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**Topic**

**Associate in Management (AIM) program: An investigation into benefits for individual staff members and for the organization.**

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the

Degree of Master of Social Science

Department of Social Development

University of Cape Town

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**Declaration**

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

**Signature**

**Date**

12/12/2003

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University of Cape Town

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## **Abstract**

This study examined management development at the University of Cape Town (UCT), with specific reference to the Associate in Management (AIM) course offered at the Graduate School of Business. It is a part-time course offered to people already in employment at different levels from across various industries. Some of the recruits enrolled are working full-time in the public sector. UCT as an employer also has had some of its staff enrolled on a part-time basis on this course. Further, this study descriptively analysed training and development in general at UCT, particularly regarding junior and middle layers of management. In addition, it assessed any noticeable changes in skills, knowledge and attitudes (attributes) that may have resulted from the AIM intervention. At the heart of this study also are the institutional structural complexities that have a direct bearing on the success of any development program.

In a bid to gain more insights into the AIM program, an information session with the Convenor of the program was arranged in the early stages of the research. In the latter part of the research, questionnaires were then distributed to the UCT-AIM class of 2001. After the completed questionnaires had been collected, interviews were conducted with the respective line managers at UCT whose staff had enrolled for AIM in 2001. Line managers were asked to note their observations of any noticeable changes subsequent to their staff participating in the AIM course. The questionnaires were distributed in November and December of 2002, whereas the interviews began during the same period but were only concluded in January 2003.

The main findings of the current study suggest that, although AIM as a management development program aims to foster and nurture those basic technical managerial skills that are a must for managerial success, there have simultaneously been areas of tremendous personal growth that are just as important. The superficial divide between hard and soft management skills seemed evident throughout the study. By hard skills the researcher refers to the practical technical skills whereas soft skills would encompass all those personal attributes and characteristics that a person has to exhibit to be successful in carrying out certain duties. Personal growth or maturity is one example of a 'soft' skill. The major findings of this study can be clustered into the following categories:

- Growth in self-confidence;
- Improved levels of skills and knowledge in some of the functional areas of management, including, but not limited to, conflict resolution, the use of information technology, the ability to coach and motivate others within a team environment, and basic understanding of financial management;
- Frustrated career ambitions of staff due to lack of institutional support; and
- Inability of AIM to offer practical solutions for day-to-day problems experienced at the workplace, which was a view expressed by most of the line managers interviewed.

Equally evident in this study, too, has been the notion of the 'development of the whole person', which is a rather important recognition that people, unlike machines, are a very unique resource that requires proper holistic handling, particularly in areas relating to their own development. Most significantly, however, the study revealed

that the University as an institution is unable or even in certain instances, reluctant to adapt itself to the new (as in new workforce, new skills, new forms of knowledge and a set of cultures that challenges the dominant institutional one). There is, indeed, an interesting irony at play here given that the main purpose of a university is to foster research, which necessitates exploration and implementation of the new. Some of the failures in staff development could partly be attributed to this rigidity.

In the final analysis, the study proposes the formulation of a comprehensive human resource development strategy (to be championed by the University senior leadership). It is envisaged that such a strategy will have, as its core thrust, training and development of staff at all levels, but with particular attention to middle and junior tiers of management. Furthermore, pragmatic steps must ensure that the institution derives optimal benefits from existing training and development initiatives, however small in scale these might be. Institutional successes depend primarily on unwavering support from top management tiers. Thus the University executive must ensure that training and development of all its employees does indeed occur, not simply for philanthropical reasons, but in fact to guarantee the ultimate success of UCT as an institution. The entire University community (both students and staff) is aware of existing executive and managerial statements on serious issues such as HIV/AIDS, harassment or even equity and transformation (however tentative some of these commitments might be); the university's top management needs to do the same with regards to training and development. Thus far, however, there has been an uncharacteristic reticence on this particular issue as other matters such as AIMS, outsourcing and restructuring projects dominated the University's priority list.

In conclusion, the current study has shown that training and development interventions at the University of Cape Town are definitely not panaceas or universal remedies for all existing problems. They must operate in tandem with other interventions, not to mention unambiguous institutional support at all levels. Even more importantly, they need to be part of a continuous process, rather than being a means to an end. In this regard, training and development must be integrated into all University activities that aim to advance the University' core business i.e. teaching and research. Training and development should not simply happen simply because it is seen as good practice to do so. Re-examination of such interventions moreover provides the institution with an ideal opportunity to take stock of what has worked and what has not. Such an evaluation would also reveal whether the set objectives of a training and development program have been met as a result of such intervention.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Description of the Study**

#### **Introduction**

In the same way that every aspect of economic, political, social and cultural life in South Africa came under intensive scrutiny after the change in government in 1994, so too has our national skills deficit. The pre-1994 closed economy and the policy of racial segregation played a major role in accelerating this deficit, as many of the education and training opportunities were not available to the vast majority of our people. In the current climate of freedom and democracy, organisations have had to engage with and tap into the talents and potential of previously excluded groups, especially blacks. With this change came a desperate need for training and development. Equally serving as a motivating factor, though, is the recognition by organisations that such training and development is in fact imperative for good business practice and will ensure sustained returns on investment. The University of Cape Town (UCT), too, has not been immune to these changes. Training and development initiatives have thus been put in place with a view to increasing the organisational effectiveness and efficiency of UCT, while at the same time attempting to redress the imbalances of the past.

#### **Aims and objectives of the research**

##### **Aims**

This study examines one of several institutional interventions that have been implemented at UCT since 1994 with regard to training and development of its staff. The Associate in Management (AIM) programme is a management development

initiative that sought to build managerial capacity across the system at both junior and middle layers of management.

### Objectives of the research

The main objectives of the research can be summarised as follows:

- To give an in-depth account of the views by managers whose staff had enrolled for the programme, regarding the usefulness of AIM training in the actual work situation;
- To give an in-depth account of the views of participating members of staff regarding the usefulness of the AIM training to themselves personally and to the actual place of work;
- To compare these positions in terms of the usefulness of the AIM training to the University of Cape Town in general.

For the purposes of this present thesis, we will focus specifically on junior level management development, as this level provides a firm base for the other managerial layers above. Leadership development at UCT has to start at this level. While the study as a whole will focus mainly on junior level management development, the purpose of this introductory chapter is to give a brief overview of the University of Cape Town's management development programmes in general, including of course AIM and other middle management development programmes. The concept of employee development (otherwise known as human resource development) will also be explored. In so doing, the vital components of human resource development, viz. education and training, will also be explored. Similarly, the current legislative

framework within which the University operates as an institution of higher learning is critical, as this ultimately gives direction and focus to such development programmes.

Clearly, developing human resources involves the development of human potential, which ensures that can contribute optimally to the betterment of themselves and of society as a whole.

### **The link between adult education and training, and social development**

First: let our point of departure be to define social development (the ultimate goal of our training and development intervention). Midgley (1995:25) defines social development as a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development. Gray (1997: 214) notes that social development has also been referred to as an approach to poverty which has certain distinctive characteristics in that it is, *inter alia*, multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary, inclusive, universal, integrative, empowering, people-centred and interventionist. Gray further argues that for all these efforts to yield rewards, planning is required to bring all the sectors in society together in an integrated and holistic attempt to combat poverty. In order to achieve this, education and training is vital. All efforts to encourage social development must be self-sustaining in the end. Gray (1997: 213) lists human capital development (education and training programmes, skills development programmes), among others, as important outcomes of a social development.

Ayogu (2000: 209) emphasises how social development is integrally linked to other spheres of development. In his article, which is contained in the Africa

Competitiveness Report of 2000/2001, Ayogu argues that another factor that affects the competitiveness of the South African economy (apart from easing restrictions on trade, reducing tariff barriers, and improving the functioning of the civil service) is the quality of its human resources. Not only does this make a compelling case for education and training of the economically active population, but it is also geared towards the lifting of standards of living for our people. The combination of education and training is a necessary condition for social development. The South African Year Book 2002/03 (pg. 189) identifies this link:

Education is not only pivotal to economic prosperity but also plays a crucial role in enabling South Africans to improve the quality of their lives and contribute to a peaceful, productive and democratic nation. (*The South African Year Book 2002/03: 189*)

The Vision Statement of the National Education Department (contained in the same publication) concurs with the above view:

Our vision is of a South Africa in which all our people have access to lifelong education and training and have access to opportunities, which will in turn contribute towards improving the quality of life and building a peaceful, and prosperous democratic society.

*The South African Year Book 2002/03 (pg. 189)*

From this point of view, education is seen as a vehicle that allows individual citizens to realise their full potential. This is seen as a building block on which a vibrant and

participative civil society can be built. Again, the ultimate aim would be to raise people's quality of life, which is an important social development goal. Even the most conservative of publications from a Neo-Liberal perspective has had to recognise the important role of social development, with education as the primary means of delivery. James Wolfensohn, the President of the World Bank Group, said the following in his foreword for the World Bank publication of 2002:

Eradicating world poverty is the greatest challenge of our age, and the greatest weapon we have to fight poverty is knowledge. Knowledge of policies that work to increase economic growth, of how to protect people from diseases and protect the environment from degradation ... training young minds and equipping them for productive work.

*World Bank, 2002*

In this statement, Wolfensohn very rightly suggests that knowledge is the key to addressing most of the ills in society. In order to move people out of dependency and the poverty trap, they must be given access to education and training opportunities.

### **Rationale for the research**

Since the rollout of the management development programmes as training interventions at UCT, there has not yet been an in-depth study that independently assesses or evaluates these programmes. This is partly what the study is intended to do i.e. to provide reliable data on the state of training and development at the institution and also act as a point of reference for evaluation of future programmes. Staff training and development involves considerable costs and therefore an

organisation needs to have an informed opinion as to whether there is enough reason to justify such expenses. This present study will thus provide an in-depth analysis of the outcomes set for such an intervention.

Mann and Robertson (1996: 14-15), however, alert us to one very important aspect in evaluating the effectiveness of any training programmes. They caution that, even though many organisations would embrace the practice of constant evaluation of their training and development interventions, there is still some fear by organisations that an evaluation may indicate that a publicly endorsed programme is not meeting its objectives. They further contend that, in fact, the purpose of evaluating training should be to provide information that will assist the training institution to improve its programmes rather than to declare them good or bad. This, precisely, is the intention of this study. The presumption here is that, in essence, there is no such a thing as a bad training programme. In theory – education and training are always positive. This viewpoint will be explored further in the Literature Review (Chapter 4).

Swanson and Sleezer (1987: 7) suggest that three basic questions must be asked when evaluating a training programme, namely:

- Were the learning objectives met?
- Was the original training need met?
- Was the training valuable?

Certainly not everything is quantifiable and for this reason, we might find the measurement of certain outcomes with regard to training intervention a little daunting.

Fagiano (1994: 4), for instance, makes this point in his memorandum to members of the *American Management Association*. He acknowledges that it could be problematic to quantify the gains of management training programmes (or in our specific case, the Associate in Management and Middle Level Management courses), as such interventions result in far more subtle long-term payoffs. This stems from the fact that since management often plays the 'overseer' role and does not get to the actual intricate details of production, most of the skills and expertise required would tend to be generic in nature, e.g. the ability to people-manage, to design and implement a sound business strategy, or to effectively communicate, coach and motivate others. Indeed such competencies are not easy to gauge unless they are examined over an extended period.

### **Programme evaluation**

As may have been inferred already, the type of research that the author pursues in this study is (in broad terms) programme evaluation research. Mouton (2001: 570) defines programme evaluation as the systemic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualisation, implementation and impact of development programmes and projects. In a nutshell, programme evaluation ascertains the motivation and reasons for the existence of a particular programme, examines its implementation, and evaluates its success (i.e. whether it meets a certain set of clearly defined goals).

The Logical Framework, which is an analytical, presentational, and management tool which can help planners and managers in problem analysis, stakeholder analysis, developing a hierarchy of objectives and selecting a preferred implementation strategy

is used by *USAid, Ausaid* (<http://www.ausaid.gov.au>) and other international development donor agencies lists the following as core components of such programme evaluation:

- The central problem that precipitated the intervention;
- The causes of this problem;
- The programme activities;
- The immediate outcomes anticipated for the target group;
- The indicators (identifying indications or signs) that these immediate outcomes have been achieved; and
- Outcome measures i.e. measures to assess outcomes.

A very important component not mentioned above is, furthermore, a specific awareness the specific understanding as to what precisely must be evaluated.

With regard to the use of training programmes as an intervention measure, Plantard and Ryan (1994: 27-30) identify four levels of programme evaluation, which they have adapted from Kirkpatrick, namely:

- Reaction: Assessing what the trainee thought of the particular programme;
- Learning: Measuring the learning of principles, facts, skills and attitudes that were specified as training objectives;
- Behaviour: Measuring aspects of job performance, which are related to the training objectives; and
- Results: Relating the results of the training programme to organisational objectives and other criteria of effectiveness.

In our programme evaluation, an attempt is really to find answers particularly on the last three items, viz. learning, behaviour and results. With reference to the first item, reaction, how this programme was offered and how the learners' felt about the personalities involved in the delivery of the course will inevitably influence how learners gauge the programme's impact. As all four levels identified above provide different kinds of evidence, it is necessary to evaluate all of them (Plantard and Ryan, 1994).

The simplicity with which Mouton (discussed earlier) puts forward the rationale for evaluation, an important consideration that would drive the training evaluation exercise, is particularly interesting. In short, he identifies several reasons for conducting evaluations, namely:

- To fulfil accreditation requirements;
- To account for funds;
- To answer requests for information; and
- To facilitate more informed future decision-making.

With reference to the first of these, the AIM programme is already accredited and is deemed a formal academic programme. Aspirant business executives and middle and lower management thus use the programme as a precursor for successful enrolment in the degree of the Master of Business Administration (MBA).

Secondly, with regards to funds, the University furthermore commits substantial funds towards the ongoing tuition of staff in the form of special tuition fee rates<sup>1</sup> for staff. The issue of funds is however a tricky one. When evaluating a programme in accordance with the criteria identified by Mouton, it is implicitly assumed that the interests and motives of benefactors or those providing financial support are in harmony with those of the recipients (participants of the course). This researcher holds the view that in a learning programme of this kind, there is usually an intense struggle between the learner and the organisation in terms of gains from learning. For instance, learners enrolled in an employee development programme such as AIM, are mainly interested in how they expect to gain personally gains from such a programme, e.g. better job prospects, increased mobility, promotion, higher income, increased job satisfaction, etc. Organisations, on the other hand, are concerned with a learning programme that yields quantifiably good results, e.g. excellent goods and/or services, higher profit margins (for profit-making organisations), and being ahead of the competition.

The third point relates to the importance of having reliable data readily available with regards to training programmes since requests for information would be made from time to time. In the current climate where training at the workplace is regulated in terms of the Skills Development Act no. 97 of 1998, it is crucial that information is readily available, as it would form the basis from which the *workplace skills plan*<sup>2</sup> can

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<sup>1</sup> Staff fee rates are special reduced fee rates for staff and their dependent spouses and children should they be enrolled at UCT for a recognised course of study. There is also a reciprocal agreement between the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and UCT that entitles staff from either university to the special fee rate. There is also financial assistance for those staff enrolling with institutions other than UCT and UWC. Such assistance is in the form of centrally administered staff assistance plan. Under the scheme, financial assistance is guaranteed to the extent that staff make satisfactory progress towards their studies.

<sup>2</sup> Workplace Skills Plan is a plan that generally outlines the training and development in a organisation over a period of one year. It does require information on, among other things, the organisation's

be formulated. It is a legal requirement that all employers have plans on how they intend to develop their staff. Furthermore, it is also required that they report on progress annually to the Department of Labour (DoL) so as to claim back a certain percentage of the *skills levy*<sup>3</sup> they would have contributed to the DoL.

Lastly, with information readily available, this would enable the organisation in making crucial decisions. Decisions made on the basis of hard evidence would, in all probability sustain the organisation and position itself well, such that it is able to thrive in the midst of challenges.

This concludes the description of the research. Lastly, one must concede, as did Mouton, that no amount of research design can anticipate every possible source of error. The present programme evaluation study therefore will most likely not be able to find out “the whole truth”. Mouton further noted that any evaluation, however difficult the conditions and the challenges it encounters, could produce results that shed light on an intervention and its effectiveness. This is precisely what is intended by this study: to give some approximation of the truth with regard to the effectiveness of the AIM training intervention and furnishing evidence in support of this evaluation.

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strategic priorities for skills development, the number of people trained in the organisation by job type and race, details of the education and training needed to deliver on the organisation’s key strategic priorities and the specific sector’s business plan. THETA. Workplace Skills Plans. [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za).  
<sup>3</sup> Payment towards this levy grant scheme is legislated in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998. The intention is to stimulate skills development by enabling employers to reclaim some expenditure on skills development initiatives. All employers who are registered with the South African Revenue Services (SARS) or who have an annual payroll excess of R250 000 are required to contribute 1% of their total payroll to SARS. SARS is a collecting agency for the Department of Labour (DoL). MQA. Skills Development Levy. [www.mqa.org.za](http://www.mqa.org.za).

## **Chapter 2**

### **Situation analysis of education and training in South Africa**

#### **Introduction**

In raising people's quality of life, it is important to improve the extent to which they are able to contribute optimally to various spheres of the nation's life. This chapter presents a short synopsis of the status quo in South Africa in terms of the development of its own human resources. It will be shown that South Africa tends to fare badly when compared to other developing nations with similar sets of problems and challenges. This chapter also contains a descriptive analysis of the University of Cape Town's *Management Development Programme*, with specific emphasis on the AIM (Associate in Management) programme. With regard to this programme, learners must meet a specific set of outcomes upon completion of AIM. This will set the tone of the current research, as our findings must determine whether these outcomes were realised or not. Lastly, the chapter will examine the legislative framework that seeks to effect training and development as part of building the country's human resource base. By looking at training and development at a macro level, it will be shown that such a legislative framework does indeed provide an enabling environment for sensible learning to take place, which had not been the case under the previous system of apartheid.

#### **Making a case for education and training in the workplace**

More often than not, we erroneously think that training and development is effected with a view to improving an organisations outputs, and that it therefore ought to only fall within the ambit of economic development. To some extent, this is true,

companies do train their staff, so that they can be well ahead of their competitors, but it is equally important that we train and invest resources in people, because we feel a moral obligation to do so. Individuals that go through a training programme become empowered and are therefore enabled to break out of the cycle of dependence on others. Thus, apart from an intention to improve staff efficiency, organisations also invest in people as part of a social responsibility plan. For example, the University of Cape Town even has a negotiated agreement with the trade unions that retrenched staff members will have access to all in-house courses for a maximum of 12 months from the date on which such retrenchment took effect.

Taking stock of how South African organisations are coping with change, Human and Horwitz (1992: 96) assert that prosperity and quality of life in South Africa will depend on the extent to which the challenges of human resource development (HRD) is met. In other words, the success of this country depends on the extent to which key areas of skill and expertise have been developed.

Poor school enrolment figures in the past have affected other spheres of education and training, particularly in tertiary education and adult education. The latter sector includes our focus in this research, i.e. workplace learning. According to the World Bank (2003: 86), South Africa's average total years of schooling are 6.1. In comparison with more industrialised countries such as the United States (where this average is 12.0 years) and the United Kingdom (9.4 years), we are indeed doing very badly in this regard. The figure for the United States suggests that almost every adult employee who underwent formal schooling will have spent the full term at school, whereas the UK indicator tells us that some students will have dropped out before

completing their secondary schooling. In the South African context, our low average means that not every person who enrolls in school will go all the way up to Matriculation level. Furthermore, when the dropout population reaches adulthood, it becomes the economically active population. Clearly, therefore, assistance is required to bridge the many years of inadequate education and lack of training. The importance of workplace education at all levels therefore cannot be emphasised enough.

The *Global Competitiveness Report of 2001-2002* corroborates the findings of Human and Horwitz (see above) regarding the state of affairs in this country insofar as the development of people is concerned. Using critical factors such as the brain drain, the availability of scientists and engineers, of women in the economy, secondary school enrolment, tertiary enrolment and years of schooling, South Africa struggles to compete seriously even with some of the developing economies. For example, the ratio of availability of scientists and engineers (between the range 1 and 7: 1 meaning non-existent and/or rare and 7 meaning widely available), South Africa can only manage an average 4.1 compared to other developing countries such as Brazil, Argentina and Indonesia, which, out of a possible 7, recorded 5.0, 4.9 and 4.7 respectively. Brain drain continues to do much harm, hence the need for a more comprehensive human resource development strategy. In the same report, South Africa is shown to be doing very badly in Mathematics and Science achievement. Furthermore, the tertiary education sector, a key partner in the development of human potential, could only attract 18.9% of all eligible tertiary students compared to Argentina's 39.0%. South Africa is also struggling to enrol many of its youths in school, which is not the case in many other countries in the developing world:

Malaysia, Argentina, Peru and Sri Lanka have a slight edge over South Africa in this instance. The legacy of apartheid accounts for much of this unacceptable state. The remnants of the *Bantu education system*<sup>4</sup> are still noticeable. At the heart of the Bantu education system was the objective to keep blacks, especially Africans, out of strategic areas of skill and expertise so that they are not able to compete on an equal footing with whites.

Both business and government have however begun to recognise that, as global competition for markets increases, this country needs to be ready for such competition. As an intervention mechanism, government has put in place a legislative framework to ensure that South Africa attains a competitive edge over other developing countries. The Skills Development Act, the Employment Equity Act, the Job Creation Fund and the macro-economic strategy known as Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), are all interventions aimed at ensuring a sustained long-term competitive edge.

With regard to the recognition that the business sector is now beginning to look for answers from training and development efforts, Pillay *et al* (2003:97) assert that a central tenet of new Capitalism is to achieve a productive alliance between learning and work and to support lifelong learning. Pillay *et al*'s assessment of the training and development record of this country concludes emphatically that not much has been done in this area, particularly in the business sector. Schuller (2003: 26) affirms this view:

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<sup>4</sup> A system of education that was introduced towards the late 60's and early 70's that sought to give blacks, particularly Africans, an inferior education. On this basis, blacks could not compete for jobs with fellow whites.

Although government is obviously a major provider of learning opportunity at all levels [including adult education], employers are also involved, though less than they might be. If they stop thinking about education and training as only to do with immediately applicable skills, they could be major players.

The current South African situation is unique and filled with opportunities. The apartheid system that preceded its fledgling democracy made it impossible for the vast majority of South Africans to have training and development opportunities. Learning under apartheid was very much like what Williamson (2003: 9) refers to in his article on continuing education. Essentially, Williamson asserts that in open and democratic societies learning is much easier. On the other hand, learning in extremis, i.e. in the most extreme of conditions, is very difficult. Williamson specifically looks at learning at learning activities that took place in war situations, but it applies equally to South Africa under apartheid. Once extreme conditions cease to limit learning, however, there can be no limits to what people can achieve. It therefore follows that when opportunities do present themselves, as is the case with South Africa now, we ought to take full advantage of such opportunities.

People opt to take full advantage of training and development opportunities as and when they are made available for the simple reason that they want to improve their lives. Indeed, with training come the expectation of promotion, higher pay and a great sense of accomplishment on the part of the trainee. The ultimate aim therefore is for people to improve their own lives: an overall goal for social development. This point is affirmed by Williamson (2003: 8) when saying that all learning touches deeply the identity, experience and hopes of people, but in different ways according to

the circumstances of their lives. We therefore learn to improve the *self* and the circumstances in which we often find ourselves. In a study by Feinstein and Hammond (2003: 22), conducted on a working adult population, it was found that (apart from increased productivity) participation in adult learning also has positive effects for a wide range of health and social circumstances. Particularly, it was found that it contributes to those small shifts in attitudes and behaviours that do occur. With specific reference to UCT, it would be interesting to see whether this is also true for the AIM programme.

As the Skills Development Act will bear testimony later in this study, training does not necessarily have to involve only those who are employed or even self-employed. Indeed, if we are to take the majority of our people out of poverty through training and development, we ought to look seriously at those who are outside or excluded from formal employment. Opportunities should also be afforded to those actively seeking employment, thus enhancing their chances of finding such employment or of becoming self-employed. It therefore cannot be disputed that training and development form the backbone of social development. Social development by its very nature advocates self-reliance and independence.

## **The University of Cape Town Management Development Programme**

### **Scope and History**

With a view to streamlining service delivery to the UCT community in the interests of greater overall efficiency, the *Audit for Integration of Management Systems* (AIMS) was rolled out in 2000. The directive at the time to kick-start this process came from the then Vice-Chancellor Dr Mamphela Ramphele, who has since joined the World

Bank in Washington DC as Managing Director for Human Development. Subsequent to a fierce bidding and rigorous selection process, two management consulting firms were contracted to help UCT to establish a project team through the first phases of the project. Gemini Consulting and KPMG were successful bidders, although most of the business process reviews were by Gemini.

Part of the plan was that external consultants would work in conjunction with UCT project team members, who will through this process gain reasonable project management skills and then be able to see the project through the final stages themselves after the external consultants had completed their work. This project was unique, in that not everything was dependent on what the final recommendations would be for the project. During this process, business operations were improved and good business practices were being suggested and implemented even in the early stages of the project. It was particularly at this stage that it was recognised that the University had a serious skills gap, especially at management level (junior and middle management levels). It was therefore felt that for this institution to realise its mission as a centre of excellence in teaching and research, a well-oiled administrative and professional branch was vital.

The AIMS steering committee contemplated bringing in reputable management training providers who would design management training courses that would not only embrace conventional management but would tailor them to the context of UCT as an institution of higher learning. An understanding of the higher learning environment and the core business of UCT had to be basic ingredients of any such management development course. Upon being alerted of the management training

needs of UCT staff, the UCT Graduate School of Business offered to design a course that would specifically be tailored to meet these needs. It is within this context that the UCT Graduate School of Business designed the Associate in Management (AIM) course, which forms the subject matter of this dissertation.

Even though the School had already offered this course for several years, it was specifically re-designed for UCT staff and junior level management. Staff had to be nominated by their own Directors and, in some cases, section heads as potential candidates for enrolment. The first intake (of 2000-2001) was sponsored by the *Mellon Foundation*, while the second intake (2001 – 2002) used UCT's special staff tuition fee rate. In 2001, there were also staff members of UCT that applied on their own accord to study AIM at the GSB. This group was enrolled in the part-time AIM programme where most lectures took place in the afternoon. Apart from the AIM programme, which catered for UCT staff with supervisory capacities, there was also a Middle Management Development programme, which catered for those in middle management positions at UCT.

### **AIM and Middle Management Development Programmes**

The Middle Management Development Programme is designed to cater for all those UCT members of staff who occupy middle management positions. Using the UCT pay-class levels, this applies to pay-class 10 and above (*see Appendix III, page 122*). In its 2002 "Statement of Purpose" the middle management training programme envisages the overall purpose of training as being to widen the perspective of the participant in that it will provide insights into all the functional areas of the organisation. Furthermore, the statement holds "this will lay the groundwork for

continuous career development”. For the purpose of this study, we will however concentrate exclusively on the AIM programme, since it is through this programme that the future middle management tier will be created. For equity purposes, too, the success of AIM is critical, since it is through this very programme that designated groups can obtain formal management training that will make them more competitive for middle management positions at UCT and outside. The AIM programme is a part-time or modular programme designed to assist candidates to move into junior management and onwards to middle management level (AIM, 2002).

AIM is different to other academic programmes in that recognition of prior learning is built into the course. There are no academic minimum requirements except that candidates ought to have 5 years working experience, since much of the course content is built on real problems in a work environment. Candidates are also required to hand in a work-based problem-solving report, after which they would be interviewed to determine the following (AIM 2002):

- personal motivation;
- ability to manage conflict;
- ability to work under pressure;
- ability to use their own initiative;
- problem solving ability;
- insight;
- worldview;
- flexibility; and
- Sustainability.

Both the outcomes and the assessment criteria to determine these outcomes are pivotal for the success of any training programme. Outcomes ought to be assessed for one simple reason: to ascertain whether the objectives set for that particular programme have in fact been achieved. This is important, since more resources (money, time and human resources) will have been committed to a programme. The organisation needs confirmation that resources were spent wisely and whether it is worthwhile to continue with a particular programme.

In measuring outcomes, one looks particularly at competencies, although of course not to the exclusion of other factors, such as knowledge and attitudes. Wolf (1995: 1) defines competency-based assessment as follows:

A form of assessment that is derived from the specification of a set of outcomes; that so clearly states both the outcomes – general and specific – that assessors, students (learners) and interested third parties can all make reasonably objective judgements with respect to student (learner) and non-achievement of these outcomes; and that certifies student progress on the basis of demonstrated achievement of these outcomes. Assessments are not tied to time served in formal educational settings.

The importance of having a clear set of outcomes and assessment criteria cannot be overemphasised. Indeed, if we are to say whether a particular programme has succeeded or not, it should pass a certain set of pre-determined criteria. In AIM, there

is indeed a clear set of outcomes that learners should meet during and after the training programme; they are listed as follows:

- Understanding of financial information;
- Fluency in oral and written communication;
- Analytical reasoning skills;
- Personal growth;
- Development of self-confidence, problem-solving and decision-making skills; and lastly,
- Broadening of management perspectives of the participants through teaching in functional areas of management, including e.g. project management, management of organisations and human resources, financial and management accounting, information technology etc.

Assessment criteria include problem-solving individual or group assignments and written examinations and tests, reports, group plays, and individual and group presentations.

The context and the business environment within which organisations operate is important, and therefore such context must be built into the staff development programme itself so as to ensure there is relevance. As UCT is an institution of higher learning and as such has teaching (learning) and research as its core business, it was therefore fitting that in addition to the set curricula in AIM, a Higher Education Module under the auspices of the UCT Centre for Higher Education Development

(CHED) be included. This Module dealt with pertinent issues in the realm of higher education, particularly in the management of higher education (AIM 2002).

### **National Legislative Framework Giving Effect to Training and Development**

Because of the legacy of apartheid, legislative regimes have been put in place, which have a direct bearing on training and development. The gross reluctance of organisations to recognise and nurture talent from previously disadvantaged groups compelled the state to usher in such regimes to encourage organisations to make an effort in reconstituting their workforce to make it diverse and broadly representative of South Africa's demographics.

The South African Constitution of 1996 laid the foundations for this transformation to occur. Section 29 (1) provides that:

Everyone has a right to education, including adult basic education and further education and training, which the state through reasonable resources must make progressively available and accessible.

Other relevant pieces of legislation that give effect to human resource development are the Skills Development and Employment Equity Acts. The AIM programme, by virtue of being a workplace action-oriented programme, is clearly designed to meet the requirements of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, among others. Section 2(1) of the Act succinctly sets out the following as the purpose of the Act:

(a) to develop the skills of the South African workforce;

(b) to increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market and to improve the return on that investment;

(c) to encourage employers:

(i). to use the workforce as an active learning environment;

(ii). to provide employees with the opportunities to acquire new skills.

The AIM course is clearly based on the requirements and is designed within the spirit of this Act. It aims to develop the managerial expertise not only of the staff at UCT, but also more generally in the South African society. Candidates for AIM course come from occupations across the country.

Section 9 of the Skills Development Act provides for the establishment of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA). This is in recognition of the fact that since the nature of business differs from industry-to-industry and sector-to-sector, this will have a bearing on the set of training needs required per sector – per industry. In taking note of this dilemma, Section 9(1) provides that:

The Minister (of Labour) may, in the prescribed manner, establish such a sector education and training authority with a constitution for any national sector.

To give proper effect to such SETA's, the Minister, according to Section 9(2) will group employers into categories depending on the nature of business or industry. On this basis, the University falls within the Education, Training & Development Practices – Sector Education & Training Authority (ETDP-SETA). All matters

pertaining to skills development, including the annual skills development report, also fall within the ETDP-SETA. During 2002, the University submitted its annual report to the SETA with regard to skills development for the reporting period from 01 April 2001 to 31 March 2002. Before the reporting period in 2002, the University had submitted the Workplace Skills Plan and the Implementation Plan. Therefore, in taking stock of the in-house training at the University, AIM is much better placed for such a purpose.

Another legislative regime that complements the Skills Development Act is the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998. The preamble of this Act reads:

Recognising as a result of apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices, there are disparities in employment, occupation and income within the national labour market and that those disparities create such pronounced disadvantages for certain categories of people that they cannot be redressed simply by repealing discriminatory laws.

*Employment Equity Act*

In the UCT Strategic Planning Framework (1997 – 2000), with regard to human resources, the University commits to a staff profile that better reflects the diverse society served by UCT. In the same document, the University further commits to recruitment and development of staff to meet UCT's objectives (short term and long term). In line with these key priorities, the University made a pledge to attain race and gender equity targets that have been established per Faculty and per Support department, as agreed upon by Deans and Heads of Support departments, with the

intention of measuring and monitoring progress. In rolling out these key priorities for human resources, the Strategic Planning Framework committed the University to developing leadership and management skills (including change management skills). It is therefore by no accident that the AIM programme is firmly located in this area of leadership development. This should ensure that those who had the disadvantage of apartheid education are given an opportunity to prove their worth through this course, thereby making them serious contenders for management positions at the University.

In conclusion, it could be deduced that the state of education and training of human resources staff at UCT is far from unique; in fact, it mirrors the state of education and training in the entire country. The statistics and the regulatory framework vindicate this claim. It therefore follows that the type of problems faced by this institution are not unique (since most organisations in the country face similar threats and challenges) and at this micro-level, the task of self-reflection (in how we fare in developing people) has to begin in earnest. For the institution to develop its people so that they contribute optimally to organisational outputs, it needs to know the status quo with regard to people development as well as what remedies to put in place as a corrective measure. This research is an attempt to offer the institution the starting point from where it redresses the imbalances of the past.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Methodology**

The main thrust of the study needs to be restated at this point as discuss the research methodology used in the study. Briefly, this study was an impact assessment study of the AIM programme as a management training and development intervention at the University of Cape Town.

#### **The Logical Framework Approach (LFA)**

For our purposes, the logical framework approach has proven to be a preferred and reliable tool. Likewise, the body of knowledge in this present research is structured along some of the guidelines contained in the LFA. According to the Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAid, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au>), the LFA is an analytical, presentational and management tool which can help planners with the following:

- To analyse the existing situation during project preparation;
- To establish a logical hierarchy of means by which objectives will be reached;
- To identify the potential risks to achieving the objectives and to ensure sustainable outcomes;
- To establish how outputs and outcomes might best be monitored and evaluated;
- To present a summary of the project in a standard format; and
- To monitor and review projects during implementation.

Depending on their relevance, some of the aspects mentioned above were dealt with in detail in the body of the research. For instance, it was not possible to monitor the project during its implementation as the research evaluated a programme that had already been completed. It is therefore a post-project implementation. Situation analysis was deemed useful, however. It identified the *cause and effect* relationship with regard to an existing problem. This relationship has already been described in the preceding chapter (Chapter 2) in the section on situation analysis, when we provided an overview of South African history and identified the root causes of the perceived gap in practical skills and overall people development.

### **Survey Target Population vis-à-vis Sampling**

Our target population was the first group of AIM students who had been enrolled for the 2001-2002 academic year. Given the small size of the group, it was unnecessary to sample as we managed to include almost everyone that was enrolled. Out of a population of 20 UCT staff included in the study, a total of 16 were engaged in the study. Although a total of 20 UCT staff were enrolled in the AIM program for 2001, only 16 were able to participate in the study. This was the target group with all the relevant insights and practical experiences that were crucial for the success of the present study. It was important to solicit the opinions of those who had been directly involved with and who had participated in the programme, and clearly no group was as well placed as the AIM 2001-2002 class. In Edwards *et al* (1997: 35) a target group is defined as the ideal group of all individuals who possess knowledge and views pertinent to the survey content. On the same point, it is also acknowledged that the target population might be a subset of the organisation whereas in other cases, it could be everyone in the organisation. In this study, it was the former. In a bid to

corroborate the evidence however, we also included another crucial segment of UCT personnel, i.e. the direct line managers / mentors of the AIM class of 2001-2002 to give an account of any noticeable changes in the post-AIM period

### **The Research Process:**

#### **Target Population Size**

Twenty-five learners went through the AIM programme (both on the modular course and in the part-time course). The modular course is a specially programme within AIM which staff attended on a quarterly basis. For each quarter, staff will have one full attending classes. Out of these 25 only 20 could be traced as some had already left the institution. Therefore, the possible total target population was 20, and of these 16 returned their questionnaires, which had been sent to them by mail.

Similarly, the total number of line managers to be interviewed was a corresponding number of 16 and with one manager accounting for two staff members on the programme and one not being available, we ended up with a total of 14 managers for the interviews. This brought the overall total target population to 30 staff members, i.e. 14 managers and 16 staff members.

#### **Data Gathering Instruments**

##### ***Survey Questionnaire***

A survey questionnaire was prepared for the staff to evaluate their own progress resultant from participation in the AIM course (see Appendix I for the questionnaires used). The questionnaire contained a mixture of both open-ended questions and closed questions. On the one hand, open-ended questions were important, as they

gave respondents some freedom to expand on their views and feelings. The structured questions, on the other hand, made it easier for the author to identify consistencies and similarities in the raw data.

Briefly, staff were asked to give feedback on the following:

- What was the main motivating factor for their learning?
- Have they successfully coached or motivated other members of their team in the last 10 months upon completion of the AIM course?
- Have they had to deal with situations of conflict at work with any measure of success – and did they employ different approaches?
- What computer systems/software/programmes have they had to use in AIM that sharpened their familiarity with information technology? How *au fait* are they now with the newly acquired knowledge and skill?
- What is their level of comprehension of financial information and management or even awareness thereof?
- How does their current understanding of the higher education environment and its inherent complexities compare to that of the period before the AIM programme?
- How relevant was the AIM programme to their working environment?

#### ***Interviews with line managers<sup>5</sup>/ mentors***

In a bid to corroborate the evidence gathered from the survey questionnaire, the researcher conducted interviews with line managers / mentors who were a direct line

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<sup>5</sup> Through out the research the terms line managers, management, and managers have been used interchangeably depending on the context to which the researcher refers. Likewise, staff and students,

to participants in the 2001-2002 AIM class. The series of questions to line managers was in the same order i.e. all managers were asked the same questions as those to staff. It must be said, however, that the interviews were very open and that much information on development and training in general came to the fore, not to mention structural challenges, which the institution faces in the eyes of the managers. Evidence gathered during these interviews focused mainly on the observations that managers made in relation to specific outcomes inherent in the AIM course. Briefly, managers had to 'testify' with regard to noticeable changes among members of staff that may have resulted directly from the AIM course. Issues covered involved conflict resolution ability, teamwork, and familiarity with information technology, financial management and/or awareness thereof. Whereas the survey questionnaires were sent by post to the participants, it was felt that personal interviews with managers / mentors would be better, given the likelihood of poor response.

### ***Policy Documents***

The AIM course documents and the University's general policy documents that had a direct bearing on staff development played a huge role in putting this study in perspective and also in locating it within the proper context.

### ***Projects and Examination Results***

To collect evidence that learners had indeed successfully passed the rigorous assessment tests and did therefore hold the AIM qualification, the research thoroughly studied (with the permission of the individuals concerned) the projects and examination results. It is important to note that the AIM programme as a registered

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although they both refer to one and the same thing in this research, it was appropriate in certain contexts to make the distinction.

qualification in its assessment of outcomes is consistent with the Policy on Criteria and Guidelines for Assessment of NQF Registered Unit Standards and Qualifications”. The policy document of 2001 suggests three assessment methods (all which will form an integral part of learner assessment in the AIM programme), namely:

- **Observation** – observing the learner while he/she is carrying out tasks, real or simulated, as defined in an outcome or outcome statement;
- **Evaluation of a product** – evaluating something the learner has produced after the task has been completed; and
- **Questioning** – asking questions orally or in writing which are answered orally or in writing. *(Please refer to Appendix III for the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) suggested list of different assessment methods and instruments.)*

Continuing on the subject of outcomes, Owen and Rogers (1999: 264) define outcomes as benefits for the participants during or after their involvement with a programme. They further hold that outcomes relate to knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, behaviour, condition or status.

For instance, the AIM statement of purpose commits itself to the following outcomes:

- Broadening the management perspectives of learners;
- Developing self-confidence, problem-solving and decision-making skills;
- Improving learners’ understanding of financial information;

- Enhancing fluency in oral and written communication;
- Fostering analytical reasoning skills; and
- Encouraging personal growth.

All questions asked in the survey questionnaire incorporated these goals above, as they were all geared towards giving answers to the central question, i.e. whether the intended goals (of the programme, of the participants and/or of the university) had been achieved. By candidly taking stock of these outcomes, one would instantly notice that, in fact, they are all about building capacity in individuals so that they are better able to play meaningful roles in the organisation and in the larger society. The ultimate aim of the course is not only to raise the quality of life of participants but also of society in general. Empowerment is indeed an essential element of social development.

As we are concerned with impact evaluation, it is important to look at what the literature says on this issue. For instance, Owen and Rogers (1999: 264) in their book, *Programme Evaluation*, define impact evaluation as an activity concerned with:

- Determining the range and extent of outcomes of a programme; and
- Determining whether the programme has been implemented as planned and;
- Determining whether its implementation has affected outcomes.

Owen and Rogers also maintain that the programme must first be completed before an impact evaluation study can begin. It is also important that the major focus of such a study should be and ought to be on delivery and / or outcomes as opposed to putting

more attention on process. Evaluation ought to be results driven. Too often, however, studies combine both delivery and outcomes (Owen and Rogers, 1999:264). By delivery, it is implied that there was implementation and also there had been results as a result. Delivery presupposes positive results.

In the present study, then, an assumption was made that in essence the set of outcomes of the AIM programme will be consistent with the needs of the learners too. This assumption is supported by the fact that the learners themselves made the conscious decision to enrol in the AIM course. It therefore follows that they would have considered the benefits of the programme to themselves whether, in fact, these would be worthwhile.

In conclusion, it is evident that the research methods encapsulated both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The Logical Framework Approach seemed the most applicable approach, irrespective of whether one used qualitative or quantitative instruments in gathering data. Although it would have been preferable and desirable to have a bigger target population size, AIM classes *per se* are not that big and given that the focus of the research was on UCT staff, this made the target population size even much smaller, hence the need to have qualitative data gathering instruments in addition to quantitative ones. In-depth interviews with line managers, complemented by policy documents and manuals on AIM and other related material that were available at the time of conducting this study, further contributed towards the body of this research. Lastly, one is confident that all methods employed did offer an approximation to the truth as far as training and development at UCT is concerned, with specific reference to the AIM course.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter introduces the reader to a much more complex area of human resource development. After studying much of the present literature on the subject, it will become evident that at the very heart of a human resource development programme lie two main components, namely education and training. A descriptive analysis will be provided of both these. It will be argued that adult education and training, in whatever form or setting are necessary for human resource development. Human capability for productive work can be built through education and training opportunities. Simultaneously, and as was indicated in the introductory chapters, it will be argued that UCT-AIM (although a management development programme in the conventional sense) is actually a form of adult education. Consequently, and following from this argument, the research will seek to unravel some of the methodologies that may be more appropriate for an adult learning/education setting. It would seem to be equally important not only what learners are expected to learn in a course, but also how such learning takes place. In other words, how adults learn is just as important to understand as the subject matter itself. It will also be shown that adult learning cannot be restricted to any particular setting or form, hence there are so many different providers of adult education and training. Nevertheless, the main ones are workplaces (employers) and government (the state).

## **Key Concepts in this Research**

### **Human Resource Development**

Nadler (1970: 3) describes human resource development as a series of organised activities conducted within a specified time and designed to produce a behavioural change. Since Nadler, much has been written on the subject albeit with new emphasis. The work of Mondy *et al* (1999) on this subject, for instance, complements much of Nadler's work. Interestingly, Mondy *et al* (1999) refrain from even attempting to define human resource development, but rather prefer to focus directly on what Nadler has identified as the components of human resource development, i.e. training and development.

### **Training and development**

Mondy *et al* (1999: 254) define training and development as a planned, continuous effort by management to improve employee competency levels and organisational performance. According to Mondy *et al* (1999: 254), training is designed to provide learners with the knowledge and skills needed for their present jobs, whereas development tends to look beyond the knowledge and skill needed for the present job. As such, it prepares employees for other work settings and even for other spheres outside of work. This could range from being an active member of the community to being an organised family person leading a fulfilling life.

Both training and development happen within a context. Firstly, a successful training and development regime presupposes that such effort would be engineered within a context of an organisation that places value on learning. The contemporary modern term for such an organisation is 'a learning organisation'. Mondy *et al* (1999: 254)

define a learning organisation as one which recognises the critical importance of continuous performance-related training and development and takes appropriate action. Daft (2002: 549), similarly, contends that a learning organisation is skilled at acquiring, transferring and building knowledge that enables the organisation to continuously experiment, improve and increase its capability and enables the organisation to seize opportunities and handle crises. Thus workplace learning will be firmly entrenched in an organisation's strategy.

Daft's view of learning organisations is one that is held in most circles of the corporate world and even in some quarters of the public sector. It is however questionable in that it seems to have a bias towards the organisation to the disadvantage of the learner (employee). It clearly states that all learning must be geared towards meeting organisational needs, with less emphasis on what the individual adult learners should personally be gaining from organisational learning. Training and development, however, must concern itself with the development of the whole person.

Boud and Garrick (1999: 6) agree with the overall view of workplace learning as proposed by Daft. They both see the purpose of workplace learning as improving the employee's performance for the benefit of the organisation (thereby ensuring results and sustainable performance), improving learning for the benefit of the learner (i.e. improving the self), and improving learning as a social investment (for the good of society). Such learning would not only be concerned with immediate work competencies, however, but also with future competencies needed in the same or in another company.

A key point to note is that, training and development within the workplace presupposes that, unlike the traditional classroom situation involving school children, this type of learning would involve adults who are already part of the economically active population and who bring their various personal experiences to the learning context. Workplace education is effectively adult education. At this stage, it is thus necessary to examine the concept of adult education.

Thus if training and development courses concentrate only on the technical skills needed for the current production mode, specific only to a particular factory floor and setting, learners may find it difficult to compete for positions outside their current sphere of work, as they might not have as many generic and transferable skills as their competitors

So far, training by definition has always been job specific. Essentially, the aim of training has been to enable persons to fulfil certain tasks associated with their particular job. No-one, anywhere in the world has written more extensively on the subject of human resource development than the American author, Leonard Nadler. His work is regarded as a classic by most scholars in the field of management education, hence his theories are most frequently used. Nadler (1970:41), for instance, defines training (a vital component of human resource development) as follows:

Those activities, which are designed to improve performance on the job the employee is presently doing or is being hired to do. It has been extended to

include the necessary activities to enable the employee move to an immediate higher-level position but still within his/her same area of basic activity.

Unlike employee **education**, which is primarily geared towards developing an incumbent beyond the immediate requirements of the task, **training** focuses on the present to ensure that an expected and satisfactory level of performance is achieved. For the purposes of this study, I will argue that UCT's management development programme encapsulates both these two aspects viz. education and training. Even though it was intended to be a training programme and thus restricted to a specific position, there are so many other aspects built into the subject material that it is not only concerned with imparting skills but rather with education in general. The focus of this programme, for instance, is the development of 'the whole individual'. It is for this reason that authors in general usually combine the three most important aspects of training (skills, knowledge and attitudes), as these are inextricably linked (Nadler, 1970: 41; Kirkpatrick, 1996: 42). In measuring the success of training, both Nadler and Kirkpatrick argue, the instructor will look at all three of the following:

- What knowledge was learnt?
- What skills were developed?
- What attitudes were changed?

The important role that training plays in ensuring an organisation's success cannot be over-emphasised. Tolley (1992: 61) supports this view when taking stock of the British national training initiatives of the 1980's and early 1990's. In his view, there

are four challenges that organisations face today, irrespective of the nature of business, namely:

- The world of global markets – this is irrespective of whether an organisation has to compete directly for their share of the global market or not;
- Inevitable and inexorable changes in both technology and markets;
- The need to ensure that organisational structures are able to cope with change; and
- That people in the organisation must be pre-eminent. It is the skills and capabilities, the attitudes and the motivation of the people in the business, which will determine success or failure, survival or extinction, progress or stagnation.

Interestingly, Tolley recognises the same vital components in training, as did Nadler and Kirkpatrick. He does not, however, seem particularly keen on the provision of generic skills in training interventions, hence his emphasis on skills, attitudes and motivation – to the exclusion of knowledge (within which generic skills are incorporated). Thus, to sum up, Tolley is more concerned about developing the individual for the particular job rather than about developing the individual holistically, as are Nadler and Kirkpatrick. Whereas training focuses primarily on developing the individual as a whole, it also has to help trainees acquire technical skills that are transferable to their actual places of work.

In making a case for training, Tolley (1992: 62) addresses the growing scepticism of those who seem particularly reluctant to encourage people development. This

scepticism revolves mainly around the challenges posed by technology – particularly in the last two decades. Given the rapid changes in technology, the argument goes, the case for development may be weakening as the workforce is continually being replaced by technology. This is not the case, though, maintains Tolley: technology has in effect created other opportunities, and what is therefore needed is that current levels of skill are adapted to meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Tolley (1992: 60-62) identifies three basic or underlying principles:

- Line managers must be trainers;
- Effective training occurs on the job; and
- Training must be sold i.e. from top management to the factory-floor worker, all stakeholders must embrace training wholeheartedly.

With reference to the first principle, Tolley argues that training is a management responsibility that needs to be accepted at every level of management in an organisation. The role of line managers in training is seen as crucial in creating a climate for effective training, setting objectives and evaluating outcomes.

Significantly, in making the role of management explicitly clear, he is in no way implying that individual employees have to shift their responsibility to develop themselves out of their own domain and to entrust it wholly to line management.

Implicit in his view is the idea that the initiative to have oneself enrolled for a particular training course has to come from the individual employees themselves.

Managers are merely required to recognise the importance of training in creating or supporting initiatives already in place, and to create a climate that is conducive to training interventions.

The second principle is particularly relevant for our own situation at the University of Cape Town. To cite a personal example: the author has participated in many training interventions offered centrally at the University. However, it was often the case that line management was indifferent to such training. Moreover, little of the knowledge acquired was immediately beneficial in the workplace. Often the transfer of skill or knowledge was extremely difficult. It is reasonable to assume that many others who trained internally at UCT shared this experience.

Tolley (1992: 60) provides the following answer to this:

Effective training is on-the-job training. Training must in some way express a job context and relationship. Generic skills developed in a vacuum are likely to stay in a vacuum.

The next principle (viz. that training must be sold) emphasises the point that training is the responsibility of everyone who is an interested party to the organisation's overall output or bottom line. Employers, employees and trade unions alike all have to commit themselves to training and ought to take this commitment seriously by acting on it.

#### *The concept of adult education*

Logically, one can infer from the words 'adult' and 'education' that adult education would mean the education of adults. It is very important that the current study unravels this concept at this point to clarify what is intended by using this expression.

In fact, we cannot even begin to speak of workplace education/training and development/in-house training without some analysis of what is meant by adult education since all of these epitomise adult education itself. To be precise, workplace training programmes are only one form of adult education. It is unfortunate that when adult education is spoken about, it usually has an elementary connotation attached to it i.e. basic adult education, literacy and numeracy training etc. Thus, sophisticated management training programmes are not (in the conventional sense) perceived to be a form of adult education.

Selman and Dampier (1991: 1) sketched three phenomena within which adult education takes shape (basing their argument on a distinguished authority in this field, Malcolm Knowles). The first phenomenon refers to adult education as the sum total of all acts of participation by individuals, and programmes offered by a vast range of institutions. The second refers to the intellectual process by means of which adults seek, or are assisted, to learn things. The third scenario is where adult education refers to the social system, which is made up of individuals and organisations, which are concerned with the education of adults. For the purposes of this research, all three capture very much what has been conceived of as adult education throughout this paper.

The definition borrowed from Houle (as cited in Selma and Dampier, 1991:3) is particularly relevant to our research population viz. the 2001-2002 AIM class. Here adult education was defined as the process by which men and women seek to improve society by increasing their skill, knowledge or sensitivities ways. Once again, the very goals that all training and development programmes seek to engender, viz. positive

change in the level of skills, knowledge and attitude, are evident. Thus in-house training programmes, external development programmes and basic elementary education at the workplace are indeed a form of adult education.

### **Methods employed in a learning situation (pedagogy and andragogy)**

This section is very important for the following reasons. The most obvious is that, on a philosophical level, how education and training is carried out is more important than the content matter of either. Depending on the way they are treated in a learning situation, learners would either be interested and actively participate in a learning activity, or they would be indifferent about the whole process. If the latter, the desired changes in the level of knowledge, skill and attitude would very likely not take effect.

The pedagogical method of learning has been the most prevalent and has been used in many settings of learning. Pedagogy comes from two Greek words viz *'paed'* and *'agogus'*. The former refers to a child, while the latter means 'leader of' (Knowles, 1990: 54). This method effectively puts learners at the mercy of the educator/facilitator. Even though learners may indeed be adults, the pedagogical method does not entrust any sense of responsibility to the learners about their own learning needs and goals. However, as most adult learners (particularly in our case, where they are all within the employ of the University), and as such bring a wealth of experience with them, they clearly cannot be led like children in a learning situation.

For instance, in one of my information sessions with the course convener of the AIM course, it was made explicitly clear that learning is the sole responsibility of the

learners themselves with the convenor only playing the role of facilitator. Learners engage with each other on issues and share experiences within the broader framework of the set curricula.

The notion of learners having to take ownership of and responsibility for their own learning situations takes us to another method of learning, which is termed '*andragogy*'. In such an approach, the entire learning process centres around the adult learners themselves (Knowles, 1990: 57). It is also imperative that learners need to know why they are learning something before they learn it. This is because adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own learning, and ultimately for their own lives (Knowles, 1990: 57).

Taking this theory of learning further, Hanson (1996: 100) expresses some discomfort about Malcolm Knowles' line of thinking (although she shares the humanistic approach to teaching adults as espoused by Knowles). Knowles, asserts Hanson, demonstrates that he has a strong humanistic and individualistic commitment to his clients (learners). However, simply believing that adults are different from children as learners because they are adults is not sufficient. The current use of the concept of andragogy often ignores the political and institutional constraints and even day-to-day influences upon the adult learners themselves (Hanson, 1999: 100). Hanson's argument is compelling, particularly as it brings awareness to a socio-political space that has a strong hold on us as adults. Realistically, though it is inevitable that institutions and their administrative branches, including those roped in to man the systems, will by association assume some control, power and influence on learners.

Issues of knowledge, power and control therefore have to be addressed (Hanson , 1999:100).

Without detracting from the very important observations made by Hanson, one needs to add that the scales cannot be balanced for as long as there exists such deep inequality in terms of resources in most societies. Unless one lives in an egalitarian society where there is a fair distribution of resources, there will be inequities in knowledge, power and control. Adult education, irrespective of its setting and context, will not be immune to this greater societal problem. Thus one has to accept that for as long as we are not living in egalitarian societies, knowledge from both above and below (wherein both the adult learner through life experience and the teacher or facilitator are equal contributors to the learning process) as envisaged in Baar (1999:33) will always be a challenge, if not a distant possibility. South Africa records one of the highest income differentials in the world despite a relatively fair gross national product per head of \$2 820 per year compared to Russia's \$1 750 and El Salvador's \$2 040 (World Bank 2003:53). In fact, South Africa has one of the highest GDP's in Southern Africa but at the same time, it also has one of the most unequal income distributions in the world (Ayogu, 200:202).

### **Education and the concept of freedom**

Education is very much seen as a necessary condition for individual freedom. It is generally thought that the ability of people to access and interrogate information puts them in a much better position to make informed decisions about their own lives.

Olinga and Lubyayi (2002:150) very succinctly suggest that education is a powerful tool of liberation. Educated people, they suggest, are people who can analyse

situations, define strategies, draw up programmes of action, and opt for a better deal on any socio-economic and indeed political matter. This is affirmed by

Hooks(1994:13-23):

Liberatory education offers information that addresses the connection between what learners are learning and their overall experiences. Education as the practice of freedom allows learners to assume responsibility for their choices. The will to be self-actualised in any learning situation must be encouraged.

*Hooks 1994, pp 12-13.*

At the very heart of this so-called liberatory education is the notion that it ought to be a two-way process, wherein both the facilitator and the learner are actively engaged in the learning process by learning from each other. Barr (1999:33-34) refers to this as *knowledge from above and below*. The very fact that there is recognition from the learning system that learners also do come with valuable life experiences that could inform and contribute to learning is significant, as it transfers some of the responsibility for the learning processes to the learners themselves. Learners therefore become important partners in the learning situation by exerting influence on, *inter alia*, what is to be taught and how, although they cannot determine it.

The corporate sector has not been immune to this mode of thinking either. Xiao and Lo (2003:411) present a compelling case on the expectations that Chinese firms have of their employees. Just like the firms, employees are expected to decide on a course of change that would be beneficial to their careers. Employees are assigned with new tasks to collect market information to build up sales networks, to develop new

products, and to redesign the production process. This demonstrates that the transfer of responsibility from top to bottom need not necessarily be a phenomenon confined to learning situations. Even at the production factory line, it can boost confidence of employees and indeed leave them feeling liberated.

### **Previous research on management development programmes**

The study further looked at case studies conducted on workplace learning with an emphasis on training and development. The intention was to see whether any parallels could be drawn, given the experiences encountered on the AIM programme. In our next two chapters, these similarities will be explored further. Also, there will be lessons for us to identify, as these may be used to inform recommendations of appropriate remedies. Some basic principles that underpin workplace learning and that came out strongly in all the three case studies, will be presented. These are the following:

- Training must be sold;
- Line management needs to be actively involved in training and development activities;
- Coaching and mentoring have to inform an integral part of any training and development program;
- There should be an already existing culture of learning in an organisation for proper training and development to occur and yield results.

*Training must be sold.*

This statement was already made in relation to Tolley's work. Far too often, training was either not sold to top management or to the individual employees. It was just presumed that it would happen and that it would be supported. As will be demonstrated in the Motorola case, such an assumption seldom, if ever works. For a training and development programme to be successful, it has to be supported both by top management (because they will have to provide resources for it) and by learners.

*Line management needs to be involved in training and development.*

Line managers must make training and development part of their value system. They need to personalise and internalise it. In a few instances where there are apparent failures in the training and development programme, it became apparent, that line management was unaware of the strategic importance of such programmes and thus were indifferent in supporting and encouraging learners on this programme.

*Coaching and mentoring have to form an integral part of any training and development programme.*

Often coaching and mentoring are used interchangeably depending on the context. Mondy *et al* (1999: 263) define **coaching** as an on-the-job approach in which a manager provides instruction on one-to-one basis. The trainee, in addition to having the opportunity to observe, is assigned significant tasks requiring decision-making skills. There is therefore acceptance, (and there ought to be) that the learner would make mistakes as practical learning occurs. Provision is thus made for things to go wrong, but the learner is nevertheless supported throughout the learning process so

that they can improve and ultimately make optimal contributions to the organisational output. Conversely, with mentoring there is an element of active supervision by the mentor, with the individual *mentee* still being expected to take charge of his/her development.

Parsloe (1995:54) suggests four methods of coaching, which can ultimately be reduced to the following two:

- ‘hands-on’, when working with inexperienced learners; and
- ‘hands-off’, when developing higher performance with experienced learners.

For the most part, our research deals with more experienced learners and the case studies to follow as well have a more experienced and independent population in them.

*There should be an already existing culture of learning in an organisation for proper training and development to occur and yield results.*

Learning organisations place a high value on education and training. Knowles (1996: 97) provided a useful guide in respect of what he perceived to be fundamental principles for learning and teaching. As can be deduced from the case studies to follow, some of the programmes were not successful, as they fell short of taking note of some of the fundamentals. Briefly, these principles were the following:

- The learner feels the need to learn.

- The learning environment is characterised by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences.
- The learner perceives the goals of a learning experience to be his or her own goals.
- The learner accepts a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore has a feeling of commitment toward it.
- The learner participates actively in the learning process.
- The learning process is related to and makes use of the experience of the learner.
- The learner has a sense of progress toward his or her goals.

Following on from this set of principles as suggested by Knowles, we can deduce from both successes and failures in some of these factory floor research cases that, in fact, in instances where the basic fundamental principles were adhered to, there was some element of success, whereas failures could very well be attributed to lack of adherence to some of these basics.

Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to look at some of the research done on workplace education, thereby identifying pitfalls and key lessons in them.

### **Case Study 1: Akin**

The first case study gives a compelling case on management development programmes. In his research on the impact of management development programmes in the early 1990's, Akin (2000: 115) interviewed 60 managers in various industries,

from financial services to manufacturing. As a point of departure, he contended that to develop effective managers, we do not only have to know what skills, knowledge and attitudes are associated with excellent management, but also how those things can be learned. He criticized the fact that most management development programmes are beset by 'the transfer of training' problem: Will managers [trainees] be able to use what they have learned when they leave the classroom and return to their jobs?

Indeed, this is a fair question, given that resources have to be committed to training and that, in the highly competitive world in which organisations find themselves, it is not enough to justify costs towards training and development, but the proponents of training have to put forward a good case on return of investment.

In Akin's study, then, managers were asked as to what accounts for managerial success, i.e. identifying the connection between their own successes at work as managers and their learning experiences. The responses will be clustered into two categories, namely: How does learning occur (by the learner/manager/trainee). And secondly: What was learned?

Managers expressed the view that they experienced learning as a personal transformation. They knew that they had been transformed because they had experienced a different world – different to one they had experienced before learning occurred. Managers reported a greater sense of comfort, whereas before the learning experience they had felt anxiety or uneasiness. There was also a sense of confidence, i.e. 'I can do it'. Akin concedes that at some stage it did appear as though managers did not deem the content of their learning to be particularly relevant. At a deeper

level though, the information that was acquired did transform the learner into a new person.

It may thus appear that management training leans too much towards the development of the self, as gains from such training are not so obvious and quantifiable (as could be deduced from the sentiments expressed). Fitz-enz (2000:209) made this observation while taking stock of management development programmes. He refers to the earliest forms of industrial training where gains from training were obvious. This type of training was mainly based on on-the-job training. With the creation of management development training, though, return of investment on training became less obvious – or even, according to some critics, invisible.

Managers included the following skills, abilities and attitudes as an integral part of their learning, and stated that these had contributed greatly to their successes (some of these skills also were valued by staff in our research as will be shown in the chapters to follow):

- *Interpersonal skills*

This was characterised as the general ability to work well with others.

- *Communications skills*

This refers to the ability to present and sell ideas, both orally and in written form.

- Job knowledge

This included all the intricacies that a manager would need to know to accomplish a particular job.

- Institutional knowledge and professional norms

This did not only involve knowing the organisation and its culture but also embracing those norms and values and acting upon them.

- Self-confidence

Self-confidence was interpreted in terms of a learned attitude towards oneself as a competent person.

Even though most of these managers came from different industries and worked under varied working conditions, Akin noted in his analysis that most of the managers had a rather singular way of describing their learning experiences. Their descriptions of how learning happened were similar, transcending particular content or circumstances. Akin structured these converging experiences into the following seven themes:

- Emulation of a mentor

The central learning activity here, according to Akin, was to find out as much as possible about how the mentor thought and did things and then to practice those methods in real situations. The mentor was seen as having a well-developed, coherent system, a coherent worldview – a system of “putting it all

together". Emulation of a mentor was of course dependent on whether managers liked his management style or not.

- *Role taking*

Even here, emulation was still a central activity. Managers tended to adopt the skills and behaviours specified by the role model. Managers in this category deemed their learning as successful if they felt that they had attained whatever role they were trying to emulate and were treated by others that way. For them, it was important to feel liked and to be seen by others as a professional. Self-image was very important.

- *Practical accomplishment*

For managers who emphasised this theme, learning and competence were outcomes of actions taken to solve problems. They tended to see most problems as opportunities. They held that learning could not be attained from management concepts but rather from a practical application of those concepts and models.

- *Validation*

Learners here tended to validate what they were doing competently already. Learning was thus based on authoritative information from authoritative sources. Through this experience, the transformation that constitutes learning was completed.

- Anticipation

Anticipatory learners tended to use concepts and models in taking action. It emphasised the interplay of concept and practice and in fact constituted the traditional mode of training, where theory was learned and practical application was observed later.

- Personal growth

The focus in this category was on self-development as a person with minimal reference to practical accomplishments. The learner was less concerned about gaining skills, but more about understanding the self. Learning opportunities were organised around self-development, and learners searched for insight.

- Scientific learning

The focus of scientific learning was on the truth. Managers learning in this way relied on others to stimulate their interest by exploring something or inquiring into things and situations just because they existed. They wanted to know how things worked because it was then easier to use them correctly.

Lastly, Akin emphasises that the learner's need or desire to want to know and to learn is key to management education. Interestingly, the most common powerful experience associated with the need to know and thus with the start of important learning, was actual failure. Every manager interviewed in this study cited personal failures as the starting point of learning experiences that became critical to their managerial success.

## Case Study 2: Wiggenhorn

The second case study is that of Wiggenhorn (2000: 48); this study was conducted at *Motorola* regarding their training function. Wiggenhorn reveals that after so many resources had been set aside for training, initially for the line workers on the manufacturing side, there were still no tangible results to justify the costs. His comment below sums up the general sentiment on the training function as expressed by most middle level managers at Motorola.

We designed and taught courses, and people took them and went back to their jobs and nothing changed. This venture failed, as not everybody that needed this type of training signed up. Training, it appeared, was not something we could deliver like milk and expect people to consume spontaneously. It was not simply a matter of instructing or giving people a chance to instruct themselves. We had to motivate people to want to learn and that meant overcoming complacency.

*Wiggenhorn 2000:48*

The old culture of learning-by-doing had a lot of pre-occupation to most staff at Motorola. With the rapidly changing world of work fast becoming *a fact of life*, it is not feasible to simply observe colleagues as they go about their normal business and to follow their lead. Some kind of a formal learning process is still desirable and necessary.

A central theme in all of Motorola's training courses was quality control; its goal was to reduce defects to the minimum, thus maintaining a competitive edge over

competitors. Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of staff that enrolled for training, top and middle management displayed little willingness to adapt work patterns, with the result that, for the most part, it was 'business as usual'. Through trial and error and over an extended period of time, a training initiative that sought to bring top and middle management of Motorola Company in line with their own training initiatives, was introduced. The purpose of such training was to ensure that "we all speak the same language of total quality control" (Wiggenhorn, 2000:49). This furthermore ensured that the company shared a common goal. Interestingly, this training venture was indeed followed by considerable successes, ranging from the creation of the Motorola Training and Education Centre to opening its corporate university, Motorola University.

Taking stock of the intended results of training and development within Motorola, Wiggenhorn notes the following:

Today we see quality as a process that prevents defects from occurring, a common corporate language that pervades the company.

Training and development are not once-off events. They are not a means to an end. Results can sometimes not be immediately forthcoming even given a properly designed training and development programme. Rather, it is a process of trial and error. In the case of Motorola, for instance, managers found this process difficult and some were not prepared to adapt their work patterns to embrace newly acquired expertise and knowledge.

The question of adaptation and change is a crucial, particularly as it resides on the individual's own philosophy and personal convictions. Although adaptation and change are crucial in business, they do not always happen easily: this is because they reside in (and often challenge) an individual's own philosophy and personal convictions. Heifetz and Laurie (1998: 171-197) also recognised this point. They hold that the most important task for leaders in the face of challenges (e.g. changes in society, markets, technology etc.) is to mobilise people throughout the organisation to adapt to the new situation. Such adaptive change, however, is distressing and challenging, as people will need to take on new roles, relationships, values and approaches to work. Heifetz and Laurie draw the interesting conclusion that, contrary to popular belief that is the responsibility of management to shoulder the burden of adaptation, solutions to adaptive challenges actually reside in the collective intelligence of employees at all levels. Thus, an ordinary staff member must also take it upon him- or herself to adapt his or her duties so that newly gained knowledge and expertise are put to optimal use.

Victor (2001: 18-19), in an article that was published in a radical feminist publication on marketing and promoting the self, would also have agreed on this point. She looked at development and self-promotion from an exclusivist and individualistic perspective, rather than from a collective perspective. In essence, she firmly believes that potential for progress lies from within. One has to aggressively develop and sell oneself in an organisation. In her view, an individual must develop him or herself aggressively in order to sell oneself in an organisation.

Making career opportunities available to talented staff is imperative for the success of an organisation, and clearly this does not only reside in the individuals themselves, as suggested by Victor above. Rather, organisations have a big role in this. In this regard, Bennett (2000, March 26) in her article in the *Sunday Times* newspaper, contends that companies need to go beyond remuneration. People want careers as opposed to “jobs”, and they will remain loyal to the company if they feel they are being given such opportunities (i.e. to advance their careers). She further argued that if you do not empower a person – through participation and career development opportunities in a positive, stimulating working environment, you would end up having an unhappy person hooked in financially and, in turn, giving a mediocre performance. It can be deduced, therefore, that a lack of career-pathing (or even a lack of opportunity to take one’s own initiative) in an organisation dampens morale and therefore makes it impossible for organisations to get optimal use of their available human resources.

### **Case Study 3: Stevens**

The last case study underscores the point already made as to how crucial staffing and programmes are as they stand between the company’s success or failure. Stevens (1996: 105-111) presents to us the case of *Forest Park Corporation*, a relatively small and obscure chemical company, which registered a phenomenal growth at one stage under Don Rogers, who was director of its employee relations at the time.

Rogers had all the ingredients and attributes of a successful manager. We can deduce therefore that Don had most of the qualities that Teal (1998: 150-169) listed of good managers, viz. among others, being good at strategy, persuasion and negotiation.

In this particular case study, it was common knowledge in the company that it had been Don Rogers' staffing, development and training programmes that had enabled the company to survive and even more than that – to become successful. However, since Rogers had been promoted to Director, staffing and development were no longer his responsibility and were badly neglected. Finally, a near revolt from one of the senior managers responsible for employee planning brought the rapidly worsening situation to Rogers' attention.

Through the company's tuition aid programme, most staff members had earned themselves qualification, and because there were no opportunities for promotion for those who were doing well and were extremely qualified, most opted to leave the company. The planning manager, Bob Pelzer, proposed that owing to the absence of a coherent system that would identify opportunities within the company for staff that had just qualified and were doing extremely well in their current jobs, the tuition aid programme should actually be discontinued as it clearly gave no return on investment. Bob emphasised that there were promotion opportunities, as positions would, from time to time become vacant, but that there was no reliable system in place to trace suitable candidates from within the company. Once staff had attended some kind of training or even completed their Degrees or Diplomas, there was never any follow-through on the part of the company. Rogers realised that he had to act on this immediately.

It can be argued from this case study that, if we were to look at employee development from a broader perspective, it is normal that staff would eagerly and on

their own accord take opportunities for self-development. Notwithstanding the intrinsic element of self-actualisation, the main motivation is also the increased possibility of an upward career move once one had completed a very intensive programme and had qualified. Although there was no return on investment as far as Forest Park Corporation was concerned, for the rest of the country, Forest Park Corporation could pride itself on playing an active and meaningful role in human resource development. The fact that some people had left the company after training should be regarded as a contribution to the greater social good. Thus, there is no sound reason to withdraw the company's support for tuition.

Such a global perspective need not detract from the fact that organisations should resort to all means possible to tap into the newly acquired knowledge and expertise of their staff, especially those that had been given the necessary financial support in the first place. The logical point to consider is that not all is lost when people leave a company, as the company could also attract skilled and experienced individuals from other companies who would also have been given the same kind of support in regard to their own training and development in their previous positions of employment. Nevertheless, one can sympathise with *Forest Park Corporation*, given the amount of resources they had put into their tuition aid programme. A complete failure to hold onto some of their most experienced and qualified employees who had benefited from this programme does raise serious questions about the efficacy of such a programme in the first place.

In conclusion, at the very heart of each of the above case studies, the rationale to have a well-developed and thought through development and training programme is

beyond question – even more so with management development training programmes.

The success of an organisation depends very much on the extent to which it is able to and does develop its existing human resource base. The literature on education and training thus holds that in order to have all our people contributing optimally to the development of this country, exposure to training and development opportunities is vital. Key points to note are the following:

- A culture of learning needs to be inculcated across the organisation for meaningful learning to take place;
- In the first instance, learners should want to learn;
- Education is a powerful tool that can liberate the mind;
- Adult learners learn differently to school children, thus there needs to be recognition of the knowledge learners already have and this should be fed into the learning situation itself. Earlier in this chapter, Malcolm Knowles referred to this learning method as *andragogy*; and
- Workplace learning cannot only concern itself with the immediate benefits such as productivity, profits and efficiency. It ought to be equally concerned with the overall development of the staff member as an asset to the greater society.

As a concluding statement therefore, one needs to state that, in order to succeed in supporting the growth of the South African economy and in raising the standards of living of our people, the extent to which organisations invest in people will be a key. Micro-level programmes such as AIM are a starting point, but more such initiatives

are needed at a larger scale if we are to overcome existing deficits in education, knowledge and skill.

University of Cape Town

## **Chapter 5**

### **Research Findings**

The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business publication of 2002 names three academic programmes in general management, viz. the Master of Business Administration (MBA), the Executive MBA and the Associate in Management (AIM). The publication further boasts that “each of the three with its acknowledged success in growing the whole person stands distinct and is highly respected in the market place”.

With specific reference to the AIM programme, the publication further asserts that the it equips people at junior level with functional management skills, social skills and the attitudes to be good decision-makers and team players, while simultaneously fostering self-confidence and belief in themselves.

As has been indicated in the previous chapters, this study looked at a few areas of competency that form an integral part of sound management function. These were narrowed down to six (see below). The survey questionnaire distributed to the 2001 AIM class and subsequent interviews conducted with UCT line managers helped to gain a fair reflection of the actual impact of this programme on the organisation and, of course, on individual staff members. Six functional areas of management, which appear to be key requirements for most advertised managerial positions, were examined. This has also been my observation for the few years I have spent in the Human Resources field as a professional.

### **Six functional areas of management**

These form a vital part in gauging whether or not staff had benefited from the AIM course. The areas are practical, and the questions contained in the questionnaire focused primarily on these (*refer to Appendix I, question 14*). The functional areas, each of which will be discussed hereunder, are:

- On-the-job coaching / mentoring / ability to motivate others;
- Conflict resolution;
- The use of information technology at work;
- Financial management skills and/or awareness thereof; and
- Higher education environment (HE).

#### ***On-the-job coaching / mentoring / ability to motivate others***

About 12 staff members out of a possible 16 who completed and returned the questionnaires were of the opinion that they were successful in motivating other members of their team when opportunities presented themselves. Such success, however, did not reside within the realm of work itself, but rather outside of it. On this note, therefore, some indicated that, given the level at which they worked (junior management and below), they were not able to be actively in charge of others.

Staff did however find (as has been suggested by this researcher) that there were far more opportunities to make an impact outside the realm of work. For instance, community organisations, including churches, social clubs and various communities, were places where staff could exert influence and make a difference. Whereas the communities in which staff lived presented ideal opportunities for staff members'

further personal growth and development, they also found that, given their increased sense of self-worth and self-awareness a result of the AIM programme, they were able to encourage and motivate others to realise their own potential. They did however feel that at the workplace, both the nature of work and the work environment were not conducive to realising this kind of impact.

#### Conflict resolution

13 of the 16 staff members have already had to deal with situations of conflict, and have had better results in resolving these than before attending the AIM course.

Coping techniques cited included, *inter alia*, listening, negotiating, making compromises, understanding and embracing diversity.

In addition, most staff members indicated they were no longer ignoring or avoiding conflict, as they had done previously. A relatively small group said they had not been tested in situations of conflict since completing the AIM programme, but nonetheless mentioned that they have coping strategies in place to manage conflict and also have the necessary awareness of the dynamics involved.

#### The use of information technology at work (IT)

All the respondents said they were conversant with IT to the extent that it was required within their own working environment. However, they did also concede that AIM had sharpened their skills in how they ought to engage with IT. Microsoft packages such as Excel and PowerPoint were frequently mentioned. Most staff also said that AIM had raised their awareness on the use of the Internet, as some of the research would be done through searching relevant information on the Internet.

At least half of the respondents highlighted the point that, although they had advanced as a result of exposure to AIM, their work environment still did not require or even encourage anything beyond the basics. Generally, therefore, there has not been much change in how tasks are executed in the workplace.

12 staff members (about a quarter of our total respondents) could not attribute their competency to the IT component of AIM per se, as this was an inherent job requirement at their places of work. Their IT expertise was far more advanced than what was on offer in the AIM IT component.

*Financial management skills and / or awareness thereof.*

10 staff out of the 16 responded positively to the financial management skills/awareness question. They said that they were positive about their knowledge and comprehension of financial statements since attending the AIM course. A further three, however, were in positions where they were responsible for budgeting, drawing up financial statements and monitoring expenditure. For these, given the high level of qualifications and practical exposure they had acquired before the AIM course, the course did not really have much effect.

Those staff who indicated AIM had had a positive effect on them warned that because opportunities seldom arose in the workplace to put this knowledge to the test, most of it would be lost over time.

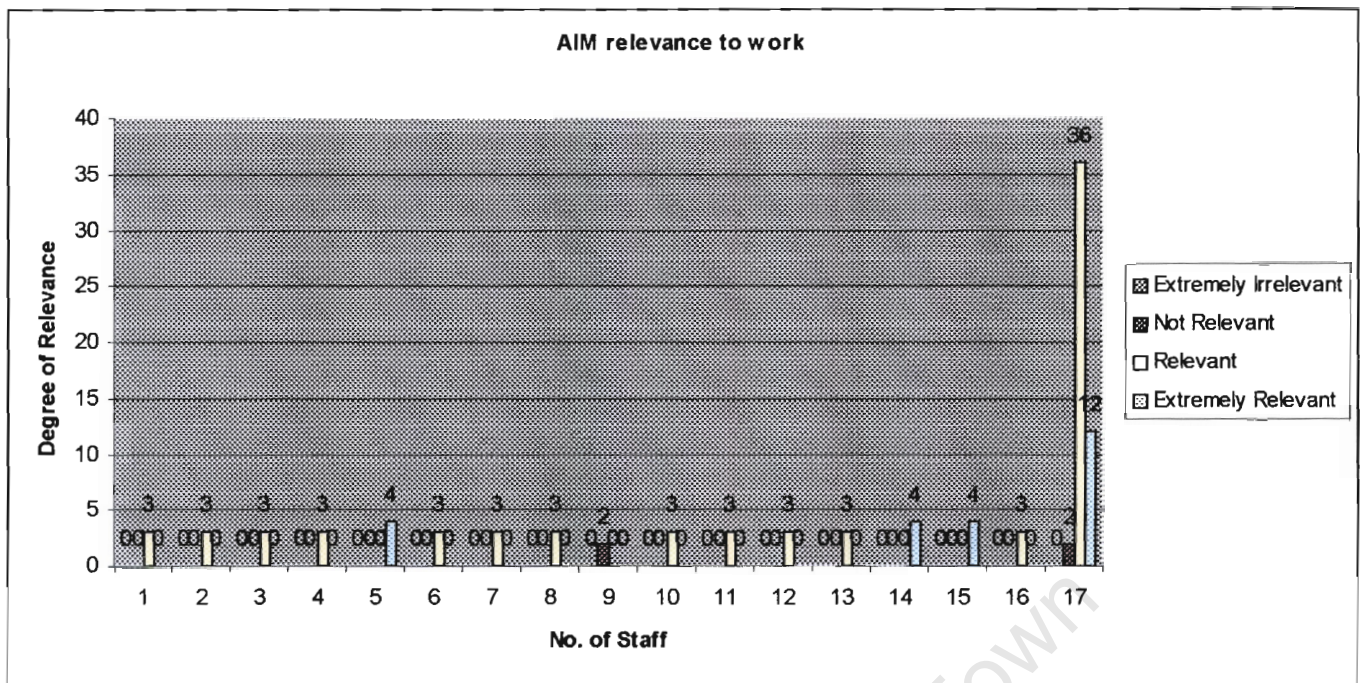
Higher education environment (HE)

For most learners, their knowledge of the higher education system has been enhanced by AIM. AIM made them aware of some of the issues and challenges facing the sector, such as the politics of admissions, the pending mergers and the dwindling funding base for the sector. A few had had prior exposure to the issues involved in HE, given the nature of their work at the University.

Generally, though, staff members did not believe that this knowledge had any effect on how they carried out their duties in their various capacities. It was deemed not to be that relevant to the current work situation, although an awareness of the issues was nevertheless thought to be of great interest and stimulating.

**Normal distribution chart to indicate degree of relevance of AIM course by staff**

Staff	Scores			
	1 Extremely Irrelevant	2 Not Relevant	3 Relevant	4 Extremely Relevant
1	0	0	3	0
2	0	0	3	0
3	0	0	3	0
4	0	0	3	0
5	0	0	0	4
6	0	0	3	0
7	0	0	3	0
8	0	0	3	0
9	0	2	0	0
10	0	0	3	0
11	0	0	3	0
12	0	0	3	0
13	0	0	3	0
14	0	0	0	4
15	0	0	0	4
16	0	0	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>



The graph above indicates the extent to which learners think AIM has been relevant to their actual workplace. The horizontal nos. 1 – 16 represent the perception of each learner in that order, since we had a total of 16 as our research population. No.17 represents the consolidated state of affairs, taking into account all the responses from our total population of 16 learners regarding the degree of relevance of AIM to the workplace. As we can clearly see, the yellow bar at no. 17 that represents “*relevant*” is far higher than any other indicator. The brown “*not relevant*” block is almost non-existent, whereas “*extremely irrelevant*” does not feature at all. None of the respondents found the AIM programme to be irrelevant to the extreme.

Notwithstanding the difficulties that many staff members face in the actual application of what was learned on the AIM program, most still thought the course content was relevant to the actual workplace and, given the opportunity, staff can make an invaluable contribution beyond what is currently required at their places of

work. Figures A & B both illustrate this point, with only a few indicating that AIM was not that relevant to their own work.

The questionnaire asked staff to cite competencies that they thought were most applicable and which AIM helped to nurture:

“It equipped me with management skills. These were severely lacking before the course. AIM broadened my horizons.”

“It was an opportunity for me to learn to manage people – which is something I was not equipped for even though the job required this.”

“I have been better able to apply critical evaluation to problems and situations due to systems thinking and formal application of the principles taught.”

In addition to what has been articulated already, the research also found that the most popular functional areas of management, which staff thought were most applicable to their job, were project management, strategy and management communication. Finance and Information Technology were also cited as most applicable.

In general, staff mentioned that their approach to work had definitely changed after the course. The different approach rested heavily on the new technical skills as well as on an inward assessment of the *self*, i.e. looking more inward as to what personal attributes an individual lacks that he or she can further develop and enhance. Thus the range of responses included both hard and soft skills. Staff cited a range of hard skills

such as planning, managing time, teamwork and project management, and also soft skills as in feelings of having grown as a 'whole person', having the necessary self-confidence and being able to better understand how their special areas of work have an effect on other units at UCT. Staff indicated that they were now a lot more analytical and self-reflective in what they were doing than before.

The general perception of staff is that, indeed, they had gained from the AIM programme. Some gains were more at a cognitive level, whereas others were more attuned towards practical application. The very strong expression of improved personal attributes rather than of hard technical skills is interesting. Some of the responses below demonstrate this:

"Yes, I am more thorough in my work, and a lot less confused as to what my strengths and weaknesses are, and in general, a lot more focussed."

"Better self management, more analytical and confident, gave insight into many areas of business and better understanding of UCT strategy."

"I have a better idea of other areas within my Department than I did before."

"Doing things with a lot more confidence than I did before. AIM is not just about acquiring skills but also about growing as an individual."

"The AIM programme has added a lot more confidence in me. My approach to certain things at work has changed. There is a lot that I can do now."

A few staff members were specific in spelling out exactly what they had gained from AIM in terms of what was transferable to the actual workplace. Some of the responses were:

“Leading strategic planning sessions with the SRC<sup>6</sup> and other student bodies on campus.”

“Assessing application forms for Student Financial Aid – the Finance component of AIM has been useful.”

“My planning has improved, I work very well within a team and I can manage projects.”

There was a strong feeling by staff that line management remains ignorant and indifferent about AIM. It was felt that it is because of such ignorance that they have not advanced in their careers, despite having undergone a formal and intense management development programme such as AIM. The degree of disappointment was particularly evident among those staff members who have had no exposure to post-Matric learning experience. For most staff who did have post-Matric qualifications (as in a Degree or Diploma), the level of disappointment was not as extreme. Most really attended the course without too many expectations of upward career mobility, but rather as a stepping stone for further learning or even to qualify

for the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree registration on completion of AIM.

### **The final examination results**

There was certainly a high success rate, which corroborated the claim by staff that they had gained substantially from the AIM course. The average examination mark (for the 13 members of staff that had granted consent to have their academic records scrutinised) was 66%. Although there were failures (albeit very few) in certain modules, all UCT staff that had enrolled for AIM in the year under question had passed, and had been granted the qualification by senate.

### **Line management account of AIM**

Line management assessment of AIM (given their experience with most of the AIM graduates) is evenly split, with dissenting views expressed very strongly. The range of responses gathered have been categorised into the following key areas of activity, each of which will be discussed hereunder:

- Information Technology (IT)
- Ability to coach/mentor or motivate others
- Financial management ability or awareness thereof
- Teamwork ability

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<sup>6</sup> SRC stands for Students Representative Council. This is a duly constituted body, elected by all full time and part time students of the University. Its main mandate is to articulate student concerns and bring them to the attention of the relevant authorities at the institution so that they are adequately addressed. The role of the SCR may change given the new student governance proposals to be considered by the University Council.

- Conflict resolution
- The level of understanding of Higher Education (HE): issues and challenges facing the sector

### Information Technology (IT)

About a quarter of staff had extensive exposure to IT, given their type of work environment. According to management, it is a job requirement of such staff that they must be very *au fait* with IT beyond the most basic level. For this category, most managers felt strongly that insofar as the actual application of IT was concerned, the situation has been “business as usual”. There have been no noticeable signs relating to the normal carrying out of duties.

The remaining two thirds of staff constitute a mixture of those who may well have benefited from AIM but with no noticeable or observable signs of change in skill; alternatively, they may have had no opportunities to make use of their acquired expertise.

A few managers were in fact very critical of the effect of the IT component of AIM, claiming that they have not seen many improvements. The following are a few of their responses:

“She would not handle the Departmental SAP<sup>7</sup> stuff. She was horrified when she was asked to do some of the departmental work relating to SAP.”

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<sup>7</sup> SAP stands for Systems, Applications and Programmes. This is an information management system bought by UCT from a reputable German company. The main users of the system are the Human Resources and Finance Departments. Departments outside of human resources and finance use the system mainly to raise purchase orders and to do funds reporting.

“His IT side has not been optimised. He could not handle Internet connections properly. Unaware that the connection shared the same line with his telephone, he left it on most of the time, only to receive a huge phone bill later.”

*Ability to coach/mentor or motivate others*

Most staff members are in positions where there are no subordinates under them. Therefore, in the absence of subordinates and a clear line management responsibility and accountability in the stricter sense, it was difficult for managers to make judgement about the efficacy of AIM in this respect. For those few staff that did have subordinates, managers claimed that there had been some signs of improvement. They were quick to point out, however, that such improvement was well below expectations. They had expected more from their staff, e.g. to lead and give direction to others.

In short, their overarching view seems to be that there had not been enough opportunities for staff to apply their expertise (as was the case with IT), given the type and level of most jobs. In a few cases where enough scope was given, the results were not clearly convincing that the AIM course had been effective.

*Financial management ability or awareness thereof*

Except for a very small component of staff, most did not have this as a definite job requirement. According to line management, the ability to compile, read and comprehend financial information is not a competency required of most staff. Thus,

training or even an exposure to such type of an environment by the AIM course has not been beneficial from that point of view.

A handful of staff did however have a hand in helping to draw up departmental budgets and monitoring and managing expenditure. For staff that had participated in the course, management was very satisfied with their general work performance in this area. It is important to note, however, that management felt that these same members of staff had always been doing well in this role, even before the AIM course. Thus, they could confidently say that AIM had less of an effect, if any, on staff abilities in this area.

For the few staff with accounting qualifications, there has not been an AIM effect. The few staff members who already had accounting qualifications did not gain much from the AIM course, as the financial module was deemed minuscule compared to the weight of qualifications and the knowledge that staff already had.

#### Teamwork ability

Many of the views expressed highlighted a strong sense of positive team involvement by staff. Most staff have always been seen to be had always posed to be good team players and had been able to make vital contributions within a team. Notwithstanding the fact that most had acquired the art of teamwork before AIM, managers did not discount the fact that AIM's approach of organising staff into teams for project work may have rekindled and fostered teamwork. This may also have given staff more focus and perspective than before. Staff members have become self-reflective and more conscious of the effect they have on others in the team.

Managers further observed a significant and fundamental change in character by some members of staff who were required to work in teams. Staff, especially those that managers thought were evidently timid and lacked willpower at the workplace, had become extremely confident when engaging with other staff and team members.

There were also a few dissenting opinions regarding progress made by staff in this regard, and this should be worth noting. For an example, one Head of Department lamented:

“There is certainly no evidence of teamwork in her. This has been a complete and utter waste of time. There are currently four administrative persons in the Department – the department has far too many secretaries! The team is not cohesive and this member of staff played no role in trying to get it together. They have divided themselves into four camps and neither camp talks to the other.”

Another senior manager commented:

“Notwithstanding the seniority of other staff in this unit, all staff wants to report to me. There is certainly a rather unsettling undercurrent and things do tend to break down occasionally.”

In the context of the comment above, it can be inferred that although teamwork seemed to have been a virtue to most staff on AIM, there were still some who were still not better team players.

Given that there is strong sense of teamwork from the management perspective, which almost all of line management attests to, this study cannot be conclusive in its finding that this could be attributed to AIM. There have always been good working teams, with staff having played an integral part of those teams. However, AIM is seen as a mechanism that did make it possible for staff to reflect and take stock of their roles in teams. AIM, it seems, gave staff a new perspective on teamwork.

### *Conflict resolution*

Most managers thought that there was undoubtedly a lot more awareness by staff regarding situations of conflict and how they ought to handle themselves and others. In trying to manage conflict situations, there have been visible signs of improvement. Managers expressed the view that, unlike before, where staff would naturally avoid or ignore conflict, now they show confidence in tackling difficult situations head-on.

The fact that the majority of staff did not have subordinates was cited by some managers as a reason for staff for not having had to be embroiled in conflict situations. Out of 16 staff that participated in the questionnaire, only three had subordinates who reported to them. This point is particularly relevant, as conflict is seen as being deeply embedded with the managerial realm of responsibility and, therefore, if one is a manager, conflict becomes inevitable. This may not be so for

staff members that do not have workers below them, thus they can afford the luxury of avoiding conflict situations or even playing ignorant.

The relatively small size of some of the units was also cited as playing a part in seeing to it that there are very few conflict situations in any event. Thus, so do managers believe, there have been few opportunities for conflict or for its resolution.

Once again, self-confidence is cited as the key ingredient for much of the success in conflict resolution. Managers said unlike before, staff members are more confident and self-assured when opportunities of conflict arise than they would ever have been before. They no longer avoided and ignored conflict as such, but were more expressive about it and also action-oriented whenever it appeared within a team.

The following comments by some of the University's most senior managers best describe the general feeling on this aspect:

“Perhaps in the conflict resolution area, I think the AIM course had been a factor. The staff member had been with the Faculty for 20 years and so because of the legacy of apartheid and because of the fact that she is a woman [and African], some people connected to the Faculty would not treat her fairly. Therefore, when it came to disagreements, which she would find overwhelming from an emotional point of view, a typical reaction was that she would simply break down and be in tears and not really being appropriately able to work on that issue.... But now there has been a remarkable change. She has been able to deal with some very difficult situations in a much more

mature and responsible way. In one special circumstance she showed an enormous amount of courage.”

*The level of understanding of Higher Education (HE): issues and challenges facing the sector*

The majority opinion was that the nature of the work of most staff did not require any in-depth knowledge about this aspect. Therefore, from that point of view, the HE component of AIM has only been a nicety to have and had no direct bearing whatsoever on daily operations. Awareness and knowledge of the sector have not been demonstrable as a result.

**General impressions of UCT line management about AIM**

Managers own impressions of the AIM programme can be categorised as follows:

- Management training vis-à-vis skills training
- Focus on operational needs
- Unnecessary expectations raised by AIM
- Staff self-confidence and sense of self-worth
- AIM and AIMS – establishing the important link

*Management training vis-à-vis skills training*

All managers interviewed felt very strongly that the focus of this management development programme was misdirected. They said that it did not appear to be attuned towards addressing the pressing operational needs of departments. Although generic management competencies are important, especially to staff being groomed

for higher-level positions, it was felt that there ought to be an even stronger emphasis on practical skills training, as this concentrates on the present. AIM trains and develops learners in terms of a global picture and this did not seem to help staff much at their actual places of work. One senior manager commented that to make a successful career in his unit, one needs a range of skills, which include business planning, project planning, proposal writing and analytical skills. Qualifications in Accounting and an in-depth knowledge of Financial Management are added requirements. In his opinion, AIM is a very lightweight course and unable to meet these requirements. It also lacks practical skills training.

Given the low literacy level of some staff who enrolled (as those who have no post-Matric qualifications also enrol in the course), it was felt that AIM should perhaps have concentrated also on the art of writing, reading and speaking English, since it is the medium of instruction and all business is conducted in this language. Numeric skills were also raised as important and relevant to most jobs at the University.

#### *Focus on operational needs*

In general, it was felt that day-to-day needs were not being met by AIM. Most of the improvements attributable to AIM are not inherently job requirements of staff at this level. Thus, staff would still be able to deliver without them. A concerted effort must be made in doing needs analysis across departments and then to tailor AIM accordingly. Staff at the level of most AIM graduates are seen as prototype administrative persons, and the ambitions created by AIM are seen to be a little disruptive. For example, one manager remarked:

“We are mere functionaries in the system. We are an administrative arm of this institution – we are paper-pushers. AIM teaches staff to want to be managers and take their boss’ jobs and units cannot simply absorb this ambition.”

The view by the line manager above echoed the general sentiments expressed by line management. The following captures the thinking of most managers toward AIM, with specific reference to meeting departmental operational needs:

“There is a growing manager syndrome at UCT, which is of concern. With each opportunity for staff to develop, there is always the expectation by staff of an automatic qualification to a management-type position. With each formal qualification earned, there is an expectation by staff for an upward career movement. The reality of the situation is that we ought to have people in place at various levels to get the job done. Not all of us can be managers. Managers don’t do any work per se, but rather give direction.”

In line with the view that AIM does not meet operational needs, the following comments by some line managers may also be relevant:

“The whole AIM course was ill-conceived, badly publicised. It had no value added. I don’t know what the experience of other line managers is, but certainly from my point of view, it was an utter waste of time.”

“AIM as it is currently structured does not offer appropriate training to research administration professionals.”

#### Unnecessary expectations raised by AIM

Both AIM graduates and management agree that many high expectations were raised and that, unfortunately, most of these could not be met. Staff expected an instant upward career move upon completion of AIM and this simply did not happen. The reasons given are varied. Line managers argued that their units are very tight on budgets and that opportunities for promotion rarely present themselves. There is very limited scope in most of these units for exploration and experimentation, and managers are loath to delegate and put systems and people to test without the confidence that they will deliver on the job.

In contrast, staff said that managers chose to be ignorant of and indifferent to AIM, and that there has been very little move by management to better career prospects of the AIM graduates.

These high expectations were not only on the part of staff who were expecting more of the institution; managers' expectations of what AIM graduates could do at their actual place of work, too, were excessively high – and thus dashed by reality. Some managers do admit that they had perhaps unrealistically hoped for more.

#### Staff self-confidence and sense of self-worth

One overwhelmingly positive feedback about AIM from line management's point of view is that staff's self-confidence and belief in themselves grew and that they had

been able to deal with issues they normally would not. For most staff, the course has broadened their horizons. Most have a much greater need to move into further studies because of exposure to the AIM course. There is a compelling account of AIM having unlocked tremendous potential in people.

*AIM and AIMS – establishing the important link*

Line management often referred to AIM and AIMS almost interchangeably owing to the shared common history. AIMS, however, is the acronym for the Audit and Integration of Management Systems (whereas AIM stands for Associate in Management). The proposal to establish AIMS was formally endorsed by the University Council at its session of 03 November 1999. One of the core objectives listed (which is important for our purposes) was the following:

Assessing the skills needed for managing the overall institution and its component parts and upgrading the quality of systems and services, and implementing the requisite skills training.

The AIM course, particularly the modular course, was seen as one appropriate intervention that would begin to improve skills among University staff at various levels for possible management functions. The extremely low opinions of line management towards AIMS to the effect that it failed to bring about the desired improvements in service delivery by supporting core activities negates the very rationale for AIMS and also raises serious questions of credibility about the scheme. These negative sentiments expressed towards AIMS could not be detached from those regarding AIM, even though the latter was seen to be the lesser of the two evils. Just

as most claimed that AIMS did not succeed in winning the support of staff in general, the same feeling was expressed towards AIM. Managers raised concerns that, notwithstanding the noble idea of the AIM programme among UCT staff, not much education and awareness was raised around it. This, as has been suggested earlier in the study, created many false expectations among staff. Managers had received very little communication and information on AIM, thus they were not very pro-active in looking at how to fit AIM to their operational needs and in the process identifying opportunities for staff to grow within their departments by tapping into all the experience they had gained from AIM.

Scepticism about AIMS was particularly rife across the superficial divide of academic, and administrative and professional staff. The following dissenting views from some of the University's most senior staff were strongly expressed:

The kinds of gains regarding UCT management systems and administration cannot be attributable to AIMS at all, but rather to concerted personal efforts by individuals such as the Executive Directors of Finance and Human Resources.

AIMS was a complete waste of time. The fact of the matter is that the University is not a business. Even though a business type operation is desirable (and most forms of it can be adaptable), AIMS took things a bit too far.

This project was a complete failure. The business-type BPR processes were not really a perfect fit for this environment. AIMS failed this Department and the external consultants were warned at the time by staff of imposing a system of operation that would not work. Now the Department is still sorting out some of the mess created by AIMS. UCT is an academic institution and does not have a production factory line.

Among the UCT managers interviewed, the deeply held perception of AIMS that it did not live up to its commitments was very evident. To staff, it failed to make pronouncements on staff development and training, and also ignored equity and transformation issues. Where it was able to set training regimes, as in the AIM modular course, it did not have further plans for follow-through. It does not address the critical question as to what happens to individual staff once they have completed training. To staff, this has been an utter failure and did not help to sustain the high morale and self-confidence that staff had acquired through this formal learning process.

In conclusion, it does appear (from learners and management) that there is some value attached to the program. From learners' own point of view, it does seem if the working environment had been more receptive of the new knowledge and skills, there could have been a greater impact on the workplace. From the staff's point of view, the fact that managers loathed adapting work patterns to embrace the new knowledge proved a huge obstacle, whereas management saw very little relevance of AIM to pressing departmental needs. Management is however appreciative of the evident cognitive abilities and increased self-confidence among graduates of the course.

Knowledge, skills and attitudes form the very backbone of training and development. In fact, these provide for a very strong case for training and development. An effective employee training and development programme needs to be built on a sound combination of these three aspects. For any such programme to claim success towards whole-person development (an ideal towards which all employee development programmes have to strive) it must strike a fine balance between these three aspects of development. Therefore, these three aspects ought to be engrained in every facet of human life, including of course, working lives. The fact that there are questions with regard to the relevance of AIM by management on the one hand and, on the other hand, with regard to the working environment not taking full advantage of the new practical skills and expertise acquired through AIM, should be of a serious concern.

In the current economic climate, where there is scarcity of resources, institutions can ill afford to put resources into programmes with no calculable institutional benefits. For each investment endeavour, there need to be calculated returns on it; if not, there ought to be a serious review process, which might mean that such investments must be discontinued. We ought to apply the same logic to employee development programmes.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Discussion of Findings**

This discussion of the findings of the study will be structured around the four levels of programme evaluation introduced by Kirkpatrick, who is an important authority in this field. Kirkpatrick's four levels of programme evaluation (as referenced in Plantard and Ryan, 1994: 27) are the following:

- Reaction
- Learning
- Behaviour
- Results

Our discussion will centre mainly on the first two levels (reaction and learning), as the last two levels (behaviour and results) are effectively contained in an analysis of the two former levels. In engaging in a discussion of the first two levels, it is almost inconceivable that one would not have also dwelled on the last two, as they are closely intertwined. For example, a discussion about what was learned (learning level) will involve learning outcomes (results), and that would include behaviour, i.e. whether there has been any noticeable change in behaviour in the post-training period that can be attributed to the training intervention itself.

## **Reaction**

The first level, according to Kirkpatrick, assesses what the trainee thought of the program. This would mainly include learners' own self-evaluation of the programme, using their own personal experiences.

Not surprisingly, the majority of staff thought that what they had learned through AIM was beneficial. This is what differentiates adult educations from education of children. With child pedagogy, there is usually an element of cohesion. Education is usually something imposed on the learner by an authority figure, mainly the educator or the parent. For the very reason that there is little choice in what one learns, how one learns, where and by whom one is taught, learners would often attach little value to the education.

Adult learners, however, have a distinct advantage in this regard. The exercise of freedom over some of the questions raised above helps to bring some credibility to the learning situation. Indeed the majority of staff deemed most of the lessons and experiences from AIM to be beneficial. In making such an assertion, however, they tend to turn inward, as opposed to looking at external factors – the practical functional areas of management that they have improved or even those aspects of which they have become more aware, than had been the case before AIM. Adults would rarely involve themselves in anything unless they believed it would be beneficial for them.

The apparent gap between AIM and the rigours and demands of the actual workplace presents serious challenges. So does the lack of a comprehensive human resource development strategy that will not only identify skills gap and put appropriate

interventions in place, but also make it a point that down the line, work patterns are adapted to embrace lessons and experiences from a programme such as AIM.

Bonoma and Lawler (1994: 99) commented that when management development programmes are governed arbitrarily, or worse, left ungoverned, candidates often fail to realise their potential. The lack of follow-through on completion of AIM negates and belittles the gains that staff had made after the program.

There is however another element to this apparent distance between AIM and the actual workplace. This element is more at a philosophical level, namely that human beings are by nature apprehensive of the notion of change. Thus, the preference seems to be to do things the ways they have always been done, rather than, for instance, reconfiguring a new system of operation, which may bring with it uncertainties, some of which with far-reaching consequences. The Motorola case study referred to in the previous chapter is a classical example of this. Although an intensive in-house training had been devised, with unwavering support from middle managers had little intention to adapt work patterns at the production line to embrace new knowledge and experiences acquired by staff from the training program.

The failures identified above can be attributed to many factors, but a compelling reason could be the nature of the inherent conflict between staff and management. Our divisive historical past also plays an important role. While staff, and quite rightly so, will look for any opportunity that will allow them to make an upward career move, either within their current place of employment or outside it, managers are only concerned with meeting production deadlines, and that means being able to work within the constraints of limited resources, viz. time and money.

## **Learning**

The second phase of making an assessment as to the efficacy of this course concerns learning. According to Kirkpatrick, this phase will focus on the measurement of the learning of principles, facts, skills and attributes that were specified as training objectives.

In its curriculum, AIM has 13 functional areas of management that include, *inter alia*, information technology, management of human resources and organisations and financial management and accounting. The focus was on the 13 factors, as they seemed to capture much of the generic competencies required in a management role. Learning outcomes prescribed for AIM also capture many of these competencies. Embedded into AIM's curriculum, therefore, is a clear set of outcomes against which some assessment would be made. The AIM learning outcomes are:

- Understanding of financial information;
- Fluency in oral and written communication;
- Analytical reasoning skills;
- Personal growth; and
- Development of self-confidence, problem solving and decision-making.

### **Understanding of financial information**

As has been demonstrated in the earlier chapter, the majority of staff, although they had not been given the space to put their knowledge around finance to the test in the workplace, had done well in class and had attained the necessary confidence that they could face up to the challenge at work. Although the lack of practical application

does put doubt on the level of competence of staff, it is fair and reasonable to suggest that the level of awareness has been heightened. This particular point was often alluded to by line management who doubted whether staff can indeed make a pivotal contribution to financial matters after having attained financial management at such a basic level.

It needs to be said that the structure of the university's administrative system renders this aspect of financial expertise rather unimportant. The system allows departments to have dedicated persons to specifically monitor and manage cash flow. Central finance is also extremely proactive in seeing to it that department overall are operating within their means; and where there are shortfalls, the department concerned will be given a warning. Thus the lack of practical application by staff in this specific area does not necessarily remove aspirant managers from the equation.

In qualifying this particular point of view, one of the managers in the interviews hinted that the view of a manager as a "know-it all" has long become obsolete. Even though it is still desirable that for managers to have expert knowledge, their main role is really to provide direction and leadership for their staff.

#### *Fluency in oral and written communication*

The art of writing and speaking well is particularly important if one wishes to make a success of management. Managers are required to have the ability to sell their ideas to superiors, to fellow managers and to subordinates. The art of persuasion therefore both in speech and in the written form cannot be emphasized enough.

The need for staff to read and write more competently came out very clearly in the interviews conducted with line management. As was indicated in the previous chapter, there was a strong feeling by some managers that, given the current AIM curriculum and also taking into account the observations they have made so far about staff, it did appear as though this need was not being specifically addressed.

Line management's misgivings on the level of literacy by staff raises crucial questions, some of which have been part of the institutional discourse for some time. Implicit in the line management's view is the notion that for one to be presumed to speak and write better – one ought to speak and write better in English. Thus English becomes a shorthand for “speaking and writing better”. This line of thinking strikes at the very heart of the prevailing institutional culture, a culture that is shaped along the lines of a British colonial heritage in a white male dominated environment. This prevailing institutional culture, threatens to obscure the reality of UCT as a very diverse institution. The preponderance of the English language under the guise of it being the only business *lingua franca* threatens to alienate staff from previously excluded groups, while it at the same time perpetuates the unfair advantage of white middle-class males. The institutional climate must allow staff to sell an idea or even to express an opinion formally to colleagues in a language that would be understood by many, and this may not necessarily be in English. I have been in interviews where clarification of points would be made in Afrikaans, because the majority of staff in the selection panel were white Afrikaans speaking. In principle, it should not be a problem to use a language other than English, if appropriate in the circumstances

The preponderance of English at the workplace has been so rife that most of the entry-level industrial training concentrated on the art of writing and speaking English. This was also suggested by Linda Widepohl's study in the early 1980's. Even in the difficult period under apartheid, unfree as this country was with less open debates on discriminatory institutional cultures and practices being encouraged, most employees surveyed still found this to be problematic. Perhaps not from a principle point of view but rather from looking purely at the practicalities of that era, most employees, as they themselves suggested, would have liked the content to put more attention on numeracy, as this skill had a lot more immediate industrial application than the writing and speaking of English.

In summary, however, one can comfortably attest to the mastery of business English writing from the set of questionnaires staff completed. There was precision and logic in the presentation of facts. Staff clearly demonstrated knowledge of their subject matter and responded appropriately, based on the set of questions asked.

#### Analytical reasoning skills

The testimonies by managers gave the impression that enough progress had been noticeable in this regard. Even though one finds comfort in managers' own assessments, it is important to recognise some of the external interventions that may have played a role in this regard. Two factors are particularly crucial in this scenario. The first factor to consider is that some of the staff in the AIM class have had some exposure to higher education and the rigours of academia. Thus, they would have learned techniques such as applying critical thinking and observing logical reasoning in their formative years of higher learning. The second point to consider is that adults

by virtue of being adults have had life experiences, most of which would have shaped their approach to life. There can be no doubt, that this would influence how one approaches workplace challenges too.

*Personal growth and development.*

There is strong evidence of growing self-confidence, which translates into other abilities such as problem-solving and decision-making. The phenomenal personal growth that staff recognised as part of the AIM experience is interesting, since it overlaps with line management's perceptions on this very aspect. In fact, the over-emphasis on improved personal attributes (soft skills) by managers over hard technical skills comes as no surprise, since the latter have an immediate impact on delivery, while in case of the former, if there is some deficit, the impact may not be felt almost immediately. Managers, by virtue of being driven by results, would therefore tend to lose sight of the very noble idea of 'developing the whole person'.

Results in this study, particularly relating to personal growth and development, add a very important twist to AIM. In fact, as has been demonstrated already, the notion of "whole person development" typifies what, in essence, management development programmes should be about – empowerment of the individual. Just as skill and experience are important, so too is one's sense of worth. Today's managers are expected to exude a great deal of confidence, albeit without arrogance, so that they are able to lead and inspire those around them. With enough confidence, managers are willing to take calculated risks and make tough decisions, while at the same time, of course, according each case the sensitivity that it deserves and yet remaining focused on clearly spelt out organisational goals.

The AIM experience appears to epitomise a completely new era for staff – an era of self-discovery. This is particularly evident in staff that had little or no formal education after Matric. AIM ignited that spark in staff. It reawakened their eagerness to learn and grow further, thus instilling a greater sense of ‘I can do it’. Adding credence to this is the line management’s own assessment of staff’s personal growth after completion of the course. With their horizons broadened, staff are more focused and have a better perspective. There is stronger sense of responsibility and ownership of one’s own destiny – all of which are essential ingredients in any management-type position.

Indeed, the issue of personal development is, as the word suggest, very inward directed, and personal. Again, this is where an inherent conflict between staff and management would surface. Staff would always, rightly or wrongly, afford themselves those opportunities which stand to advance their careers beyond their current level of work and even outside of the organisation, while organisations would only want to train to get immediate results with service delivery. With requisite expert knowledge and the right attitude, moulded by experience and through interventions such as AIM, chances of staff members competing seriously for opportunities outside the institution are even greater. The weight given by staff to personal development therefore cannot be emphasised enough.

In situations of competing interests such as these, a win-win situation, where both parties gain from training and development, is desirable.

### **AIM and AIMS – a critical review**

The action-learning component of AIM attempts to address the very pressing demands of the workplace, but given the strong negative sentiment from at least half of all the managers interviewed, it does appear that the programme has not been particularly successful. Hence, more focus must be placed on skills training and less on management development. Action learning is evident in the AIM program.

Rothwell (1999: 5) defines action learning as a real-time learning experience that is carried out with two equally important purposes in mind: meeting organisational needs and developing individuals or groups at the same time. According to Rothwell, action learning occurs when a group of learners assembles to, among others, identify causes of a problem, solve the problem, formulate goals and work towards achieving those goals, and to establish and realise a shared vision of the future.

Action learning does largely mitigate management's reservations that the course is far removed from day-to-day practical work and that there actual knowledge and skills acquired are not that transferable. The attraction to skills training could be two-fold: Firstly, that it indeed focuses on the *now* and therefore yields immediate returns, and secondly, that managers themselves are feeling insecure when faced with the burning desire by such staff for management type positions. At worst, the fear could be that one could lose one's job to an up-start with not much experience. Thus, in making sure that competition is kept to the absolute minimum, one should not expose staff to many opportunities, as this could stand them in good stead at the manager's expense.

Comments such as "there is a growing manager syndrome at UCT", "staff think the AIM qualification is a mini MBA" and "AIM teaches staff to take over the boss's

job”, among others, could indicate undertones of resentment. On the other hand, perhaps this is too harsh a judgement, since managers in these departments have, through personal observation encouraged staff being promoted through the ranks.

AIMS was criticised more harshly than the AIM course. As was mentioned in the introductory chapters, the very first module of action-learning AIM was a direct intervention that came out of the university-wide Audit for the Integration of Management Systems (AIMS). Hence, all that went wrong with the AIM program was attributed to the perceived failures of the AIMS project. Most of line management was particularly negative towards AIMS. This extremely negative sentiment should be worrisome, particularly given the enormous resources committed towards the project by the institution. AIMS also raises some very fundamental, more moral questions regarding the project. Staff had hoped that, as promised by the university authorities, improvement of systems and service delivery meant that there would be skills transfer (i.e. by external consulting firms) on an ongoing basis. The integration of management systems to cut down on the level of paper generation and scale down unnecessary administration at all levels, including of course the executive level, was a further important issue. However, there are only two main aspects: firstly, cutting down on lower level jobs to concentrate on activities that support the institution’s core business and, secondly, introducing administrative systems which created more problems than they offered solutions. This about-turn raises suspicions as to whether the institution was sincere and meant well in the first place. In general, therefore, there seems to be sufficient basis for such a negative sentiment.

Shattock (2000: 8-9), in his internal report on the governance and management issues at the University of Cape Town, made far-reaching recommendations regarding the re-organisation of the executive branch. In his findings, he criticised strongly UCT's extended structure of administrative decision-making, which (in his opinion) seems to lead to frustration at almost every level. He recommended that the administrative chain of command should be shortened with the end-result being to accelerate decision-making, clarification of individual responsibilities, and greater transparency. This, he asserted, should reduce frustration and improve morale. In his view, the University has too many senior people sharing administrative / managerial powers. The super-structure has become too large for the institution, which slows down the conduct of business, builds up increasing levels of frustration and costs much more money, both in terms of cash spent on salaries and in the expenditure of unproductive effort.

None of Shattock's recommendations were followed by an executive that made every effort to entrench its own interests. The level of cynicism with regard to AIMS and those that jumped on its bandwagon is held far more deeply than top management cares to recognise. The negative sentiment on AIMS does have a spill-over effect on other efforts that have a close association with AIMS – AIM, for instance, was no exception. It is essential that every effort be made in building integrity into any process, especially if it is to have far-reaching implications.

In conclusion, although much still needs to be improved as far as training and development is concerned, there cannot be any doubt of the important milestones set by AIM. The fact that it has instilled a sense of self-worth and raised confidence

levels in the majority of learners is a rather an important point to note. Most of the training and development that takes place (as has been seen in the case studies presented in the literature chapter) only concern themselves with organisational outputs and nothing else. Less thought, if any, is given to how to develop an individual for the greater good of society. Even though the managers were a little uncomfortable with AIM, the course does contribute to the greater good.

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## **Chapter 7**

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

This chapter will provide a short synopsis of the major findings of the study. The body of this Chapter is on AIM and its trickle-down effect or lack thereof, but also governance, management and structural issues that underpin staff development and training at the University.

Although an attempt is made by the AIM course to offer practical technical skills, such training has been limited and superficial, hence the strong belief at management level that the programme does not quite meet operational needs. Thus, there had been very little direct transfer of skills and knowledge acquired during the course to the workplace. For example, with functional skills such as accounting and information technology, AIM graduates had demonstrated little noticeable knowledge and expertise, except at the most basic level.

Looking at generic soft management skills, on the other hand, there has been a reasonable measure of success. Staff are more constructive in situations of conflict, have a better understanding of how their conduct and actions (or inaction) can affect other members of the team and overall, they are much more focused and put everything into perspective. They understand the higher education environment within which they operate.

Based on testimonies by both management and staff, there is a strong feeling of personal growth and increased self-confidence among graduates in the post-AIM

period. This was particularly evident among those who had little or no prior exposure to post-Matric studies.

Although the introduction of modular AIM course did have good intentions, there was no proper follow-through, in the sense of tapping into the graduate's newly acquired knowledge and expertise. Much has been left to management's goodwill to engage with the AIM graduates as to how best they can make a contribution, given their exposure to higher learning.

Management seems to see development as a once-off event, which has to yield immediate results. In similar vein, Daly (1976) quoted Paul Gorman, the then Chair of the Board and President of the International Paper Co. in his article on management and supervisory development:

Management development must be a continuous process, otherwise the management in all probability will become static, and any company with a static management, in the future, will become a static company. It seems to me that management is the key to success of all business enterprises – those companies who will become the most successful spend a great deal of time in the management of the development function.

There seems to be ignorance of the vital role of management through fostering on-the-job coaching to make sure that the graduates are able to implement their theoretical knowledge in a practical way. There is little recognition of the importance of

mentoring and coaching by managers, which ought to occur in parallel with training and development interventions such as AIM.

Middle management expresses cynicism towards the AIMS project that gave birth to the AIM modular course. Such cynicism towards the project seems to have had spill-over effect on how AIM in general is perceived. The extremely negative sentiments by middle-level managers towards AIMS and top management calls attention to the prevailing superficial divide between the center (top management) and the periphery.

Staff have expectations that that it is entirely management's responsibility to expose themselves to developmental opportunities once they have undergone formal training, while management in turn put the onus squarely on the individual employees. There is little recognition of a collective responsibility for development.

There seems to be no clear signs that top management understands the broad costs and benefits of training and development of employees. There also appears to have been no clear pronouncements from the executive on training and development. In the academic sector, for example, one former head of department lambasted the appointment process of academic heads of departments. He stated that it takes little recognition of the importance of using leadership development to ensure that that newly appointed heads make a success of the academic leadership roles entrusted to them by the University Council<sup>8</sup>. On the administrative and support front, there also seems to have been no rigorous re-evaluation, apart from a handful of initiatives such as AIM, the Middle Management Development course and the Melon Foundation

initiative (which is a staff exchange programme with universities in the US for middle-level managers).

As a final point, we need to examine the notion of change. Change always involves uncertainty, and with uncertainty comes the fear of the unknown. Change moves people out of their comfort zones, and unless things have reached a crisis point, the natural reaction is always to avoid it in the first place. The fact that people would be subjected to such rigorous training in the form of AIM and yet find themselves still in rather unfavourable positions as a result of managers being reluctant to adapt work patterns to accommodate AIM graduates' new knowledge is indicative of this phobia towards change.

In conclusion, one cannot over-emphasise the importance of developing human resources. People play a central role in ensuring the success in organisations and we cannot simply wish them away, besides, it would be irrational!! Therefore, it is imperative to develop and care for human capital on an ongoing basis. Nowhere has this point been illustrated better than in McLuskey (1999:76):

Sustained competitive advantage is secured from the organisation's internal resources. Human capital is, on the whole, unique, difficult to imitate, not easy to substitute and is able to add value to the product or service offered.

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<sup>8</sup> The University Council is the highest policy decision-making body at the University. It is constituted in terms of the Higher Education Act. At least 60% of members that sit on Council must be from outside, while 40% must be internal i.e. on the University's payroll.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations revolve not only around AIM as a management development programme, but also emphasise the current realities of training and development at the University of Cape Town. In order to ensure that meaningful development takes place and that the institution derives optimum benefits from its training and development interventions, the following are proposed:

- Departmental Workplace Learning Co-ordinators (WLC's) need to be designated.
- The role of the Staff Learning Centre needs a re-look with a view to closing the identified gaps with regards to functional practical skills, since this is an area of need, which AIM did not adequately meet.
- UCT must make the move towards being a learning organisation.
- Notwithstanding the critical role individuals have to play towards their own development, staff development must also become part of the line management function for which they (line managers) should be held accountable.

### *Designation of Departmental Workplace Learning Co-ordinators (WLC's)*

Each department (academic and support) within the existing staffing complement should designate WLC's who, in conjunction with the Head of Department/unit, will champion training and development in their specific areas. In addition to collating data on training and development interventions for the respective departments and/or units, the WLC's should regularly analyse in-house efforts to put new knowledge, skills and attitudes to optimal use.

This should not involve extra overheads or expenditure. These arrangements have already been tested at other fronts, and they seem to have had a reasonable measure of success. Most staff at UCT will, for instance, be aware of the health and safety representatives, the fire marshals and the system administrators in departments. There is an education and awareness on roles expected of people in these positions a responsibility, which has been for the most part been neglected.

### Role of Staff Learning Centre

The current Staff Learning Centre under the auspices of the central Human Resource Department, must, in conjunction with the University's Skills Development Facilitator, play a more proactive role in assuming leadership and providing expertise on institutional staff development and training. Not only should they together ensure that all departments set training and development objectives, but they should also have the authority to hold departments accountable to these commitments.

There needs to be synergy in roles (particularly regarding training and development of staff) of the Human Resource generalist teams placed in faculties and departments.

We must not lose sight of the fact that it is mainly through human capital from within the institution that the business of UCT is being effected and therefore every effort must be made to nurture and preserve these resources.

The SLC must keep a register, whose data would be continually updated, with the names of all recent qualifiers and make these available to departments to enable them to identify people with the requisite knowledge to meet their departmental objectives.

In the normal selection and recruitment process, most of these individuals will be missed, either because they simply lacked the confidence to come forward or, in some instances, they might not have been aware of the existence of appropriate vacancies. UCT is an institution of higher learning and it seems ironic that management, especially in administrative and support areas, seems to overlook the value of acquisition of knowledge through formal qualifications. Such authority to monitor and assess development continually should motivate management towards more meaningful action to bring about redress of past imbalances. Obviously, there would be more sustained long-term benefits to the relevant departments too.

#### *Transforming UCT into a learning organisation*

Training and development must be embedded in the life and culture of the organisation. UCT's mission to develop staff is enshrined in both its Mission Statement and the Strategic Planning Framework but apart from this level, there has not been a rigorous effort at the top to live up to this commitment. Just as we are continuously reminded, and quite rightly so, of the scarcity of resources and the absolute imperatives for cost saving, so should we be reminded of the necessity to effect training and development. The significance of development must be emphasised in the top levels of the university's administration, since that is where the moral and legal authority lies. Staff development and training is one of the university's strategic priorities and should not be relegated to a lifeless Mission Statement and Strategic Planning Framework. Practical efforts are urgently required to give effect to these very noble ideals.

### Line management's role and responsibility towards staff development

Just as line management will be held accountable for setting staff equity targets and implementing these, it is proposed that they also be held accountable for enabling staff development in their respective units or departments. For line management to start take seriously their role in rolling out development and training in their respective areas, and making development opportunities available to staff, staff development, among other key line functions, must be made a key performance indicator on which the successes and failures of a section or department are to be judged. In cases where there had been genuine efforts but not much progress reported, a thorough assessment must be made of what could have accounted for the failures and to recommend possible courses of action to counter future obstacles.

The suggestion need not detract from the fact that, equally, staff have a responsibility towards their own development. This is suggested in the context of development being a joint responsibility, but with management having to create an enabling environment. The suggestion to tie management to some form of commitment is simply made to ensure that the University's mission of providing optimal opportunities for development to all staff in ensuring that overall organisational objectives are met, is realised.

Notwithstanding the fact that AIM is a formal management development programme in that not only it is designed to meet UCT's specific organisational goals, but those of the larger society too, AIM remains a UCT academic programme and needs to urgently re-examine itself against the benchmarks set by UCT for its qualifiers. In the Strategic Planning Framework (2002:11), UCT in particular aims to ensure that each

and every one of its qualifiers is effectively literate, effectively numerate and computer literate, at the appropriate graduate level. Middle management suggested that there have not been observable competencies in business communication and the ability to work with and manipulate information; where there have, in fact been signs, they have been at the most basic level. In the Strategic Planning Framework, it is recommended that UCT should aim to ensure that every candidate is effectively literate (with courses that demand rigour and precision in language, critical thought and reasoning), effectively numerate and computer literate at the appropriate level.

Given that staff enrol on their own accord for the part-time AIM course, there is a very important and fundamental principle at play here –that of freedom, and it should not be dismissed. However, the fact that there has been little movement within some departments to afford AIM qualifiers developmental opportunities at their actual places of work is indicative of the widening gap between the actual course on the one hand and UCT middle management on the other, hence the lack of awareness and insights on AIM at this level. There needs to be some sort of arrangement incorporated into the programme that will involve managers to some extent. Managers can offer coaching on certain aspects taught at the course and give appropriate feedback to the course convenors.

In expanding on the point above and in raising the profile of the AIM programme, not to mention giving prospective AIM graduates exposure to the intricacies of day-to-day management, an intensive one-month internship programme is proposed. Such an internship programme must be taken out in a different department than the staff member's home department. In the first instance, it may have to be ring-fenced for

those managers that have staff enrolled on AIM to randomly pick interns. Innovation and practical learning should be far easier, as neither side would have preconceived ideas about the other. Managers would have to mentor and coach staff actively, and give appropriate feedback, according to specific criteria.

The AIM programme must be aggressively marketed at UCT. AIM as a management course has not been effectively sold to UCT, hence the usual reluctance of managers to embrace it. The Graduate School of Business needs to recognise that not only is UCT an institution of higher learning but also an employer, just as corporate businesses are. Thus, management expertise and knowledge are required and formal academic programmes such as AIM should be delivering at this level; they must then be sold and communicated internally.

AIM graduates need to form a support group or network at the University that will offer advice and reinforce the knowledge gained through the AIM experience. The convenors of the programme should help to facilitate the formation of such a network. As a ground rule, staff should volunteer to participate in the group and in no way should they feel compelled to do so. Support groups tend to have positive spin-offs, especially in a group of people that share common interests.

In conclusion, for the institution to harness gains from training and development initiatives, there needs to be involvement by all stakeholders both in the planning phases and during the implementation of such schemes. This will ensure that there is, at least, a common understanding, which will in turn ensure that the work environment is conducive for meaningful learning to occur. Proper follow-up

processes can be designed once all the parties are familiar with the various training and development initiatives that are in place, as well as with the expected outcomes of each of these initiatives. As we have seen, this has been lacking in AIM. Only a few managers that were interviewed had a basic understanding of AIM (since it had not been sold to them). Thus, very few knew what learning outcomes they should expect from the staff who had participated in the programme.

University of Cape Town

**Appendix I**

**UCT AIM Program: An Impact Assessment Study**

Please fill in the questionnaire and make comments where applicable. This questionnaire should take just under five minutes of your time.

Personal Details

1. Name: ..... (optional)

2. Dept: .....

3. Job Title: .....

4. Highest Qualification: .....

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5. Were you enrolled for AIM in 2001? (tick )

Yes / No

6. How did you get to know about AIM?

.....

7. What motivated you to enrol for this programme?

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8. In the last ten months, have you successfully coached and motivated other members of your team? If yes, how would you compare this to other years?

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9. Have you had to deal with a conflict situation at work in the last 10 months? If yes, any noticeable differences in the way you would have handled it previously?

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10. What computer systems/software/programme/package have you had to familiarise yourself with during and after the AIM course and to what extent have these been useful at your current job?

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.....

11. How conversant are you in the preparation and/ or comprehension and analysis of financial information? How would you compare your comprehension and skill currently to the period before AIM?

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12. Compare your knowledge and understanding of the higher education environment at UCT before and after you enrolled in the AIM Programme.

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.....

13. On a scale of 1 – 4 (with 1 representing least relevant and 4 representing extremely relevant), how would you rate the relevance of the AIM course to your work at UCT?

*Tick where appropriate and motivate*      1      2      3      4

.....  
.....  
.....

14. Below is a list of functional areas of skill and knowledge covered in AIM; which ones were more applicable to your job in 2001? *Tick where appropriate.*

- a. Management Communication
- b. Finance & Management Accounting
- c. Information Technology
- d. Business, Government & Strategy
- e. Global Economics
- f. Operations Management
- g. Marketing
- h. Management of Organisations and Human Resources
- i. Project Management
- j. Entrepreneurship

k. Strategy

l. Law

m. Business Ethics

n. Sustainable Development

15. Are there any aspects of your job that you are doing differently as a result of the influence of the AIM programme?

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.....

16. Any other comments or experiences you would like to share?

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.....

**NB. Please sign to give consent as the author would like to use your tests/assignment and examination marks as part of the research data.**

Sign

Date

.....

.....

## Appendix II

### Structure of the National Qualifications Framework

NQF Level	Band	Types of Qualifications and Certificates	Locations of Learning for Units and Qualifications
8	Higher Education and Training	Doctorates & Further Research Degrees	Tertiary/Research/Professional Institutes
7		Higher Degrees & Professional Qualifications	Tertiary/Research/Professional Institutes
6		First Degrees & Diplomas	Universities/Technikons/Colleges
5		Diplomas & Occupational Certificates	Universities/Technikons/Colleges

#### Further Education and Training Certificate

NQF Level	Band	Types of Qualifications and Certificates	Locations of Learning for Units and Qualifications
4	Further Education & Training Band	School/College/Trade Certificates Mix of Units from all	Formal High Schools/ Technical/Community/Police/Nursing Private Colleges RDP & Labor Market Schemes/ Industry Training Boards Workplace
3		School/College/Trade Certificates Mix of Units from all	Private/State Schools Private Colleges
2		School/College/Trade Certificates Mix of Units from all	

#### General Education and Training Certificate

NQF Level	Band	Types of Qualifications and Certificates	Locations of Learning for Units and Qualifications		
1	General Education & Training	Senior Phase	Formal Schools	Occupation/Work-based Training	NGO's/Churches/ Night Schools
		Intermediate Phase			
		Foundation Phase	Private Providers Industry Training Boards/ Unions/ Workplace		
		Preschool		ABET Level 1	
			ABET Level 2		
	ABET Level 3				
	ABET Level 4				

**Appendix III**

**UCT grade correlation table**

<b>Peromnes</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Decision Level</b>	<b>Castellion</b>	
18/19	1	Defined Decisions	PC1	
17	2			
16	3		PC2	
15	4	Discretionary, Operative, Sub-System or Automatic Decisions	PC3	
14	5		PC4	
13	6		PC5	
12	7		PC6	
	7			
11	8/9	Skilled, Technical and Academically Qualified Employees, Junior Management, Supervisors, Foremen, Superintendents, Routing or Process Decisions	PC7	
10	10		PC8	
9	11		PC9	
8	12		PC10	
7	12		PC11	
	13/14			
6	15	Professionally Qualified and Experienced Specialists, Middle Management, Interpretive Decisions.	PC12	
5	16			
	17			
4	18/21	Senior Management, Heads of Major Functions, Programming Decisions.		
3				
2			22/23	
1	24		Top Management, Board Level, Policy Making Decisions	
	25			
1+	26			

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