searches
(C) //Node Clipboard - 'TextSearch191'

Appendix C

Sample of respondent data and coding

Q.S.R. NUD.IST Power version, revision 4.0.
Licensee: cranfield school of management.

PROJECT: comerqep2, User Frank Scott Lennon, 1:50 pm, Oct 3, 2000.

+++++ ON-LINE DOCUMENT: CHEESEDEN EP

+++ Document Header:

* No Header

(1 2)	/ROLE/Lack of role clarity				
++ Units:53-53	56-56	65-65	233-233		
(1 5)	/ROLE/Role of Facilitator				
++ Units:57-58	89-89	96-96	109-109	115-115	122-123
(2 1)	/SKILLS, TRAINING/Skills Developed				
++ Units:60-60	104-104				152-152
(2 2)	/SKILLS, TRAINING/Skills for development				
++ Units:15-15	109-109	111-111	207-207		179-186
(2 3)	/SKILLS, TRAINING/Training Required				
++ Units:4-5	17-17	24-24	97-97	121-121	180-180
(2 4)	/SKILLS, TRAINING/Training going well				
++ Units:6-6	11-11	18-18			186-186
(2 5)	/SKILLS, TRAINING/Training to improve				
++ Units:3-3	12-13	16-16			
(2 6)	/SKILLS, TRAINING/Training - difficult aspects				
++ Units:8-8					
(2 7)	/SKILLS, TRAINING/Training Officer				
++ Units:9-9	14-14	31-31	75-75		
(3 1)	/CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Communications				
++ Units:83-83	85-85	136-137	139-141	143-143	145-145
157-158	205-205	231-231	234-234	240-240	147-147
(3 2)	/CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Quality				
++ Units:55-55	84-84	105-105	117-117	140-140	161-161
					210-210
					212-212

(3 3) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Money...Pay
 ++ Units:36-36 38-41 43-49 99-99 101-101 107-107 119-120 124-125
 184-185 192-192 219-219 226-226
 (3 4) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Management Commitment
 ++ Units:20-23 25-26 30-30 33-33 54-54 66-66 76-76 87-87
 90-90 94-94 110-110
 (3 5) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Team Concerns
 ++ Units:28-28 32-32 67-67
 (3 6) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Involvement eg Prob Solv
 ++ Units:55-55
 (3 7) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Job Responsibilities
 ++ Units:82-82 160-161 163-164 166-166 173-173 235-235
 (3 8) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Meetings
 ++ Units:162-162 175-175 231-231 240-240
 (3 9) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Productivity
 ++ Units:210-210 212-212 214-219
 (3 10) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Performance Management
 ++ Units:35-35
 (3 13) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Output, Yield
 ++ Units:212-212
 (3 14) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Visioning..Directioning
 ++ Units:29-29 70-70 74-74 77-77 102-102 156-156 240-240
 (3 15) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Union Attitudes
 ++ Units:95-95 201-201 208-208
 (3 17) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Individual Growth..Maturity
 ++ Units:128-134
 (3 18) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Employee Relations
 ++ Units:199-199 201-202 204-208
 (3 19) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Structures..Systems
 ++ Units:230-230 237-237 239-239
 (3 20) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Industrial Relations
 ++ Units:116-116 199-199 206-206
 (3 22) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Employee..Team Commitment

++ Units:189-193 195-195 197-197
 (3 24) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Work design, flow
 ++ Units:114-114
 (3 25) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Conclit within teams
 ++ Units:100-100 113-113 195-195 197-197 202-202 228-228
 (3 26) /CONTEXT, PRACTICES/Flexibility
 ++ Units:216-216 218-218
 (4 1) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/Supportive of the initiative
 ++ Units:64-64 69-69 72-73 79-80 188-188 223-223 227-227
 (4 4) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/"them" - confrontational about others
 ++ Units:100-100 165-165 224-224
 (4 5) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/"we" - collaborative approaches
 ++ Units:113-113
 (4 6) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/Teamwork Attitude...Behaviour
 ++ Units:92-92 222-222
 (4 7) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/Trust..Mistrust..Respect
 ++ Units:6-6
 (4 8) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/Management Style
 ++ Units:52-52 62-63 81-81 103-103 106-106 123-123 155-155 170-170
 172-174 176-177
 (4 10) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/Non-deliverance by Mgmt
 ++ Units:171-171
 (4 11) /VALUES, ATTITUDES/Implementation..Intro of Teams
 ++ Units:71-71 88-88 221-221
 (5 1) /MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES/Change...No change
 ++ Units:168-168
 (6 2) /RESOURCES REQUIRED/Not available now
 ++ Units:7-7
 (T 1) //Text Searches/TextSearch
 ++ Units:57-57 89-89 96-96 109-109 115-115 122-122 123-123 139-139
 152-152
 (T 2) //Text Searches/TextSearch190
 ++ Units:231-231 234-234

(T 3) //Text Searches/TextSearch191
++ Units:231-231 234-234
(C) //Node Clipboard - 'TextSearch191'
++ Units:231-231 234-234
+++ Retrieval for this document: 242 units out of 242, = 100%
++ Text units 1-242:
Cheeseden Early Phase

Historically very poor at training
Technical training required now
Safety training is a critical issue with a number of claims pending
Looks like the current assessment of needs is going well and building
some trust
The real problem is getting enough time
Although bright, the operators don't seem to want to train
MC doing a good job on training

We have never had much training in the past
Dungarvan gets all the training attention
Some training when we came over to WCC with very little now
The new fellow looks like planning training better
Technical help badly needed
They just leave us to do the job with no real training
They say they are going to train now we'll see
Initial quality course was good

Donal seems totally fired-up for this.
Dungarvan management are in support mode.
H.R. seem to be behind this initiative.
Donal is decidedly the champion.
They have to support us with additional training.
Now that the supervisors are gone management have to help us more.
Management have to get us working as a team.

27 They say they'll sort our concerns I'll wait and see.
28 Donal seems genuine enough but he has to bring the others along.
29 H.R. guy and the union guy were down spouting support for this.
30 Don't know what MC is supposed to be doing.
31 They say they'll support it.
32 Management haven't been good at supporting in the past but say they will
33 now.
34

35 We've never really had performance management here.
36 Rewards ? guys seem quite unhappy about rewards.
37 There isn't any link between performance and rewards.
38 The reward system is different - has inequalities in relation to
39 Dungarvan.
40 Internal differentials here are unsound and certainly don't reflect
41 performance.
42 The 'upstairs men' already have extra concessions but have a big claim in.
43 The union will not allow discussions on money to be related to
44 performance.
45

46 Our money is lousy.
47 A County Council worker gets more than we do.
48 I have no confidence in the grading structures.
49 Our claims keep getting thrown out by the Labour Court.
50 When will they sort out the money for us.
51 I'm sure they're well paid we're not.
52 I have a younger brother working in another factory and earning far more
53 than I
54 am.

We are trying to get the operators to lead themselves.
Not sure at all what we mean by teamwork.
Our own teamwork within management is very poor.

We have to get the operators more involved in improving quality.
No supervisors means a different kind of management not sure what that is.

The talk about being a facilitator confuses me.
The difference between the new role and the discipline that is required is difficult to understand.
Not sure if we have the skills for this new leadership role.

Management are supposed to be leading differently.

We still have TJ and MC jumping on top of us.

It's better not having a supervisor on shift.

No one to ask about queries when they arise.

Don't see much teamwork in management.

They are still pushing us for more and more.

Off to a reasonable start.

Donal shows great vision and energy.

It's going to be difficult to get this done in our climate.

Should be OK with the new energy in the team.

The fact that the supervisors are out of that role.

Donal's commitment is very strong.

MC is trying to get credibility back.

The support from Dungarvan.

Donal's leadership of the whole thing.

Not much has gone well.

The fact that we don't have supervisors all around us.

They seem to want to leave more to us.

Plans for the operator information system going well.

A bit more information coming through.

Greater quality awareness among the lads.

The new notice boards.

86 We should have harnessed greater commitment, particularly from HR.
87 We should have known better about how slow this would start.
88 The role of facilitator is misunderstood and needs clarifying.
89 The management team are not as much together as they should be on this
90 teamworking issue.
91 The employees seem willing to co-operate individually but not yet working
92 as a
93 team.
94 External support from Dungarvan must be improved.
95 The union activists are not on this teamworking bus.
96 The role of facilitator is in chaos.
97 We have to increase the number of training workshops for the management
98 team.

99 We should have our pay grievances settled, that would clear the air.
100 Better teamworking with the upstairs crew.

101 What about pay and the snail pace of negotiations.

102 It's not really clear where all of the teamworking is going.
103 We're working harder but I don't see management changing their ways.
104 We need more skills training.

105 We need to understand the technical aspects of quality better.
106 Some managers still interfere in areas where they should not.
107 Increase our freedom but give us more money.
108

109 We need to follow through with more facilitator skills training.
110 Management need to believe in teamworking and let that be seen.
111 The teams needs to get more technical training and inter-personal skills
112 training.

113 Individuals within the team need help to overcome past conflicts.
114 The work-flow from shift to shift is not getting enough attention.
115 Facilitators are too regularly asking what they should be doing.
116 Some of the ill-discipline of the past is still around.

Hygiene is an issue within the teams.

They could pay us more on our basic pay.
The grading difficulties need sorting.

More training is needed for us.

We don't know what facilitators are.

One of the facilitators is still in supervisory dictation mode.

Money is at the root of the discontent within teams.

Our pay compares badly with others, that's the first support to be put right.

No great change in maturity.

Too early to say.

Some greater co-operation might lead to maturity.

No evidence of maturity increase yet.

The guys are somewhat traditional and maturity will be hard to achieve.

Not enough evidence yet.

∞ Some increase in maturity of one individual.

The team awareness of their role in quality has matured them a little.

Certainly a big improvement in communications.

The number of meetings launching team working got much better

communications

going.

Even the facilitator and the team members seemed to be talking much more.

More encouraging reporting of quality issues by operators.

New operator information system (OIS) has been a great vehicle for improved

communications.

The notice boards, when we eventually got them re-organised, have

improved

communications.

Not sure if some of our supposed improvement in communications is just

145 window
146 dressing.
147 Everyone says a great improvement in communications.
148

149 The managers seem very intent on trying to improve communications.
150 Yes, quite an improvement.

151 The notice boards keep us up-to-date.

152 Facilitators have more regular briefing sessions which seem to help.

153 The new information we've got to supply through the computer helps our
154 communication with management.

155 Think management are a bit more open now.

156 Donnie has met all the staff twice in the last 3 months.

157 At least they seem to be putting their cards on the table now.

158 No real information being received from Dungarvan.
159

160 Now more responsible for information going up to management.

161 Given great responsibility for quality and quality testing.

162 Meeting more regularly within ourselves downstairs.

163 Contacting maintenance guys ourselves immediately after breakdown.

164 Calling in technical support when required.

165 One should have more contact with upstairs team but not achieved yet.

166 Maintenance call-ins are better now that we are linking directly with
167 them

168 ourselves.

169 In my area in the stores not really doing much differently than before.
170

171 Trying to let go a little.

172 Much the same although they say they are doing things differently.

173 Stepping back a little.

174 Letting us do some more of the information processing.

175 Giving us more information than before.

176 Having more meetings.

Letting us get maintenance and technical support when needed.

Not doing much different than before.

Leave us to do our jobs ourselves.

Organise more training.

Let us have more relief men when required.

Get to maintenance and insist that they respond to us when we need them.

Leave us alone.

Sort out our wage and grading issues.

Get management to have real negotiations with the unions.

More technical training required they could help.

Most employees seem willing to give teamworking a try.

All operators seem some way committed to this new initiative.

One or two of the diehards not committed.

Commitment will really be seen if they improve the operation side of things.

They say they want their money issues sorted before they get fully behind this.

In the initial workshop meetings expressions of commitment looked high

.... has to be delivered on the ground.

Not sure about the commitment of the guys to overcome long standing personal

squabbles among themselves.

The upstairs crew are particularly difficult and don't seem greatly committed.

Industrial Relations having been so poor it was difficult to get employee relations on the agenda.

The unions seemed to want to block company employee relations initiatives.

Employee relationships within themselves hampered some efforts at building

employee relations.

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Leaving money aside there certainly were less grievances coming forward.
Some of the initial communications efforts helped employee relations.
The crackdown on discipline that has started has not helped.
We didn't get enough training in how to build employee relations.
Union activists very unco-operative re employee relations.

If we view the renewed interest in quality as productivity then it has improved somewhat.

No hard measures in productivity but looks like greater through-put and improved quality.

Not sure if the measures are in place yet.

No real indicators of huge productivity increase.

Greater flexibility among operators is indicative of improved productivity.

Productivity should increase as training programme develops.

Flexibility up, therefore productivity probably up.

Some people holding back a little on productivity over the money issue.

Maybe a possibility of turning the corner.

Some employees look to have improved attitude.

We need some improvement and there are signs of it coming from some quarters.

Some employees, particularly the upstairs crew are diehard and it is difficult

to see good attitudes and behaviours coming from them.

Some other employees complain all of the time about grading.

Some of the co-operation downstairs indicates improved behaviour.

Historical ill-feeling between some of the operators affecting this change.

The change from MIS to OIS is radically different.

Communications systems with increased meetings looks very different at
this
stage.
The roles expected of people in management are very different.
Communications changed a lot for the better.
Main structure change is trying to get team working whereby the
guys take
more responsibility for their work and quality.
Even though structure has changed debatable whether or not attitudes have
followed.
The new information system is excellent.
Plant wide communications improved with Donie's meetings across all
shifts.

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