HOW CAN THE NWT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND
EMPLOYMENT ASSIST EMPLOYEES TO DEVELOP PERSONAL RESILIENCY
IN THE FACE OF SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURAL CHANGE?

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE – STUDY BACKGROUND

The Problem

What can the NWT Department of Education, Culture & Employment do to help employees develop personal resiliency in the face of significant structural change?

In 1995, as a result of reduced transfer payments from the federal government, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) was forced to engage in significant downsizing; whole divisions and one department disappeared while other departments were amalgamated into a few "super" departments. Until 1995, the concept of lay off was all but unheard of in the GNWT; the federal formula used to fund the GNWT protected northerners from the structural changes which affected the rest of the country in the 1980s. As a result, the lay off announcements in the NWT were received with shock and alarm from all quarters (Slave River Journal, Dec 1995, p. 1; Slave River Journal, Feb 1996, p. 3).

In the short lead-time available, the GNWT enhanced its Employees' Assistance Program to provide employees in all communities personal crisis counselling by phone and organized some short work search/resume writing workshops. In addition, all employees on lay off status were given first priority for any other jobs available within the government (Government of the NWT, no date).

However, as many employees pointed out at public meetings with their Members of the Legislative Assembly, the response was insufficient for the magnitude of the change (Slave River Journal, Mar 1996, p.1). There simply was not enough time. While some employees were able to launch a new endeavour immediately, many appeared to spend considerable time working through negative emotions before moving on. Indeed, due to the lack of job opportunities in the NWT, a job

loss could easily mean a move to another community and all that that entails financially, emotionally, and mentally. In a few cases, it is not clear if the affected employees recovered at all. It appeared that many employees were not sufficiently resilient to deal with the changes thrust upon them.

Resiliency is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "an act of springing back... or withstanding shock without permanent deformation" (Merriam-Webster, 1993, p. 1932). How this notion can be translated into a personal attribute to deal with structural change on the job needs to be explored. What are the characteristics of a resilient employee? Is resiliency constant in a person's life, or does it ebb and flow? To what extent can it be developed in adults on the job? How can an organization assist employees to become more resilient?

The literature tells us that constant, and perhaps disruptive, change will characterize the future. Jeremy Rifkin (1995) paints a very pessimistic future of people being replaced by software. William Bridges (1994) and Charles Handy (1995) both point out that the "job" as a concept, with its attendant notions of security, stability, and long-term nature, will soon disappear. They contend that people will return to seeking work, not jobs and will move from short-term employment in one situation to contractor and perhaps short-term employer in another. Resiliency will be an important personal attribute however we view the future.

In addition to predictions from economists and futurists over the last several years, there are unmistakable indicators in the NWT fiscal and political context which make additional structural change unavoidable. To begin, there is the accumulated deficit initially anticipated for 2001/02 (Government of the NWT, 2000a). While the government has managed to temporarily delay the impact of that deficit through reallocation, (Government of the NWT, 2001a), pressing fiscal issues are in the wings. Unless the funding formula with the federal government can be renegotiated, or a resource royalty sharing agreement finalized to allow

the NWT to retain more than the present 20% of non-renewable resource royalties (Government of the NWT, 2000c) the GNWT will face some difficult options, one of which may be further lay off. From a monetary standpoint it is clear that the NWT is already looking at significant costs in dealing with high rates of fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol dependency, and diabetes. The cost of administering services to 42,000 people over 32 communities is huge. The delivery of education, health and social services account for 45% of the territorial budget (Government of the NWT, 2001c), and there is no reason to believe this will decrease in the near future; 42% of the population is under 25 years of age whereas the national average is only 33% (Government of the NWT, 2000b). It is possible that as the southern taxpayer ages, fiscal support for territorial issues will wane. The Government of the NWT can ill afford to add to this list of costly problems.

Secondly, of profound significance, are the land claim and self-government talks. To date all land claims negotiations north of Great Slave Lake have been settled. The follow up self-government talks are moving apace as are and land claim negotiations south of the lake. While only one Final Agreement is imminent, there is no reason to believe the others will be protracted (Antoine, 2001). Indeed, these negotiations are placing the GNWT on a precipice of foundational change which will affect the very nature of its role and relationship with residents of the NWT.

Self-government is not a simple download of programs and services from federal and territorial governments to aboriginal groups. It is "a regulation by an Aboriginal people of its own affairs through an Aboriginal government" (Government of the NWT, 1999a, p.16). The GNWT's legislative function, fiscal responsibility, and the manner in which it defines accountability will undergo fundamental change. So significant is the anticipated change that a Special Committee has recently been formed to consider the impact of self-government generally and recommend specifically how the GNWT can "amend legislation

...to reflect the concurrency of jurisdiction between Aboriginal and partner governments and the Government of the NWT" (Government of the NWT, 2001d).

The stature of the GNWT has already changed noticeably. Aboriginal groups are forming partnerships with business and industry in light of the oil and gas and diamond developments and are becoming much less dependent on either the federal or territorial governments. In fact, in seeking the royalty resource sharing agreement mentioned above, it was clear to the GNWT that it must bring the support of the aboriginal groups to the federal table (Government of the NWT, 2000c, p. I).

The implications of these changes for GNWT staff will be significant. Groups of jobs or perhaps complete occupational areas could be transferred to the claimant groups who may choose not to accept present government employees in the transfer. The remaining jobs and workplace could be very different from they are today.

Thirdly, from a cultural standpoint, NWT leaders often point to the importance of ensuring the GNWT reflects aboriginal traditions of which caring and looking out for one's neighbour is core. Enhancing personal resiliency is highly consistent with traditional values and would be an appropriate way for the GNWT to reflect those values. Fourthly, from an organizational standpoint, one need only look at the vision and mission statements of all government departments to find references to respect for staff and concern for individual potential. It would seem that assisting staff to develop sufficient resiliency to weather structural change, is a wise fiscal move and a vehicle to express traditional and organizational values.

The Organization

Today there are about 4,000 working for the GNWT (Government of the NWT, 2000e). Until 1989 most employees were hired directly from the South and remained in the NWT for a very short period of time. But as a result of the Affirmative Action Policy, with its priority on aboriginal and long term northerners and its requirement to recruit in the NWT first, the GNWT bureaucracy is far more home grown. Today about 40% of the GNWT public service is made up of aboriginal and long term northerners as compared to 34% 1991 (Government of the NWT, in process). In short, most GNWT employees no longer call another province "home". In the face of significant change, they will not return to another jurisdiction. Rather their inability to deal with change will be experienced in the NWT.

The GNWT, not unlike most bureaucracies, nurtured a relationship with staff based on an exchange of staff loyalty for job security. In the new work dynamic where change is constant, this relationship serves neither party. The emerging work values, while not totally clear, suggest short-term agreements of employment with uncertain working conditions and benefits (Bridges, 1994; Moses, 1997). Until the new work dynamic is clear to everyone. we live in that discomfort of the transition, the unknown, where personal resiliency can be tested.

In the mid 1990's the signs of coming change were clearly visible through some government newsletters, radio interviews with Ministers, and newspaper sources. However, collectively NWT residents seemed to be lulled by a lack of belief (Slave River Journal, July 1996, p. 3). They appeared not to see their connection to the larger global community or have the prior experience for processing the imminent changes. The GNWT was the largest employer after the mining industry; it was a stalwart of the community in possession of both the right questions and the right answers.

Senge's laws and systems thinking offer a useful lens for understanding some of the issues at play within the GNWT (Senge, 1990). For example, after the bulk of lay offs occurred, the government hastily announced its "no lay off policy" in order to bring calm. That policy was embraced as the solution, even though it was clearly a temporary measure "for the life of this government" (Slave River Journal, March 1998, p. 1) which ended in December 1999. This is an excellent example that "today's problems come from yesterday's solutions" (Senge, 1990, p. 57) and "the easy way out leads back in" (Senge, 1990, p. 60). By focusing on the narrow politics of the immediate, we take time and energy away from considering a long-term approach to preparing staff for significant change. While it is possible to identify many of Senge's learning disabilities within the GNWT, the "I am my position" disability is particularly interesting. In a small population where anonymity and often confidentiality are rare, a person *is* his/her position at all times in the community. It is not simply that one chooses to define oneself as a particular position; the rest of the community does as well. The feedback loop on this can be very powerful.

This paper will consider aspects of personal resiliency from a variety of sources and will explore potential leadership approaches which could be adopted by the Department. In addition, it will outline the methodology used for and ideas obtained from interviews with six staff members on each person's perception and experience of personal resiliency. To begin, we will turn to a review of organizational documents and supporting literature.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW
Review of Organization Documents

This project is concerned with how the NWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment can assist employees develop personal resiliency in the face of significant structural change. While the phrase "personal resiliency" is not used within the organization, there is every reason to believe this project will be consistent with organizational priorities.

The Legislative Assembly is seeking through its vision "a strong, unified and self - reliant Northwest Territories that can take its rightful place in the federation and the international community" (Government of the NWT, 2000d). Flowing from that is the mission of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment which seeks a "community where people value learning...where people accept personal responsibility for their learning...work together to develop their own vision for learning in the community and continually nurture it" (Government of the NWT, 1999b, p. 4). Further, the mission of the department is to "invest in...the people of the Northwest Territories...enabling them to reach their full potential...and to support individuals to be self-sufficient and make productive choices" (Government of the NWT. 1999b, p. 4).

Of further interest is the recently developed career development policy, "Career Development Across the Life Span" (Government of the NWT, 2001b), which outlines the department's commitment to the delivery of career services to its many client groups. It speaks of "providing people with the tools and strategies required to move toward their dreams" and "helping people better fulfill their values, beliefs and interests with *every* decision they make". Within the policy's learning framework there are many K-12 level competencies that are of interest such as:

> Knows and demonstrates skills needed to prepare for and cope with change and transition (moving to a new community; preparing to exit school; and demonstrates a capacity to be self-reliant.
>
> (Government of the NWT, 2001b, p. 10)

Certainly the goals of self-reliance, personal responsibility, full potential, and self-sufficiency resonate with "personal resiliency", however it may be defined. However, all of the documents mentioned above focus on the government's commitments to its publics. There is no mention of staff, but, by the same token, there is no suggestion that staff should be excluded from these ideas.

One point where this project and departmental goals differ, apart from the former's focus on staff and the department's focus on the public, is the department's use of defined programs and services as a vehicle for implementing its goals. What is sought in this project is not a program, but an approach to working with staff on an everyday basis. It seeks understanding of the kind of leadership and organization that is required to enhance personal resiliency.

Where this project and departmental goals intersect is in their concern about how people can meet with change, yet hold strong to what is essential about themselves and move on in a way that is meaningful and productive in their own terms.

This project does not replicate or run parallel to any existing plan. Rather, it will add a new dimension to the search in which the department is already engaged. It is hoped that this project will bring another perspective to the difficult world of structural change by focusing on the development of a resilient workforce in an organization that seeks understanding of that process. This paper will now turn to a review of literature related to resiliency and its development within employees.

Review of Supporting Literature

How can the Department Education, Culture and Employment assist employees to develop personal resiliency in the face significant structural change?

This section will review literature which speaks directly to the issue of personal resiliency as well as that literature which uses other frameworks or language to discuss very synonymous ideas. Secondly, it will review the notion of social capital and how it provides an environment for the development of resiliency. Lastly, it will consider advice from theorists on the role of leadership in developing and preserving resiliency within organizations.

Resiliency

Resiliency is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "an act of springing back... or withstanding shock without permanent deformation" (Merriam-Webster, 1993, p. 1932). While an excellent starting point, this definition does not inform us specifically about what we should be assisting employees to develop or what we could expect from someone we consider resilient.

Konrad and Bronson (1997) suggest that resiliency is the capacity to "successfully adapt in the face of adversity and develop social competence despite exposure to severe stress" (p. 188). They refer to resiliency as an "antibody that enables warding off attacks" (p. 190) and say resilient people use "adaptive distancing – the ability to separate themselves from their dysfunctional environment" (p. 190). Konrad and Bronson (1997) analyzed the findings of four authors on the issue of resiliency among students. Of the 28 characteristics identified, only 9 were supported by all four theorists. These characteristics are: sense of personal worthiness, a social orientation, a support network, ability to delay gratification, internal locus of control, problem solving ability, critical thinking ability, and sense of humour. Konrad and Bronson (1997) believe that developing resilient people "is a long-term developmental process that involves systemic changes – the fundamental altering of our human systems,

including the family, the school, the neighborhood, community-based organizations, and the workplace" (p. 194).

While expanding our notion of resiliency with a physiological analogy and some concrete characteristics, Konrad and Bronson's (1997) view that developing resiliency is a long-term paradigm shift is not helpful in the immediate term. Further, one could argue that many of the nine characteristics identified are in fact skills which can be learned without the extended time commitment. As we expand our understanding of personal resilience, it will be important that our remedies remain manageable without sacrificing our depth of understanding.

Patterson (1997), in contrast, offers some very practical views on resiliency. He speaks of "personal energy accounts" (p. 6), which contain energy in the form of time, thoughts, and efforts to spend on daily living and the assimilation of change required both in and outside of work. He sees resiliency as a highly situational state of affairs depending upon the rate at which, or whether, one's account becomes depleted. Clearly he does not see resilience as a set of characteristics which must be developed over a considerable period of time. For Patterson (1997), resiliency ebbs and flows as one "invests" and "spends". To expand his discussion of the invest-spend dichotomy, Paterson (1997) uses four different scales. For example, investing or buying-in behaviour is more likely to occur when organizational change originates "from within, rather than the outside" when employees are required to "refine, rather than reframe" an activity and where their involvement is that of "initiation, rather than responding". In contrast, spending behaviour occurs in the reverse situations. While seemingly simplistic, Patterson's banking analogy and four scales can form a useful lens for understanding the extent to which employee resiliency can be depleted in a given situation.

However, to make Patterson's (1997) view of resiliency more appropriate to NWT situations, it would be useful to add three scales. One scale would address the

time frame for completion of the change with "immediate" and "long term" as the variables; another would address prior knowledge with "surprise" and "substantial lead time" as the variables; the third scale would address the degree of change on one's personal life with "move to another community" and "no change" as the variables. That is, those changes which must be completed immediately, are received as a surprise, and/or require a move to another community are likely to cause significant expenditure from the personal energy account. Those variables at the other end of these three scales – long-term change, substantial lead-time on announcement of the change, and/or no change in community - will account for a smaller or perhaps no expenditure.

One drawback to Patterson's (1997) work is that his advice to leaders who want to increase resiliency in staff focuses on the time period of organizational restructuring. He is not looking at how resiliency can be nurtured in advance of a restructuring exercise. Further, his advice is quite specific: "help staff understand the potential..." or "assist staff come to terms with..." Because these remedies are leader focused, they do not inform as to what we might see in the employees. As a result they run the risk of cultivating dependency rather than resiliency in the staff.

In sum, Patterson (1997) provides an interesting lens for analyzing the ebb and flow of individual resiliency during stressful times. However, he does not assist us to understand how resiliency can be developed in preparation for change, and his suggestions are more focused on what leaders should do, as opposed to what staff, themselves, can become.

Collard (1996) speaks of "career resiliency" which she defines as "the ability to adapt to changing circumstances even when the circumstances are discouraging or disruptive" (p.33). She elaborates her definition with six key concepts: self-awareness, values driven, dedication to continuous learning, future focus, connectedness, and flexibility. Where Collard's (1996) work departs or moves on

from that of Konrad and Bronson (1997) or Patterson (1997) is her view that personal resiliency affects and is affected by the system in which it is developed. Career resilience "requires both independence (self-direction) and interdependence (interconnectedness)" (Collard, 1996, p. 38). It is a "do it yourself operation that you can't do alone" (p. 30). Collard (1996) offers nine strategies that career development professionals and clients can work toward together, the most important she maintains is "to reframe career development around learning" (p. 43).

Collard (1996) does not provide specific suggestions for the implementation of her nine strategies. Rather she calls for the development of tools and activities. As a result we are left without tangible starting points. Further, she uses phrases such as "self-directed" without providing definitions. This is unfortunate because "self-directedness", often uncritically embraced as a positive state of affairs, has been used to describe approaches to learning, an attitude, and even personalities. However, despite the drawbacks, Collard's (1996) work raises the discussion of resiliency to a new level of thinking and forces us to a broader vantage point.

Conner (1992) who speaks specifically of resilient employees, managers and organizations, defines "resilience" as "the capacity to absorb high levels of change while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior" (p. 6). Resilient people are positive, focused, flexible, organized, and proactive (p. 238) although they cannot be defined in dichotomous terms as either resilient or not resilient. Rather Conner developed a resilience continuum with Type D, danger oriented characteristics, at one end and Type O, opportunity oriented characteristics, at the other. Conner (1992) believes that people come into the world with a baseline of resilience. Because resilience breeds resilience, those with a higher base line are able to increase their capacity for resilience significantly more than those who start with a lower base line. However, even those lacking in a predisposition for

resilience can increase their baseline by "replicating what resilient people do" (Conner, 1992, p. 247).

For Conner (1992) the heart of resiliency is an understanding of the change process itself which must be seen as an on going, understandable process with phases that can be anticipated and managed. If the change process occurs faster than our own "individual speed of change" or if the change is unexpected, that is, "we are surprised that we are surprised", we can severely test our resiliency. Interestingly, like Patterson (1997), Conner (1992) uses a "personal assimilation budget" to represent a person's or an organization's ability to assimilate change. But rather than using a set of scales as Patterson (1997) did, Conner (1992) suggests that we have a fixed number of points to be expended across several areas of life including work, family, and personal health. Resilient people, he says, "have more available points and use fewer of them, thereby conserving their assimilation resources for future changes" (Conner, 1992, p. 84).

In reviewing the details of Conner's (1992) work, one senses a somewhat linear presentation of change processes and a focus on singular change efforts. In reality many organizations experience several change efforts of differing magnitude at the same time. Some changes are just being introduced; others are almost integrated; some are well received within the culture; and others never seem to find a happy home. Nonetheless, Conner's (1992) overriding message that all aspects of change can be understood, anticipated, and managed is well taken. As he points out, resilient people or organizations are no less challenged by or susceptible to the stresses of change than are others. Rather they have insight into the changes occurring around them and a faster rate of recovery.

Other Frameworks

Other theorists offer frameworks and ideas that resonate with "personal resiliency", but use very different language and labels. This paper will now consider five examples.

Martin Seligman (1998) speaks of "learned optimism" which he sees as a particular way of viewing and responding to the world. Optimists, he says, "see bad things in their least threatening light" (p. 4). They view defeat as "a temporary set back... (with)...causes confined to the case at hand...(p. 4). Further, optimists feel "defeat is not their fault, but due to circumstances...bad luck...other people" (p. 4). Pessimists on the other hand see defeat as long lasting and almost always their own fault.

There is a complexity around cause and effect that Seligman (1998) does not deal with. That is, the pessimist who blames himself may be showing great insight, and the optimist who sees no fault may be misguided. Seligman's (1998) point that the use of optimistic or pessimistic lens is a learned choice is well taken although what Seligman (1998) is offering is a constructivist approach applied in one small dimension. Perhaps the important point is not so much how to adopt the optimistic mantle, but how to develop a facility in the "pessimist/optimist" continuum and know when to use which lens.

Moses (1997) also strikes a "personal resiliency" chord when she refers to "career intelligence" which, she says, includes understanding the new work realities, the external economic and social realities of one's life, as well as one's marketability. In addition career intelligence is

> ... being attuned to your internal, *personal* world...(so) you will be able to rise above the frenetic busyness of working life...developing a broader vision of yourself in the world...it's about being an *intelligent actor in your own life*. (Moses' italics) (Moses, 1997, p. xv)

The connection throughout Moses' (1997) work to Collard's (1996) skills of independence and interdependence as well as to priorities of the department are unmistakable. Further, Moses (1997) provides several concrete activities for managers and organizations which include the usual career related ideas: foster

marketability, provide career-nurturing support, promote self-knowledge, and restore belief in personal competence. In addition, she calls for "life-friendly" culture, an end to "the politics of overwork" (Moses, 1997, p. 209), support for the work/life balance, and a rethink of the distribution of work. For Moses, career intelligence or "becoming a career activist" is a personal responsibility. However, like Collard (1996), she is clear that it cannot be done in isolation of the organizational culture in which the employees function.

Senge's (1990) choice of "personal mastery" bears a striking similarity to the fundamental ideas of the authors above, and not surprisingly, his discussion is framed within the systems of the organization. Personal mastery goes beyond competence, skills or spiritual unfolding, but is grounded in all three. It is "living one's life from a creative as opposed to reactive viewpoint" (p. 141). It is working from a deep inner vision and sense of purpose where we identify and challenge "the structures embedded both in our ways of thinking and in the interpersonal and social milieus in which we live" (p. 171). People with personal mastery are constantly clarifying what is important to them and learning how to see current reality more clearly (p. 141). They demonstrate a commitment to the "truth" by "root(ing) out the ways we limit or deceive ourselves from seeing what is and by challenging our theories of why things are the way they are" (p. 159). In short, in seeking the truth, people with personal mastery are continually deepening their understanding of the structures underlying current events. Further, they have a sense of connectedness and see themselves as part of a greater whole. As a result, their energies are focused on the broader vision beyond their self-interest, and they have no time or energy for narrower goals (p. 171). Personal mastery is "not something you possess. It is a process. It is a life-long discipline" (p. 142).

To strengthen personal mastery, Senge (1990) points to the powerful role of the organization's culture which can continually encourage personal vision, a commitment to the truth and a willingness to face honestly the gaps between the two. Enhanced personal mastery is the cornerstone of Senge's (1990) learning

organization. As such it must be developed in concert with a shared vision of the organization and in an environment which values joint inquiry or "team learning"; where systems thinking is applied to create change; where "mental models" or deeply ingrained assumptions are examined and challenged.

The fourth approach found in the literature is that of "personal agency" explored by Cochran and Laub (1994) who carried out an exhaustive review of the literature. Personal agency is defined in a myriad ways although there are a number of elements common to most definitions. For example, there is a cluster of ideas around self-determination, self-legislation, and meaningfulness which points to "allegiance to one's own distinctive values ...as a basis for involvement in activities" (p. 7). Or put another way, "we are not really a person unless we are law givers unto ourselves" (Werkmeister in Cochran and Laub, 1994, p. 7).

Other elements found in definitions of personal agency are purposefulness, confidence, active striving, planfulness, and responsibility (Cochran and Laub, 1994). Interestingly, active striving was found, in the literature survey, as the major difference between agents and patients: "agents take action while patients endure ...in response to disparity between the actual and the ideal" (Cochran and Laub, 1994, p. 12).

In conclusion, Cochran and Laub (1994) say there are three criteria which comprise agency. To begin, all elements "concern meaning from the perspective of the agent" (Cochran and Laub, 1994, p. 16). That is, agency is a highly individualized notion. Secondly "agency is always exercised in relation to context" (Cochran and Laub, 1994, p. 16) and thirdly, "a sense of agency is lived or experienced; it is not just a dry belief" (Cochran and Laub, 1994, p. 16).

The final concept resonating with "personal resiliency" is Ouellette's notion of "psychological hardiness" (Ouellette, 1995). Ouellette found that "hardy" people were those "who endured stress while maintaining peak levels of mind-body

health" (p.126). At the heart of their hardiness were the three C's: commitment, control, and challenge. People demonstrating commitment, "find meaning and purpose in their work and relationships…and are capable of wholehearted involvement in their activities" (Ouellette, 1995, p. 128). People demonstrating control "believe and behave as if they influence over life circumstances…and a sense of mastery, confronting problems with confidence in their ability to devise and implement effective solutions" (Ouellette, 1995, p. 129). People high in challenge "rise to the occasion because they view problems as challenges to overcome, not threats to their well-being" (Ouellette, 1995, p. 129).

Ouellette (1995) found that hardiness did not anaesthetize people from pain during difficult times, but it did increase resilience once a person weathered a crisis. In her research, Ouellette (1995) factored in outside variables such as exercise and diet, but still found the "Three C's" as the main determinants of hardiness or the mind-body health. Interestingly, she found that a support network was not necessarily a positive contributor to hardiness as one might suspect. People low in hardiness "sometimes use support to reinforce their position of alienation, passivity, and dependence" (Ouellette, 1995, p. 135). This is a point worth connecting to the concept of social capital discussed later in this chapter.

Clearly the literature is rich with ideas which could find a comfortable home under the 'personal resiliency' umbrella. There is no single definition, but rather a set of threads which inform us in a general, but no less comprehensive way. In sum, the main threads are: resiliency is not a static state of affairs. It can ebb and flow in response to external stressors. Secondly, while some people may be endowed with a greater degree of resiliency, resiliency can be learned. The environment can play a huge role in testing or supporting people's resiliency. Thirdly the organization can enhance resiliency by supporting people's need for control, purposefulness, and agency; by helping people understand the nature of change; by providing opportunities for people to understand their own career intelligence.

hardiness, or resilience and to develop personal plans based on that understanding.

Most importantly, resiliency, while it can ebb and flow, is not a commodity we can bulk up on in preparation for an event. When we consider concepts of optimism, personal mastery, or psychological hardiness, we realize they are approaches to life which govern how we think and behave. Resiliency, by whatever label, is something to be cultivated for all seasons. If an organization is to have people resilient in the face of structural change, it must have resilient people for the everyday requirements of the organization.

This paper will now turn to the literature on social capital and later leadership to consider their roles in enhancing personal resiliency in the organization.

Social Capital

This section will look at the meaning of "social capital"; the manner in which it can be called "capital"; the role of trust and networks in social capital; problems or areas of caution regarding social capital; and the implications all of these have for leadership and the development of resiliency.

It has been commonplace in organizations to focus on investments in physical or human capital. The former includes the infrastructure of an organization from buildings to computers; the latter includes employee skills and abilities usually represented by employee certifications or other generally accepted qualifications (Coleman, 2000). A new form of capital gaining currency within organizations is that of social capital which is concerned with the manner in which people interact. It is "the essential connections among people without which purposeful cooperative work cannot happen" (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 8)

Social capital is defined similarly from a number of quarters. The World Bank defines it as "the norms and social relations embedded in social structures that enable people to coordinate action to achieve goals" (Cohen and Prusak, 2001,

p. 3). Robert Putnam (1995) describes it as "the features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p. 67). More recently Cohen and Prusak (2001) have defined social capital as,

> the stock of active connections among people: the trust, mutual understanding, and shared values and behaviors that bind the members of human networks and communities and make action possible (p. 4)

At the heart of these definitions is the quality of the relationship among people and centrality of those relationships in facilitating action. Drawing on quantum physics to analyze organizations, Margaret Wheatley (1999) echoes these descriptions. Quantum physicists, she points out, have learned that analyzing particles by themselves is fruitless because the same particles are different depending upon their relationships. "In the quantum world, *relationship* is the key determiner of everything. Subatomic particles come into form and are observed only as they are in relationship to something else" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 11). In the quantum world, "relationships are not just interesting; to many physicists, they are *all* there is to reality" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 34).

Originally the term "social capital" was used in the context of community development where strong networks, crosscutting personal relationships provided the basis of trust, cooperation, and collective action so necessary for the survival and functioning of city neighbourhoods (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 2000). Robert Putnam, (1995) who describes social capital as a cornerstone of democratic society, has documented a steady decline in community social capital much to the detriment of American society. Civic trust and civic engagement, says Putnam (1995), are the main ingredients of social capital which under grids all successful outcomes in communities.

For those who work in organizations where the notion of "partnership" has been popular, the discussion of social capital may seem more of the same. Certainly the notion of social capital itself appears common sense. However, what makes

social capital important in organizations and separates it from simple partnering are its role as a feature of an organization and its dimension as capital.

Capital

Webster's Dictionary defines "capital" as "the stock of accumulated goods...which can be devoted to the production of other goods" (Merriam-Webster, 1993, p. 332). When viewed this way, social capital can be "demonstrated, analyzed, invested in, worked with, and made to yield benefits" (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 9). There is always risk and cause for concern when we import economic metaphors into discussions of about people. Such concepts have a disquieting propensity for reducing complex human affairs to numbers and tangible units. On the other hand, assigning the status of "capital" in this case suggests that social capital is an important element of organizational structure and merits the investment, maintenance, and monitoring that would be provided to any other form of capital.

Exploring the relationship of social capital to other forms of capital, Adler and Kwon identify three characteristics that social capital shares with other forms of capital and four characteristics where it differs (Adler and Kwon, 2000,) To begin, they say social capital is like other forms of capital in that it can be invested in for future return. That is, it is "constructible" (Adler and Kwon, 2000, p. 93). Secondly, it is "appropriable" and "convertible" (Adler and Kwon, p. 93) in that it can be used for a variety of purposes outside of its original context. For example, membership in a work based network can also be a source of assistance on issues from another social setting. Thirdly, social capital can be a substitute for or a compliment to other forms of capital. For example, it can be a lubricant improving the efficiency of economic capital by reducing transaction costs.

The remaining four areas identify where Adler and Kwon see differences between social capital and other forms of capital. Firstly, like physical and human capital, but unlike financial capital, social capital needs maintenance so that the

social bonds and networks do not lose their efficacy. Secondly, like human capital, but unlike physical capital, social capital does not have a predictable rate of depreciation. That is, while it may depreciate without use, it does not depreciate with use. Thirdly, "like clean air and safe streets, but unlike many other forms of capital, social capital...is a 'collective good', in that it is not the private property of those who benefit from it ...it takes mutual commitment and cooperation from both parties to build...a defection by only one party will destroy it" (Adler and Kwon, 2000, p. 94). Lastly, unlike all other forms of capital, social capital is not found in people, but in their relations with each other.

An eighth point which could be added to Adler and Kwon's list, is that unlike other forms of capital, we do not know what a minimum investment might be to produce results. Cohen and Prusak (2001) suggest time and physical space are the best investments, but there is no cookbook or mathematical formula. In short social capital does not lend itself to analysis using 'generally accepted accounting principles'. However, it is clear that social capital is a form of capital which requires investment and monitoring.

There is much discussion in the literature about the sources and elements of social capital. Some theorists identify four sources: networks, norms, social beliefs, and rules (Ostrom in Adler and Kwon, 2000). Others see social capital as a set of dimensions: a structural dimension including networks; a cognitive dimension including shared codes and language; and relational dimension including trust and norms (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 2000). Still others look at whether social capital produces trust, or whether trust produces social capital (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 2000). Trust and networks are seen as central to social capital across all of these discussions and will be the focus of discussion in this section. Further an assumption will be made that trust and networking both create and flow from social capital. Determining causality is not central to this paper.

Networks

Networks are the bones of social capital. Cohen and Prusak (2001) define a network as a "group of people brought together through common interests, experiences, goals, or tasks (implying) regular communication and bonds characterized by some degree of trust and altruism" (p. 56). They go on to point out that it is a sense of affiliation, emotion, and active connection which separates a network from another group of like-minded people. To that, it might be useful to add the notion of voluntary association of members to further denote a network as something separate from a pre-established work unit.

Networks can be conduits of information, havens of support and understanding, sites for learning. Further,

> The recognition and praise from colleagues and a sense of belonging to something are also very important and foster commitment and self-esteem that a good salary cannot guarantee (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 61)

Networks can fill in the gaps in manuals of prescribed procedures and can embody a host of norms and values that might be difficult to list in any conscious way. They can also be sources of censure for members who chose not to work within the accepted norms or values of the group. While their membership may be known to those outside of the network, the networks themselves are the ever-present "invisible fabric of our connectedness" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 45). The extent to which networks contribute toward social capital within an organization has much to do with how they are configured.

Those networks where the members are highly interconnected are described as having "closure" (Coleman, 2000, p.26). Putnam describes such networks as "dense" (Putnam, 1995). An "open" network, by contrast, is sparse with tendrils of contacts that do not overlap. The latter configuration is somewhat limited in its role, but can be useful in transmitting uncomplicated information over a wide range of contacts. The value of the former is two fold. First, it facilitates the integration of information which is "uncertain and ambiguous or where the parties

to an exchange differ in their prior knowledge" (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 2000, p. 135). That is, a dense network can be a site of learning where members assist each other make sense of new information.

Secondly, a dense network, or one characterized by closure, facilitates the "existence (and dissemination) of effective norms...(and)...the trustworthiness that allows the proliferation of obligations and expectations" (Coleman, 2000, p. 28). Opportunities for cooperation are increased and self-seeking opportunism decreased. Viewed in a different way, "reputation cannot arise in an open structure, collective sanctions that would ensure trustworthiness cannot be applied" (Coleman, 2000, p. 28). That is, the greater the density of the network, the greater the ability of its members to integrate complicated data and the greater the likelihood of trustworthiness. An example of a very dense network is that of the Jewish diamond merchants in New York who buy and sell fortunes in diamonds on little more than a handshake. The connections among the merchants and their families within the network and the pervasiveness of norms and beliefs are so dense that any defection of those norms would bring immediate sanction of overwhelming proportions.

Interestingly, Putnam (1993) found at the international level a close correlation between trust and membership was true across time and countries. The 1991 World Values Survey found across 35 countries "the greater the density of associational membership in a society, the more trusting its citizens" (Putnam, 1993, p. 73).

Networks as Sites for Learning
The role of networks as sites of learning cannot be underplayed. It has been estimated that at least 80% of learning happens informally on the job (Cohen and Prusak, 2001). An astounding statistic when one considers the demand for formal training within organizations, but highly probable in light of the research

into the causal relationship between social capital and human and intellectual capital.

Coleman (2000) found a significant relationship between social capital in the family and the creation of human capital in the next generation. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (2000) found a direct connection between social capital and the development of an organization's "intellectual capital" which they define as " the knowledge and knowing capability of a social collectivity, such as an organization, an intellectual community, or professional practice" (p. 124). This intellectual capital is created through two processes: combination and exchange of existing knowledge carried out by organization members. An organization's ability to engage in these processes in turn depends on its "absorptive capacity" – opportunity, motivation, ability to assimilate and use new information – which resides not in a single individual, but "depends, crucially, on the links across a mosaic of individual capabilities" (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 2000, p. 131).

Trust

If networks form the skeletal structure of social capital, trust is its lifeblood. It is "at once a precondition, an indication, a product, and a benefit of social capital, as well as a direct contribution to other benefits" (Cohen and Prusak, 2000, p. 29). Trust is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "assured reliance on some person or thing; a confident dependence on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something" (Merriam-Webster, 1993, p. 2456). Clearly "trust" is deeply social in nature and the function of a relationship, not a quality of a person. Further, it is situational. That is, we may trust someone in one situation, but not in another.

How trust is developed is not totally clear. Some researchers believe an intellectual approach is at play where trust arises from a series of observations. Others suggest that trust can be developed instantaneously, called "quick trust" (Weick in Cohen and Prusak, 2000, p. 31), at an intuitive level. It is possible that

these two extremes are in fact ends of a continuum and that most people may have experienced trust in both ways or at points in between. Another way in which trust can be developed is through a "roll over" effect where trust is extended to people simply on the basis of a recommendation from a trusted contact. This, of course, is how trust breeds trust.

The benefits of trust seem obvious, but given the amount of research into it, some points bear recounting. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (2000) reviewed the literature and found people in high trust relationships are more likely to engage in cooperative interaction; high levels of trust in an organization can increase the potential for coping with complexity and diversity; and interpersonal trust can assist knowledge creation in contexts of high ambiguity and uncertainty.

However, developing trust in environments which do not have it is extremely difficult. "Shared tasks & interests can help develop trust, but when it is lacking or has been betrayed no amount of enthusiasm for a subject can hold these collective entities together" (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 51). Generalized trust in an organization can take years to develop, but can be destroyed quickly, not just through acts of betrayal, but also through inappropriate action from leadership after the fact.

The best antidote is preventative care of the level of trust in an organization. Leaders must role model and reward trust: "when the qualities of those at the top...and those rewarded by the organization include trustworthiness, there is a good chance others will copy..." (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 44). But it cannot be manufactured. It "can only be demonstrated, not asserted" (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 45).

Cautions Regarding Social Capital

In addition to the concerns about the use of economic metaphors in complex human affairs, there is one other caution to social capital. Social capital and the

networks and trust that support it are not automatically beneficial. Indeed, high levels of social capital can exist producing "groupthink" or "the ties that blind" (Cohen and Prusak, 2000, p. 15). Close-knit hate groups or other clannish groups which exclude women or minorities may well have high social capital Organizations can also experience negative social capital where members support each other's misjudgements to the detriment of the organization, its product, or both (Adler and Kwon, 2000). A less formidable situation, but certainly counterproductive, would be a number of dense networks in an organization with little overlap among them. That is, some networks could be fortresses against other parts of the organization.

Leadership, Social Capital, and Resiliency

Theorists on social capital do not speak directly to personal resiliency. However, it is probably safe to assume that they would claim they speak to the preconditions in the organization for developing personal resiliency. In this way they would resonate with other theorists who point to the influence of the organization. For example, Putnam (1995) points out that increased social capital creates increased democracy. Cohen and Prusak (2001) say the networks "provide havens in a heartless world – a refuge for friendship, membership, and identity, a place where...the competition that limits cooperation is less evident" (p. 70).

With this in mind, the starting point for leadership is to recognize that social capital exists either as a positive or negative force for the organization and the employees. It cannot be directly managed in the traditional sense. That is, "it cannot be developed through weekend adventures, company picnics or other one-shot activities" (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 22). These may foster new or strengthen existing relationships. But social capital must be understood as part of the ecology of the organization and developed within that context.

Leaders can encourage the natural development of positive productive social capital in two important ways. First, in a very practical sense, leaders must understand that human connections need both time and physical space to develop. People tend to interact with those in close proximity. One study found that workers on different floors of the same building had only a one per cent chance of meeting one another on any given day (Cohen and Prusak, 2001). As a result, it may be necessary to spend money on 'empty space' that will provide fertile ground to increased social capital.

Secondly, leaders must recognize that networks and trust do not exist in isolation of the organization itself (Cohen and Prusak, 2001). Leaders must steward the stated values of the organization. They can do this by rewarding the demonstration of trustworthiness and other values which affect the relationships within the organization and by ensuring transgressions do not go unnoticed.

As was discussed earlier in this section, personal resiliency is profoundly affected by the environment. Social capital plays a critical role in defining that environment, as does an organization's leadership which in turn affects both social capital and the individual resiliency of employees. This chapter will now turn to its final sub-section, leadership.

Leadership

This section will review contributions on leadership from two theorists, Senge and Conner, whose ideas on resiliency were reviewed earlier. In addition, contributions from Kouzes and Posner and Margaret Wheatley will also be reviewed. To begin, this section will briefly consider the problems with traditional approaches to leadership.

Many theorists today lament the staying power of the old Newtonian approaches to organizational development with its rigid, bureaucratic structure of parts geared to function in a known, unchanging world. Wheatley suggests this may be

because many of those writing in the field of management were engineers or greatly admired the profession (Wheatley, 1999, p. 29). The leadership for such an organizational approach had to rest in one or two people who planned, organized, directed, and controlled all aspects of the organization from equipment to employees. To obtain and maintain such lofty status, leaders either were or cultivated the image of the charismatic hero. However, underlying this traditional view of leadership are "assumptions of people's powerlessness, their lack of personal vision and inability to master the forces of change, deficits which can be remedied only by a few great leaders" (Senge, 1990, p. 340).

Kouzes and Posner (1995) believe that "just about everything we were taught by traditional management prevents us from being effective leaders" (p.15). For Kouzes and Posner there is no alchemy; leadership is an "observable, learnable set of practices" (p. 16) and something that "ordinary people exercise" (p. xx).

Referring to the work of Ouellette (1995), discussed earlier in this paper, Kouzes and Posner (1995) see an important role for leadership in creating an atmosphere that promotes psychological hardiness. Ouellette (1995) found that people who were committed to various parts of their lives, felt a sense of control over things that happen in their lives, and experienced change as a positive challenge demonstrate greater psychological hardiness.

Kouzes and Posner (1995) recommend that leaders build commitment by offering appropriate rewards; build a sense of control by identifying tasks that are challenging, but within employee skill level; and build an attitude of challenge by encouraging people to see change as full of possibilities. Further, Kouzes and Posner say leaders must also be cognizant of their own hardiness and be prepared to make the necessary adjustments in their own lives (Kouzes and Posner, 1995, p. 74).

In addition to recommending specific advice for building hardiness, Kouzes and Posner (1995) found that leaders in their best practice situations demonstrate five "fundamental practices". That is, they challenge the process by questioning the status quo and seeking a better way; they inspire a shared vision for and with their constituents; they enable others to act by fostering collaboration and sharing power; they model the way by demonstrating the beliefs and values they espouse; and encourage the heart by recognizing employee contributions and celebrating accomplishments. The researchers have analyzed each of these practices and laid out a series of commitments that leaders can exercise or develop the skills to implement.

There is a manageable simplicity about Kouzes and Posner's (1995) work although it could not be called simple. Indeed, each of their five practices requires a depth of understanding and an array of skills. What is notable is that these researchers present leadership as "everyone's business", something that can be developed in everybody whether they the hold the leader's title or not. Other than their reference to supporting psychological hardiness, Kouzes and Posner (1995) do not address specifically how leaders might develop resilience among employees. Rather one assumes employee resilience is captured in their view that " the most significant contributions leaders make are not to today's bottom line; they are to the long-term development of people and institutions who adapt, prosper, and grow" (Kouzes and Posner, 1995, p. xxv).

Conner (1992), whose work on employee resiliency was discussed earlier, sees the starting point for leadership as understanding "the structure of change" which is made up of a number of "support patterns". One such pattern is "the nature of change" which speaks to issues of control, direct or indirect, an employee has over the change process. That is, the less influence one has over one's environment, the more assimilation points one spends, and the less resiliency one has on hand. Another pattern leadership must understand is "the process of change" which addresses the mechanisms of human transitions which are

heavily influenced by "shifting images, interpretations, and perspectives" (Conner, 1992, p. 126). For example, a new initiative regarded as a minor change by senior managers, may be experienced as a major transition by junior staff who expend significant assimilation points in the process.

A third pattern is resistance to change which should be accepted as natural and inevitable. In fact, leaders should encourage overt expressions of resistance so that it does not go "underground". Rather than responding to the resistance itself, leaders should view it as a signal that abilities or motivation are the real issues.

The fourth pattern is the enormous power embodied in the organization's culture in facilitating the adoption or rejection of change. Conner (1992) defines culture as "reflect(ing) the interrelationship of shared beliefs, behaviors, and assumptions that are acquired over time by members of an organization" (p. 164). A culture which evolves emerges "from a history of isolated decisions made under particular circumstances, generating a default corporate culture" (Conner, 1992, p. 169). The planned or "architectural development" of a corporate culture "is the conscious design and maintenance of a set of specific beliefs, behaviors, and assumptions" (Conner, 1992, p. 169). Conner (1992) says that corporate culture cannot be left to evolutionary forces and must be managed in order to enhance resiliency and minimize the chance of dysfunctional behavior. He is not specific as to how this might be carried out but focuses on the importance of consciously analyzing one's culture to identify the prevailing beliefs, values, and behaviours that can be reinforced. Specifically, he suggests conducting a "culture audit" (Conner, 1992, p. 172) to determine the gaps between the existing and desired cultures.

The final pattern to be considered here is that of "synergy". Conner (1992) defines a synergistic relationship as one where "individuals or groups work together to produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of their separate efforts" (p. 188). Such relationships increase resiliency among employees by

producing a cache of assimilation points. Unlike self-destructive relationships where time and resources are spent in blaming, defensiveness, and conflict, synergistic relationships are characterized by common goals, mutual support, and focused energy.

In summary, Conner (1992) says that all members of the organization must work from an understanding of human reactions to change which directly affect their personal resiliency. Maintaining resiliency begins with learning one's own limitations and applying what one has learned to the preservation of resiliency in others. Leaders in particular are responsible for continually analysis of their organization's culture to determine where reality and values statements differ and creating plans to correct those disparities.

Senge's (1990) concept of "personal mastery" was discussed earlier as one of the notions congruent with resiliency. Leaders seeking to enhance personal mastery "work relentlessly to foster a climate in which the principles of personal mastery are practiced in daily life. ...where it is safe for people to create visions, where inquiry and commitment to the truth are norm, and where challenging the status quo is expected" (Senge, 1990, p. 172).

Personal mastery is one of the critical elements or disciplines of the learning organization which Senge (1990) defines as "an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future" (p. 14). To clarify this concept, Senge points out that his definition is not a description of an external phenomenon or a label for an independent entity (Kofman and Senge, 1995, p. 32). Rather it is a model or vision for an organization to thrive in a world of increasing change and interdependency. The learning organization has five elements or disciplines of which personal mastery is one. The remaining four include systems thinking, mental models, a shared vision, and team learning. Systems thinking requires a move away from the traditional mechanistic method of analyzing the parts of a

whole in isolation of each other. The defining characteristic of a system is that it cannot be understood as a function of its isolated parts.

Mental models refer to the assumptions we hold, consciously or not, which influence how we understand the world and take action. A shared vision is a picture of the future that fosters a genuine commitment by everyone in organization. It captures the imagination and gives meaning to the work. It is not a product of the executive suite or a reflection of the leader alone. Team learning focuses on collaboration and collegiality. At its heart is dialogue which allows the team to become "open to the flow of a larger intelligence" (Senge, 1990, p. 159) of the group.

The leadership for such an organization cannot draw on the traditional view of leaders as heroes, the problem solvers "who set the direction, make the key decisions, and energize the troops" (Senge, 1990, p. 340). Rather leaders are those "'walking ahead' regardless of their managerial position or hierarchical authority. Such leadership is inevitably collective" (Kofman and Senge, 1995, p. 34). Believing in the individualistic notion of leadership blocks the emergence of leadership teams and organizations that can lead themselves. If we wait for that great leader to save us, "we surrender the confidence and power needed to make progress toward the learning organization" (Kofman and Senge, 1995, p. 35).

Leaders of learning organizations are designers, stewards, and teachers. As designers they orchestrate the collaborative development of the shared vision and values. As stewards of the vision they seek to build a value-based, vision driven environment. Traditional organizations provided for the first three levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: food, clothing and shelter. Leaders must ensure organizations address the higher order self respect and self-actualization (Senge, 1990). Many leaders rose to the top because of their decision making and problem solving skills, not their mentoring, coaching, or helping others learn.

Problem solving tends to focus on short term, quick fix measures leaving the deeper source of the problem untouched. Lastly, as teachers, leaders foster learning within the framework of the five disciplines.

In summary for Senge (1990) and Kofman and Senge (1995) leaders seeking to enhance personal resiliency root out and reject vestiges of traditional leadership. They help people understand and work from the five disciplines of the learning organization in both an overt way through mentoring and coaching and in a less overt way by fostering a culture based in shared values.

The last theorist to be discussed is Wheatley (1999) who asks us to "think of all the contemporary leadership problems that are variations on the theme that we don't know how to work together" (p. 164). Wheatley (1999) who draws on quantum physics to analyze organizations says that these problems remain because we confuse control with order, hold fast to a belief in cause and effect, and fail to understand the invisible forces that help create our environment.

Order and chaos are not polarities, but complementary entities. Order is created out of chaos, not through control functions, but through "a few guiding formulas or principles repeating back on themselves through the exercise of individual freedom" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 13). Within an organization, these guiding principles are the organization's identity, that is, its vision, its values, and its culture. They are the invisible, yet powerful forces which allow the organization to self-organize in the event of external change forces. According to Wheatley (1999), in today's organizations too much emphasis is placed on fine tuning the control functions, rather than strengthening the guiding functions which can release employees to greater levels of creativity than could be considered in the control focused situation.

In particular, Wheatley (1999) describes the concept of "strange attractors" from quantum physics to describe the power of values in an organization. "Strange

attractors" are the patterned shapes that occur on computer screens when a chaotic system is plotted over time. At first the system appears to have no order, but in time its wanderings take form even though the system never repeats itself exactly. The system does not wander off. Rather it has "a hidden boundary...(which) lives within the system" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 118). For Wheatley (1999), the stated values within the system are "strange attractors" performing the same shape-defining function (p. 132).

Wheatley (1999) does not discuss the problem of a disparity between the stated values in an organization and those experienced in the worksite. However, it would appear that an organization would simply replicate itself according to the values at play in the organization as opposed to the stated values which are not in general use. In any event the organization's ability to weather chaos would be compromised without the "strange attractors" of stated values shared throughout the organization.

Wheatley's (1999) second point, that we cling to a belief in cause and effect, stems from the Newtonian axiom that an effect must have a cause. Translated to thoughts on motivation in organizations, the belief in cause and effect became one of "pushing and prodding them (people) into action, overcoming their inertia by the sheer force of our own energy" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 77). But there is no linear cause and effect in organizations. Rather, drawing on the quantum world, there are "mediums of connection" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 51) or exchanges of energy which occur according to overarching principles and formulas through rich webs of relationships. This same phenomenon can occur in organizations where the vision and values, or overarching principles, are shared by employees who in turn "have the availability of places for the exchange of energy" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 72).

Wheatley's (1999) third point, the invisible forces helping to create our environment, includes the vision and values discussed above. However, they

also include forces also refer to the webs of relationships, incubators of collaboration, within the organization. For Wheatley (1999), "the power in organizations is the capacity generated by relationships" (p. 39). In considering the capacity for healthy relationships, Wheatley (1999) asks several questions:

> Do people know how to speak and listen to each other? To work well with diverse members? Do people have free access to one another throughout the organization? Do organizational values bring them together or keep them apart? Is collaboration truly honoured? Can people speak truthfully to one another? (p. 40)

For Wheatley (1999), healthy relationships are the main determiner within organizations. Personal resiliency is not an issue separate from the concept of the resilient organization or from the need for appropriate leadership. Resilient organizations are those where information is seen as nourishment for all its members.

The leadership for such organizations is to focus "(not) with all of the problems piece by piece, in a linear and never satisfying fashion" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 102). Rather it is to bring "strong and evolving clarity about who the organization is" (Wheatley, 1999, p.131) so that employees can make "congruent" decisions (Wheatley, 1999, p.131). By focusing on a guiding vision, sincere values, and organizational beliefs, leadership can provide the purpose and direction. When things become chaotic, "this clarity keeps us on course. We are still able to make sense, even if the world grows mad" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 131).

Summary
In summary, the theorists reviewed in this section have provided consistently parallel advice leaving us with three main points. To begin, all point out the extent to which the traditional approach to leadership both remains an influence and is no longer useful. As part of their response, leaders must develop an awareness about this and cultivate a consciousness of themselves as leaders.

Secondly, leaders must focus their energies on creating a culture which enhances employee resiliency. Within such a culture, leadership is defined, shared, and developed in everyone; systems thinking and an understanding of human processes are applied to day to day situations; opportunities for challenge, control, and growth are priorities; and the vision and values are the guiding forces for everyone. Leadership concerns itself with the gaps between what the organization says are its values and vision and current reality.

Thirdly, leaders are role models. They demonstrate the culture and values of the organization in an authentic way. They expect of themselves what they expect of and seek for each other.

This paper will now turn to a discussion of how the remainder of the research for this study was collected.

CHAPTER THREE – CONDUCT OF RESEARCH STUDY

Research Methods

This paper is concerned with how the NWT Department Education, Culture & Employment can assist employees develop personal resiliency in the face of significant structural change. The following assumptions were used to determine the most appropriate methodological process.

Firstly, people actively construct their own reality based on their perceptions of the world around them. As a result there is no ultimate truth, but rather many truths or perceptions available to the researcher. "There is no unique 'real world' that pre-exists and is independent of human mental activity and human symbolic language" (Bruner as quoted in Palys, 1997, p. 19).

Secondly, to fully understand people's truths, a researcher must commit time and "mental space" to explore participant perceptions. "You must spend time with them, get to know them, feel close to them, be able to empathize with their concerns...to *truly* understand" (Palys, 1997, p. 19).

Thirdly, to be consistent with the above assumptions, this project will use an inductive approach where fieldwork precedes the generation of theoretical concepts. There are no preconceived ideas or hypotheses to test.

Action-based Research

Given these assumptions, this project will use an action-based research approach. Action-based research has experienced a resurgence due in large part to a growing understanding that traditional, quantitative research, however useful it has been in many other research areas, has simply not been able to address the complex and ever evolving issues in our social and cultural context (Stringer, 1999).

Action research has been defined as "a systematic process of learning by doing – carefully observing the character and consequences of what one does with the tripartite aim of improving one's own practices, improving one's understanding of these practices and improving the situation in which these practices are carried out" (Kemmis, in Wood, 1988, p.136). And more recently as "disciplined inquiry (research) which seeks focused efforts to improve the quality of people's organizational, community and family lives" (Calhoun in Stringer, 1999, p. 52).

The elements constant to any action research process are found in its participative, cyclic, qualitative, and reflective nature. Participants are partners to, not "subjects" of, the research. The process is cyclic in that the steps occur over and over to enrich the quality of the outcomes, to validate earlier interpretations and to pursue new interpretations. The process is qualitative dealing "more with language than with numbers" (Dick, 1993, p. 2) and seeking to capture the complexity of people's lives. Further, it is highly reflective requiring both the data and process to be reviewed critically throughout the process.

While different steps to the action research process have been presented, there is a remarkable consistency among them. Stringer (1999) views the process as "look, think, act". Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) view it as "plan, act, observe, reflect" and in light of this, plan for the next cycle.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) describe the plan as "constructed action" (p. 11) which recognizes the unpredictable and risky nature of social research. The action, while guided by the planning, is "critically informed" so is open to negotiation. The observation "documents the effects of the critically informed action...(providing) a sound basis for critical refection" (p. 13). Reflection seeks to make sense of the action; it "leads to the reconstruction of the meaning of the social situation and provides the basis for the revised plan" (p. 13).

While presented in linear fashion, the process is anything but as Stringer so eloquently points out: "People will find themselves working backward through the routines, repeating processes, revising procedures, rethinking interpretations, leapfrogging steps or stages, and sometimes making radical changes in direction" (Stringer, 1999, p. 19).

The framework for this project will follow that proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) and, it is anticipated, will bear a resemblance to that described by Stringer (1999).

Data Gathering Tools

The data collection technique chosen for this project is the interview which allows for direct contact with the participant and encourages a depth of response which can be clarified and reclarified. Further, it allows for greater flexibility in accommodating participant time restraints and, to a certain extent, community location. Lastly, it has the added benefits of avoiding the power issues that could emerge in group activities such as learning circles or focus groups and creates an increased possibility of confidentiality.

Kirby and McKenna (1989) say interviews have been defined as everything from "a face to face verbal interchange in which...the interviewer attempts to elicit information...to "a guided conversation whose goal is to elicit from the interviewee rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis" (p. 66). They further point out that the interview "is more than an instrument of data collection" (Oakley as quoted in Kirby and McKenna, 1989, p. 66), it is a process made up of distinct components, each of which must be tended to in an intentional, philosophically consistent manner.

One critical element is the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participant. Kirby and McKenna (1989) call for a sense of equality in the

relationship where the researcher has the responsibility for minimizing the power differential that might exist.

Another element is that of the interviewer who creates a safe environment for the participant and guides discussion as required and "in the language and gesture of the person (being interviewed)" (Kirby and McKenna, 1989, p. 68). Palys (1997) says the researcher "must be familiar with the participants, the phenomenon under study, research objectives to make responsible decisions about what to do in unique situations that emerge" (p. 155). To this, one might add that the researcher should come to the interview with a deep curiosity about the interviewee's perception of the topic. Indeed, attending the interview with a genuine openness might address Palys' (1997) concern with "reactive bias" (p. 155), a situation where participants become overly attentive to cues from the researcher and see those cues as indicating what they should be talking about. Certainly ensuring that the interviewee understands the interviewer's assumptions about truth, about the participant's role as experts, and the lack of any agenda or foregone conclusions surrounding the interview should also counter reactive bias.

The third important element is the structure of the interview, which in this case, will be appreciative inquiry.

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative inquiry (AI) is an approach to research which looks at what works in an organization. It rejects the mechanistic process of traditional models focused on problems or the deficiency orientation. AI assumes that by paying attention to problems, we amplify them thereby reaffirming the status quo. Further the deficiency orientation produces "problem solvers" rather than creative possibilities, and in the process of the quick fix, the assignment of blame is often a side effect. In addition when problem solving is the approach, smaller and smaller parts of the problem are analyzed to the exclusion of any systemic or holistic approach. Barrett (1995) suggests that problem solving can become so

pervasive that entire careers are built on the process and organizations become 'addicted' to fixing problems without ever seeking constructive alternatives (p. 37). However, the appreciative approach does not deny that problems exist and even abound,

> It is deliberately called the *appreciative* approach, not the affirming approach or the positive approach or the uncritical approach. ...It is about choosing the elements of a situation that we want to work with; it is not about a pollyannaish refusal to recognize the fact that good and not-so-good are mixed in unequal proportions in everything we experience (Elliott, 1999, p.10)

AI assumes that in every organization something works and that change can be managed through the identification of what works, and the analysis of how to do more of what works. That is, it assumes we construct our own reality and recognize that there are a number of realities from which to choose. In the case of AI we are choosing a positive reality from our past and in so doing can bring that reality forward to the present. As Elliott (1999) points out:

> There is no one real concrete thing (of the organization) that exists independently of the way we read it, understand it, appreciate it, but rather that we make it as we choose in the process of conceptualizing it...such choices are consciously made...and they do not need to be made from a negative, critical, or problem-focused stance. ...the way we read our organizations actually affects the way they operate and how we operate within them (p. 47)

The essence of AI occurs when participants are asked to "stir up memories of energizing moments of success" (Hammond, 1996, p. 7) related to the issue of the research and to expand their story to talk about the circumstances that facilitated their positive experience. Like learning circles there are two levels of outcomes. The first occurs at the time of the interview as each participant relives, not what might be, but what can be again. It is a moment where participants "know clearly how to make more moments of success" (Hammond, 1996, p. 7). The second occurs later as the themes from the interviews are formed into recommendations.

The purpose of AI is to allow people to expound in detail about events that stirred their passion in a deeply positive way. As a result, the touch stone question may be different from participant to participant and may be developed with considerable participant input.

Ethical Issues

There are two major ethical issues associated with this project. Most importantly is the protection of participant anonymity and confidentiality during the inquiry and in the final document. There is a fine line between providing sufficient information about a participant's situation and revealing too much. Given the small population in the NWT, this challenge had implications for any informal discussion of the project, storage of electronic data, and selection of a transcriber.

Secondly, the issue of how the research could be used in the future, while difficult to deal with, is important. The intent of this project could be misconstrued as licence to treat staff poorly or to engage in lay off with impunity once staff have developed resiliency and 'can take it'. This concern has been woven into the fabric of the project and governs the presentation of the final recommendations. As Palys (1997) has pointed out, "As researchers and hence knowledge producers, we are reminded to always consider whose interests we serve when we design a piece of research, since we serve some no matter what we do." (Palys as quoted in Palys, 1997, p. 34).

Study Conduct

There were few restrictions around the selection of participants for this project. At a minimum, they were to be long-term employees, ideally not less than 5 years, of the department or its agency, Aurora College. This was to ensure they had a sense of the department's culture and would be in a position to draw on positive experiences they had had while working for the department. It was

hoped that there would be a mix of participants in terms of age, status within the organization, headquarters/regional, male/female, and aboriginal/nonaboriginal.

Six people approximately representing the hoped for mix were contacted by phone or in person about becoming involved with the project. Each was informed about the nature of the research question, the purpose and philosophical assumptions of appreciative inquiry, the reason for approaching them, and the ethical requirements governing the project. Because these people were from different communities in the NWT, arrangements to meet proved impossible with one particular person. Another person declined to become involved. As a result interviews went ahead with four people only in October 2000 and with two others in January 2001.

To ensure confidentiality, the time and place for all of the interviews were arranged according to the interviewee's preferences. All but two took place outside of the worksite and work hours. Prior to each interview, candidates were given time to read and sign the participant agreement letter which outlined among other things the researcher's commitment to maintain confidentiality and participant anonymity as well as participant freedom to withdraw at any time during the interview (see Appendix A).

At the beginning of each interview, the nature and purpose of the project was reviewed and the informal, conversational format of the session was emphasized. Beyond that, each interview proceeded very differently depending upon perceived cues from the interviewee. In some cases, to assist the interviewee develop a mental context different definitions of resiliency were read aloud (see Appendix B); in another, time was spent reminiscing various departmental events from the past; in another, the interviewee was ready with two clear experiences ready for discussion.

The structure of the interview was simple and guided by three general questions which focused on (1) a description of a time in the department when the interviewee felt most resilient; (2) why was that time memorable? (3) what supports or leadership approaches facilitated that experience? (See Appendix B for detail).

Very few notes were taken during the interviews. Those notes which were produced were shredded immediately after the interview. All audiotapes were kept secure throughout the research project accessible by the researcher only. The original plan to have the tapes professionally transcribed in the South did not happen. Instead, voice recognition software was used to transcribe the tapes directly to the computer. All tapes and printed transcriptions will be destroyed upon successful acceptance of the research project.

CHAPTER FOUR – RESEARCH STUDY RESULTS

How Can The NWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment assist employees to develop personal resiliency in the face of significant structural change?

This chapter will begin with a review of the data collected through the six interviews. It will draw conclusions based on that data and the literature and will then present a set of recommendations for further action. To begin, this chapter will briefly explain the structure used to discuss the themes.

Study Findings

After reviewing the transcripts from the interviews, four broad themes emerged and will be used as headings for discussion. These themes are: serendipity, the many sides of agency, leadership, and social capital. The leadership and organizational issues related to a particular theme are discussed within that theme. However, there were some issues that pertained to both receiving and providing leadership which are discussed separately in a smaller theme outside of the other three. This paper will now turn to a discussion of the four themes.

Theme One: Serendipity

Webster's Dictionary defines "serendipity" as "an assumed gift for finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for"(Merriam-Webster, 1993, p. 2072). It has been chosen as a title for this theme because many interviewees spoke of very positive situations where "things just came together" without any apparent orchestration. While there may have been some organizational supports at play which facilitated the positive experience, such supports were not evident to the interviewee. One person spoke of an evening continuing education contract where she worked with a:

> wonderful, cohesive, fun staff...one of the best staff's I've worked on...
> probably [created through] more luck than anything...you just get a

combination of people together that really cooks. Interestingly enough...
we were pretty much unled. At night it was much more free flowing with
nobody watching us...So, organizationally there really wasn't anything that
created that, it was just happenstance.

Further, this interviewee pointed out:

Everybody was smart, everybody was funny, everybody was a good
teacher. We laughed a lot, but they were a real professional staff in terms
of teaching...it was a real culture

Another interviewee spoke of "a tremendous coming together of many things.
Different circumstances collided. if you will, to make it a very productive and
exciting time."

Still another, who expressed a dislike of team or joint activities, described a
particularly positive experience with an ad hoc group charged with developing a
document under a tight time frame.

We were all working separately feeding things in. And it was a real neat
experience to see how things came together. Chapters and sections and
appendices just fed in until we went to the first draft and it was almost by
accident that a proposal written by the committee actually looked
coherent. It didn't look like the committee had created it...Oddly enough, if
you were sitting on the wall during our meetings, you wouldn't know who
was in charge or who led it. In fact, you would think a different person was
in charge each time.

While such stories of serendipity and positive experiences were neither common
to all of the interviews nor recounted as the most important of the positive
experiences discussed, they did feature clearly in the interviewees' memories. It
is not easy to speculate what such stories mean, certainly they cannot be
dismissed simply because they appear silent on the issue of leadership or any
intentionality on the part of the organization. There are three possible
interpretations of these stories. Firstly, among the people involved with these
situations there may have been "roving leaders, those people indispensable in
our lives who are there when we need them...taking charge, in varying
degrees...everyday" (De Pree, 1989, p. 48). Secondly, the leadership within

those organizations may have consciously decided to "abandon itself to the strength of others" (De Pree, 1989, p. xvi). Thirdly, these positive experiences may have occurred in spite of poor leadership.

Certainly these stories raise questions about the finite reach of formal leadership and its ability or requirement to be responsible for orchestrating situations. Margaret Wheatley's addresses this in her discussion of self-organizing systems within organizations:

> If we believe that there is no order to human activity except that imposed by the leader, that there is no self-regulation except that dictated by policies, if we believe that responsible leaders must have their hands into everything, controlling every decision, person, and moment, then we cannot hope for anything except what we already have – a treadmill of frantic efforts that end up destroying our individual and collective vitality (Wheatley, 1999, p. 25)

It would seem that in these situations where leadership appeared as a neutral or distant force, it was, in fact, the appropriate leadership for the situation. The people involved rose to the challenge of the work before them and, not only fulfilled their obligations, but felt proud of their work.

Theme Two: The Many Sides of Agency

Personal agency, as discussed in Chapter Two, encompasses the ideas of active striving, of maintaining allegiance to one's own values, and self-determination (Cochran and Laub, 1994).

One very common theme throughout most of the interviews clustered around four inter-related sub themes: breaking new ground; implementing one's beliefs; feeling challenged, but up to the task at hand; and autonomy. Together these ideas form "the many sides of agency". Interviewees were noticeably animated in describing their excitement of these experiences.

To begin, some interviewees were hired to create or implement new programs or approaches; others simply seized the opportunity to engage in the new. One interviewee, upon assuming a newly created position to develop a new program area, described her job as "a brand new slate and you can write anything on it." Another spoke of drawing upon one's university education and the excitement of implementing ideas based on various theories studied. Another, also hired to implement a completely new program in a large number of communities, spoke longingly:

> It was new, so there were no restrictions. Apart from the general bureaucracy of the government, it wasn't particularly bureaucratized. There were no established models that you had to fit into. I was given a good deal of autonomy ...So, I had the opportunity to create whatever was going to be there. There wasn't that much interference.

Secondly, while working in a new area held great attraction, that was not the exclusive source of fulfilment. Rather one's personal agency seemed to both cause and flow from being engaged in, not just the new, but in implementing one's beliefs in new ways or in new situations. Making a contribution through the expression of one's personal beliefs was heartfelt in most discussions. One spoke of an "unequivocal sense of bringing value to the job; making a difference". Another said, "everything fit; my values and principles had a place". She spoke of feeling productive, creative, "really, really contributing in a practical way...and doing something extraordinarily valuable". Yet another who described her involvement with turning around a very negative reputation a departmental program had developed in a community said,

> For me it was very positive because I am a really strong, strong believer in community development. I took the skills that I had learned to use in smaller communities and put them to use here. It turned into a real positive for the staff, for the department, and for me.

Another interviewee was more effusive in describing her experience:

> This was a very exciting and challenging and interesting time in which I felt as though I was really contributing and doing something cutting edge and really, really practically contributing. That is, [doing work that is] absolutely, totally, essential and necessary.

Thirdly, in addition to seeking "the new" and opportunities for expressing one's beliefs and ideas, many interviewees demonstrated significant confidence in their abilities to meet the challenges, the third strand of personal agency. Upon accepting a position to carry a new policy into practice, one said:

> This was a major direction, a major policy. It wasn't clear by any means. I didn't know what to do at first. I was quite perplexed for at least the first six months.... And I think if I had not gone to graduate school, it would have been much more intimidating. Even though I didn't know what to do, I didn't feel incompetent or overwhelmed by the situation or daunted by it particularly. So I thought I had the capacity to cope.

This interviewee summed up his discussion of this with, " I guess the big piece of it for me was, one, having a background and, two, feeling competent and, three, being left alone - the opportunity to just do the work."

Some interviewees connected their confidence to what one called "a toolkit", a set of mental frameworks for understanding oneself and the organization. For example, one interviewee spoke of her understanding of "human processes" such as the grieving process and the change process which allowed her to analyze herself within the context of her environment. This understanding allowed her to "disengage at a certain level" so she could avoid taking personally such things as public criticism over departmental policy. She felt her ability to "talk it out (with others)" and "talk it out with myself...to put it into a box and take it out later (at a more appropriate time)" helped her deal with and even rise above sources of stress. Another interviewee, in discussing ways of handling stress, said, "I think that there is a point where disengagement is a practical, reasonable thing to do. Its not that you are shutting down, or turning off; it's a coping mechanism."

Another tool, an analysis framework, was described by an interviewee when he entered government employment after having worked in the non-government sector only, "I knew this was just another system. I simply had to learn what

made it tick". Applying the skills he had obtained in the non-government sector, he said:

> The first thing you do is analyze the organization. You figure out what makes it tick. How does it function? What are its values? How does it function structurally in terms of hierarchy? And what is all the informal stuff? You analyze that and then you focus. You just transfer the approach, and that's what I did.

He went on to say,

> So part of the resiliency came from efforts to understand and view the organization. And to figure out, OK, what is the blockage here. What is at the heart of it? What is the root cause of it? And how do I turn that around? So it won't be there in my way anymore.

Yet another interviewee spoke of drawing on the what she had learned through her involvement with feminist organizations - deconstructing a situation, consciousness raising, finding a mentor, and maintaining a support network – as tools and frameworks that helped her "read the organization" and work through problems: "I have felt my whole life that much of what I have learned through the women's movement has informed how I approach my paid work, my volunteer work, and my personal life, and my personal relationships."

A few interviewees showed a remarkable ability to stand up for themselves. Two spoke of a short period of time where the supervision they experienced was "controlling" and "smothering". Both dealt with the situation head on. One spoke directly to the new supervisor, "I said very calmly, 'Look, I don't want your job. I just want to do what I am doing. I will make sure you are informed'". The other similarly spoke directly to the supervisor(s), "Its not that people are trying to stop you...mainly (they have) a fear".

The fourth and final side to personal agency described by several was autonomy. Many spoke of having been "given free reign" or "complete freedom" to work. One said, "I was left alone, unfettered to put my own thumb print on the project". Another said, "I was the only person out there. I remember that and being proud I

was able to do that". In contrast, another interviewee described the present worksite,

> You have no control over your life. And I think that a big piece of being resilient is in the level of control you've got. Or seem to have. So, there is a real lack of autonomy. And I think that's an important thing if you are going to find job satisfaction

When first reviewing this notion of autonomy, one might describe these interviewees as "rugged individualists" and further construe that "doing one's own thing" created the positive experience or was a source of resiliency. However, as will be shown, these same people spoke clearly to the need for networking and collaborative activities. Rather it would seem that they had the freedom to take risks, to be creative, and to bring themselves fully to the task at hand. They were simply allowed to focus without intervention. The notion of "aloneness" was not so much a solitary state of affairs, but an archetypal notion of being out in front or ahead of the pack in pursuing or creating innovation.

In summary these four sub themes, working with new ideas, implementing one's own beliefs, feeling up to the challenge and autonomy, appeared closely intertwined in both supporting and flowing from people's agency to function and contribute to the job. The opportunity to work with new ideas and to give expression to one's own beliefs fuelled one's confidence and desire for greater autonomy to seek, in turn, new ideas which were congruent with one's own beliefs. Certainly, having all four of these elements come together at one time is a utopian dream in today's organization. Indeed one of the reasons these particular situations stood out for the interviewees was that they were particularly positive. The challenge for leadership is not in orchestrating the ideal for people. Rather it is in understanding the appropriate approach and response when staff are feeling their most resilient and in ensuring that potentially positive situations are not thwarted. While this is hardly a new idea, it is perhaps not as common as it could be when deadlines loom and opinions clash.

This section will now turn to the third theme which arose in the data, leadership.

Theme Three: Leadership

Most of the discussion about leadership was in relation to one of the other themes and in particular to social capital to be discussed next. However, there were a few issues related to both receiving and providing leadership which bear discussion outside those other themes.

One interviewee described an extremely exciting and productive time characterized by "loose reporting relationships" where officially she reported to a Director, but in practice reported to the Assistant Deputy Minister. The situation allowed for an immediacy of planning and action and was supported by the Director who was informed about all activities. The interviewee said,

> How far can we bend that (organizational) skeleton without having it break... it (the skeleton) is essential. And the reporting relationships have to work. That has to happen. But you can have the bones of the skeleton not be so brittle that they don't allow for any flexibility. The leadership of the organization must understand that and encourage teams, encourage people to take initiative, and encourage working outside of the chain of command as long as people are kept informed. It must be encouraged from the top and replicated throughout the organization so every manager encourages their staff.

Others spoke of the nature of the relationship between a leader and staff. One recounted a particularly productive relationship where she and a supervisor would "problem solve together in a really collegial way...with an equality of dialogue" where she was routinely asked to "bring who I am with my smarts, my ideas, and be listened to."

Overwhelmingly, interviewees spoke to the importance of respect for staff and integrity from leadership. One interviewee said "respect and dignity are about how you treat people, how you speak to people, how you listen...If we as human beings respected each other, I think we wouldn't have a quarter of the problems that we have." She went on to say that everybody has "to go (to work) without

dragging their personal stuff or their moods and to work with their colleagues in a really positive and professional manner." Another said respect included consulting with people even if they are somewhat peripheral to a project. "It is a matter of respect and nobody is embarrassed or put in an awkward situation...its such a small thing to do." While this discussion included employee-employee relationships, interviewees were clear that,

> It sets the tone of the entire organization. It is really important for the person who is heading up that organization to have all of those skills (of showing respect and dignity) ...If they don't, it is horrendous. It erodes the whole organization

Many interviewees discussed either directly or indirectly the importance of a leader's integrity. One interviewee described a supervisor no longer with the government,

> He was one of those people who had guts and principles. He wasn't afraid to stand up. He was a great guy to work for. There was someone who was really leading the charge, a person with a high level of personal integrity. He was a real leader in that sense.

It is interesting that the most important points raised about leadership focused on the leader's character and the nature of the leader-employee relationship. Issues of competence associated with performing managerial duties were not mentioned as important items on their own. For example, one person spoke to the importance of having performance reviews completed on time, but saw this as one of the ways a leader can demonstrate respect toward staff. The challenge to leadership, arising from this theme in the data, was its need to both role model and require of others respect and integrity in all departmental dealings.

Theme Four: Social Capital

One aspect of organizational life to which all interviewees spoke at some length was social capital although none used that phrase. Social capital, as already discussed, is "the stock of active connections among people: the trust, mutual understanding, and shared values and behaviors that bind the members of the

human networks and communities and make cooperative action possible" (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, p. 4).

Interviewees spoke of the importance of social capital not only for their own support and job satisfaction, but also for the overall productivity of the organization. For example, one spoke animatedly about the "camaraderie, joie de vivre...and group spirit we had in the department...we worked to impossible deadlines...(but also had)...the Friday morning goodies tradition...where crepes or chocolate fondue (were not uncommon)". These events, which took place at break time and involved everyone, were "bottom up, but encouraged by senior management...(one Assistant Deputy Minister) was one of the first to jump in, and (another Assistant Deputy Minister's) smoked fish was legendary." She went on to conclude, "We must nurture collegiality. We are understaffed. If we don't (nurture collegiality), we loose vitality, not just spirit or loyalty, but we erode effectiveness and productivity".

Echoing this sentiment that investment in social capital produces returns just as other, more tangible forms of capital do, another interviewee attributed the success of a planning team to the group's high social capital,

> ...alot of the people knew each other. There was alot of cross networking prior to this group coming together...You could connect people to people, not everyone to everyone, but if you webbed it out you could see a network existed before we even got to the table.

Another interviewee speaking to the interdependent relationships among employees, the heart of social capital, said, "I think in this environment your resiliency is related to your colleagues, the people you work with."

Writers in the field of social capital (Cohen and Prusak, 2001; Putnam, 1995) have suggested, "supplies are dwindling" (Kiechel, 2000, p. 149). It would appear that most interviewees shared a concern for the lack of connectedness within their workplace. One interviewee feeling that there is not a true team attitude within the department said, "people find those compatible people to work

with in their little sub groups on specific things...(as a result) you lose communication and (the necessary) people aren't involved". To counteract this, he recommended "more attention to involvement of staff in planning...It would make people feel they are more important; more of a team; with a more clearly defined sense of their own place in it. We would get better productivity".

Several interviewees identified the value of retreats and the need to gather staff together. One said,

> (This isn't) meetings for the sake of meetings, we all do entirely different things that don't necessarily relate to each other. People don't understand why they have to do certain things. But the bigger picture is everyone is part of the (organization). Its important to see each other, to hear each other, to see the amount of work each person does.

In the same vein, another interviewee reminisced about a time "when there was the time to talk about the actual work of teaching. Not just about the administration. We need to create time for people to actually do some talking. Everyone is planning and thinking in isolation". Another spoke about "getting out of the cacophony and chaos of the day-to-day grind" to seek renewal.

Another interviewee felt that the department can have higher expectations for others than it does for itself in terms of social capital, "we want agencies (within communities) to work together, but we don't even work together. So I think we need to look at ourselves, not as a department, but as a community"

Interviewees recognized that social capital was not a quick fix nor necessarily something which was facilitated outside of themselves. There was a clear recognition that social capital took time and was not the sole responsibility of the leadership. One said,

> you must understand and acknowledge that there needs to be informal networks, and this is a huge challenge for our (amount of) time. Time has not been good for the last four to five years, but we need to nurture a sense of collegial community.

Another said,

> I think we can do better networking. But you have to take time to do it.
> We would be able to either eliminate some of these crisis responses or we
> would be even more effective, or we would be able to deal with things
> more promptly (if we networked more effectively). I don't see it as time
> lost. It's a better way of doing business.

It is interesting that within the NWT today every community has telephone and
fax service and all but the smallest have Internet access. Further most
communities have enjoyed daily flights to their regional centre or to Yellowknife
for several years. And within the department, electronic mail is highly accessible
and efficient. However, our sense of connection has not kept pace. And among
employees within the department, there is a sense that we are less cohesive
than we once were. As Cohen and Prusak (2001) point out, the bulk of our
communication is likely information exchange and not the deeper exchanges
which create the trust and connectivity of social capital (p. 105)

In summary, four broad themes emerged from the interviews with the six
participants to the study. These themes are: serendipity, the many sides of
agency, leadership, and social capital. Within the second theme, the many sides
of agency, there were four sub themes: breaking new ground; implementing
one's beliefs; feeling challenged, but up to the task; and autonomy. Using this
data and the ideas from the literature review, this chapter will now turn to a
presentation of the study's conclusions

Study Conclusions

The section will discuss six conclusions which draw on the literature reviewed in
chapter two and the data presented in chapter four. These conclusions will form
the basis of the recommendations in the following section.

To begin, it is clear that the research concerns about personal resiliency of
Department Education, Culture and Employment staff fit very closely with the
GNWT concerns for increased self-reliance within the general population.

Further given the potential for significant change of, not just the GNWT workplace, but the stature and very role of the GNWT itself, this is an opportune time to focus on employee personal resiliency.

The notion of personal resiliency refers to a set of behaviours and skills that can help people become less susceptible to the negative effects of difficult or stressful situations. A high level of resiliency does not necessarily stop people from experiencing stress; rather it provides an approach or perspective which can reduce the effects of as well as the recovery time from taxing situations. Resiliency is not something we stock up on to survive a taxing event. Rather, like good health, resiliency is something that is developed and maintained throughout one's working life. It is as important for the demands of daily workplace encounters as it is for large-scale structural change.

Secondly, the study found there are many practical and concrete ways to foster resiliency. Theorists pointed to the importance of understanding of career development issues; of developing a personal vision and plan; of understanding and using of the stages of personal and organizational change. Interviewees spoke of having a toolkit which included knowing how to "read" the organization; of drawing on an understanding of human change processes; and knowing when to disengage.

Thirdly, the study also found that challenge and control go hand in hand with resiliency. Both theorists and interviewees spoke to the importance of this. Comments from the interviewees suggested that the challenge of working with new ideas while maintaining some degree of autonomy over the process was a critical element in sustaining their resiliency on the job. When the new challenges were rooted in interviewees' closely held beliefs, one senses a "breeder effect" at play where existing resiliency increased exponentially.

The conclusion to be drawn here is not that people should have their days filled with challenging, heart felt activities over which they have complete control. While that may be the ideal, organizations will always have their less glamorous tasks that must be tended to. And it is simply not practical, nor feasible for large numbers of people to be devoted to developmental positions. Rather, organizations need to consider how they can make room for employee generated projects. For example, in-house employee driven research projects which fit or add to the organization's values and mission would be an excellent vehicle for providing challenge and autonomy.

Fourthly, the importance of connectedness within the organization was unmistakable in this study. Theorists in the field saw interconnectedness and interdependency so important, they elevated the concept to a form of capital on a par with other forms of capital in which an organization must invest. Interviewees spoke of the need to create time and opportunities to nurture collegiality, to talk about the heart of our business, and to engage in more joint planning. Retreats were suggested as were cross department planning.

While theorists say social capital cannot be manufactured, it can be fostered. Organizations can provide time and space for connections to develop naturally. They can encourage greater interconnections among divisions. Or they can create planning exercises based not on work unit, but on cross department issues. An example of this occurred in the Department Education, Culture and Employment last fall in preparation for the Literacy Strategy. People from different divisions who had not worked together, but whose positions related in some way to literacy, came together to plan a departmental wide strategy. While the time frames and expectations were difficult, several people within the department commented on the value of that exercise.

Fifthly, the importance of experiencing a fit between of one's own values and principles and those on the job was a critical point in this study. Theorists spoke

often of the powerful influence of shared values and beliefs in an organization. And for interviewees, a major source of the excitement in their stories came from that critical fit. Conner (1992) suggests that organizations engage in "culture audits" to determine where there are gaps between the stated values within the organization and those values of the worksite.

The final conclusion to be drawn from this study is the pivotal importance of leadership. Theorists lament the staying power of traditional models of leadership. Such models focus on the development of a few "high flyers" to the exclusions of other members of the organization and celebrate short-term problem solving as opposed to the longer-term focus on a culture of shared beliefs. Where the traditional model focuses on developing a few leaders, contemporary approaches focus on developing the leadership in everyone. Interviewees raised the issue of appropriate leadership often. Receiving the right kind of leadership at the right time, or working in a culture based on shared values which are fostered by leadership was very important to interviewees.

It would appear timely to initiate a dialogue on leadership within the department. To reflect the philosophy of leadership at all levels of the department, the shape of that dialogue would have to touch all corners of the department and render practices and approaches that could be understood and experienced by everyone.

Study Recommendations

The study found a very close fit between GNWT concerns for self-reliance and this research concern for personal resiliency. To aid in developing personal resiliency within the organization, the study concluded that personal resiliency can be developed through: many practical ways on the job; the experience of challenge, control, and autonomy; increased connectedness or social capital in the organization; the close fit of personal and organizational values; the

experience of appropriate leadership. The following five recommendations are based on these conclusions. Four of the recommendations call for the establishment of committees to develop and steer each recommendation's plan. It is anticipated that each committee will be a different group of employees to ensure sufficient time and energy are available for each plan and to allow as many people as possible to be involved. It will be important that participation on these committees not be viewed as an "add-on" to employee present workloads. Rather committee participation should be included in the annual work plan and given due recognition in the annual appraisal process. Following are the five recommendations:

1. To address the study's conclusion that there are many practical and concrete ways to foster personal resiliency, the first recommendation is: Establish a committee of interested, knowledgeable people to develop a plan to address: career development processes, personal vision and planning; systems thinking; personal and organizational change. The committee should include people from a variety of disciplines such as the NWT Library Service and the Department of Health and Social Services among others.

   At a minimum, the plan should include workshop modules and three or four other ways of reaching staff such as speakers at brown bag lunch events, brochures containing print and video references, e-mail notices or "did you know..." information. The committee should be as creative as possible. The department should be prepared to fund the plan based on a reasonable budget from the committee and should strongly recommend that senior and middle management attend.

   Two years ago, the Department Education, Culture and Employment in a very forward thinking way, arranged for all interested employees to participate in a one-day career planning workshop and to receive a one-

hour confidential one-on-one career counselling session. It was received very well by staff who attended in large numbers. However, it was also expensive and has not been repeated or followed up on. We need to develop a less expensive way not only to continue providing this service, but also to add the other important element raised by theorists. This recommendation is intended to expand upon that earlier event.

2. To address the study's finding that experiencing challenge, control, and autonomy foster and flow from personal resiliency, the second recommendations is:

    Establish a committee to develop a comprehensive plan for encouraging and supporting employee directed action-based research projects on the job. At a minimum the plan should address: training; resource acquisition including print, video, human expertise; promotion; as well as the establishment and management of a fund to which staff could apply. The committee should be sensitive to interpretations of "research" and clarify that university training is not required. The committee should look at ways to encourage joint projects especially across branch and division lines where social capital is weak.

    Further the committee will have to work with senior management to ensure that research projects are seen as adding to the organization. They are not taking valuable time away. Time must be provided within working hours. Lastly, the plan should include how the research will be celebrated and disseminated throughout the department. Could there be a semi annual journal in the making?

3. To address the study's finding that connectedness within the organization is important for both the organization and employee personal resiliency, the third recommendation is:

Establish the necessary conditions and context to encourage increased social capital. Because social capital cannot be manufactured or measured in any objective way, this recommendation will be less straightforward or concrete than the others. Senior management will need to work with staff to identify how greater connectedness can occur across the department. For example, cross department planning sessions such as that already discussed on literacy could be replicated around culture or career development. Another suggestion might be to include a very simple addition to the annual work plans completed by all divisions. In place of identifying resources or outside partnerships, staff could be requested to identify internal connections for joint projects. These ideas and others must be explored further because at present, the department sponsors a number of conferences each year which theoretically should provide opportunities for networking and the further development of social capital. It would appear that the opportunity for informal networking outside conferences is at a premium.

4. To address the study's finding that the stated values of the organization have a powerful influence over personal resiliency, the fourth recommendation is:

Establish a committee to create a process for reviewing the department's existing statement of values. The committee may want to seek outside assistance in defining terms or aspects of the exercise; however, the process should be tailored to our situation. At a minimum, this process should include a statement to staff about: the role of values in an organization; the importance of updating the existing list of values which was produced in 1991; a method for receiving employee input about which values should be added or deleted; and a method for gaining consensus from all staff on the final, updated values statement.

The committee should be as creative as possible in obtaining input such as electronic anonymous questionnaires or written submissions. Large index cards of the raw data from the questionnaires could be displayed on a prominent wall, perhaps near the first floor elevators in the Lahm Ridge Tower, at different points in the process allowing staff to be kept informed throughout the process.

There are two points which should be noted up front. First, some staff may question the exercise if it does not include a process to deal with those who transgress these values. The committee will need to include those suggestions and comments. Secondly, the committee should be made up of individuals highly respected within the department known for maintaining confidentiality and depth of understanding.

5. To address the study's finding that leadership plays a pivotal role in an organization, the fifth recommendation is:

Establish a committee of interested, knowledgeable people to create a definition of "leadership" and a process for nurturing leadership within the department. The committee's scope could certainly include other departments or aboriginal groups who also are interested in developing leadership. However, if the increased scope threatens to be too cumbersome, the committee should move ahead, but maintain a connection with other groups so they are informed.

The Department did adopt a short-lived management development program a number of years ago. However, it was open only to a select few and focused on a long list of skills from demonstrating integrity to producing well-written memos. We need to begin with a philosophical view which reflects the department's needs; moves us collectively away from

the ineffective aspects of traditional leadership models; and underpins statements of skills, changes to appraisal systems, or efforts in professional development.

At a minimum, the committee should look at a facilitated exercise attended by as many employees as possible to work through the elements of a definition of leadership. To ensure employees have a variety of ways of providing input, the committee should be creative in soliciting thoughts through print or electronic means. One suggestion might be to use an appreciative inquiry approach asking staff to submit their experience of "The Most Effective Leader I worked with..." on index cards to be displayed on a prominent wall for everyone to read and perhaps respond to. Because the focus would be leader's behaviour, names would not be included.

Further, at a minimum, the committee should develop the outline of a set of workshop modules flowing from the definition of effective leadership. An excellent model would be the five module Financial Management Training series which has proven very popular and highly effective. An ideal would be to have the modules approved for credit with Aurora College. Finally, the committee should make recommendation for changes in performance appraisal systems.

CHAPTER FIVE – RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

This chapter will look at the changes the department Education, Culture and Employment will have to consider in order to undertake the recommendations outlined in the previous chapter. It will then look at the implications of this research on the body of knowledge under study.

Organization Implementation

This section will consider the changes the department will need to make in order to implement the recommendations of this study. Further, it will make suggestions about the implementation process and will consider implications if the recommendations are not undertaken.

The Department Education, Culture and Employment is responsible for a number of program areas such as schools and income support which can have emotionally charged, public profiles. Further, given the enormous range of program areas beyond schools and adult training, there is a constant flow of legislative and program changes, studies, and new initiatives. Against this backdrop in the last five years there have been three different ministers, each requiring new briefings and wanting to focus on different initiatives.

Essentially the department's focus has been outward to its publics. There has not been time or occasion to consider the internal issues of the department. The present vision and organizational values for the department were developed ten years ago and have never been updated. There are complete divisions within the department which did not exist when the vision and values were developed. In order to implement the recommendations the outward focus would have to change.

Secondly, as a department we will have to become more self-conscious of how we function. These recommendations are not "add-ons" to present procedure.

Most will replace existing ways of doing things. For example we cannot expect a new approach to leadership if we reward problem-solving skills only. We cannot speak to partnership or increased social capital and accept the lack of connectedness between the two branches.

The implementation process for these recommendations should be based on the ideas reviewed in this study. For example, members of the committees referred to in the recommendations should view their committee's work as a source of challenge. That is, one where they have the autonomy to produce more creative and effective ways of developing resiliency on the job. Secondly any processes used by the committees to obtain feedback or implement aspects of the plan should be done in a way that is mindful of the personal resiliency of others. Thirdly, these committees should see themselves as networks needing to connect with each other and with those outside of the committee structure.

There are three implications for the department if these recommendations are not implemented. To begin, it should be noted that what is good for personal resiliency is good for an organization. All of the recommendations point to changes in the organization which should result in a more productive, better functioning organization. Certainly one implication is that the department would lose the opportunity to develop its concept of leadership, improve social capital, reap the benefits of employee research, or experience the results of shared vision and values.

One could dismiss concern over lost opportunities by pointing out that the department and the entire GNWT will likely be a very different organization within the next several years as staff and responsibilities are transferred to self-government groups. However, the benefit to the department when that time comes may be that it will be partnering or negotiating with former employees who are well versed in the many elements of personal resiliency.

A second implication could be that those who do not learn how to develop their personal resiliency or who do not experience an environment which supports their resiliency, will not be in able to weather significant changes on the job. The consequences for the department may be unnecessary stress leave, low morale, or decreased productivity. For the GNWT as a whole, it could mean increased draw on the Employee Assistance Program or even greater expenditures through other departments such as Health and Social Services.

A third implication for the department would be lost opportunity to demonstrate good corporate citizenship, not only to other departments, but to the private, non-profit, and growing aboriginal and community government jurisdictions.

In sum the greatest implications for not implementing recommendations from this study are that we would never know what organizational life would be like where employees pursue and monitor their own resiliency within an organization structured to support those efforts.

Future Research

This section will consider the implications of this research project on the body of knowledge on personal resiliency.

Certainly this was a very small contribution to the body of knowledge on personal resiliency. Although, its findings were very similar to the ideas presented by theorists in the field.

An interesting consideration would be a similar study, but with a very different group of people. For example, participants in this study were fairly seasoned employees who valued the ability to work with the new ideas. Many displayed the characteristics of resilient people. Using a very different group who preferred their day governed by routine would have been an interesting contrast. As would

a younger, less experienced or entry group or a group directly affected by the lay offs in 1995/96.

This research project used appreciative inquiry to guide the interviews which meant participants' were not asked to identify problems they had experienced on the job. While several did raise present problems, that was not the focus of the session. Another method, such as a learning circle, would have gathered a range of responses and conceivably made for different conclusions.

CHAPTER SIX – LESSONS LEARNED

Research Project Lessons Learned

The lessons I learned in this project are a combination of new insights and lessons I seem to relearn on a regular basis. To begin, I found the interview process an interesting one in that almost all interviews followed the same rhythm. After an initial tentative start they progressed quite well until they hit point of low energy. I later referred to this as the mid point doldrums. However, in the first few interviews I was uncomfortable with the situation for both the interviewee and myself and considered ending the interview session. Fortunately, I did not. The interview not only picked up its pace, but we were able to take the discussion to a deeper, richer level. This was a real insight for me. I was so glad I put my faith in the process in those first few interviews and was able to ride the doldrums in the later ones. The data I gathered was the richer for this.

My other lessons relate to understandings I have already have about myself. First, is the importance of starting as early as possible. I assumed that I would be able to complete most of my interviews by late October 2000. As Murphy's Law might have it, I completed only three and had to find replacements for two of the original participants. Further, as the search for replacements took time, it was not possible to complete the interviews until January 2001. This in turn created problems for interview transcription. As a result I turned to voice recognition software which also added to the time constraints.

My second lesson, which I know all too well, is that it always takes me longer to write something than my most conservative estimates suggest. I have a love-hate relationship with the writing process which can, very occasionally, simply flow. More often it is a time consuming process. But my memory of difficult periods and long time frames seems to fade quickly.

Program Lessons Learned
Major Project Competencies

Major Project required competency evaluation:

1c	Provide Leadership
2b	Apply systems thinking to the solution of leadership and learning problems
5a	Identify, locate and evaluate research findings
5b	Use research methods to solve problems
7b	Communicate with others through writing

Five additional competencies:

1e	Recognize ethical considerations
2a	Apply current systems theories to problem solving
3c	Create and lead teams
4a	Assess the implication of the learning environment
7a	Interpret oral communication

I believe I have mastered all of these competencies. Many, I feel, I had developed to the level of mastery before I entered this program. However, I believe that this program expanded my knowledge base about these competencies thereby encouraging and allowing me to explore them anew. Reaching mastery is not a terminal stage. Rather having these competencies articulated has increased my awareness of them. I have become much more conscious of myself in my day-to-day dealings in light of these competencies. They provide me a useful framework for analyzing my behaviour that was not at my disposal before. I find as I age, certain views or priorities that I have held either lose or gain importance in my life affecting how I might demonstrate particular competencies. Having such a framework allows me to check back to see if indeed I am functioning at the mastery level.

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Appendix A

Letter to project interviewee confirming their consent to participate:

Participant Name
Address
Community

Royal Roads University Research Project

To begin, I would like to thank you for your interest in my major research project entitled "How Can the Department Education, Culture and Employment Assist Employees to Develop Personal Resiliency in the Face of Significant Structural Change?" By interviewing selected employees in the Department and reviewing relevant literature, I hope to provide the department with a set of practical recommendations to enhance the personal resiliency of staff within the department. This project is my final requirement in the Master of Arts in Leadership and Training program at Royal Roads University.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project by engaging in a face-to-face interview which should run about two hours. While I do not anticipate taking any more of your time than one interview session, it is possible I might need to contact you later for clarification on some points flowing from the interview. If so, I expect these contacts to be brief.

The nature of the interview is intended more as a conversation than a lock-step question and answer format. In fact, we could jointly agree on the nature of the initial questions to open and guide the discussion. Essentially, the interview will focus on the positive experiences you have had in the department and the organizational circumstances that you feel fostered those experiences.

These interviews will be recorded on audiotape and transcribed. You will receive a copy of the transcription and asked to verify that it accurately represents what you said during the interview. Your anonymity and the confidentiality of your comments will be maintained. Neither your name nor any information about your identity will be made available to anyone at any time during or after the research project is completed. The audiotapes will be transcribed by a professional transcriber in Victoria and will be demagnetized and destroyed once the major project is approved. The Department Education, Culture and Employment is the sponsor of this project and as such is entitled to receive the final outcome of the research only.

This research is considered "minimum risk" so I do not foresee any potential harm or financial costs for you. However, there will be the inconvenience of conducting the interviews outside of regular work hours.

You should be aware that you may withdraw at any time from this process without any prejudice. The choice not to participate or to withdraw will not have effect upon your employment or advancement within the department. Should you withdraw during or immediately after the interview process the tape recording of your interview will be destroyed and no information from the tape will be used in the project.

Once the research is complete, you will receive a summary of the project including the final recommendations made to the department. I must have this project completed by mid-April, 2000.

The supervisor for this project is Dr. Irene Naested at Mount Royal College, Calgary. Should you have any concerns about the research you can reach Dr Naested at (403) 240-6428 or through e-mail INaested@MtRoyal.AB.CA.

If you have any questions at any time before, during, or after the interview, please let me know. I am very pleased you are interested in the project and want to ensure you are comfortable with the entire process.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research.

Sydney O'Sullivan

Please sign below that you have read this letter and agree to participate in this research.

Signature   Date

Print name

Appendix B

1. Definitions of "personal resiliency" for use with interviewees as required.

- "An act springing back...or withstanding shock without permanent dislocation"

- "An antibody that enables warding off attacks"

- "Being attuned to your internal, *personal* world...(so) you will be able to rise above the frenetic busyness of working life...developing a broader vision of yourself in the world...it's about being an *intelligent actor in your own life*"

- "the capacity to absorb high levels of change while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior"

- "resilience, the ability to demonstrate both strength and flexibility in the face of frightening disorder, is the internal guidance people use to reorient ourselves when blown off course by the winds of change"

2. Potential questions

- Do any of the definitions of personal resiliency strike a chord with you? Any thoughts on what personal resiliency might mean to you?

- To begin, reflect on your time with the department and that was a real high point for you, when you felt the most resilient, making a difference or doing creative meaningful work.

- Describe those times. What made them so memorable? Why did they appeal to you?

- What sorts of things in your environment supported or nurtured that feeling? What supports from the organization? From leadership? From outside the organization?