**Gordon Institute
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Career capital as an enabler to an ambidextrous approach for inter-industry career transitioning

Rikesh Amarlal

(15388230)

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ABSTRACT

The turbulent global economy brought about by commodity price meltdowns, technological advances and a combination of collapsing, amalgamating and restructuring of industries has given rise to a complex and uncertain business environment in which the knowledge worker strives to remain employed within. This compels the knowledge worker to guard against potential unemployment by having the ability to translate their career capital across an industry and in the process developing career resilience that enhances sustainable employment. By understanding how individuals have transitioned their career capital across industries provides the back drop into how this feat could potentially be achieved.

A qualitative research study with an exploratory design was conducted to provide the granularity necessary to understand how individuals transitioned their careers across industries. To gain unique insights into how individuals' were able to make such career transition, fifteen face to face, semi-structured in-depth interviews were held with purposely selected individuals that have transitioned more than one industry and currently hold executive roles within their organisations. The insights from these interviews formed the basis of the data that was analysed through a combination of content and thematic analysis to elucidate the research findings of this study.

The research study recognised, with greater understanding, the components of career capital that enabled knowledge workers to transition their career across an industry and how these specific components of career capital were acquired. A frame work, underpinned by ambidexterity, was developed for knowledge workers to consider when deciding to undertake an inter-industry career transition. The importance of possessing vast amounts of self-awareness, contextual intelligence and business acumen facilitate adaptability of career capital to a new industry. The research findings may assist the knowledge worker to better manage their careers by building career resilience against uncertain business environments by considering the frame work as an approach to using career capital that enables an ambidextrous approach to inter industry career transitioning.

KEYWORDS

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It is not been submitted before for any degree or examination in another University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorization and consent to carry out this research.

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Rikesh Amarlal

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CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM DEFINITION

1.1 Introduction

The South African economy has shed more than a million jobs since the 2008 global financial crisis and recent commodity price melt down (Evans, 2015). The mining sector alone has bled 47 000 jobs between 2012 and 2015 with an estimated further 32 000 jobs to be lost in 2016 (Seccombe, 2016). In the first six months of 2015, approximately 44 000 professionals lost their jobs across the trade, community services, mining and quarrying, construction and business services industries (Capazorio & Dlamini, 2015). As of the first quarter of 2016, the economy again shed 15 000 jobs (Peyper, 2016). Savickas and Porfeli (2012) explain career adaptivity as an individuals' inclination to engage in the process of attaining person-environment fit. To remain employable, the knowledge worker has to ensure constant alignment to the dynamic and ever changing business environment. In light of this context, it becomes imperative for the knowledge worker to ensure sustainable employment by acquiring career capital that can be adapted and transferred across industries should the industry they are currently employed within, undergo considerable changes as outlined above.

Recent developments in the labour market regarding increasing volatility and flexibility place a growing urgency on employees to take accountability for both executing their job and managing their career (Segers & Inceoglu, 2012). It is therefore of vital importance that employees develop the appropriate skills to effectively manage both their work and career in time of uncertainty (Akkermans, Brenninkmeijer, Huibers & Blonk, 2013). Smith (2010) accentuates the developing of human, cultural and social capital as a means to enhance ones employability in times of a turbulent economy, large-scale job reallocation, delayering and outsourcing (Barley & Kunda, 2006; Kalleberg, 2009).

The ability of the individual to translate and adapt their skills across an industry is considered a key requirement in building their competency of career resilience against the backdrop of the abovementioned contextual changes. Brown, Bimrose, Barnes and Hughes (2012) explain career adaptability as the ability of individuals' to undertake a succession of effective transitions were the labour market, organisation of work and fundamental business and organisational information systems may all be susceptible to

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extensive reforms. Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) explained that employability is the incessant accomplishing, acquiring or generating of work through the optimum utilisation of competencies which comprises of the individual's knowledge, skills and capabilities to satisfactorily complete tasks coupled with their ability to adapt to changes in both the internal and external labour market.

Baruch (2015) identified that progress in technology and the necessity to acquire and adjust to different circumstances continually encourages individuals to take responsibility of their own careers, increasing an employees' position towards developing and improving their abilities and skills. The impact of globalisation and economic decline underpinned by various commodity melt downs has initiated new forms of organisations, new ways of working and managing one's career (Sutherland, Naidu, Seabela, Crosson & Nyembe, 2015). As industries collapse or integrate to form composite ones, this research study seeks to understand how knowledge workers' can safeguard the career capital developed throughout their career and make it applicable in other contexts in the event of them being vulnerably exposed to potential job losses. Prior research has focused on career transitions within a company and within an industry however limited information exists on how an individual can adapt a portfolio of career capital from one industry (e.g. engineering) and make it relevant in another industry (e.g. finance or marketing). With this context in mind, it can be argued that it is extremely imperative for knowledge workers to understand how their existing career capital can be potentially adapted and translated across industries to ensure sustainable employment.

Froehlich, Beausaert and Segers (2015) maintain the rapidly increasing rate of innovation makes it inappropriate to continually conceptualise employability from specific labour market perspective, instead describe employability as possessing a set of competencies that empowers individuals to fulfil, acquire or create work (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006) which infers possessing career capital that facilitates sustainable employment. Gubler, Arnold and Coombs (2014b) state that in the current labour market "individuals are, or should be, increasingly mobile and self-directed in their careers" (p.23), which again reinforces the knowledge workers responsibility in ensuring they can effectively manage their careers by negating a potential job loss in terms of guarding against economic uncertainties. Collard, Epperheimer and Saign (1996) affirm that career resilience refers to an individuals' career development,

building the knowledge and skills required to make a visible and personally motivated contribution to the organization and its customers. This research study seeks to understand how individuals utilised their career capital from one industry and adapted this to the next industry or labour market. This research study maintains that having the ability of being able to transition ones career across an industry is a form of career resilience as the knowledge workers career capital was made relevant in a new industry.

Gerli, Bonesso and Pizzi (2015) emphasize that the idea of a 'boundaryless career' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) is emerging as the basis for the understanding of modern career paths. Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh and Roper (2012) argue it remains abstruse which specific boundaries are traversed (organisational, industrial or geographical) as literature has recognized importance to the role of organizational boundaries, but this classification is relatively restrictive since it disregards other pertinent domains of physical mobility, specifically industry (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). To demystify any ambiguity, this study focuses its attention on inter-industry transitions to establish how individuals have successfully translated and adapted their career capital across industries.

De Vos and Dries (2013) maintain it has become undeniably imperative for knowledge workers to understand career capital components that are mandatory to guarantee career success and how these components are assimilated during a knowledge workers career journey. It can be contended that individuals need to continually acquire career capital that enables them to maintain employability in their current industry but, in parallel, also develop career capital that enables employability across other industries. There is a dearth of evidence highlighting the wide range of techniques to develop one's career capital but limited literature is available on the components of career capital required for transitioning across industries (Arthur & Rosseau, 1996; Verbruggen, Sels & Forrier, 2007; Lamb & Sutherland, 2010; Clarke, 2013; De Vos & Dries, 2013; Sutherland et al., 2015). By establishing the components of career capital that enable inter-industry career transitioning and through understanding their method of accrual, knowledge workers have a basis for diagnosing their current career capital and can forward plan the changes that may be required to acquire the components of career capital that enables inter-industry transitioning. The existing literature provides almost no information on the granularity of how to adapt and translate existing career

capital into forms suitable across industries. This research study also seeks to establish how knowledge workers can continuously exploit current career capital in their day to day work roles but simultaneously explore what is required to enable their transition to a new industry in terms of adapting their current portfolio of career capital to transition across to the new industry.

At an organisational level Bonesso, Gerli and Scapolan (2013) express ambidexterity as the ability of a firm to exploit its current competencies as well as to explore new opportunities. Extending this definition to an individual unit of analysis and by adopting Good and Michel's (2013) notion of individual ambidexterity as being the individual-level cognitive capacity to flexibly adapt within a dynamic context by suitably shifting between exploration and exploitation, this research study proposes that the knowledge worker should adopt an ambidextrous approach to inter industry career transitioning in terms of exploiting their current career capital and then exploring a means of using these components (or building new career capital) that will enable them to transition their careers across an industry. Whilst most ambidexterity research focuses at the organizational level, it remains a multilevel phenomenon also driven upward by individuals as they contend with a dynamic context (Good & Michel, 2013).

However, existing research neglects the analysis of ambidexterity at the individual level assuming that majority of the heterogeneity is located at the organizational level (Bonesso et al., 2013). Turner, Swart and Maylor (2013) highlight the limited theorisation on individual ambidexterity and the scant empirical evidence on how individuals actually coordinate exploration and exploitation simultaneously (Bonesso et al., 2013). This research study seeks to understand how this coordination between exploitation and exploration was achieved. O'Reilly and Tushman (2004) noted that ''ambidextrous organizations need ambidextrous senior teams and managers'' (p.81), highlighting the variation at the individual level in terms of personal characteristics which may explain why people are effective in career transitions. Felin, Foss, Heimeriks and Madsen (2012) studied the micro-level origins of a firm's competencies and have found that the individuals' attributes are essential for the growth of organizational capabilities.

Although certain aspects of career transitions have been studied thus far, including its determinants (Ng & Feldman, 2009) and causes (Chudzikowski et al., 2009), these

studies are limited in specifying the actual components of career capital that enables an individual to transition across industries. Rodrigues and Guest (2010) argued that the boundaryless career has encouraged a wide theoretical debate over the past two decades but questioned its ability to effectively capture the nature of modern careers. This assertion is further supported by Gerli et al. (2015) as they state there has been limited progression in boundaryless career conceptualizations and insufficient empirical investigations of its causes and outcomes. This study links a defined industry as the boundary and is used as the basis for transitioning across a boundary.

Changes in organizational contexts, including employers increasing efficiency by retrenching employees and affecting job stability, intensifies an employees' active participation in career management (Baruch, 2015). The Centre for International Labour Market Studies (CILMS) found that the dominant problem opposing industries are the differing labour markets. Sutherland et al. (2015) suggests that the type of skills and experience required may vary considerably between sectors and that human resource manager's and career capitalist's need to know how specific this variability is. By understanding the career capital required for inter-industry transitioning, business schools and HR practitioners can develop and package study programmes that enable individuals to build career capital that makes them adaptable across industries and remain employable. Human resource recruiters may better understand the interchange-ability of skills across industries and this could be utilized when recruiting from diverse industries.

1.2 Purpose of this study

This research study primarily seeks to understand how individuals transitioned their careers across an industry. In doing so, this research further probes the following:

- The components of career capital that enabled inter-industry career transitioning
- The method of accrual of the components of career capital that enabled inter-industry career transitioning
- How an ambidextrous approach to an inter-industry career transition can be achieved
- The career capital that is required to sustain employability in the future

By recognising the components of career capital deemed necessary for transitioning ones career across an industry, knowledge workers have a career capital baseline from which they can diagnose, from a career capital perspective, what is required to enable such a transition. The method of career capital accrual may allow individuals to contextualise their learning. An approach to inter-industry career transitioning will provide the individual on how to potentially adapt and contextualise their current career capital (or further develop) to an industry they plan on transitioning to. The study then seeks to establish the career capital required in the future labour market across the various industries the research study participants' are employed within and serves as a prospective basis for gaining insight into what is potentially required of the knowledge worker in the future.

1.3 Research problem

The turbulent global economy brought about by commodity price meltdowns, technological advances and a combination of collapsing, amalgamating and restructuring of industries has resulted in complex and uncertain business environments. A negative outcome of this uncertain business context has led to wide scale retrenchments and job losses placing the knowledge worker under considerable and testing circumstances to find alternate employment. As technology advances certain skills become obsolete which results to a large extent that specific human capital becoming voided. This context necessitates the knowledge worker to guard against potential unemployment by having the ability to translate their career capital across industries. By possessing this ability, the outcome of being able to translate ones career capital to a new industry is viewed as developing career resilience which may result in sustainable employment.

If the knowledge worker understands how they may be able to translate their career capital to a new industry, this may prompt them to start evaluating their current portfolio of career capital and then find alternate use for it. By placing themselves and reviewing their amassed career capital in a new industry the knowledge worker can readily understand how vulnerable and susceptible they may be should the industry they operate in collapse, an example being the mining sector highlighted earlier. The knowledge worker needs to better manage their careers in building career resilience by understanding how to translate their careers to a new industry whether they are forced to (contextual uncertainty) or make a conscious decision to pursuit a new career path.

By understanding the phenomena around how individuals have transitioned their careers across an industry, it becomes imperative to establish the career capital that empowers individuals to stay relevant and adaptable in the knowledge economy by enabling them to apply their career capital across more than one industry which may ensure sustainable employment.

1.4 Research objectives

It should be noted that the study does not focus on how to find a new job; how to excel at an interview or the effects of age, gender, race and so forth on career transitioning. This research study is focused with specifically understanding how career capital is used for inter-industry career transitioning, with primarily focussing on establishing what are the components of career capital that enabled the transition, how these components where acquired and then seeks to establish how an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning can be adopted.

CHAPTER 2: THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Contemporary career capital

The concepts of knowledge, the knowledge worker and career capital form the basis in understanding career capital in relation to the knowledge worker in transitioning their career. Bourdieu (1986) explored the economic system with knowledge being a concept that is created through investment and has the ability to be traded. Drucker's (1994) concept of the knowledge worker is an individual who continually reinvents themselves to align with the business context, is prepared to learn, is highly mobile and possesses a high level of knowledge and skills (both job specific and general business acumen) on which they capitalize. DeFillippi and Arthur (1994), who provided a resource based perspective, introduced the notion of career capital which is viewed as the value created through an on-going improvement in career position and recognition in the competitive external labour market (inter-organisational recruitment) as well as the internal labour market (intra-organisational staffing). Career capital is entrenched in the knowledge worker's set of skills and abilities and as such forms the basis to identify and isolate those specific components of career capital that enable the knowledge worker to transition their careers across an industry.

DeFillipi and Aurthur's (1994) notion of career capital was aligned with the concept of the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) to conceptualise a means of the knowledge worker having tradable capital that enables career employability. Aligned to this is the concept of the boundaryless career, described in the seminal work of Arthur and Rousseau (1996) were knowledge workers strive to develop their skills, capabilities and competencies to accumulate career capital that may be traded within or between organisations. However, this tradable capital has no context attached to it which this research study seeks to establish, in relation to being adapted across industries. Bourdieu (1996) defined capital as having a synthesis of three components with each having the potential to be converted into economic capital such as income; social capital that comprises of relationships, social networks and class membership and cultural or competence capital such as an academic qualification.

Hall (2004) proposed the concept of the "protean career" as one in which the individual, instead of their organisation, is primarily responsible for planning and forming their

career path (Donnelly, 2009). Given that individuals have transitioned across an industry, the assumption of them adopting a "protean career" is deemed valid. The process of acquiring knowledge is seen as an investment activity that increases an individual's ability to generate additional capital (Harris, 2001). Both Arthur and Rosseau (1996) and Lamb and Sutherland (2010) claimed the knowledge based economy brings increasing returns. As the knowledge worker spends time in a particular industry, career capital is accrued and becomes tradable capital in that field (Sutherland et. al, 2015). This study looks to explore and extend the tradable capital across multiple fields, specifically industries.

Baugh and Sullivan (2005) maintained that individuals define career success on their own terms, as opposed to organizational measures which places greater emphasis on individuals to take responsibility for their own career development. This is in line with Perotti, Wall and McLaughlin (2010) who emphasized that with increased mobility, fast-changing work environments and increased self-interest are seen as attributes of the modern career. Given the context of this research, in trying to establish the components of career capital that enabled the knowledge worker to transition across industries, the literature that follows focuses on what are the components of career capital, how they supported movement across an industry to increase the knowledge worker's perceived employability.

2.2 Components of career capital

Becker (1964) stated that the two indicators for human capital (investments) important for industry choice and subsequent individual performance are education and industry experience. DeFillippi and Aurthur (1994) proposed that career capital comprises of three dimensions of knowing namely knowing-whom, knowing-why and knowing-how. Suutari and Mäkelä (2007); Dickmann and Harris (2005) and Inkson and Arthur (2001) confirmed each of these three dimensions with knowing-whom consisting of social relations within and external to the organization and pertinent to one's professional network; knowing-how relates to work knowledge, skills and competencies and knowing-why relates to the individual's identity, career associated choices and the motivation and energy the individual brings to their careers.

Jones and DeFillippi (1996) added 'knowing what', involving understanding industry opportunity, threats and requirements; 'knowing when', an understanding of the best timing of roles, activities and choices and 'knowing where', understanding how to position one's self in an industry by understanding where to enter, train to remain relevant and enhance opportunities. In the context of this research, the preceding considerations by Jones and DeFillippi (1996), augmented with the notions of "knowing-whom", "knowing-why" and "knowing-how" (DeFillippi & Aurthur, 1994) forms the basis for contextualising career capital that enables inter-industry career transitioning.

Lamb and Sutherland (2010) built on these concepts by adding the concept of 'knowing oneself' which recognises the requirement for emotional maturity and emotional intelligence. They proposed the "de facto" model which splits career capital into two distinct groups of capital; "must have capital", a requirement to compete and "nice to have" capital, which they claim adds marginal value to knowledge workers career. Sutherland et al. (2015) list a wide range of career capital and their method of accrual across the manufacturing, financial, high tech research and development and the public service sector in South Africa.

Gerli et al. (2015) argued, in contrast, that the concepts of the three career competencies (knowing-why, knowing-how and knowing-whom) is insufficient as it only includes the "repositories of knowledge" individuals may acquire and use during their professional experiences, especially when moving across boundaries. This facet of research fails to consider the behavioural aspect of individual competency that transcends above ones knowledge and centres on both the reason and the associated behaviours that enables individuals to pursue greater outcomes in their career path. Savickas and Porfeli (2012) found four scales that measure career behaviour's and attitudes which included concern, control, curiosity, and confidence as psychosocial resources for managing occupational transitions and developmental tasks. Each of these four measures reflect the ability to look ahead to one's future, consideration for future career possibilities (concern), having a sense of what their career aspirations are and acting on it (control), exploring potential job options and roles (curiosity), and to have the self-efficacy to embark on activities required to attain those career goals (confidence).

An associated facet of career capital, in particular "knowing whom", is that of a career network. Bartol and Zhang (2007) defined a career network as relationships "with actors who can facilitate career progress by providing career advice" (p.389), through activities such as mentoring, support and sponsorship. Career networks that enable collaboration and dialogue become a necessary mechanism for information collecting and diffusion as this provides career information (Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001). The role of having a network, in the form of professional individuals and mentors is seen as an important factor for assisting individuals in managing their careers.

Given the research objectives, specifically in understanding how career capital was adapted across industries, the ability to adapt ones skills and to contextualise the new environment requires greater attention. Kutz (2008) stated that amidst globalization, advancing technology, the intensifying cognizance of global citizenship and the growing amount of stakeholders, it is no longer unexpected to discover a vast number of contextual variables innate in each situation. Kutz (2008) further noted that an individual's responsibility to correctly interpret contexts necessitates a radical shift in current methods of thinking, categorizing and understanding data and information. Khanna (2014) described contextual intelligence as the ability to recognise the confines of our knowledge and to adapt that specific knowledge to an environment dissimilar from the one in which it was initially formulated.

In light of this study, the change in industry is viewed as the new environment that the individual is required to understand and adapt to. Khanna (2014) further explained that contextual intelligence requires moving far beyond an analysis of institutional context into areas as diverse as intellectual property rights, aesthetic preferences, attitudes toward power, beliefs about the free market, and even religious differences. The greatest challenge resides in the "soft" work of changing mental models, learning to differentiate between universal principles and their specific embodiments and being open to new ideas (Khanna, 2014). According to Kutz (2008) contextual intelligence helped explain what materialises when, in one context a leader excels, however the same leader, when promoted, reassigned, or transitioned into another context, is less effective. With this conceptualisation, the research will investigate how individuals were able to contextualise their transition from a career capital perspective in establishing a fit within a new industry.

Business acumen as a component of career capital has cropped up in numerous occasions (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010; Sutherland et al., 2015) however little to no information on the definition or detail of what constitutes business acumen in relation to career capital could be attained. By limiting business acumen to the confines of single organisations operations, Zott, Amit and Massa (2011) stated that the business model of a company is how business is conducted to firstly generate and then capture economic. By unpacking this notion and understanding of a business model, Kindström and Kowalkowski (2014) summed up a business model as the story of the firm in terms of money generation, customers and the customer value that is presented with content encompassing revenue model(s), structures, activities, processes, customer relationships and the firm's position within the value network (Magretta, 2002; Chesbrough, 2007).

2.3 Movement capital

Trevor (2001) introduced the concept of movement capital which he stated is an individual's attributes that enhances their career mobility. Forrier, Sels and Steynen (2009) identified that movement capital is centred on personal agency and the individuals strengths both permit and encourages them to exploit and expand their employability compass (Thijssen, Van der Heijden & Rocco, 2008). According to Forrier, Sels, et al. (2009) movement capital is the aggregate of "individual skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes influencing an individual's career mobility" (p.742) along the four dimensions of human capital, social capital, self-awareness and adaptability (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004; McArdle, Waters, Briscoe & Hall, 2007; Koen, Klehe & Van Vianen, 2013).

The first dimension, human capital, denotes an individual's capacity to meet the performance expectations pertaining to their occupational expertise (Fugate et al., 2004; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006) and is aligned to the knowing-how competencies. This could include possessing subject knowledge expertise in the field of finance, human resources, marketing and so forth. The second dimension is social capital which highlights the significance of social networks in influencing careers or networking (Kuijpers, Schyns & Scheerens, 2006), and it aligns with the notion of knowing-whom competencies. This could entail ones professional network and mentors.

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The third dimension is self-awareness which implied career identity (Fugate et al., 2004) or reflects the individual's career competencies (Akkermans et al., 2013) central to the knowing-why competencies. The fourth dimension refers to adaptability, which considers the amalgamation of the individual's willingness and ability "to change behaviours, feelings and thoughts in responses to environmental demands" (McArdle et al., 2007, p. 248). Adaptability allows people to evolve and motivates them to adapt their human capital, social capital, and career identity to new circumstances (Forrier, Sels, et al., 2009). Verbruggen et al. (2007) stated that activities such as career counselling, training, task enrichment and network development can be used to maintain or enhance movement capital.

Further research by Forrier, Verbruggen and De Cuyper (2015) asserted through their dynamic chain analogy that job transitions increase an individual's movement capital (Chudikowski, 2012); movement capital in turn improves perceived employability (Wittekind, Raeder & Grote, 2010) and perceived employability prompts additional job transitions (Jiang, Liu, McKay, Lee & Mitchell, 2012). However, this literature neglects to analyse the context around the transitions; to theorize as well as to elaborate on the components of career capital that enables an individual to transition specifically across industries.

Preceding research has largely concentrated the operationalization of a physical boundaryless career to inter-organizational movement (Sullivan, 1999; Inkson et al., 2012; Gubler et al., 2014a) and global careers through international assignments (Fang, Zikic & Novacevic, 2009). These studies do not state the industries these skills are applied to but rather focuses on adaptability of individuals seeking work across the globe (Baruch, Dickmann, Altmand & Bournoisf, 2013; Suutari & Mäkelä, 2007; Sammarra, Profili & Innocenti, 2013; Yao, 2014). This research study seeks to build on the original construct, introduced by Sullivan and Arthur (2006) by focussing on cross industry career transitions and applying a protean career mind-set to career management.

Wittekind et al. (2010) established a link between movement capital and perceived employability, also advocating the relationship between willingness to change jobs as a facet of adaptability and perceived external employability. Although there is support for

the link between movement capital and perceived external employability, the external employability is not clearly defined but rather limited to external of the current employer. Forrier, Verbruggen, et al. (2015) criticized the notion of movement capital as it is inclined towards an agency perspective, excessively accentuating the significance of personal strengths with little focus on the influence of context. Based on the research at hand, movement capital does not provide the specific details on how an individual has transitioned across an industry and what is adapted from career capital perspective.

2.4 Career capital: Differences across industries

Forrier, Sels, et al. (2009) stated that the increasingly fragmented and discontinuous nature of careers has focused new career concepts with the concepts of the boundaryless career (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996) and the protean career (Hall, 2004) being the most influential. Although both these concepts diverge in their primary focus of attention, these concepts concentrate on the mounting uncertainty of careers with emphasis on transcending traditional boundaries and the increasing significance of individual agency that contributes to influencing careers (Forrier, Sels, et al., 2009). The "boundary" crossed in most of the current research work focuses on inter-organisations however given the contextual changes, this research study seeks to explore the adaptability and portability of skills in crossing industry boundaries that can assist individuals in better managing their careers.

Inkson and King (2011) assert that an individual's decision to invest in a particular organisation is influenced, amongst others, by an organisational or inter-organizational career. If the latter is the choice, the individual considers the extent to which the newly acquired capital is portable. Lamb and Sutherland (2010) found that career capital is accrued through the transfer, experience and exposure as the knowledge worker moves through and across organisations in the boundaryless career. This research study strives to establish whether career capital acquired within one industry can be ported to another and to provide insight into how this is actually achieved.

Hall (2004) advocated that knowledge workers drive their own careers as their careers comprises of assignments irrespective of the organisation employing them (Van Staden & du Toit, 2011). Forrier, Sels, et al. (2009) argued that if career capital is specific to

one industry, it limits the knowledge workers movement capital across industries. This infers that if knowledge workers do not possess career capital that enables transitioning to another industry, then they may be subjected to potential employability risks should that particular industry collapse or evolve to an extent that makes certain components in their current portfolio of career capital obsolete. Sutherland et al. (2015) state there is limited data on the literature illustrating the similarity or differences between career management practices across different employment sectors. However, their contribution to career research shows there are four common components of career capital (action orientation, educational qualification, self-motivation and drive, determination and perseverance) across the manufacturing, financial, high tech research and development and the public service sector in South Africa. The limitation of their study is that data was collected from single organisations within these industries which could make the data non representative for each of the above mentioned industries.

2.5 Acquiring career capital

Manuti, Pastore, Scardingo and Morciano (2015) stated that individual learning is increasingly becoming a strategic factor for global competitiveness since the formation of the international knowledge community with emphasis placed on knowledge development. They note this is a result of the fundamental redefinition of the international labour market impacted by changes in demographics, skills demand, technologies, people's relationships and roles within various institutions and organizations. Career capital can be developed through both formal and informal learning. Jacobs and Parks (2009) label workplace learning as "the multiple ways through which employees learn in organizations" (p.134). Career capital can be developed through the knowledge worker taking the initiative and building career capital or alternatively could be carried out by the organization together with the employee to sustain or improve the employee's functional, learning and career competencies (Forrier & Sels, 2003).

De Vos, De Hauw and Van der Heijden (2011) explained that partaking in competency enhancing activities refers to how employees cultivate their competencies by proactively engaging in various types of developmental initiatives presented by their organization, i.e. increased traditional methods of formal learning activities including

training and informal learning such as on-the-job learning. Philosophies of learning through work tasks are centred on how people learn by engaging in daily activities and social interactions in the work environment (Smith, 2003).

Campion, Cheraskin and Stevens (1994) reported a positive association between job rotation and both perceived knowledge and skill development, highlighting the significance of job rotation within an organisation. More recently, Nauta, Van Vianen, Van der Heijden, Van Dam and Willemsen (2009) established that an organizational culture that is openly committed to individual development has a favourable outcome on an individual's employability. De Vos et al. (2011) found that competency development, initiated by an organisation, not only relates to subject specific but also to occupational expertise and flexibility (Campion et al., 1994).

Lohman (2005) explained informal learning as the learning that employees self-initiate in the workplace which involves the exertion of physical, cognitive or emotional effort, resulting in the acquisition of professional knowledge and skills. Manuti et al. (2015) stated that informal learning is cognizant of the development of knowledge and skills in the work environment and is not solely achieved from structured programs but learning transpires through critical moments of importance entrenched in the context of practice.

Informal learning happens in circumstances that are not typically planned for learning, especially in the actual work setting and requires an amalgamation of individual intellectual curiosity, self-directedness and self-efficacy (Beckett & Hager, 2002). Manuti et al. (2015) noted that informal learning may arise due to varying activities which include group problem solving, mentoring, coaching and job shadowing by engaging with others or by embarking on self-initiated study when required. According to Manuti et al. (2015) informal self-initiated learning at work has a positive correlation with flexibility, employability and adaptability of learning to context.

2.6 Career transitioning across industries

Gunz, Peiperl and Tzabbar (2007) affirm that career transitions can be explained as transfers across diverse types of boundaries that can result in both minor discontinuities and major disruptions to an individual's career with the extent of their

impact dependant on the nature of the boundaries transcended (Ng, Sorensen, Eby & Feldman, 2007). Career transitions can be studied across three physical dimensions organizational, horizontal, and vertical (Schein, 1971; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). This study focuses on movements along all three dimensions, specifically involving transitions across industries, with each industry being defined by its core product or service. An example of such transitions includes individuals that move from engineering into telecommunications or from banking into insurance.

Ng and Feldman (2009) stated numerous elements have stimulated individuals' career mobility over the last decade including macroeconomic conditions; the perception of favourable economic conditions in some areas; firms downsizing and outsourcing in search of flexibility, efficiency and innovation thus changing career prospects from job security to continuous learning in an attempt to ensure marketability in the external labour market (Gerli et al., 2015). The factors highlighted above suggest a change in the environment that may influence an individual to transition their career however there could be potential instances were individuals may decide to seek employment in another industry in the absence of such contextual changes.

Gubler et al. (2014b) argued that in the modern career, individuals are predominantly accountable for managing and directing their career paths with individual agency and personal traits indicating critical factors for career mobility. Rodrigues and Guest (2010) assert that crossing career boundaries may produce a feeling of insecurity, creating stress associated to employment uncertainty that individuals endure when they identify threats to the stability of one's employability. This perception of ambiguity may intensify if individuals change employer but more significantly if they plan on entering a new industry (Gerli et al., 2015). Literature has identified the impact of individual characteristics on the propensity to transcend boundaries by taking into account factors which included gender, level of education, age and prior working experience (Gerli et al., 2015). Most of these elements are restricted to a personal agency perspective with limited research available on the specific components of career capital that enabled transitions across industries, let alone how the components acquired in one industry were transferred and translated into usable career capital in the new industry.

2.7 Individual ambidexterity

In light of the dynamic global business environment in which firms strive for agility and flexibility, the study of career capital has taken on more prominence (Inkson & Arthur, 2001). In relation to agility and flexibility, March's (1991) formative work on the notion of organizational ambidexterity, defined as the simultaneous pursuit of exploitation, "the development of things already known" and exploration "the development of new knowledge" (p.105) forms the basis for ambidexterity studies at both an organizational and individual unit of analysis. This is followed by Hills, Todd and Goldstein's (2010) definition of ambidexterity which they defined as the "the ability to switch flexibly" (p.593) which, for the purposes of the research, refers to an individual having the ability to switch their cognitive mind-set from the current industry into a new industry.

At an organisational unit of analysis, ambidexterity could be defined as the ability of the firm to simultaneously exploit and explore which enables a firm to adapt over time (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2004). Prieto and Santana (2012) stated that both researchers and managers have a vested interest in understanding how firms can pursue ambidextrous learning by simultaneously exploring new knowledge spheres while exploiting current ones. By adopting Good and Michel's (2013) explanation of individual ambidexterity, as being the individual-level cognitive ability to flexibly adapt within a dynamic environment by appropriately shifting between exploration and exploitation, this research study further contextualises this definition to the ability of the individual in applying an ambidextrous approach to career transitioning. Ambidexterity in the context of this research refers to acquiring career capital that builds the intimate knowledge of the new firm or industry that an individual envisaged transitioning across to. As an individual exploits their career capital through the day to day activities, in parallel they should explore the adaptability of their career capital in a new industry which ultimately builds career resilience in an effort to ensure sustainable employment.

Mom, Van den Bosch and Volberda (2009) provided evidence that ambidexterity can be pursued not only at the firm level but also at the individual level. Mom et al. (2009) found that individuals who remained employed for a long time in their current position, where easier suited to simultaneously balance exploitation and exploration. This is in direct contrast to Bonesso et al. (2013) whose study revealed that individuals who had prior exposure to working in different business units or organizations were able to

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better achieve ambidexterity. They found the underlying reason for this was related to these individuals often operating in different sectors, thus acquiring a broad knowledge base.

Bonesso et al. (2013) stated that individual prior inter-functional and/or inter-firm work experience promotes not only exploration, but exploration and exploitation simultaneously. However, these findings have a context associated to them as the research failed to consider how the differences in terms of type and variety of individual prior work experience (inter-industry) may influence differently the ability of reconciling both explorative and exploitative learning roles. In relation to interpreting a new industry and a firm within that industry, prior working knowledge may assist individuals to adapt and flexibly adjust their cognitive frame to the new industry. Good and Michel's (2013) criticism of individual ambidexterity studies was the failure to capture the simultaneity of exploring and exploiting as most studies question past behaviour of exploring or exploiting, rather than testing one's ability to actively pursue both simultaneously. This study seeks to understand how individuals can explore the necessary requirements to enable an inter-industry career transition whilst exploiting their current portfolio of career capital.

Lavie, Stettner and Tushman (2010) stated that exploitation and exploration should not be analysed as a decision between two isolated choices, but rather as a continuum. Laureiro-Martínez, Brusoni and Zollo (2010) who embraced a neurological perspective, affirm that individual ambidexterity is neither exploration nor exploitation of tasks, but the decision-maker's ability to alter his/her attention scope (from broad to narrow and vice versa). In light of this research, the ability of the individual to alter their attention scope by exploring and contextualising a new industry forms the basis of how one may adapt their career capital to the new industry. Laureiro-Martínez et al. (2010) distinguished between two cognitive operating modes, the phasic and the tonic. In the phasic mode, individuals expand their attention and are able to search and explore for alternatives and are creative (exploration behaviour); whereas in the tonic mode, individuals narrow down their attention hence they are more concentrated and focused on solving specific problems (exploitation behaviour).

Although Turner et al. (2013) highlighted the limited theorization on individual ambidexterity and the limited empirical evidence on how individuals can practically

manage exploration and exploitation, they also provide evidence that individual ambidexterity can be achieved through taking the initiative; displaying cooperative behaviour and multitasking. Zhu et al. (2013) research on executives established that through prior job rotations and different types of roles within the three role type changes (e.g. line, staff, or matrix), executives boosted their adaptability with 100 months being the optimal time to spend in each role type.

Brown (2015) noted the two significant themes in career adaptability emerged which related to having an ambidextrous approach to learning and these included updating a substantive knowledge base (or mastering a new additional substantive knowledge base); learning through (and beyond) interactions at work and being self-directed and self-reflexive. Prieto and Santana (2012) recognized that an organizational social climate conducive to learning enables ambidexterity at the individual and organizational level. This research study will provide insight into whether or not having a self-initiated ambidextrous approach to learning assisted the knowledge worker in acquiring inter-industry transitioning career capital or if these skills were acquired as the organisation diversified.

Mom, Fourne and Jansen (2015) who studied ambidexterity in managers, stated that ambidexterity is having the ability to both use and refine existing knowledge (exploitation) while also creating new knowledge to overcome knowledge deficiencies (exploration) or absences identified within the execution of the work (March 1991, Turner et al., 2013). Relating manager to any individual and within the context of exploring a new industry, individuals may need to engage in paradoxical thinking, a selection of diverse activities and roles, and different kinds of learning (Mom et al., 2009; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2004).

Mom et al. (2015) noted that individuals that are skilled and motivated engage in an extensive variety of different or even opposing activities and roles such as conducting both monotonous and non-routine activities (Denison, Hooijberg & Quinn, 1995). Through the process of exploration, it can be argued that for a knowledge worker to direct their attention to a new industry, it is a non-routine activity which requires a change in mind-set. This change of mind-set is seen as the shift between exploitation and exploration but exactly how this may be achieved, in relation to inter-industry career transitioning, is a pertinent objective of this research study.

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2.8 Career adaptation and resilience

King (2004) stated that vocational psychology must be able to explain how employees manage their careers purposefully; become adaptive and flexible through their career and how they can successfully balance the confines between work and non-work. Savickas's (2002) theory of career construction conceptualized career adaptability as attitudes, behaviours and competencies that individuals use in aligning themselves to work that appeals to them, comprising of the four dimensions which included concern (planning), control (being decisive), curiosity (exploring, being inquisitive) and confidence (being efficacious).

In relation to career transitioning, Hirschi, Herrmann and Keller (2014) noted that career adaptability is being progressively considered a multi-dimensional construct that refers to the flexible ability of individuals to undertake transitions successfully which is described as the conscious and continuous exploration of both the self and the environment, where the ultimate objective is to attain coordination amongst the individual, their identity and an occupational environment (Savickas, 2008). Career adaptability in the above context alludes to ambidexterity as the individual has to proactively search for within the occupational environment, which is driven by personal traits and attributes. This research seeks to establish how these personal traits and attributes were adapted across industries in the new occupational environment.

Hirschi et al. (2014) stated that individual attributes are fundamental to the development of career adaptability, including personality dimensions that affect the extent of individuals' ability to adjust to working in diverse work contexts, their flexibility when faced with change, their proactiveness when searching for new challenges and their willingness to plan with implications for their future career. Bimrose, Brown, Barnes and Hughes (2011) accentuate that the governing features which describe an individual's career adaptability profile encompasses an individual's personality traits; context and opportunities; learning and development and career orientation.

Given the above importance of the proactiveness associated with adaptability, it can be argued that being able to adapt ones career to different industries bring resilience to ones' career. Resilience in this research context refers to preventing unemployment by negating the threat of occupational disruption and remaining employed as opposed to

bouncing back after an occupational disruption such as a job loss. Lyons, Schweitzer and Ng (2015) noted that resilience has long been an important construct in the field of psychology but has received relatively little research attention in the context of career development (Bimrose & Hearne, 2012). This research study contends that building career resilience is seen as an important factor in managing ones career with adaptability of career capital being a crucial aspect of in achieving resilience.

In relation to sustainable employment, Arora and Rangnekar (2014) argued that career resilience delineates the degree to which people resist career impediments or conditions that affect their work, self-confidence, need for achievement, willingness, risk-taking ability as well as the ability to act independently and cooperatively (London & Mone, 1987). This research study views career resilience as having the ability to translate ones career capital to a new industry when required as opposed to being forced to by uncertain economic environment stimuli.

At an individual unit of analysis, Waterman, Waterman and Collard (1994) advocated that career resilient workers, concentrated on continuous learning, adaptation to change, career self-management and meeting the fluctuating requirements of the labour market. One infers that being career resilient means having the capacity to continuously align oneself with varying market needs as opposed to just one market. Stolz and Coetzee (2015) noted career adaptability to be positively correlated with future job exploration self-efficacy, employment status, perceptions of the future work self and person-environment fit (Guan et al., 2014).

2.9 Conclusion of literature review

The research problem relates to career capital used as an enabler for an ambidextrous approach for inter-industry career transitioning. The literature reviewed covered the following pertinent aspects:

- Career capital and the relevant components
- Career capital development
- Career capital that allow movement
- Individual ambidexterity in relation to learning
- Career adaptation and resilience

Current literature and theory has provided vast amount of information on career capital and how it affects employability, career management and career success predominantly within an organisational setting or to a limited extent inter-organisational. The concept of the boundaryless career is well published however little information exists on how the boundary, in this study it is referred to an industry, is transitioned. Inter-industry transitioning although very scarcely furnished, lacks the granularity on how career capital was utilised to transcend the boundary (industry). This research study seeks to fill this void in literature by understanding how the knowledge worker transitioned across an industry by adapting their career capital from one industry to the next.

Most of the literature presented focuses on what is required for career adaptation and career self-management however almost no information provides specific detail on how ones career is adapted across an industry. Almost no literature exists relating to skills adaption and how to position ones portfolio of career capital in a new context. This research study aims to understand how individuals are able to transcend a boundary using career capital that has no context in terms of an industry specific viewpoint and in doing so where able to contextualise their career capital.

Current ambidexterity research focuses predominantly at an organisational level with limited but increasingly available literature on individual ambidexterity. Initial individual ambidexterity primarily focuses on an individual's ability to adjust their mind-set by making a conscious decision and choice between two different and independent tasks with more recent literature focussing on ambidexterity as a continuum of two tasks and not a single task in isolation. Coupled to this view of ambidexterity is the ability to exploit current career capital whilst exploring new ways to make use of this career capital and as such the study focuses on how ambidexterity was used to promote an inter-industry career transition and the role of career capital as an enabler.

The ultimate aim of the research is to understand what career capital is required to enable an inter-industry career transition and how the process of an inter-industry career transition is achieved with specific attention given to the use of career capital in this process. This research study seeks to align career capital with skills adaptation in an effort to build and enhance an individual's career resilience that may ensure sustainable employment.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Saunders and Lewis (2012) state that research questions provide a clear link to the appropriate literature with the intention of obtaining renewed perceptions into the selected topic. DeFillippi et al. (2006) introduced the term career imprinting which refers to the ability of an individual to transfer similar career experiences from one industry to another but they maintain this is difficult feat to achieve. This research study aims to understand how individuals that have transitioned into a new industry, managed to transfer their career capital across to the new industry. This research study intends on unravelling very explicit detail pertaining to how components of career capital were used to transition individuals' careers across to a new industry and why these specific components are crucial for transitioning across industries.

Research projects are intended to solve problems and research questions are addressed to bridge the gaps in an existing body of knowledge. Career adaptability has been researched in numerous empirical studies and its measurement, emergence and predictive value are of vital significance in current career research (Hirschi et al., 2014). This chapter draws on the issues emerging from the literature review presented in Chapter Two coupled with the purpose of the research detailed in Chapter One to understand how research questions must be positioned to obtain the necessary data to meet the objectives of the research study. Based on the research problem definition, literature reviewed and the limitations of current studies, the researcher wishes to understand how career capital is an enabler in facilitating an ambidextrous approach for inter-industry career transitioning. The purpose of this research study is to answer the four questions outlined below and interpret the findings to produce a meaningful contribution that will provide insight into the process of transitioning ones career capital across an industry. In order to satisfy this broad objective the following research questions will be investigated during this exploratory study.

3.1 Research question 1

What are the most pertinent components of career capital that are required to transition careers across industries?

Research question 1 was aimed at identifying the specific components of career capital that enabled individuals to execute an inter-industry career transition. These specific

components will serve as a diagnostic mechanism for the knowledge worker to understand the career capital that may be required for them to transition their careers across an industry but may also assist human resource practitioners in recruiting individuals from diverse career backgrounds.

3.2 Research question 2

How are these components of career capital acquired?

Research question 2 seeks to identify how the components that enabled an inter-industry career transition were acquired. The research question explores the methods and processes used to acquire career capital. By understanding how the components, listed in question one above, are acquired the knowledge worker can use this as a basis for learning on how they may plan to acquire career capital or supplement their current methods of acquiring capital.

3.3 Research question 3

What enables an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning?

Research question 3 is aimed at understanding the process of approaching an inter-industry career transition in relation to the thought process, preparation and effort expended before and during the transition. This research question forms the basis and the core to understanding how career capital (from question 1) can be used to both initiate and execute an inter-industry career transition. Research question 2 is used to provide insight into how to acquire career capital which is important to the ambidexterity required when exploiting current career capital but exploring new career capital to assist the knowledge worker in transitioning their career.

3.4 Research question 4

What components of career capital may ensure sustainable employment?

Research question 4 was aimed at providing insight into the human capital requirements required for the future. Research question 1 will provide career capital components from a hindsight perspective however research question is to provide career capital components from a foresight outlook. These components of career capital should be acquired in conjunction to the components mentioned in research question 1 to form or enhance career resilience.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This research aimed to develop a vigorous study that followed a three pronged approach to firstly understand the research question, secondly to achieve the pre-defined objectives and lastly to contribute to the identified and defined research problem. The research methodology, prescribed in the subsequent sections, formed the basis for the execution of the study. This research study resembled Yin's (2013) heightened interpretation of research which was to study four areas that included what questions to study; what data is to be collected; what data is relevant and how the data is to be analysed. The research methodology served as a guiding policy on how the data was collected and analysed to prevent biases when addressing the research problem. The literature review formed the underpinning and frame of reference when the data was analysed. Given the nature of this research study, a qualitative exploratory design was used to acquire the data through in-depth, semi-structured face to face interviews. The results of the research findings formed the basis of input in the development of a model that served to address the research problem.

4.2 Research method and design

This research study is qualitative in nature and made use of an exploratory design to gain insight into what career capital components can be used to enable an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning. A qualitative design was used as the researcher attempted to interpret a specific phenomenon and answer a few research questions that necessitated further probing as opposed to skimming the surface (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012). This research design was deemed suitable for the study as the researcher wanted to gain an in depth understanding of the career capital that initiated the process and enabled an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning. Exploratory research was utilised as the researcher did not clearly understand the topic and wished to learn greater detail about the topic (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The study made use of external, primary data. Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2013) emphasised that exploratory research is conducted to elucidate ambiguity in situations, however it is not planned to offer definite evidence for decision making. Based on the above sentiment, exploratory research was considered

appropriate to better understand the granularity of the data to address the research problem.

The qualitative method enabled the researcher to probe and establish the specific details deemed necessary to answer each research question and eventually the research problem. Qualitative research was deemed the most appropriate method when trying to understand the components and characteristics of the phenomenon before attempting to theorise around it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The primary advantage of employing a qualitative method resided in the ability to generate rich detailed data, preserving the participants' perspectives but also providing various contexts for understanding the phenomenon under study (Anderson, 2010). Qualitative data assisted the researcher to better understand the context in which decisions were taken (Myers, 2013)

This research study also made use of an inductive research approach. Inductive analysis involved the process of delving in the granular details of the data obtained to discern the key patterns, themes and inter-relationships by exploring then verifying the research findings, underpinned by analytical principles as opposed to rigid procedures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Inductive analysis was considered relevant to determine the components of career capital and its methods of accrual that enabled an inter-industry career transition. This method was also utilised to view all the data in its entirety to develop a model that outlines the approach to an inter-industry career transition.

4.2.1 Population

The target population which is a complete set of group members that shares some common characteristics, and for this research study, was senior managers and executives who have undertaken more than one inter-industry career transition and also currently hold a senior position that influences the strategic direction of the organisation (Zikmund et al., 2013). This group of individuals was identified as the population from which the samples were extracted for the face-to-face, in-depth interviews. Adopting this process facilitated easier testing of the findings that emerged from the literature review. This population was restricted to the individuals having previous work exposure in a corporate setting. These criteria ensured that valuable

contributions could be provided by the individuals especially around inter-industry career transitions at a senior level; insight into the process of an ambidextrous approach to career transitioning and lastly to provide details of the career capital that may ensure sustainable employment within their current industry of employment.

4.2.2 Unit of analysis

The process of both determining and establishing the unit of analysis is a pivotal milestone in the research design as it contributed to identifying the key areas in which focus was devoted to during the data gathering phase. The unit of observation was individuals that transitioned across more than one industry and who currently hold a senior position that influences the strategic direction of the organisation. The unit of analysis for this study were individuals based on the perceptions and recollection of their approach to an inter-industry career transition and insight on the career capital required to ensure sustainable employment in their current industry of employ. These constituents made the seniority of the individuals greatly interview-able for the wealth of practical knowledge they shared and their valuable insights on this research topic. The insights provided contributed to creating a framework for an approach to inter-industry career transitioning. The pre-defined research design and methodology aligned to the nature of the research topic which ensured the defined research objectives were realised as it tied back to the stated research problem.

4.2.3 Sample

The sampling method adopted involved the researcher requesting people within his professional networks, individuals that transitioned across more than one industry and who currently hold a senior position that influences the strategic direction of the organisation. Given the rigidity of the population criteria, the following non-probability (non-random) sampling methods were used in this study: purposive, judgement and quota sampling. Purposeful sampling was specifically used by the researcher to look for participants who possessed specific qualities or merits by considering the objectives of the research then choosing the participants that will fulfil the research objectives (Coyne, 1997).

Fifteen in-depth interviews including one pilot interview was completed with the detailed sample discussed in the subsequent chapter. The interviewees were from diverse industries, within South Africa, with most of them undertaking more than two inter-industry career transitions. The researcher is cognisant of the potential bias of these sampling methods as the sample may not be entirely representative of the target population. In light of this research study, non-probability sampling methods were beneficial for exploratory research circumstances as it provided initial insights into and outlined the random variables under study, which was the purpose of this research study (Wegner, 2014).

4.3 Ethical considerations

The interviewees from various and diverse industries all signed a consent form (Appendix B) before partaking in the interview to confirm that it was a voluntary participation and that their responses will be kept confidential. Prior to starting the interview, the researcher requested the participant to sign the informed consent form that detailed the research study requirements and stated that the participant could abandon the interview at any time. All participants agreed for their names to be disclosed in order to identify and uphold the calibre of the research findings; however their responses in the discussion of the results and analysis were kept confidential.

4.4 Research instrument

The data collection method employed was in-depth, face to face qualitative interviews. According to Saunders and Lewis (2012), the most common way of conducting exploratory research is to analyse the academic literature and interview experts on the subject. All fifteen interviews were held in person at the participants' place of employment. The findings of all interviews (including the pilot interview) were used as data to address the research problem. The responses of the fifteen interviews were analysed for this research study. The average interview was fifty minutes long with a range of approximately forty minutes to seventy minutes depending on the time constraints imposed by the interviewee and their availability.

4.4.1 Design

Semi-structured, in depth face to face interviews were conducted as it gave the researcher some structure and allowed for improvisation, and allowed the interviewees the opportunity to provide important insights during the course of the interviews (Myers, 2013). The semi-structured interview technique enabled the researcher to obtain a variety of responses based on the interviewee's viewpoints on the topic at hand and to the set questions that allowed for detailed responses to be provided on these viewpoints to ensure greater understanding of the dynamics at play (Struwig & Stead, 2001). The researcher did not provide any of the interview questions prior to the scheduled interview date to eliminate any potential biases if the interviewees decided to prepare for the interview. The semi-structured interview method enabled the researcher to probe for specific details from the interviewees' without directing them in any specific way so the researcher is not completely suggestive thereby skewing the results.

The in-depth interviews were organised in a manner that stimulated a conversation with the participants which focussed on a specific number of aspects with the objective of assimilating an academic puzzle (Mason, 2002). The initiating email sent to each respondent describing the research study and desired population served as a basis for the respondent to confirm they were a match for the sample criteria. At the start of each interview, each respondent confirmed the industries they transitioned to as well as being currently employed within.

The interview was divided into four parts with each part reflecting a research question. The first part of the semi-structured questionnaire focused on open-ended questions on the components of career capital that enabled the respondent to transition into the new industry. The second part of the interview schedule was more structured in establishing the methods of accrual of the above mentioned components of career capital that enabled the respondent to transition their career across an industry. The third part of the interview was open-ended as it sought perspectives from the interviewee on how one could potentially adopt an ambidextrous approach to inter industry career transitioning. The fourth part sought to understand the components of career capital that could potentially ensure sustainable employment within the respondents current industry if employment. The interview schedule (Appendix A) presents the full list of

questions asked to each interviewee. All of the interviews were recorded in order to assist with the analysis phase.

4.4.2 Data validity and reliability

It is of paramount importance for data to be both reliable and accurate for individuals to make appropriate decisions from the analysed data. Lincoln and Guba's (1985) measure of reliability in qualitative studies consisted of a criteria that included credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability of the data to indicate its trustworthiness. In an effort to attain and ensure trustworthiness of the research, the interview schedule was the same for all fifteen interviewees. Research tools and data analysis techniques were evaluated by two other research scholars, with experience in conducting qualitative research, before executing the in-depth interviews. Pilot testing was also conducted to test the robustness of the interview schedule and the duration of the interview. These checks endorsed better reliability of the analysis and accretion process as it was validated on a second and a third tier.

Struwig and Stead (2001) described validity in qualitative research as the trustworthiness or credibility of the outlined process. Given the nature of this research, the potential for researcher bias did exist, hence the need for interpretive validity (Johnson & Christensen, 2004) which related to the degree to which the research participants' viewpoints, thoughts and intentions were correctly interpreted by the researcher. Electronic recordings of each interview assisted with the process of interpretive validity to ensure the researcher was using the data accurately as the researcher could repeatedly listen to the interviews that transpired. To minimise this bias, a third party and research scholar assessed and validated the approach to coding and analysis.

4.4.3 Pilot interview

Kvale (2007) underlined the importance of a pilot test as it supported the researcher in determining if there are faults, limitations or other flaws within the interview design and will then enable the researcher to make the necessary adjustments prior to commencing with the actual interviews. The interview schedule was developed with themes constructed from the literature review to confirm the whether the objectives of

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the research questions could be met from the defined research questions. The interview schedule was tested on a third party and fellow researcher to ensure austerity of the interview schedule before it was used. The intention of the pilot interview was to ascertain the construction of the questions; the participants' ease of understanding and whether the responses address the specific research objectives.

One pilot interview was conducted with an individual who met the sample criteria. The purpose of the pilot interview was to afford the researcher the opportunity to evaluate whether changes were required to be made to the interview style and the manner in which questions are asked. The outcome of the pilot interview was that the interview flowed well with adequate understanding of the vocabulary used and the initial themes that emerged from the interview were easily translatable with the themes discussed in the literature review. The researcher decided that no further adjustments were required to the interview schedule and the same interview schedule was used for the remaining fourteen interviews. The data from the single pilot interview was incorporated into the total data set and analysed to produce the findings of this research study.

4.5 Data analysis

Data collection and data analysis should have some overlap to provide flexibility during the data analysis process and to be open to new concepts in the event of fresh content emerging from the data (Darke, Shanks & Broadbent, 1998). Qualitative content analysis was selected from the numerous qualitative methods for analysing the data and understanding its implications as it represented a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena that emerged (Schreier, 2012). The data analysis procedure is extremely intuitive and as such may not always yield a source of insight (Merriam, 2009).

The fifteen research interviews which formed part of the data collection process occurred in the time frame between July and September 2016. As each interview was completed, the researcher recorded the interview responses on a Microsoft Excel template which served as the framework for data analysis. Detailed interview summaries were noted during the interview as well as the interview being recorded. The recordings were critically reviewed on numerous occasions to warrant precise

transcribing of the responses into the Excel document to facilitate increased reliability of the data analysis.

Prior to commencing the data analysis phase of the research study, it was critical to refine the interpretation of each interview held by coding the data. Coding is a systematic process that enabled the researcher to confidently understand the essence of what each respondent conveyed and represented by organising and sorting the data. The coding process was achieved by assigning meaningful labels to the clusters of data that surfaced. This allowed for patterns and consistencies in the data to emerge (Saldana, 2009).

Thematic analysis was utilised as the method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data and subsequently designated as the methodology adopted for this research study due to its flexibility and capability to produce rich yet complex representations of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis provided a purely qualitative, comprehensive and nuanced interpretation of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study made use of both content and thematic analysis on the data obtained from the participants'.

Content analysis was used extensively as it was found fitting for use in qualitative research (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Content analysis was considered appropriate for this research study due to the flexibility in being used throughout a range of both theoretical and epistemological approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The output of thematic analysis was interpreted and enabled the researcher to draw the necessary conclusions and insights to address the research problem. Data saturation occurred when no additional data that was collected provided few, if any, new insights into the research objective (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This occurred once the thoughts and insights from the different interviewees began to emerge and become repetitive with no new themes surfacing. Data saturation occurred after thirteen interviews with an additional two interviews conducted to confirm data saturation. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample, interpret the results and draw conclusions based on the collated data.

Inductive content analysis and thematic analysis was used due to the limited previous studies dealing with this phenomenon, regarding inter-industry career transitioning, which resulted in coded categories that were developed straight from the transcribed text data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Thematic analysis offered the systematic component of content analysis and enabled the researcher to combine the analysis meaning within the specific context of this research study's objectives (Loffe & Yardley, 2004). An inductive method of thematic analysis was used as the author mined themes from the data that was intimately related to the data themselves (Braun & Clarke, 2006), without trying to fit the themes into the researcher's pre-conceived interests and investigative preconceptions.

The researcher mapped all the responses as per the research questions onto an Excel spread sheet and began to classify data based on the theme it embodied. The process of manually translating the responses onto the spread sheet assisted the researcher to become conversant with the data. The researcher also continuously read the content and coding groups of the data to enhance his familiarisation and understanding of the data. By reducing responses into codes, this allowed a third party and fellow researcher to test and verify the codes in an effort to ensure consistency, reliability and validity of the concepts gathered.

The process of data analysis using thematic analysis commenced with the researcher familiarising himself with the data when producing the initial codes; developing then examining the relevant themes and lastly defining and naming the final themes (Braun & Clark, 2006). For each research question the initial codes were further clustered and the findings incorporated into themes with the researcher reducing the number of themes where possible whilst ensuring the essence of the data was not diluted. The themes were then reviewed and scrutinised by constantly re-evaluating the original responses and initial codes produced, checking that the themes were still an honest representation of the data. This process was suitable as the researcher was absorbed in the details and specifics of the data in order to discover important patterns, themes and inter-relationships (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Polit and Beck (2012) emphasized that the research findings must be a reflection of the participants' voice and conditions of the inquiry and not the researcher's biases, motivations or perceptions. It is for this reason why the researcher presented representative quotations from the transcribed text. The above mentioned rigorous process underpins the basis upon which the

findings in Chapter Five are discussed and the platform upon which the data was analysed against the literature review.

4.6 Research design limitations

While this research study has offered valuable insights into career capital as an enabler to an ambidextrous approach for inter-industry career transitioning, there have been certain acknowledged limitations in the research methodology that may hinder the generalizability of the findings. These limitations included:

- Collection of data within a restricted time allocation and geographic location, may possibly result in biased information that was dependent on the respondents recollection of activities at a point in time and the researchers own biases based on own perceptions, assumptions and interpretations. This time constraint could be negated with future research framed over a longer period of time and drawing from a sample over a greater geographic location.

- The restriction of the universe to selected individuals, who under took more than a single inter-industry career transition, further resulted in potential limited variability in responses from participants. Again, this potential constraint could be mitigated by future research conducted over a lengthier period of time thus enabling the researcher sufficient time to extend the universe.

- The outcome of the research was immensely dependent on the quality of the content discussed by the respondents during the in-depth interviews. This limitation can be mitigated through consistent quality and thoroughness of the interview questions, the process, and ensuring sufficient time with the respondent.

- The research focused on the components of career capital that enabled the respondent to transition but did not consider the position to which they transitioned within the new industry. This would require a much more in-depth study into finding a sample that is representative of different hierarchical responsibilities (junior, senior and executive) within the organisation.

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Despite the identified limitations, this research study provides valuable initial insights to career capital as an enabler to an ambidextrous approach for inter-industry career transitioning. Furthermore, it provides a framework for individuals looking to undertake a inter-industry transition or alternatively build career resilience which may ensure sustainable employment by considering the adaptability of their career capital.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research methodology to address this research study. The research design and methodology adopted were intended to fulfil the requirements and objectives established when initiating this research report. Decisions pertaining to the choice of semi-structured interviews, the unit of analysis and data collection and analysis were substantiated. Research limitations were discussed in order to provide a view on potential biases, errors and the generalizability of the findings. The findings attained from this research methodology are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

The sample of this research study consists of 15 individuals that have transitioned across a pre-defined industry as illustrated in Table 1 below. Each of these individual's has held or currently holds senior positions within their organisation which was a key requirement for research question four. As per Table 1 below, next to each respondent's position is the organisation they are currently employed within. Under the heading of "Industries Employed", lists the industries the participants' were employed within since commencing their employment with the last complete column, per row, reflecting their current organisation of employ.

Table 1: Participants' inter-industry career transitions history

Position: Organisation	Industries Employed					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
CEO: SET Consulting	Hospitality	Recruitment				
Director: Ericsson SA	Automotive	Telecoms				
CEO: MUSA Capital	IT	Investment Banking				
Associate Director: KPMG	Mining	Business Advisory				
Director: Nielsen	Retail: Clothing	Market Research	Retail: Consumables			
GM: Adcorp Ingram	Hospitality	FMCG	Hospitality	Higher Education	Recruitment	Higher Education
HR Director: Nedbank	Banking	Pharmaceutical	Banking			
Managing Director: Rulemeca	Mining	Investment Banking	Manufacturing			
CEO: Sunstrike Capital	Banking	Advisory	Economic Development	Investment Banking		
Strategy Executive: Nedbank	Academia	FMCG	Banking			
Executive: AIG Africa	Construction	Market Research	IT	Financial Services	Insurance	
Managing Director: Renault SA	Automotive	Finance	Automotive			
GM Finance: ACSA	Banking	Aviation				
GM Commercial: ELB	Auditing	Mining	Construction	Mining		
Consulting: Various	Auditing	Business Advisory				

Given the stringent criteria for the sample, the selection of each respondent was particularly purposeful which resulted in vast amounts of time being spent in tracking such individuals. The respondents have worked in more than a single industry with some individuals transitioning across more than three industries in their current career tenure to date. As previously highlighted, each industry is defined on the core product or service offered.

Each interview was recorded using a hand held recorder, then manually transcribed into Microsoft Excel. For each research question, through content analysis then thematic analysis (Appendix D), themes were identified and subsequently aggregated to form sub themes. Collectively each sub-theme was further amassed to represent the main theme for each research question which forms the basis for a component of career capital (research question one and four) and the method of accrual (research question two). The methodology is further elaborated at the start of each research question in the subsequent sections that follows within chapter five. Each research question provides the main theme with the sub themes. At the end of each research question is a conclusion that describes the significance of each main theme in relation to the research question. It should be highlighted that none of the interview questions were provided prior to the interview being conducted with only a brief overview of the research sent to each potential respondent via email when the researcher initiated contact with each potential participant.

5.1 What are the most pertinent components of career capital that are required to transition careers across industries?

The data to answer research question one was obtained from questions 1a, 1b and 1e as listed in the interview schedule (Appendix A). Question 1a related to the components of career capital each respondent believed they possessed which enabled their transition across the specific industry. As an example, question 1a was asked in relation to transitioning from industry 1 to 2 as per the industries listed in Table 1 above. This question was repeated for each industry the respondent transitioned across (Industry 2 to Industry 3 and so forth). Question 1b was aimed at further probing and clarifying why the respondent's deemed those skills were the most pertinent that enabled their transition with question 1e intended to establish if any skills were common across the industries transitioned.

The analysis started off with 37 themes which were subsequently reduced to 29 themes after combining and regrouping a few themes together. Examples of such regrouping are combining Prioritisation under Personal Approach with another example being combining General Management under Business Acumen. All 37 themes that emerged are found in Appendix C. Some themes appeared more than the number of respondents purely as a result of analysing the data in terms of the cumulative number of transitions by the entire sample. As per Table 1, there were a total of 31 transitions across the various industries. This resulted in some instances were respondents have transitioned more than one industry that the same theme was mentioned for more than one transition in their career.

Figure 1 below shows the 29 themes (X-axis) and their occurrence (Y-axis) that was believed to be the key components which enable inter-industry career transitioning. The details encompassed within each of the top 5 themes are discussed in the subsequent sections. It should be highlighted that no single theme alone was solely responsible for a particular transition but at times it was a combination of themes that assisted the respondent in transitioning across a specific industry.

Figure 1: Career capital enabling inter-industry career transitioning
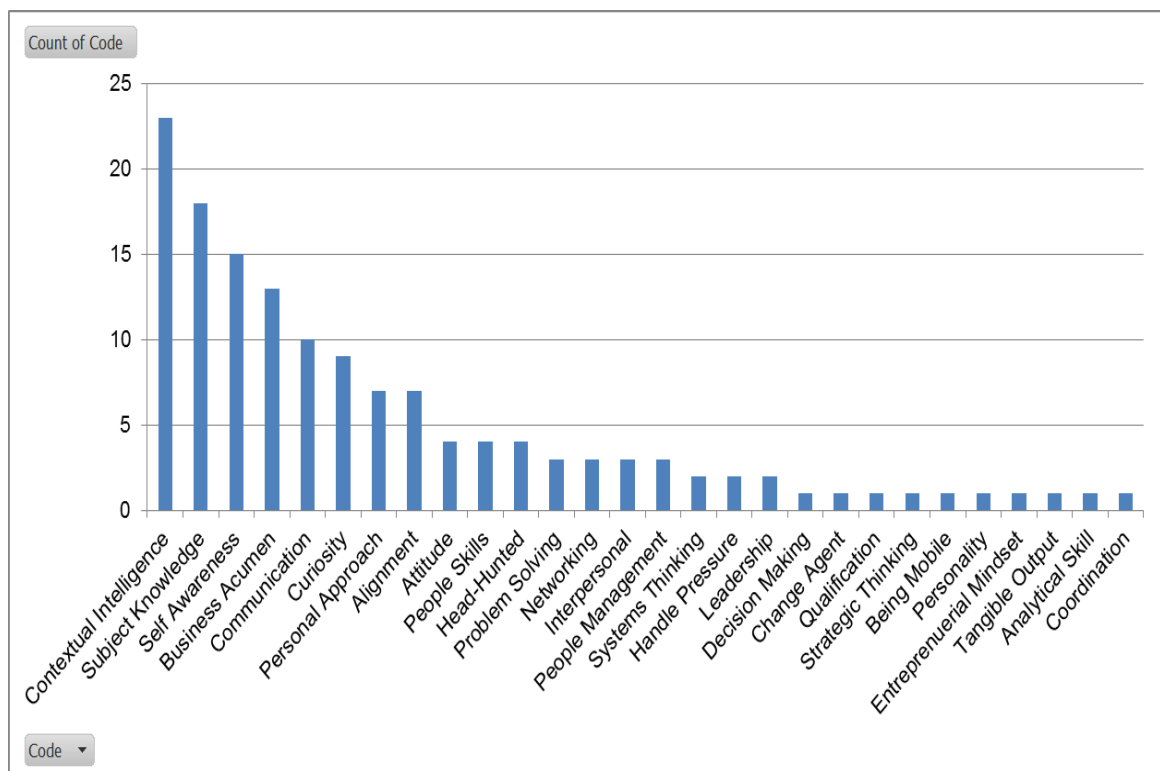
5.1.1 Contextual intelligence

Contextual intelligence was the most commonly used component of career capital that enabled the respondents to transition their career across an industry. Contextual intelligence comprises of sub themes which included being adaptable to the changes in environment, interpreting client requirements and having an understanding of the industry that you currently employed in or plan to operate within. Being adaptable emerged as the prominent sub theme of contextual intelligence. An executive described adaptability as the "Ability to be flexible and the willingness to be uncomfortable to progress…is quiet important". Being uncomfortable highlights the importance of being open-minded when making a career transition, especially to an industry that one is not naturally familiar with.

A general manger re-iterated the necessity of being able to change (adapt), in pursuit of career growth, by adding, "If you are stuck in what you use to do, even a year ago, you are not going to get anywhere". Adaptability, in the essence of career capital relating to career transitioning, is perceived to be the ability to cognitively change with your environment and having the flexibility to make this change which was adequately summed up by a director that commented, "When you volunteer to move, you prepare your mind, to say that I am moving to a different environment that will require me to abandon certain behaviours and adapt". Adaptability is seen as the ability to make a mental shift and not being fixated on what is familiar to the individual.

The second sub theme of Contextual intelligence relates to having the ability to interpret client requirements. Regarding the ability to interpret clients requirements, a senior manager stated, "The world is changing, business is changing, and you got to keep abreast [of market requirements]." Similar sentiments on understanding client requirements were echoed by other respondents and may suggest the necessity of being able to adapt to the dynamic environment with a strong emphasis being placed on monitoring both client requirements and consumer behaviour.

Contextual intelligence in relation to being both adaptable and understanding the operating environment was summarized by a CEO with the following quote, "The market is training us, our Clients are training us...so be open to change continually otherwise you do not grow with the market... you need to metamorphasize with the

market". At a more granular level, understanding ones context in terms of consumer behaviour and market dynamics further enhances and emphasises the ability of the individual to adapt in relation to the context and not necessarily to the organisation they are employed within.

5.1.2 Subject knowledge

Subject knowledge emerged as the second most dominant theme that enabled inter-industry career transitioning. Some of the sub themes of Subject knowledge included having expertise in Human resources, Marketing, Finance, Analytics and Business development. The above mentioned sub themes were used as the basic requirement for entering into the new industry and served as the core area of speciality that was adapted to the new industry. In support of having a core skill, in this case subject knowledge expertise, a director mentioned, "Market research gave me the ability to translate analytical insight into business knowledge" and a managing director stated, "What you are and what you are strong at will be with you throughout your career and you will find different and novel ways of applying it".

The ability to adapt and apply ones core skill to the new environment plays a significant role in the transitioning process and serves as the basis for negotiating and entering a new industry. A general manager possessing both marketing and financial skills which were used in tandem for the multiple inter-industry transitions stated that "I could understand how finance and sales linked" which tied back to her earlier comment of, "I don't think, well I haven't believed it's about the industry you work in because a business is a business is a business". This statement iterates the positive aspect of having a core skill but knowing how to adapt this skill in the new context is critical.

The sub-themes of subject knowledge expertise specifically Finance, Business Development and Marketing are required in most industries and was found to assist respondents who developed this as a core skill to easily transition across an industry. By contrast, those individuals that possessed an engineering degree relied on both their technical and systems thinking capability which was developed through their formal course work. One CEO mentioned that, "Developing a system's thinking mind-set, with systematic thinking was used as a basis to approach problems". A systems mind-set was key for this individual in transitioning into the next industry as the systems

thinking was easily adapted to solve problems in the new industry and may suggest that individuals could possess a cognitive thinking capability as a skill that is transferable across industries and not only through a defined subject such as finance or marketing.

5.1.3 Business acumen

A third dominant theme that surfaced was respondents' possessing business acumen which comprised of the sub themes that included understanding business's goals, business models and value propositions of the company within the industry they planned on transitioning to. By understanding these aspects of business the respondents believed they were in a leveraged position during interviews and also aided them in finding their potential fit within that specific organisation. One CEO stated that understanding the variables of the business you intend on joining as a key factor in diagnosing what the company is doing, "What are the variables in this business...being able to pull the system apart".

An executive who amplified the sentiment of understanding business models added, "The ability to understand their [new organisation in the new industry] business models in terms of their entire value chain". Another executive augmented the previous two sentiments thinking by initially affirming "You need to start by understanding what the company does", then later stated, "Find the essence of what is driving this organisation in this way and what is the critical problem at the moment, once I understand that then I can understand the nature of the organisation, nature of the products". Understanding the new company's business models and value propositions appears to serve as a diagnostic tool and a test of how one should intend on aligning their current career capital to the new industry.

5.1.4 Self-awareness

The fourth theme that emerged was that of self-awareness in relation to understanding why the respondents made career transitions across industries. The sub theme that emerged the strongest was for career development and a passion for what the respondents wanted to achieve. A director mentioned, "The ability to be self-aware [why you want to transition] and to be honest with yourself is a very key skill in almost

anything". This rational was further supported by an executive who made career transitions to pursuit a passion for developing people, "It was being self-aware and wanting to develop people and teams". Again, the sub theme of passion, was aptly supported by an executive who firmly believes you need a desire for what you want to do and pursuit that, stated, "I really do believe that careers are built on what you want to achieve and not what opportunities are available", and later followed up that train of thought by advocating, "I think career capital is about who you are intrinsically…who you are is the career you should go for". The data suggests that possessing a degree of self-awareness in knowing what purpose you serve in life or understanding your career goals and career development are intrinsic elements that initiate the process of inter-industry career transitioning and forms the basis and reason for transitioning.

A managing director stated that having a career goal is extremely important in his decision to transition, "I have a clear idea of what I want to do and will do whatever it takes to get there". Although self-awareness is not a measurable skill per say, but rather a personal attribute, it was deemed extremely important in the context of inter-industry career transitioning as providing the stimulus for transitioning their careers. Most of the respondents had a defining reason for the transition and was constantly repeated during the interview to reiterate the importance of knowing why you are embarking on such a transition.

5.1.5 Other relevant components of career capital

Curiosity and Communication ranked just outside the top four previously discussed themes. Within the theme of Curiosity, the sub-theme that emerged the most noticeable was the passion for learning and the desire of the respondents to continuously up-skill themselves. Communication revealed sub themes of the ability to influence as well as being able to articulate complex matters in a simplified manner as specifically mentioned by those respondents with a strong technical and analytical background. Themes such as Leadership, People management, Interpersonal and People skills featured less prominently as the components of career capital that enabled individuals to transition their careers across industries. Themes such as individuals Qualifications, Decision making ability and Personality where regarded as the least relevant.

5.1.6 Conclusion

Upon holistic review of the data, the ability to contextualise what a business is, what are the business models, drivers and understanding value propositions in relation to the industry you move into, emerged from the theme of Contextual intelligence as the most pertinent component of career capital. This was closely linked to the themes of Business acumen and Subject knowledge which enables the individual to adapt their human capital in relation to this new context. The theme of Self-awareness, in relation to inter-industry career transitioning, relates to the individual understanding why they are making such a transition as all moves were voluntary and a conscious decision to do so. The data infers having a good understanding of business, oneself in terms of skills and motivation and the ability to adapt these skills into a new context are the pertinent components of career capital that enables inter-industry transitioning.

5.2 How are these components of career capital acquired?

The data to answer research question two was obtained from questions 2a, 2b and 2e as listed in the interview schedule (Appendix A). Question 2a relates to how the respondent acquired the skills that enabled them to transition their career across industries. This question was repeated for each industry they transitioned across. Question 2b was aimed at establishing if the skills mentioned in question 2a was dependent on being employed. Question 2e intended to establish if seniority has an effect as to when one could acquire these skills.

The analysis commenced with 36 themes which were subsequently reduced to 23 themes after combining and regrouping certain themes together. An example of such a regrouping was combining the method of learning through being Self Critical under the theme of Reflection. All 36 themes that emerged are found in Appendix F. Figure 2 below reflects the 23 themes (X-axis) and their occurrence (Y-axis) that were deemed the key methods of acquiring the career capital that enabled inter-industry career transitioning. It is important to highlight that methods of career capital accrual such as on the job, formal course work and training where omitted on the premise that these were mentioned by most respondents and as such the researcher probed for the granularity of the specific detail on how these skills were acquired. The details

encompassed within each of the imperative themes are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Figure 2: Methods of career capital accrual
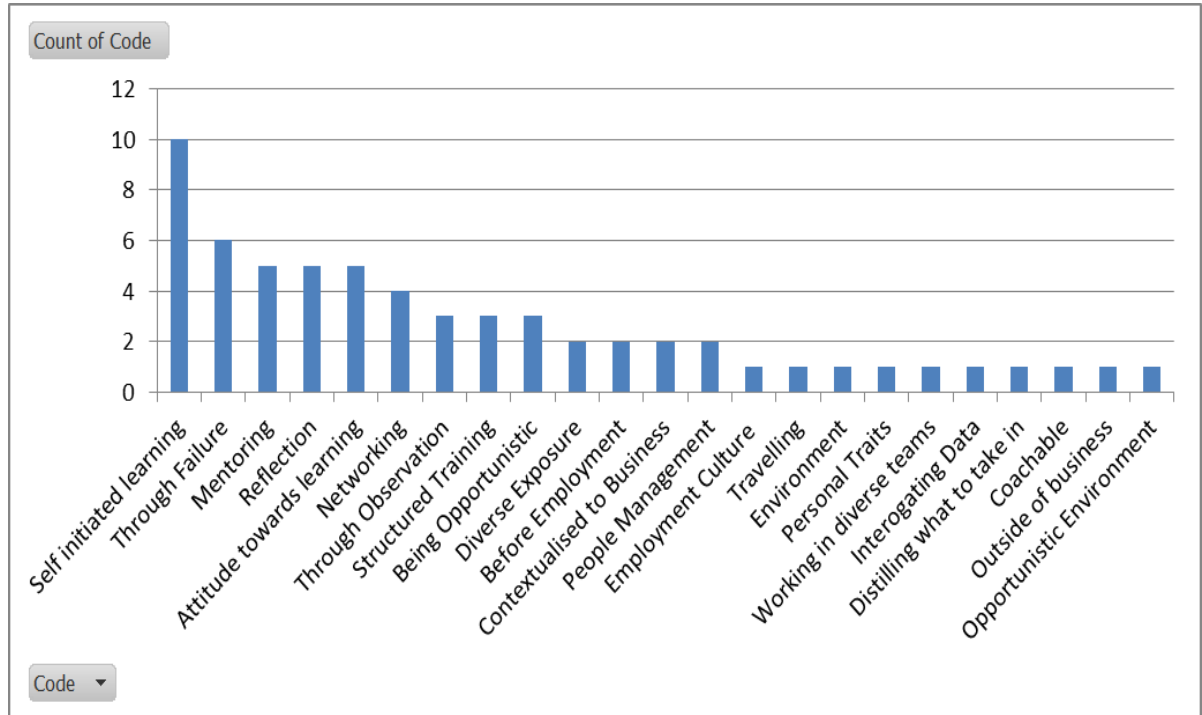
5.2.1 Self-initiated learning

Self-initiated learning emerged as the dominant theme in relation to how respondents acquired the career capital that enabled them to transition their careers across industries. The sub themes include self-initiated further studying, distilling information, curiosity and being inquisitive. Respondents portrayed a proactive approach to learning, especially those that studied multiple Masters and Doctoral degrees. In relation to transitioning across industries, the elements required to be learnt and contextualised did rely heavily on the pro-activeness of the respondents in making a conscious and concerted effort in acquiring the components of career capital.

Inter-industry career capital that enabled these individuals to transition their careers required, specifically business acumen, understanding business models and value propositions, required the respondents to spend time collecting, reading and distilling this information in understanding the new context they intended on transitioning to. In support of this inference, a director mentioned, "It was not an industry that I knew, so

there is a transition between industries, and I had done a lot of research...you go and do your homework". The theme of Self-initiated learning supports the perception that the ability to contextualise, specifically a new industry, is self-initiated but more importantly self-taught.

A managing director mentioned that an individual may be exposed to work place activities but if one is not aware of what it is that you are being exposed to, you may not be able to absorb that learning. Being aware of what it is that is required to be learnt relates strongly to self-awareness and understanding what it is that you are trying to learn and what are the expected learning outcomes of that exposure. The managing director further elaborated, 'I knew my technical skills alone would not get me the job, I needed more financial skills…so I did an MBA". Once again, self-awareness coupled with the proactiveness towards self-initiated learning is abundantly evident in being determined to obtain the skills that are perceived as necessary to enable an inter industry career transition. In continuing with the sub theme of self-initiated learning, a chief executive added the following, "Always enhance where you are, never accept that where you are currently operating from is an optimal place…you always have to look for ways to improve how you work…it's all about learning."

5.2.2 Mentoring

Mentoring surfaced as the next visible theme that enabled the respondents to acquire their inter-industry career transitioning capital. The sub themes of mentoring included mentoring others and having a mentor. Respondents that served as a mentor to others saw mentoring as a self-discovery exercise into their own strengths and weaknesses. A CEO mentioned, "You need to understand your importance/relevance in the eco-system, because if you are good technically for the survival of the organisation at some point you need to transfer the technical skills to the next person, you need to mentor people, you need to coach people...immediately when you start understanding your importance of assisting people then you understand that you need to speak well, need to listen well, be sympathetic when people don't get it and not understand things much quicker than you do." Mentoring others is viewed a process that enhances one's communication skills, in particular articulation and the ability to listen.

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Other respondents that had a mentor, mentioned the opportunities that a mentor created, as these mentors were seniors employed within the same organisation. A general manager added the following about his mentor, "Whenever he [mentor] found something he could give me exposure to, he gave me that exposure". Having a mentor was seen as important in being exposed to different roles and positions that enabled respondents to develop the necessary inter-industry career transitioning capital.

5.2.3 Learning through failure

The next prominent theme of acquiring skills was the learning distilled through the process of Failure. Sub themes of Failure included being experimental and failing, taking risks and making mistakes. Although these methods may appear random, what emerged through these failures is what it taught people, particularly self-awareness. An executive mentioned, "The ability to be able to be experimental and fail…but not let that be a fear factor…you have to be willing to make mistakes". The ability the make mistakes but still learn from them relates back to the attitude towards learning as these respondents made a conscious effort to learn from their mistakes which also insinuates a high degree of self-awareness.

Learning by making mistakes was aptly supported by an executive who added, "I think the best lessons are learnt by making mistakes…and on the job", as it enforces the value of making mistakes and learning on the job. A general manager that acquired people management skills, as an inter-industry career transitioning skill, added, "Because you have a degree and they don't, you tend to stamp your authority...you soon find out that's the wrong way [to manage people]". Again, self-awareness augmented with the attitude towards learning reinforces the potential of learning when mistakes are made. Making mistakes is embedded in human nature however what emerged from these mistakes and failures were the respondents' ability to use failure to learn and in learning has enabled them to acquired career capital that allowed them to transition their career across industries. An executive appropriately enhanced this notion of learning through failure with, "Take failure as a lesson". Most of the interviewees' viewed learning from failure as a conscious decision in an tempt to improve themselves.

5.2.4 Reflection

Another relevant theme to emerge was acquiring career capital through the process of Reflection. Sub themes of Reflection include feedback (including feedback from a support network) and sense-making. Respondents saw reflection as a time to deliberate on activities relating to what they were doing or what has happened as a mechanism for improving oneself. Aligned to the overarching importance of acquiring career capital and learning, one CEO mentioned, "You only learn if you are willing to learn…being self- critical is hugely important". The ability to reflect on your actions and be critical of oneself was regarded as a steep learning curve.

Reflection was again supported by a director who added, "Once you come to the end of the road, you've got to say did I do this the best way, you need to have some reflection/introspection because that's how you grow as a person, how could I have done it differently." Reflection is closely related to self-awareness as is evident by the respondents being self-critical as a means to improve oneself and develop

5.2.5 Other methods of acquiring inter-industry transitioning career capital

A key theme that surfaced was the respondents Attitude towards learning. This had sub-themes of wanting to learn, desire to learn and passion for learning in general. An executive's approach to learning was simplified to, "If you [the respondent] are in a mind-set, at any given time, to learn as much as I can and if I'm not learning in my environment…I change my environment". Having an attitude towards learning in general was strongly highlighted by all respondents and this is viewed as an intrinsic motivational driver that seems to be embedded and entrenched within the mind-set of the respondents.

A general manager's attitude towards learning and development was described by the following quote, "I always made the deal, if you are willing to teach me [her senior] what you know…I am willing to share your work load." Having an attitude of acquiring knowledge and going through such extremes, reinforces the importance of having a positive attitude towards learning but also the proactiveness in pursuing it. Less pertinent themes for acquiring inter-industry transitioning career capital include working in diverse teams; employed within an opportunistic environment; and travelling for work

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related business. These less pertinent themes relate to the context that a knowledge worker may be exposed to and to an extent cannot be controlled the knowledge worker but nonetheless highlights the learning potential that such contexts provide.

5.2.6 Conclusion

Respondents acquired their inter-industry career capital through the pertinent methods and processes of Self-initiated learning, Learning through failure, Reflection and an Attitude towards learning. These themes are centred on the intrinsic drive and attitude of the individual in raising both self-awareness and the motivation for acquiring the skills they required for the inter-industry career transition. Other mechanism's that also feature prominently such as mentors and networks have elements that are dependent on other individuals' contributions and is therefore not solely dependent on the knowledge worker however the attitude to learn is what emanates through all the above themes. This attitude towards wanting to learn is the driver for the career capital acquisition and development process.

5.3 What enables an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning?

The data to answer research question 3 was obtained from all questions under sections 1, 2 and 3 as listed in the interview schedule (Appendix A). Responses were used for all these questions to understand what enables an individual to transition their careers across an industry. The data gathered across all the questions were analysed in its entirety for each interviewee and as such themes that emerged needs to be viewed and contextualised in relation to the above research question.

The analysis started off with 27 themes which were subsequently reduced to 15 themes after combining and regrouping a few themes together. Examples of such regrouping are combining Risk Taker under Opportunistic and Diverse Industry Exposure under the theme of Ability to Contextualise. All 27 themes that emerged are found in Appendix G.

Figure 3: Career capital enabling an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning
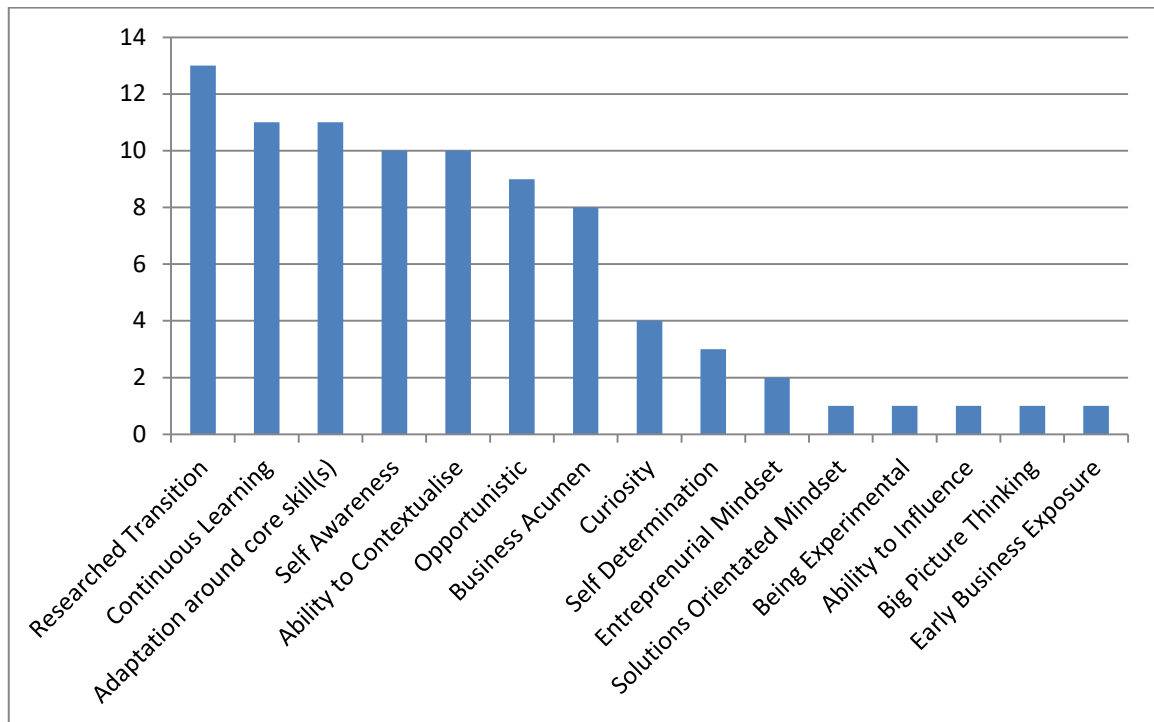
Figure 3 above shows the 15 themes (X-axis) and their number of occurrences (Y-axis) that were considered to be the significant themes which enabled an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning. The details encompassed within each of the highest ranked themes are discussed in the subsequent sections.

5.3.1 Researched transition

Researched transition emerged as the dominant theme that enables an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning. Researched transition relates to the activities performed by the respondents when considering an inter-industry career transition. The central sub themes include researched the industry/firm and matched skills to firm. The data suggests there is an intrinsic drive that is usually self-initiated by the individual when embarking on embarking on such a career transition. There were three instances in which respondents were head hunted and as such did not initiate the transition however these respondents still researched the prospective employer. The researcher decided to include these specific instances within the theme of Researched

transition as the respondents spent vast amounts of time in researching that prospective employer in the new industry.

The majority of the respondents researched the firm itself, the actual positions available, reflected on their own skills, determined their pitfalls from a skills perspective and prepared for potential interviews. A general manger that transitioned in pursuit of career growth made the following comments, "If I really want this role, then I need to realise what is it that I need to do on day one when I get there" and later on added, "Looking at the job spec…realising what it is that I needed to know to get the opportunity". The general managers closing remarks on being prepared also included, ""Be prepared to answer what your hindrances might be seeing that you are in a new industry". The above sentiments amplify the actual research and time that is required when making inter-industry career transitions, especially at a senior level and highlights the granularity of exactly what was researched and what sort of preparedness is essential to make a successful transition.

Remaining within the conception of preparing for the transition, an executive that transitioned from banking into insurance asserted, "The older I got the more preparation I did for industry transitions…banking to insurance, required plenty of preparation…" Another general manager who was head hunted, researched that specific firm within the new industry, commented as follows, "I did some research into the company, although I knew it, I wanted to understand the bigger picture…" When asked why that research was conducted, the respondent stated, "I knew that if…I had the skillset that filled their void...it would put me in a position of negotiating power with them". Researching the transition highlights the need for understanding what specifically it is that the individual is going to bring to the new company in the new industry and serves as a diagnostic mechanism to understand what is required of the individual to enable such a transition.

5.3.2 Adaptation around core skill(s)

The next significant theme that emerged was the ability of respondents knowing how to adapt their core skill to the new industry they transitioned to. Some of these core skills included Finance, Human Resources, Marketing, Technical and Analytical ability. Respondents who possessed these skills saw their core skill as a minimum

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requirement or basic skill as it enabled them to transition across and industry. A general manager that used Finance as the core skill mentioned that the new company is not going to challenge you on your core skill and as a result one should prepare for the other attributes required for the job.

The ability to use a core skill(s) to initiate a transition was supported by a director who stated, "Your core skills are always relevant", and went on to add the following once transitioned into a commercial role, "Understand your technical skills in a commercial role". Having the ability to adapt ones core skill(s) to a new industry emphasis how closely linked the themes of researching the transition and adapting one's core skill are. Another general manager added the following when asked about translating her skill across industries, "It's not to look at the industry per say…a business is a business is a business…all businesses are run by the same principles…it's about honing on to those principles[of your skill] and adjusting them in time." Her comments highlight that one's core skills should not remain static as the market is dynamic and requires continuous tweaking of ones skills as required.

Other respondents core skills included cognition (systems thinking) and people management. Those respondents that mentioned cognition, specifically systems thinking, augmented this style of thinking with their business acumen to diagnose how a specific firm in a new industry operated. One CEO described his application of systematic this as, "Systematic thinking…in an industry perspective, there's an understanding of how does this company work, it's a black box with inputs and outputs…whether it's a housing company or it's a farm…it doesn't matter…what are the variables in this business?" In essence, a core skill is what an individual brings to the place of employment as a minimum requirement but understanding how this skill fits into the new context is what remains crucial.

5.3.3 Continuous learning

The next prominent theme that emerged was that of Continuous learning. The sub themes include passion for learning, wanting to learn and attitude towards learning. In terms of formal course work, this ranged from degrees through to doctoral studies which either supplemented their core by building on existing knowledge or provided diversity to their career capital. A CEO whose core skill resided in the subject

knowledge of finance added, "You can see the common factor was finance and as you give advice this where you discover…then start learning from this". The respondents' passion for their respective subject knowledge kept on driving them to continually enhance their existing skills and study further, only to become subject matter experts based on their core skill alone.

One of the general managers viewed continuous learning as an opportunity to stay relevant and initially added, "Industries are connected...you need to watch what's happening to other industries…and not have a silo mentality….look wider, read wider and expose yourself". This was followed up later in the interview with, "The world is changing, business is changing and you got to keep abreast". Some of the respondents had an inherent passion for learning as demonstrated by a managing director, "I was interested in things….I have a natural feel about learning and I continue to do that". Continuous learning was perceived as playing a pivotal role in understanding what the respondents short falls were which directed learning towards either bridging the gap for the career transition or to supplement and broaden their subject knowledge. There appears to be a strong connection between continuously learning and being able to adapt.

5.3.4 Self-awareness

The next pertinent theme that enabled an ambidextrous approach to career transitioning was Self-awareness. In the context of career transitioning, self-awareness in this instance relates to understanding why people transition their careers and predominantly includes intrinsically stimulated sub themes such as career planning, seeking diversity or pursuing a passion. For most respondents these sub themes served as the stimulus for the transition in contrast to those that were head-hunted, it served as a point of reflection.

On the sub theme of career planning, one CEO used an early inter-industry transition purely to achieve a goal of finding additional funds to further his studies by commenting as follows, "My first [inter] industry move was a conscious decision to pursuit career growth and long term goal of becoming a Chief Financial Officer, I needed funds to further my studies." A general manager seeking diversity and to leave the current industry stated, "The move [transition] was voluntary; I was not interested in this

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sector". This was later followed up by "I turned down similar opportunities in search for something different". The data suggests, knowing why one wants to transition a career into a new industry strongly resides in being self-aware and fully understanding the motive for the transition.

Some respondents used the career transition to pursuit a personal passion. To these respondents, their career served a greater purpose and as such their career transitions rested on satisfying this passion. A CEO made the following comments, "The next transition was more of a personal passion that I have for developing people on finances...opening up investments for bottom of pyramid market". Another executive who had a similar passion supported the logic for pursuing a passion within a career by asserting, "I really do believe that careers are built on what you want to achieve and not what opportunities are available."

5.3.5 Ability to contextualise

The Ability to contextualise surfaced as another important theme that enabled an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning. The emergent sub themes included understanding markets, possessing multi-industry exposure, client interfacing and understanding one's potential employer. Individuals that had the ability to contextualise were able to understand what is happening in a particular industry in terms of what a particular organisation is doing in relation to that industry. Respondents that were able to contextualise organisations within industries were assisted by their understanding of business. A director that worked within the market research industry commented as follows in trying to understand and make sense of an organisation, "Start from your customer, work back from what the company is doing", and later added, "Understanding the data in relation to the industry…what's important to the industry". The ability to contextualise is an extremely important component of career capital as an individual is required to understand the industry that they intend on transitioning to but also provides insight into how their skills are required to be adapted.

5.3.6 Other pertinent themes

Other themes that emerged from the data included Business acumen and Opportunistic as being significant for adopting an ambidextrous approach to career

transitioning. These 2 themes do share commonality with the other 5 mentioned themes. Business acumen, as previously discussed (section, 5.1.3) relates to understanding how the business in the new industry functions (alone or in relation to the industry), what are industry variables and a general understanding of value propositions. Business acumen plays a vital role in aiding the individual in diagnosing the context but also to serves to inform the individual as to how their skills may align within the industry, thereafter enabling the individual to prepare accordingly.

Opportunistic, as a theme, relates to individuals taking risks during the transition, stepping into the unknown and also finding opportunities that enhanced their development. With regards to taking risks a general manager noted, "You have to be open-minded because you can also inhibit yourself by not wanting to evolve with the next industry". An independent consultant, who at the time transitioned, saw an opportunity in the market, added, "You must identify the need in the market and work back to your skill…package that into a product that they [market] would consume". Being opportunistic is also closely related to understanding the market dynamics.

5.3.7 Conclusion

Upon analysis of the data, the first seven fundamental themes that emerged (Figure 3) have a shared dependence and are closely linked to each other. What is however evident, is the themes of Researched transition, Self-awareness, Ability to contextualise and Business acumen when combined, supplemented each other in assisting individuals to better understand why they wanted to transition, what the new company did and what was required from them to make the transition in terms of skills, culture and their values. The themes of Adaptation around the core skill(s) and being Opportunistic formed the back bone of the individual in positioning themselves for a particular opportunity within the new industry. The data suggests there may be a structured approach to transitioning ones career across an industry.

5.4 What components of career capital may ensure sustainable employment?

The data to answer research question 4 was obtained from all questions under section 4 listed in the interview schedule (Appendix A). Question 4a was used to understand

the career capital required to enable future sustainability in the industry the respondent is currently employed within. Question 4b aimed at further probing into why these skills were relevant for sustainability in that particular industry, with question 4c targeted at where outside of the industry would they find such individuals to match the skills set they mentioned during questions 4a and 4b.

The analysis started off with 46 themes which were subsequently reduced to 13 themes after combining and regrouping a few themes together. Examples of such regrouping are themes requiring adaptation, such as ability to adapt, adapt skills, ability to contextualise and similar, were grouped under Contextual intelligence. Similarly, specific skills such as finance, marketing and actuaries were grouped under Subject Knowledge. All 46 themes that emerged are found in Appendix H.

Figure 4: Future career capital for sustainable employment
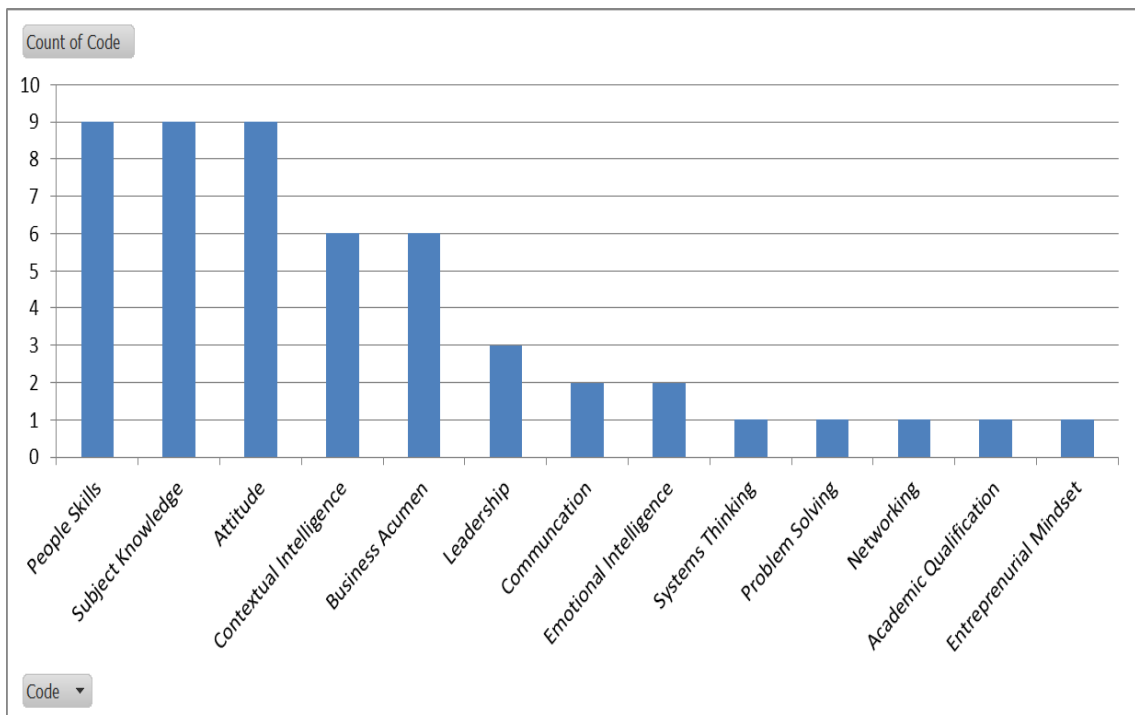

Figure 4 above shows the 13 themes (X-axis) and their occurrence (Y-axis) that were considered to be key components for sustainability across a combination of 12 different industries.

Table 2: Participants' current industry of employment

Respondent	Position: Organisation	Industry
1	CEO: SET Consulting	Recruitment
2	Director: Ericsson SA	Telecoms
3	CEO: MUSA Capital	Investment Banking
4	Associate Director: KPMG	Business Advisory
5	Director: Nielsen	Retail: Consumables
6	General Manager: Adcorp Ingram	Higher Education
7	HR Director: Nedbank	Banking
8	Managing Director: Rulemeca	Manufacturing
9	CEO: Sunstrike Capital	Investment Banking
10	Strategy Executive: Nedbank	Banking
11	Executive: AIG Africa	Insurance
12	Managing Director: Renault SA	Automotive
13	GM Finance: ACSA	Aviation
14	GM Commercial: ELB	Mining
15	Consulting: Various	Business Advisory

Table 2 above lists the 12 different industries the participants' are currently employed in. The details encompassed within each of the pertinent themes are discussed in the subsequent sections.

5.4.1 Subject knowledge

Possessing Subject knowledge emerged as one of the pertinent themes that is required to remain sustainably employed across the above mentioned industries. However, majority of the sub themes reside in people possessing Marketing and

Business development knowledge as an area of expertise. The next sub theme that had the majority of responses was the requirement for people possessing good analytical and technical abilities. The data revealed that a core skill is still required however individuals need to have additional skills ranging from leadership to people management and be good communicators. A CEO added the following, "There are still roles for specialist…however the environment changes quickly and rapidly…we looking for people who are packaged, who have a speciality but are in touch with different areas as there is more collaboration in the market…they are able to stay relevant". This comment implies that having a core skill alone is no longer sufficient to stay relevant in the job market and individuals are required to acquire more skills to supplement the core skill with the primary reason being the uncertainty in the business environment.

5.4.2 Attitude

Attitude surfaced as the next dominant theme. Attitude encompassed sub themes of being self-motivated, coachable, pragmatic and determined. Analyses of these themes reveal that Attitude in the context of the research relates to the traits of the person and how flexible they are in operating within a turbulent industry. Given the sample interviewed, most of the industries were in a state of change which resulted in majority of the respondents alluding to the ideal candidate having flexibility and the ability to deal with change. One of the directors commented as follows, "Ability to be flexible and the willingness to be uncomfortable to progress is quiet important".

A general manager mentioned, "The industry is in a transition, we need to get people to do things that they aren't comfortable doing". The ability to be self-motivated and to continually sustain one's level of determination was seen as crucial given the state of flux and restructuring within the various industries. It can be inferred that Attitude, in the context of sustainable employment, is viewed as the malleable nature of an individual's emotions in assisting them to adjust and regulate their mind-set in dealing with change.

5.4.3 Contextual intelligence

The next significant theme to emerge for individuals to possess was Contextual intelligence. Sub themes include the ability adapt skills, have multiple skills, adapt to culture and analysing markets. Contextual intelligence is relation to sustainable

employment, has two facets with the first regarding the adaptability of the individuals skills and how they work within flatter organisational structures and participate in team work. Adaptability in this context relates to how individuals can interpret what is required of them based on how the organisation is adapting in relation to its current state of change. A director shared the following sentiments in terms of the importance of team work in relation to adapting to organisational structural changes, "This is the industry [banking] now that requires people to collaborate….organisations are moving flatter…requires people to work in a multi-structure environment". The first facet speaks largely to the adaptable behavioural traits of an individual with an organisation.

The second facet relates to interpreting the environment outside of the organisation. The respondents that represented this facet of thinking were more of the CEO's and general managers that held board positions and related contextual intelligence as the sense making at an industry level and understanding the market dynamics. A general manager noted the following, "Changes in the macroeconomic climate, forces you to behave in different ways at different times, you have got to be adaptable in that way…you can't become entrenched in the way you do things, got to be innovative in thinking…" Based on the general manager's sentiments, if one holds a position that contributes to the strategic direction of an organisation, contextual intelligence speaks to the adaptability of the organisation and not at the granular unit of analysis of the employee.

5.4.4 People skills

Another significant theme highlighted was the ability to work with people and as such was placed under the banner of People skills. The sub themes include people management, working with people and interpersonal skills. People management focuses on delivering output from teams. The working with people sub theme focuses on general interaction with people when deployed to work within teams. All three sub themes focus on the collaborative aspect of working and managing people and was aptly supported by a general manager's comment, "You are nothing without your people, it doesn't matter which industry you are in… if people don't buy into your vision then you are not going to succeed".

In terms of achieving results through people, a CEO commented as follows, "Your ability to deliver results through people is a process you go to work on all the time". The context in which this statement was mentioned was around the dynamic nature of teams and people and that people management and people skills is dynamic as opposed to static. As the majority respondents have highlighted the state of flux and change industries are in, the ability to collaborate with and manage people is magnified and seen as one of the most pertinent attributes required for an individual to be sustainable.

5.4.5 Conclusion

Themes such as Leadership, Emotional Intelligence and Communication featured less prominently but in essence do have a dependency on the above mentioned attributes. Other attributes such as Qualifications and Problem Solving were mentioned less frequently and as such is deemed less relevant. In reviewing the pertinent attributes required for sustainable employment, all 13 themes to a large extent are controlled by the individual. Contextual Intelligence and Business Acumen are attributes that may require greater attention in developing as a skill however Attitude, People management and Subject knowledge can be more readily developed and enhanced in day to day activities.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 What are the most pertinent components of career capital that are required to transition careers across industries?

Research question 1 sought to identify the specific components of career capital that enabled inter-industry career transitioning. The results from the in-depth interview, data coding and analysis phase of the research was compared to literature as discussed in Chapter Two to draw the relevant insights in relation to the research study.

6.1.1 Contextual intelligence

The interviews highlighted the importance of contextual intelligence in understanding the organisation or industry the respondent planned on transitioning to. The most pervasive sub theme that emerged was being adaptable to the new context. Adapting entailed cognitively adjusting to what is happening in the new context to make sense of the organisation or the industry. Contextual intelligence also included a broader understanding of the business in terms of understanding business models and value propositions. Savickas (2013) asserted that adaptivity is a psychological characteristic of the level of readiness to face unversed and complex problems that stem from vocational development tasks and occupational transitions with appropriate responses through proactivity or flexibility.

The capacity to then identify the key variables in the new industry and interpret these variables satisfies Kutz's (2008) explanation of contextual intelligence. The ability of the respondents to then contextualise the new industry supports Khanna's (2014) view of contextual intelligence of being able to shift cognitively from understanding the current industry to understanding the new industry. The importance of analysing a new context forms the cornerstone of the mental preparation that is required for the respondent to align with. Contextualisation of the new environment was achieved by utilising another theme denoted as the theme of Business Acumen, which served as the mechanism in sense making of the new organisation in the new industry.

Forrier, Sels, et al. (2009) state from a career capital perspective that adaptability allows people to evolve and motivates them to adapt their human capital, social capital, and career identity to new circumstances. Based on the research findings, the context in which the interpretation of adaptability is framed is more congruent with sense making on a cognitive level as opposed to a behavioural mechanism. These findings form the basis that contextual intelligence falls within the knowing-what (Jones & DeFillipi, 1996) component of career capital in the perspective of transitioning ones career across an industry. Contextual Intelligence is seen as the most pertinent component of career capital.

6.1.2 Subject knowledge

The data revealed that subject knowledge is the second key requirement that enabled inter-industry career transitioning. Subject Knowledge refers to the knowing-how component of career capital with reference to the knowledge workers skills, abilities and competencies (DeFillippi & Aurthur, 1994). The key areas of expertise that surfaced were Finance, Marketing and Business Development. The primary reason being these skills were easily transferable across the industries as they were a primary requirement in most organisations, independent of the industry.

Subject Knowledge was seen as the entry point, or minimum requirement, for the new industry as this was used to meet the performance expectations encompassing their occupational expertise (Fugate et al., 2004; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Individuals used this skill to position themselves within the next industry in terms of where they potentially fitted in. The individual had to then determine how the skill is to be adapted and packaged to appear relevant in the new industry. This theme has a strong dependency on Contextual intelligence as this the individuals' perception of the organisation or industry forms the prognosis for packaging this skill.

6.1.3 Self-awareness

The third theme that emerged was that of self-awareness in relation to understanding why the respondent made career transitions across industries. Self-awareness supports the knowing-why competency (DeFillippi & Aurthur, 1994) and relates to the individual's identity, career associated choices and the motivation for why they pursued

an inter-industry career transition. In terms of movement capital, across an industry, Self-awareness supports one of the four themes as discussed by Forrier, Sels, et al. (2009). The sub theme of Self-awareness that emerged the strongest was for career development, resulting in a conscious decision to leave an industry and to pursuit a passion for what they wanted to achieve. Inkson and King (2011) assert that an individual's decision to invest in a particular organisation is influenced, amongst others, by an organisational or inter-organizational career. These research findings are in contradiction to that of Inkson and King (2011) as the consideration is based on a learning perspective and not entirely for the type of career within an organisation.

Self-awareness is seen as an intrinsic motivating factor for the transition and not necessarily a tangible skill. The data suggests that possessing a degree of self-awareness in knowing what purpose you serve in life or understanding your career goals and career development aspirations are intrinsic elements that initiate the process of inter-industry career transitioning.

6.1.4 Business acumen

The fourth theme that surfaced was respondents possessing business acumen which comprises of understanding business's goals, business models and value propositions of the company within the industry they planned on transitioning to. Business Acumen is very broad subject however this was given specific granularity in terms of career transitioning across an industry. Although business acumen is recognised as a component of career capital, very little literature exists on the precise elements that encompass business acumen. This research provides some detail of what exactly was considered specifically understanding business models and value propositions which were the key sub themes of Business acumen.

Business acumen has a strong link to contextual intelligence as it assists the individual with sense making of the environment. The findings may suggest that individuals possessing Business acumen used this as both a skill knowing-how and knowing-what. Although Business acumen can be viewed as a skill that is brought to the job, it served as a dual purpose in assisting the individual to make sense of the environment by understanding the business itself. Individuals possessing Business acumen already had this "skill" developed as it played a significant role in transitioning their career.

6.1.5 Other pertinent themes

 The next two pertinent themes included curiosity and communication. Curiosity was considered as a skill as a few respondents questioned whether this was skill as they strongly believed it was one skill that enabled their transition. Based on this is premise, it was included as a skill and falls within the knowing-why category of career capital as defined by (DeFillippi & Aurthur, 1994) and supported by Forrier, Sels, et al. (2009) as a contributing factor that enables transitioning. Curiosity in this respect was directed to wanting to learn and, in general, how things worked.

Communication, as a component of career capital, is lesser known with scantly distributed literature linking communication to career capital. Communication, in the context of this study refers to ability to influence and to coordinate people through a medium. The role and significance of communication as a skill is undoubtedly relevant with its successful implementation forming the backbone of interpersonal skills. People management, Interpersonal and People skills featured less prominently as the components of career capital that enabled individuals to transition their careers across industries. This comes as a surprise as these skills were deemed of lesser relevance in relation to inter-industry transitioning, considering the sample comprises of senior managers and executives. Soft skill qualities like interpersonal skills are crucial to achieving promotions and other benefits in the workplace with researchers commentating that recruiters may place greater emphasis on recruiting a job candidate that who possess soft skills over technical skills (Bedwell, Fiore & Salas, 2013)

6.1.6 Conclusive findings for research question one

Research question one was aimed at establishing the components of career capital that enabled the knowledge worker to transition their career across an industry. The themes that emerged include:

- Contextual intelligence: the ability to interpret and make sense of what is going on in the new industry.
- Subject knowledge: The most pronounced skill(s) that an individual brought to the new organisation in the new industry

- Self-awareness: The intrinsic motivating factors as to why the individual pursued such a career transition and included passion for learning and their career serving a purpose
- Business acumen: this served as both a diagnostic mechanism used in conjunction with Contextual intelligence and also a skill in terms of a general business understanding. The major components of Business acumen include understanding business models and value propositions.
- Communication: A theme that emerged, and not well published within career capital literature, is communication as a skill. Components of communication include the ability to influence and articulate complex matters.

It should be noted that some of the themes especially Contextual intelligence and Business acumen together played a significant role in enabling an inter-industry career transition. Communication and Subject knowledge also share a moderate dependence. Communication is the less published component of career capital literature but served as a pertinent component of career capital of some individuals especially within the Marketing domain.

Subject knowledge, Business acumen and Communication served as the skills that were also brought to a role; however Self-awareness served as the intrinsic stimulus for the transition with Contextual intelligence serving as a sense-making mechanism that enables the individual to align their Subject knowledge in a manner that can be positioned within the new industry.

Froehlich et al. (2015) maintain it is increasingly inappropriate to frame employability in terms of specific labour market demands, instead, they express being employable as possessing a set of competencies that enables individuals to fulfil, acquire or create work. The data supports these researcher's findings as defining skills in-terms of labour market has little relevance as the respondents adapted their skills across different labour markets and as such having the ability to be employable is more appropriately framed in terms of the competencies one possesses, in other words the career capital that the knowledge worker has accumulated. This notion was well framed by an executive who maintains, "I very rarely think it is about the content of the job you do, I think it's about the skills and the attribute you bring to the role.

Becker (1964) stated that the two indicators for human capital (investments) important for industry choice and subsequent individual performance are education and industry experience. This research has found that education and industry experience is not a defining factor for an individual's industry choice with subject knowledge and business acumen being the key indicator.

6.2 How are these components of career capital acquired?

Research question 2 sought to identify how the components that enabled inter-industry career transitioning, in research question 1, were acquired. The results of the in-depth interviews, data coding and analysis phase of the research showed the following results. As previously discussed, formal training and learning on the job were seeing as the overarching mechanisms to learning in general. This research question was aimed at further probing to seek granularity in terms of specific details around acquiring career capital.

6.2.1 Self-initiated learning

Self-initiated learning emerged as the dominant theme in relation to how respondents acquired the career capital that enabled them to transition their careers across industries. The sub themes included self-initiated further studying, distilling information, curiosity and being inquisitive. Further studying related to acquiring new career capital that the individual deemed was necessary in enabling the transition. This included self-studying and research on a new company/industry, going on specific courses such as an MBA, knowing what to learn from a given situation, with all of these being underpinned by being inquisitive and having a natural curiosity. Mom et al. (2015) indicated that ambidextrous individuals possess the relevant skills and enthusiasm to engage in variety of learning activities to both enhance and renew their knowledge and skills. There is a strong link between the theme of Self-awareness (6.1.3) in terms of the motivation for the transition (learning and passion) and being self-initiated by consciously pursuing active learning.

Maurer (2001) used self-efficacy as a basis to explain that individuals pursue learning for career growth and learning across multiple prospective developmental tasks that they may encounter throughout their career with the focus and belief in one's

propensity to learn and develop when required to in their career. This rational holds true for most of the respondents as the drive to learn and develop was self-initiated to pursuit a specific goal which was the career transition itself.

6.2.2 Mentoring

The next prominent method used to acquire career transitioning capital includes the role of mentoring. Hayes and Allinson (1998) stated that individuals learn considerably through their interactions with others, especially those with diverse backgrounds, expertise and seniority with mentoring serving as a form for personal learning (Kram, 1996). This is in line with the learning experienced by respondents through the process of mentoring.

The sub themes of Mentoring included having a mentor or mentoring. Wanberg, Welsh and Hezlett (2003) found that individuals with mentors show greater positive career progress than those without a mentor. This has proved true for 3 of the 6 respondents that mentioned having a mentor was beneficial and instrumental to both learning and their careers in general. Some of the respondents discussed the role of their mentor in creating opportunities for their development whilst another mentioned the guidance and direction provided by the mentor. The respondents in the sample that mentored others developed the skills of people management and communication. Those that developed communication as a skill, through the process of mentoring, were predominantly from a strong analytical and technical background. The communication skills developed was specifically around articulating complex material into a simplified manner for the mentee's to understand.

6.2.3 Learning through failure

The next prominent theme for acquiring capital was learning Through Failure. Sub themes included being experimental and failing, taking risks, and making mistakes. A mistake is an evaluative term attributed towards a non-successful goal-directed process or its result (Senders & Moray, 1991). This seems like common knowledge per say, however the insight consumed from these failures is where the deep learning through failure originated.

Bauer and Gruber (2007) stated that competence development can be conceptualised as the acquisition and modification of concepts, routines and scripts by experiencing failure in everyday work. What emerged as a whole was how self-critical these individuals where on themselves once they failed and was expressed by a CEO as, "You only learn if you are willing to learn…being self-critical is hugely important". These respondents had acknowledged their failures but made a conscious decision to learn from it.

6.2.4 Reflection

Another theme for acquiring capital was learning through the process of Reflection. Sub themes of Reflection include feedback, sense-making and using a network to reflect. Raelin (2002) defined reflection as the practice of "periodically stepping back to ponder the meaning of what has recently transpired to us and to others in our immediate environment" (p.66). Leung and Kember (2003) explained that reflection is a greater significance than merely understanding as it incorporates the distilling of a concept into personal knowledge structures, relating the concept to the person's other forms of knowledge and experience. Weick (2002) stated that reflective learning may also include disbelieving and unlearning what was previously believed to be true. This was certainly applicable to a general manager that saw reflection as an opportunity to unlearn, "Sometimes you pick up some really bad habits that you have to unlearn". Reflection is seen as an important aspect of sense-making and shaping an individual's mind-set toward learning and development. Respondents used feedback and their network of professional acquaintances to distil what mistakes had transpired then collectively discussed on how to correct such mistakes. Mezirow (1990) stated that by evaluating the assumptions on which beliefs are formulated, critical reflection encourages learning at a more profound and transformative level. The ability to reflect served an important role in the learning process.

6.2.5 Conclusive findings for research question 2

Upon analysis of the data, it must be noted that the methods of acquiring career capital are not independent of each other, but rather ranked according to level of significance in acquiring the specific components of career capital. In other words, a combination of

these methods in the formulation and accumulation of career capital would contribute to increased value and recognition in the labour market. Baruch (2015) stated that advances in technology and the need to learn and adjust to new situations encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own careers, increasing employees' orientation towards developing their capabilities and skills. The data revealed that respondents made a very conscious decision to enhance their career capital through a variety of methods as highlighted. In light of these findings, there seems to be an underlying assumption of self-initiated learning and development by the respondents.

Concluding remarks from the results of research question 2 suggests a strong relationship may exist with the results attained in research question 1. In the context of the study, and as per the findings in research question one, the process of acquiring both the pertinent skills that enable an inter-industry career transition and the methods of accrual, may suggest that an inter-industry career transition is initiated by the knowledge worker in making a conscious effort in acquiring the relevant skills for the transition.

6.3 What enables an ambidextrous approach to career transitioning?

Research question 3 sought to understand the process of adopting an ambidextrous approach to an inter-industry career transition in relation to the thought process, preparation and effort expended before and during the transition. Data from research questions 1 and 2 along with research question 3 formed the total data used to answer research question 3. The results from the in-depth interview, data coding and analysis phase of the research presented the following results.

6.3.1 Researched transition

Researched transition emerged as the most prominent theme with regards to embracing an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning. The major sub themes included individuals researching the industry/firm and matched skills to firm. These activities are viewed as the exploration aspect of ambidexterity as this was a conscious decision to research the transition. Bonesso et al. (2013) stated that individual prior inter-functional and/or inter-firm work experience promotes not only exploration, but exploration and exploitation simultaneously. In terms of career

transitioning, the above sentiments held true for 3 of the respondents as they had intimate working knowledge of the firm they transitioned too as their existing firm provided services to the prospecting organisation prior to them actually joining the organisation. A director that mentioned his exposure to various roles within the organisation, assisted with his ability to contextualise what the organisation was doing. Bonesso et al. (2013) whose study revealed that individuals that had prior exposure to working in different business units or organizations were able to better achieve ambidexterity with the underlying reason related to these individuals often operating in different sectors, thus acquiring a broad knowledge base.

The general findings of the respondents researching the firm within the new industry, was a conscious decision that required time and preparation to understand what transitioning across an industry entailed. Given the new industry was a going to be a new context; the respondents had to mentally switch to explore the relevant information that would fulfil their requirements to enable and facilitate the transition. The primary aim for researching and adapting a career across an industry aligns to an earlier study conducted by Savickas (2008) which emphasised the flexible capacity of individuals to negotiate transitions successfully, in relation to ambidexterity, he described as the conscious and continuous exploration of both oneself and the environment, with the sole purpose to achieve alignment between the individual, their identity and an occupational environment.

6.3.2 Adaptation around core skill(s)

The next substantial theme that emerged as being crucial in career transitioning was the ability of the respondents to adapt their core skill(s) to the new industry they transitioned to. Some of these core skills included Finance, Human Resources, Marketing, Technical and Analytical Ability. Individuals that possessed such skills saw this as a minimum requirement or basic skill that had to be used to enter the new industry. Adapting this core skill(s) was the enabling factor to meet the minimum job requirements. Subject expertise is the individual's ability to meet the performance expectations encompassing their occupational expertise (Fugate et al., 2004; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006) and is aligned to the knowing-how competencies (DeFillippi & Aurthur, 1994).

Having a core skill(s) was just one of the important facet's that enabled the transition, however there were other aspects that are required to supplement this core skill(s). A general manager that used finance as a core skill had to portray other skills to supplement the core skill and commented with, "They [new company] wanted to see my leadership skills from my management skills; I needed to plan for that". In most instances the supplementary components of career capital were the respondents' softer skills which related to both communication and interpersonal skills. Tolentino et al. (2014) noted that in today's fast-evolving career context underpinned by multiple transitions, in addition to discipline-specific and technical skills, generic competencies transferrable to various occupational situations are becoming increasingly appreciated.

6.3.3 Continuous learning

The next prominent theme that emerged was Continuous learning. The sub themes included a passion for learning, wanting to learn and an attitude towards learning. In terms of formal course work, this ranged from degrees through to doctoral studies which either supplemented their core by building on exiting knowledge or provided diversity. Learning as well as the methods of learning is well studied in literature however; learning in the context of this research speaks to a passion, an intrinsic driver fuelled by curiosity that has motivated the respondents to build up their knowledge base which broadens their thinking thus aiding their adaptability.

The respondents' attitude towards learning and the reason for learning share a close link and resemble findings by Savickas's (2002) theory of career construction which conceptualizes career adaptability as attitudes, behaviour's, and competencies that individuals use in aligning themselves to work that suits them, consisting of the four dimensions of concern (planning, being planful), control (decision making, being decisive), curiosity (exploring, being inquisitive), and confidence (problem solving, being efficacious). Waterman et al. (1994) advocated that career resilient workers focused on continuous learning, adaptation to change, career self-management as a means for meeting the evolving needs of the market.

6.3.4 Self-awareness

The next pertinent theme that enabled an ambidextrous approach to career transitioning is Self-awareness. In the context of career transitioning, self-awareness in

this instance relates to understanding why people transition their careers and includes predominantly intrinsic stimulated themes such as career planning, seeking diversity or pursuing a passion. For most respondents this served as the stimulus for the transition in contrast to those that were head-hunted, it served as a point of reflection.

6.3.5 Ability to contextualise

The Ability to contextualise surfaced as another relevant theme that enabled an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning. The emergent sub themes include understanding markets, possessing multi-industry exposure, being client interfacing and understanding your potential employer. The Ability to contextualise shares an extremely close dependency with Business acumen as it is the business understanding that enabled the respondent to make sense of the environment. Mom et al. (2015) who studied ambidexterity in managers, stated that ambidexterity is the ability to both use and refine existing knowledge (exploitation) while also crafting new knowledge to overcome knowledge deficiencies consciously recognised in the execution of the task to be achieved (exploration). The Ability to contextualise has ambidexterity embedded within it as the respondents has to use the business acumen developed in their current industry (exploit) to make sense of the new industry (explore).

6.3.6 Conclusive findings for research question 3

Research question 3 sought to understand the process of approaching an inter-industry career transition in relation to the thought process, preparation and effort expended before and during the transition. Findings suggest that researching the transition and understanding how one can adapt a core skill(s) into the new industry. Coupled to these findings was the ability to contextualization what is going on in that specific industry. These three activities where done is parallel whist being employed within ones current firm.

Ambidexterity was seen as being a key component is the process of inter-industry career transition as the individuals had to exploit their current career capital (usually a core skill) and then find a fit for that skill in the new industry. Continuous learning served as an important aspect in terms of broadening ones knowledge base, especially

when there was specific career capital required to make a particular transition. All the above mentioned themes arise from having a reason for making such a transition which stems from the theme of self-awareness. Self-awareness is seen as the stimulus or point of initiation for starting the process of undertaking an inter-industry career transition.

6.4 What components of career capital may ensure sustainable employment?

Research question 4 was aimed at providing insight into the human capital requirements that each respondent, in their respective industry, regarded as being crucial for the knowledge worker to possess to ensure sustainable employment within that specific industry. The sample which included a range of senior managers and executives was deemed a valid source of data as they were considered to be in tune with the business's future requirements of human capital as well as having the knowledge of the organisations future orientation. The sample of 15 respondents is currently employed in 12 different industries

6.4.1 Subject knowledge

Subject knowledge emerged as one of the pertinent themes that an individual is required to possess. Included within the sub-themes of subject knowledge was a strong bias towards Marketing and Business Development expertise. Given the turbulent economic climate within the context of South Africa, these 2 areas of expertise come as no real surprise as firms are finding it difficult to find organic growth. Hall, Ahearne and Sujan (2015) stated that personal selling will always be a significant avenue for companies to generate revenue. Given the seniority of roles in the sample, it comes with little surprise that the focus on revenue generation in the current economic climate was given greater emphasis.

6.4.2 Attitude

Attitude surfaced as the next dominant theme that is required for the knowledge worker to possess. Attitude encompassed sub themes which included being self-motivated, coachable, pragmatic and determined. Analyses of these themes reveal that Attitude in

this context relates to the traits of the person and how flexible they are in operating within a turbulent industry. Given, the sample interviewed most of the industries we in a state of change which resulted in most of the respondents alluding to the ideal candidate having flexibility and dealing with change. Briscoe, Henagan, Burton and Murphy (2012) found that individuals that embraced the protean mind-set of actively driving their careers were found to better deal with changes in a turbulent environment. Jimmieson, Terry and Callan (2004) established that employees with a great deal of change-related self-efficacy have an inherent belief of handling change-related demands and can perform effectively during and organisational change processes.

6.4.3 Contextual intelligence

The next significant theme to emerge for individuals to possess was Contextual intelligence. Sub themes included the ability adapt skills, have multiple skills, adapt to culture and analysing markets. Contextual intelligence in relation to sustainable employment attributes has two facets with the first regarding the adaptability of the individuals' skills and how they work within flatter organisational structures and participating in team work. In light of sustainable employment, this theme alludes to the manner in which individuals can adapt their behaviour in a work environment.

The importance of being able to adjust emerges from the constantly changing business environment which necessitates the individual to constantly adapt. Huang, Ryan, Zabel and Palmer (2014) stated that the importance of workers' ability to adapt to different situations with increased performance is as crucial as ever as a result of changing technologies that result in varying work designs; unified global economies undergoing constant change that require adaptation and structural business changes such as mergers and acquisitions require workers to adjust to new environments (e.g., location, position, company culture).

The second facet relates to interpreting the environment outside of the organisation and speaks to the business acumen attributes that individuals should possess in making sense of the environment to influence the business. In relation to understanding market dynamics, Rapp, Agnihotri, Baker and Andzulis (2014) stated that individual competitive intelligence is the individual-level knowledge about competitors and the competitive environment. Individual competitive intelligence feeds

into the organisation as input data, however at an individual level and in relation to this research; it is the individual making sense of the environment and adapting these environments to deliver products/services to the environment.

6.4.4 People skills

Another significant theme raised was the ability work with people and as such was placed under the banner of People skills. The sub themes include people management, working with people and interpersonal skills. People management focuses on delivering output from teams with the working with people sub theme focussing on general interaction with people on teams.

In relation to an individual appreciating teamwork and being engaged whilst working in teams, Costa, Passos and Bakker (2014) found that team work engagement is the shared, positive and fulfilling motivational emergent state of work-related well-being. They proposed team work engagement as a multidimensional construct comprising of affective and cognitive dimensions which included: team vigour, team dedication and team absorption. Team vigour represents levels of energy, and willingness to expend effort and motivate other members of the team to work; team dedication refers to the enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge while working in a team and team absorption represents being immersed in the work itself. Individuals need to understand why the value of team work is important in relation to achieving organisations goals and what team work constitutes off. Neubert, Mainert, Kretzschmar and Greiff (2015) stated advances in the working world are accentuating tasks that require active problem solving that include the need to collaborate with others.

In relation to managing people, given the context of South Africa and the diversity of people within organisations, managing diverse people within teams is becoming more prominent as highlighted in the data analysis. Alexander, Havercome and Mujtab (2015) state that twenty-first century managers must realize that managing diversity is an essential requirement to effectively managing employees to deliver results. The authors went on to further unpack what managing diversity entails by adding that managing diversity includes planning and implementing organizational systems to manage people. In relation to managing diverse teams to extract performance, Jones and George (2016) stated that managing diversity includes rectifying

misunderstandings about the nature of different diverse groups in how they differ from each other and ultimately find collaboration between the diverse individuals and their skills-set.

6.4.5 Conclusive findings for research question 4

Components of career capital that appear pertinent for sustainable employment across the 12 defined industries indicate that having subject knowledge expertise is as skill is crucial however equally important is people management skills and having an adaptable attitude. This indicates that subject knowledge alone whilst important, has to be ably supported with an ability to manage people and having an adaptable attitude to change. Business acumen and Contextual intelligence still hold high importance signifying the benefit of understanding business, specifically changes in environmental contexts that may affect business.

6.5 Cumulative research findings in relation to literature

This research findings to an extent, share some similarities to that by Savickas and Porfeli (2012) who found there are four scales that measure career behaviour's and attitudes for career transitions which include consideration for future career possibilities (concern), having a sense of career aspirations are and acting on it (control), exploring potential job options and roles (curiosity), and to have the self-efficacy to attain those career goals (confidence). The major difference between the studies is that this research study provides granular detail on how one enacts an inter industry career transition and how using specific components career capital enables one to contextualize the transition. The study by Savickas and Porfeli (2012) discusses what drives career transitions, with limited reference to inter-industry transitioning. This research study provides an understanding of the "why", "what" and "how" aspects of inter-industry career transitioning.

With regards to building career resilience to enable sustainable employment, Arora and Rangnekar (2014) explained that career resilience describes the degree to which people resist career impediments or conditions that affect their work, self-confidence, need for achievement, willingness, risk-taking ability as well as the ability to act

independently and cooperatively (London & Mone, 1987). By combining research question one and four, the research study gives the knowledge worker a portfolio of career capital that they should acquire. The research study also provides insight on how to contextualise what is required for an inter-industry career transition. The study highlighted the importance of understanding one's self-awareness then amalgamating business acumen and contextual intelligence to make sense of the environment and the new industry and finally using business acumen and one's core skill(s) to position ones-self in the new industry.

Tolentino et al. (2014) noted that in today's fast-evolving career context underpinned by multiple transitions and amplified personal agency, generic competencies transferrable to various occupational situations, in addition to discipline-specific and technical skills are becoming increasingly appreciated. The study highlights the need to have more than just a core skill, although a core skill is viewed as a necessity it forms just one of many facets required for sustainable employment. People management and softer skills such as communication are now emerging as critical components of career capital due to the diversity of the labour maker resulting from globalisation.

Huang et al. (2014) stress the importance of adaptation by stating that the importance of workers' ability to adapt to different situations with increased performance is as crucial as ever as a result of changing technologies that result in varying work designs; unified global economies undergoing constant change and structural business changes such as mergers and acquisitions require workers to adapt to new environments (e.g., location, position, company culture). The word that sums up an inter-industry career transitioning is adaptability as the knowledge worker is required to adapt their cognition to the new industry, the new business and then finally adapt their core skill and other components of career capital to the new company within the new industry.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Synthesis of research

The research set out to primarily understand how certain knowledge workers were able to transition their careers from one industry to the next and in doing so translating their career capital across an industry. Having the ability to make such an inter-industry career transition is seen as a method of building career resilience in an effort to ensure sustainable employment in a turbulent economic environment. This research study established the components of career capital which included Self-awareness (understanding motive); Contextual intelligence (adaptability); Business acumen (business drivers) and Subject knowledge expertise (core skill) as the dominant themes that are crucial for undertaking an inter-industry career transition. An inter-industry career transition was enabled through the predominant use of these four components of career capital as it provides the motivation for the transition, a diagnosis of what is required to enable the transition and then how to adapt and position ones core skill into the new industry.

The research also established that Self-initiated learning, Mentoring, Learning through failure and Reflection were the most commonly used methods and processes of acquiring the above mentioned career capital as the inter-industry career transitioning process is largely driven by the knowledge worker, placing a huge onus on oneself to acquire the necessary career capital for the transition. This research study also provided insight into the future career capital requirement across 12 different industries as based on the participants' current organisation of employ. The data concluded and revealed that a core skill (Subject knowledge) has to be ably supplemented by other components of career capital such as people skills and an adaptable to attitude as this seen as necessary in being able to adjust to the dynamic work environment.

Lyons et al. (2015) stated that resilience has long been an important construct in the field of psychology but had received relatively little research attention in the context of career development (Bimrose & Hearne, 2012). Given the findings presented, the subsequent section provides and describes a framework of how career capital, emerging from the research study, can be used to enable an ambidextrous approach to

inter industry career transitioning which ultimately results in developing career resilience.

7.2 A framework: An ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning

The framework depicted in Figure 5 below, outlines a process that may assist individuals in undertaking an inter-industry career transition using career capital as the enabler. The approach involves seven steps commencing with understanding the reason for the transition and culminating with adapting and packaging the relevant components of career capital to enable the transition from a career capital perspective.

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Figure 5: An ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning
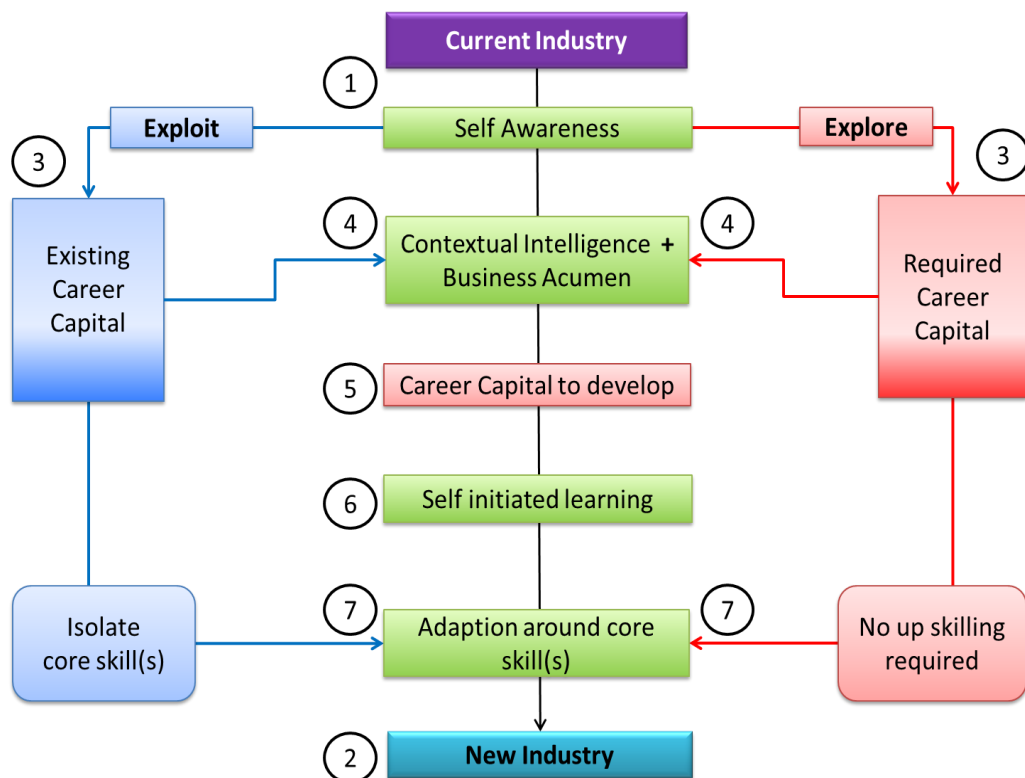
Step 1: Motivation for the transition

Self-awareness is seen as the starting point at is provides the intrinsic driver and motivation for the reason for the transition (DeFillippi & Aurthur, 1994). This could be

for job security, pursuing a passion, career development or any other clearly thought out reason for wanting to transition. This is seen as a critical step as the motivation and drive for the transition has an influence on the attitude and determination in executing the transition.

Step 2: Deciding on the new industry/firm

This is seen as the conscious decision made on the choice of industry the individual wishes on transitioning to based on the motivation an drivers identified in step one. This step forms a vital stage in the process as all subsequent steps are dependent on how career capital should be acquired and positioned for this selected industry.

Step 3: Ambidexterity

This single step has two parts that requires an ambidextrous approach in simultaneously executing both steps. Lavie et al. (2010) stated that exploitation and exploration should not be analysed as a decision between two isolated choices, but rather as a continuum. The first part entails exploring and researching the firm or industry that the individual is planning on transitioning to. Research includes using business acumen (understanding of business models and value propositions) and contextual intelligence to understand and make sense of what is valued in both the new organisation and the new industry.

The second part involves reflection and understanding ones current career capital portfolio. It is this career capital that will be exploited and used as the basis for the transition (Brown, 2015; Mom et al., 2015). It is of vital importance to be self-critical and honest in identifying ones core skills as this forms the basis in which other skills will be augmented and then amalgamated to form the portfolio of career capital used for the transition.

Step 4: Diagnosis

This step involves reviewing what career capital is required in the industry/organisation then comparing this to one's existing portfolio of career capital. This is seen as sense making and contextualising what career capital is required for the transition. Possessing business acumen is vital in this step as it forms the initial basis on how one

may position and package the necessary components of career capital for the transition. Any components not one's current portfolio, is then required to be developed or enhanced which forms the next step in the process.

Step 5 and 6: Planning and self-initiating career capital development

This dual step involves acquiring or enhancing the career capital that is perceived as necessary to possess for the transition. The knowledge worker should plan on how these components of career capital may be developed. The knowledge worker will have to self-initiate this learning process by either getting these skills on job (exploiting current industry) or through further education and studies. The attitude towards learning drives this process as the time frame has a dependency on the effort exerted by knowledge worker.

Step 7: Positioning career capital in the new industry

This is the final step that packages ones core skill(s) (isolated in step 3) with other components of career capital that are deemed necessary for the transition (step 5) or steps 5 and 6 is skipped if the individual possess the necessary career capital. Step 7 makes use of contextual intelligence and business acumen for positioning ones portfolio of career capital in the new industry. Jones and DeFillippi (1996) explained 'knowing where' speaks to understanding how to position one's self in an industry by understanding where to enter and train to remain relevant but also to enhance opportunities.

The above seven steps only serves as a basis and a framework of using career capital to position one's self in the new industry to enable a career transition. It provides insight on what should be considered for the transition by using contextual intelligence and business acumen to position and potentially adapt and find alignment of one's career capital in a new industry. It must be highlighted that this approach should be constantly adopted even if there is no stimulus in wanting to leave ones current place of employ. Given the turbulent and uncertain economic climate, the knowledge worker needs to guard again potential job loss (organisation or industry collapse) by ensuring they have the necessary know how and career capital that can be adapted to a new context which ultimately results in building career resilience against business uncertainty.

7.3 Limitations of research

While this research study has offered valuable insights into career capital as an enabler to an ambidextrous approach for inter-industry career transitioning, there may have been certain recognised limitations in the research that may hinder the generalizability of the findings. These limitations included:

- Collection of data within a restricted time allocation and geographic location, may possibly result in biased information that was dependent on the respondents recollection of activities at a point in time and the researchers own biases based on own perceptions, assumptions and interpretations. This time constraint could be negated with future research framed over a longer period of time and drawing from a sample over a greater geographic location.

- The restriction of the universe to selected individuals, who under took more than a single inter-industry career transition, further results in potential limited variability in responses from participants. Again, this potential constraint could be mitigated by future research conducted over a lengthier period of time thus enabling the researcher sufficient time to extend the universe.

- The outcome of the research is immensely dependent on the quality of the content discussed by the respondents during the in-depth interviews. This limitation can be mitigated through consistent quality and thoroughness of the interview questions, the process, and ensuring sufficient time with the respondent.

- The ability of the respondents to accurately recall and clearly distinguish, at each inter-industry career transition, the specific components of career capital that enabled that particular transition. There may lay a possibility of various other components of career capital that were amalgamated but articulated as a certain component which may bias the results.

- The research study did not set out to determine the position (role) in the new industry the participant took in order to enter into a new industry and as such may influence certain limitations of where exactly an individual can position themselves within the new organisation in a new industry.

Despite the identified limitations, this research study provided valuable initial insights into career capital as an enabler to an ambidextrous approach for inter-industry career transitioning. Furthermore, it provided a framework for individuals looking to undertake a inter-industry transition or alternatively build career resilience that may ensure sustainable employment by considering the adaptability of their career capital.

7.4 Future research considerations

This study adopted a lowest common denominator approach is grouping themes and factors to depict what is shared in terms of career capital enabling career transitioning (research question one), their method of accrual (research question two) and future career capital requirement (research question four). Potential area's for further developing and enhancing this study is to focus on the following:

a) How specific components of career capital were translated across industries. This approach will provide greater understanding on adapting and translating specific skills across an industry but may provide evidence on how work roles and tasks are similar across an industry. As an example, how an engineer's role in product design different to a financial services product design? What exactly is the differentiator into what may and may not be translatable?

b) Provide greater focus on studying the transition from one industry to another. For example from engineering to finance, limit the population for those that have made this specific transition across a seniority of roles (junior, senior, executive). A challenge for this study could be time frame and finding the quantity of participants' that will ensure the study reaches data saturation. This study may confirm the results of this study in terms of career capital enabling the inter-industry transition.

c) Empirically validating the model that was developed (section 7.2). This would test the robustness and applicability of the model but also the model could be continuously refined to align with the dynamic and constantly changing business and subsequent labour markets.

7.5 Recommendations

This study was primarily undertaken to provide knowledge workers' with evidence on how to enact an inter-industry career transition. It has been argued throughout the research that an inter-industry career transition is seen a method of building career resilience as knowledge workers have a framework on how to contextualise their career capital. This framework should be used in uncertain economic times when considering an inter-industry career transition however the researcher recommends that this approach be constantly embraced to develop and enhance ones portfolio of career capital that can be called upon and adapted as required as opposed to a reactive response (collapsing or markets and industries). Knowledge workers that view themselves as specialists need to consider how susceptible their career capital is to their current business environment; whist exploiting their current career capital should consider exploring and developing new career capital to diversify their portfolio of career capital. The approximate duration of how long it may take to diversify ones existing career capital is a function of the knowledge workers existing career capital and future exploratory endeavours however this process is driven by attitude, determination and the ability to accurately diagnose alignment of career capital to this new endeavour (Figure 5).

This research study may assist human resource practitioners to better understand how diversity of skills can be introduced into their business environment by discussing the organisations business model and value propositions with prospective employees. This may enable new employees to contextualise and understand their role within an organisation in relation to what a business is trying to achieve which may provide them with the necessary context on how to adapt their skills to align with the business requirements thus potentially shortening the on-boarding process. This study has found that skills are transferable across industries and the dominant logic of only recruiting within an industry for a specific organisation in that industry must be challenged. Career capital as found in this research study, and confirmed by Froehlich et al. (2015), is specific to business in general and not limited entirely to a single industry.

The frame work desired in Figure 5 can be extended and generalised when considering a transition to a new role, division or organisation. All that is required is to reframe step 2 in the frame work (Figure 5) to what the knowledge worker wants to achieve. However, what is of vital significance is for the knowledge worker to acquire and

possess vast amounts of business acumen and contextual intelligence as this forms the link in the career capital adaptability process.

7.6 Conclusion

The objective of the research was to understand the components of career capital that enabled knowledge workers to transition their careers across industries, how these components were acquired and how these knowledge workers used career capital to enable such a transition. Through 15 semi-structured, face to face interviews, these research findings provided greater understanding on which components of career capital enabled knowledge workers to transition their career across an industry, how knowledge workers acquired these specific components of career capital and a frame work for undertaking an inter-industry career transition. The importance of possessing business acumen and contextual intelligence was greatly discussed within the study as these components of career capital enable adaptability of the knowledge workers career capital to an organisation within a new industry. The intention of the findings is to enable the knowledge worker to better manage their careers by building career resilience against turbulent and uncertain business environments by providing the knowledge worker with a frame work on an approach to using career capital to enable an ambidextrous approach to inter-industry career transitioning.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Schedule

Semi-structured, Face to Face Interview Schedule

Name: Surname:

Industry 1:   Duration:

Industry 2:   Duration:

Research question 1: What are the most pertinent components of career capital that are required to transition careers across industries?

1a) Which skills ensured you transitioned across industries?

1b) Why are the above mentioned skills deemed most important?

1c) How did you know these skills are relevant?

1d) Context: Forced you to transition or Voluntary?

1e) How did you translate these skills from Industry A to Industry B? Specific examples

1f) If multiple industries were transitioned across, any similarities among the industries?

Research question 2: How are these components of career capital acquired?

2a) How did you acquire these skills? Examples of each of these pertinent skills.

2b) Where these skills relevant to your job or acquired outside of employment?

2c) When do you think these skills could be acquired in one's career? (junior, senior etc)

2d) Duration required to acquire these skills? Does it require fine tuning?

2e) Can these skills be acquired through training?

Research question 3: What enables an ambidextrous approach to career transitioning? (Answers from research questions 1 and 2 required to answer this question).

3a) Did you recognize the need to acquire these skills and diversify or was it initiated through the company?

3b) Based on 1, how did you balance this?

3c) From the approach you have provided, what could be done in parallel?

Research question 4: What components of career capital ensure sustainability in the current industry?

4a) What skills are important to ensure sustainable employment in this industry?

4b) Why these specific skills?

4c) Which sort of individuals, outside your industry could possess these skills? Why would you say this?

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Gordon Institute
of Business Science
University of Pretoria

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Re: MBA research study

I am a GIBS MBA student who is conducting research on translating career capital across industries. I am trying to find out how individuals are able to adapt their career capital across industries. Our interview, which will focus on your experiences of adapting your career capital across multiple industries, is expected to last about an hour and will help understand how individuals were able to adapt their career capital across multiple industries to sustain their employment.

The cost of this interview would be your time, however, the benefit would be the opportunity to contribute to a broader knowledge base in the form of this research study.

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All data will be kept confidential and the findings will be captured by numbering the interviewees. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Rikesh Amarlal   Dr Gavin Price

Researcher   Research Supervisor

rikesha@elb.co.za   priceg@gibs.co.za

061 345 8826   011 771 4223

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

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Appendix C: Initial 37 Themes for Research Question 1

Ambition
Analytical Skill
Attitude
Being Mobile
Business Acumen
Change Agent
Communication
Contextual Intelligence
Coordination
Curiosity
Decision Making
Desire to Learn
Determination
Entrepreneurial Mind-set
EQ
General Management
Handle Pressure
Head-Hunted
Interpersonal
Leadership
Networking
People Management
People Skills
Personal Approach
Personality
Previous Skills
Prior Experience
Prior Knowledge
Prioritisation
Problem Solving
Qualification
Self-Awareness
Strategic Thinking
Subject Knowledge
Systems Thinking
Tangible Output
Understanding Culture

Appendix D: Snap Shot of Coded Data using Thematic Analysis

Code	Detail
Contextual Intelligence	Consumer Behavior
Contextual Intelligence	Adaptability
Problem Solving	Business Challenges
Communication	Listening
Self Awareness	Career Planning
Personal Approach	
Curiosity	Wanting to Learn
Handle Pressure	Self Regulation
Systems Thinking	Big Picture, high level
Business Acumen	Building Business Models
Self Awareness	Career Planning
Contextual Intelligence	
Communication	Influencing People in Organisation
Business Acumen	Value Chain
Alignment	Prior Experience
People Skills	
Curiosity	Wanting to Learn
Systems Thinking	
Attitude	Determination
Problem Solving	
Entrepreneurial Mindset	
Curiosity	Learning from mistakes
Networking	People in a position to recruit
Subject Knowledge	Business Development
Self Awareness	Career Planning
People Skills	
Contextual Intelligence	Interpreting Client Requirements
Communication	Listening

Appendix F: Initial 36 Themes for Research Question 2

Attitude
Before Employment
Being Inquisitive
Being Opportunistic
Coachable
Colleagues
Contextualised to Business
Continuous learning
Curiosity
Distilling what to take in
Diverse Exposure
Environment
Exposure
Exposure to Analytical Thinking
Interrogating Data
Learning From Failure
Making Mistakes
Mentoring
Networking
Opportunistic Environment
Outside of business
People Interaction
Personal Traits
Reflection
Self Critical
Self Taught
Structured Training
Taking Calculated Risks
Theory to Practice
Through Experimentation
Through Feedback
Through Observation
Through People Management
Travelling
Using Systems Thinking
Working in diverse teams

Appendix G: Initial 27 Themes for Research Question 3

Ability to Contextualise
Ability to Influence
Being Experimental
Adapted around core skill(s)
Big Picture Thinking
Business Acumen
Continuous Learning
Curiosity
Diverse Exposure
Diverse Industry Exposure
Early Business Exposure
Entrepreneurial Mind-set
Knowing what you want
Matched Skills to Firm
Opportunistic
Preparing for the Interview
Researched Transition
Risk Taker
Self-Awareness
Self Determination
Self-Driven
Solutions Orientated Mind-set
Waited for the Correct Opportunity
Wanted Diversity
Wanted Options

Appendix H: Initial 46 Themes for Research Question 4

Ability to Add Value
Ability to Collaborate
Ability to Delegate
Ability to Influence
Ability to Shape Business
Academic Qualification
Adaptable
Analytical
Attitude
Be coachable
Build Teams
Business Acumen
Communication
Contextual Intelligence
Contextualisation
Emotional Intelligence
Entrepreneurial Mind-set
Generalist
Have multiple Skills
Influencing
Inquisitive
Interpersonal
Leadership
Management Experience
Marketing
Networking
People Centric
People engagement skills
People Management
People Skills
Pragmatic
Problem Solving
Product Development
Relevant Experience
Self-Driven
Self-Motivated
Skills Contextualisation
Subject Knowledge
Systems Thinking
Team Focussed
Teamwork

Technical Ability
Understand Client Requirements
Understand Human Behaviour
Understanding Business problems
Work in any structure

Appendix I: Ethics Approval Confirmation

Dear Mr Rikesh Amarlal

Protocol Number: **Temp2016-01170**

Title: **Application for Guide**

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been APPROVED.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards,

Adele Bekker

Appendix J: Turnitin Receipt

Turnitin Originality Report

AmarlalR by Rikesh Amarlal

From Test your originality (GIBS Information Centre _99_1)

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Keller, T., and J. Weibler. "What It Takes and Costs To Be an Ambidextrous Manager: Linking Leadership and Cognitive Strain to Balancing Exploration and Exploitation", Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 2015.

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