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# The Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis and Cape Town

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A qualitative study on overcoming the barriers to job access

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### PLAGIARISM 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: September 2010

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilled in requirement of the award of the degree of Master of Social Sciences

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## **Abstract**

This is a qualitative study based on the issue of job access, which forms part of the spatial mismatch hypothesis. Within the context of Cape Town, the study shows that barriers with regard to job access, such as transit and information barriers, concerning job opportunities or vacancies, can be and are overcome. Data were gathered through interviews conducted within the city of Cape Town with employees, owners and managers within the low-skilled employment sector.

The use of informal social networks is shown to be frequently used within the low-skilled sector, by both employers and employees. Information concerning job vacancies and opportunities for the low-skilled, low-wage workforce are thus passed on through networks. The fact that job seekers, who are part of an employment-rich network regardless of space or distance between home and where work is located, have a better chance of job acquisition is also illustrated. Neighbourhood networks are often characterised as being employment-poor, and are conceptualised by the spatial mismatch hypothesis as being the only networks used among the low-skilled workforce. This is proven to be null – that networks extend beyond the neighbourhood and thus information through employment-rich networks are without boundaries.

Ultimately, it is shown that distance has little to do with accessing employment information around low-skilled, low-wage job opportunities and has little to do with high unemployment levels and low wages experienced by the low-skilled workforce.

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## Introduction

The essence of the spatial mismatch hypothesis (SMH) is that the space or distance between where many low-skilled, low-wage black urban workers live and where suitable employment opportunities are located, leads to the adverse labour market outcomes of this workforce. Adverse labour market outcomes are conceptualised as low wages and high unemployment rates. The theory originally stems from American literature, and thus is embedded in the structure of American cities. However the theory has subsequently been applied and explored within the context of other cities.

There are three main arguments that underlie the spatial mismatch hypothesis and its effect of adverse labour market outcomes of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. Namely, the spatial shift of low-skilled work out of the central city (where many low-skilled workers live) to the suburbs (which is further in distance to where the labour force lives), which is conceptualised as decentralisation. Secondly, housing market discrimination and the high housing costs associated with areas of low-skilled job growth. This refers to the racial discrimination of white residents trying to keep black people out of the employment-rich neighbourhoods and the unaffordably high cost for the low-wage black workforce to live in the suburban employment-rich neighbourhoods. And thirdly, barriers to job access which includes inadequate or insufficient access to transport and poor information about job vacancies and opportunities (Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998: 851; Holzer, 1991: 128).

The fact that there is a geographic, and physical, mismatch between where the many urban, low-skilled workers live and where suitable employment opportunities are located is well documented among authors of the spatial mismatch hypothesis (see, for example, the works of Wilson, 1987; Abraham, 1991; Turok, 2001; Kain, 1992). The mismatch is clear but the effects of such a mismatch are less apparent and more problematic. The effects of the spatial mismatch are conceptualised as causally resulting in the unemployment and low-wages of the low-skilled, residentially isolated workforce. The problem with this is that such adverse labour market outcomes are not necessarily caused by the spatial mismatch.

Job access is conceptualised as a combination of factors that leads to the adverse labour market outcomes of the low-skilled, urban poor living in isolated ghettos. Isolated ghettos are conceptualised as being areas where the low-skilled, concentrated poor live and are also conceptualised as being job-poor areas, with few available jobs or work opportunities for the low-skilled, low-wage workforce, which are far, physically and geographically, from areas that are job-rich, which have many available jobs or work opportunities for the low-skilled, low-wage workforce.

The factors conceptualised as contributing to job access are the limitations of transit systems between job-poor areas (where the lower skilled live) and job-rich areas; and the lack of or poor information concerning employment vacancies in these distant employment-rich areas, which have hindered the ability of the lower skilled workforce to access employment in job-rich areas (Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998: 851; Holzer, 1994: 713).

The focus of this paper centres on the issue of job access. The aim of this qualitative study is to explore the concepts surrounding job access within the context of Cape Town, and to investigate whether or not the spatial mismatch affects access to information about job vacancies and opportunities caused by the inefficacy of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce to conducting efficient job searches in areas far from where they live. I will show that the causal effect of the spatial mismatch, namely unemployment, is not perpetuated in Cape Town in terms of accessing information concerning employment opportunities. Unemployment is not causally linked to nor is it disseminated in terms of information, as the spatial mismatch literature argues (where these authors argue that greater distance results in poorer information regarding employment opportunities).

Information around employment opportunities is dealt with intricately because I try to combine the spatial mismatch literature and arguments from literature on job search then relate it to issues of job access and the spatial mismatch effects. The reason for wanting to do this is because there seems to be two poles of research,

one concerning the spatial mismatch and job access, and the other concerning job search and recruitment, but neither of these poles appear to consider the research findings of the other. Thus the SMH views spatial constraints as a primary cause of unemployment and low-wages among the low-skilled workforce but other job search literature and network literature argues that unemployment and low-wages is less centred around space and more around social networks.

As such, social networks will be explored along with the kinds of job search methods that are being used by the low-skilled workforce. According to the SMH the only social networks that are conceptualised are neighbourhood networks. This would mean is that low-skilled workers in isolated ghettos only have their neighbourhood networks to rely on and that because most people in the network are often unemployed, the network is employment-poor and leaves these low-skilled workers in a state of isolation from the realm of employment. This in turn would leave them with little or no information with regard to employment opportunities within the unskilled and semi-skilled labour markets in distant, job-rich, areas.

The more pertinent point here, that I take issue with, is that social networks extend beyond the boundaries of the neighbourhood, and can be employment-rich. Thus, information around job vacancies and opportunities would be able to be carried over to low-skilled workers if they are part of such a network, regardless of distance.

Following this section, I continue with a literature review encompassing an overview of the spatial mismatch hypothesis, the context of Cape Town and the spatial mismatch that exists, job access, job search methods, the reasons for employers using employee networks and why job searchers use this method. This is then followed by a section on the research methodology including the conceptual framework, research design, sampling procedure and sample, data collection, limitations and ethics. A discussion on my research findings is then carried out and finally, a conclusion drawn.

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Overview of the Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis

The 'spatial mismatch' hypothesis (SMH) finds its origins in a 1968 paper written by Kain entitled *Housing Segregation, Negro Employment, and Metropolitan Decentralization* (Kain, 1968: 175-197). Essentially the notion of the SMH suggests that the disconnection between segregated black residential neighbourhoods and the distribution of where employment opportunities are located for the low-skilled, black workforce leads to poor labour market outcomes. Thus, the spatial constraints experienced by the afore mentioned population within the scope of larger metropolitan areas accounts for the high level of unemployment and the low wages that are experienced (Kain, 1992: 378; Gobillion, Selod and Zenou, 2007: 2401-2402; Houston, 2001: 135).

The SMH explains the adverse labour market outcomes, of the black low skilled workforce as owing to the decentralisation of lower-skilled and manual work opportunities and a lack of sufficient mobility with regard to employment. Job access fits into this in terms of mobility constraints. Commuting difficulties and poor information with regard to job opportunities and vacancies result in decreased job access which is said to result in unemployment (Houston, 2001: 135; Ihlanfeldt & Sjoquist, 2000).

With regard to the concept of job access, Kain (1968: 179) justifies that the low skilled, black workforce have few associations with those in more distant areas, which are more affluent or better off and employment-rich. He terms these as being white areas, which are in the suburbs outside of the inner-city ghettos. He explains that because very few of their (the inner-city low-skilled workers) friends and neighbours are employed in such job-rich areas or frequent such areas, that there is thus a decrease in the chance of acquiring information in employment-rich suburban areas, with regard to job opportunities, for the low-skilled workforces living in job-poor neighbourhoods. This would lead to, what Wilson terms as, social isolation of the low-skilled, black, urban poor workforce living in employment-poor neighbourhoods (Wilson, 1987). It is argued that an increased

distance results in decreased opportunity to learn about jobs that are available for the low-skilled, black, urban poor (Kain, 1968: 179; Ihlanfeldt & Sjoquist, 2000: 119).

In addition to the barrier to information, there is a lack of physical access to these jobs, which is exacerbated by inadequate transportation (Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998: 856; Johnson, 2006: 332-333). Thus, to overcome the adverse labour market effects of the low-skilled workforce, caused by the spatial mismatch, these factors would need to be overcome by the workforce.

Kain (1968: 179) adds to this where he argues that the high cost associated with conducting a job search in distant job-rich areas for the low skilled, black workforce might act as a deterrent for searching for employment in such areas and therefore the low-skilled workforce may be restricted to look for work only within the realm of their job-poor neighbourhood (Gobillion *et al.*, 2007: 2408). Gobillion *et al.* (2007: 2408), discuss several mechanisms of the SMH, some from the point of view of the labour force and some from the point of view of the business owners, or the employers. The former mechanisms include low-skilled workers refusing to accept jobs that have long commutes and high transportation costs relative to income; they also suggest that there is an inverse relationship between distance and the efficiency of conducting a job search, because there is a decrease in information regarding employment opportunities – both of which speak to the issue of job access and is said to result in the adverse labour market outcomes of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce.

Gobillion *et al.* (2007: 2408) also argue that a mechanism, which perpetuates the effects of the spatial mismatch, is that employers hire their workforce from a closer proximity because of the perception that hiring distant employees makes them less productive owing to the long commutes they experience in order to get to work. This also relates to job access in that such a practice would spatially limit employment opportunities to include those who live close by, which would result in the exclusion of those workers who live in distant neighbourhoods.

As noted earlier, the focus of this paper is on job or employment access by low-skilled, low-wage workers. The SMH argues that because various studies show that there are high unemployment rates among those living in the inner-city and that many low-skilled jobs are located far from the inner-city, in more suburban areas, that it is the space and distance between these two locations – residential and work – that causes high unemployment rates among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. The inability to carry out effective job searches, by the afore mentioned workforce, is also said to be caused by distance (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996: 180).

## 2.2 Conceptualising Informal Job Search Methods and its Frequency

The literature conceptualises different kinds of job search methods that job seekers use to gain information about employment opportunities that could lead to job acquisition. These practices are conceptualised as being either formal or informal methods. Informal methods include using informal (social) networks and place-to-place searches, consisting of walk-ins and direct applications. Formal methods include job seekers using employment agencies, or other organisations to find employment, and media advertisements, such as job advertisements found in newspapers (Henly, 2000: 146; Elliot, 1999: 206) and more recently, job advertisements found via the internet.

The relationship between distance and job search method used, by the job seeker, has different implications concerning the effects of the spatial mismatch. For the purposes of this paper, I focus on informal job search methods because it is used more frequently by the low-skilled, low-wage workforce in searching for and acquiring work compared to formal job search methods.

Walk-ins and direct applications, which are forms of informal place-to-place searches, do not have a formal or informal intermediary. Thus, the job seeker has virtually no information regarding vacancies within the business. The job seeker walks into a business or company without any previous knowledge concerning actual

suitable job vacancies or knowledge concerning the required skill levels, or walks in on the basis of seeing a 'help wanted' sign and enquires about job vacancies in that way (Henly, 2000: 147).

This differs to using informal social networks, in that, there is a personal intermediary involved that passes on information regarding job opportunities and job vacancies to the job seeker. Such intermediaries could be acquaintances, friends, neighbours, relatives or current employees of a business (Henly, 2000: 147). Informal social networks often pass on information concerning employment opportunities through word-of-mouth, which could be considered a mechanism of informal networks. However, in terms of employment acquisition through informal networks, this is based on a sponsor vouching for a job seeker (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996: 189). In terms of the employer accessing information about the workforce, this is done through referrals or recommendations as put forward by company employees or other associates.

To illustrate the frequent usage of informal job search methods among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce I draw on Kain (1968: 179) who notes that labour mobility studies, which are often quantitative in nature, show that fewer jobs are found through the use of formal search methods. Rather, low-skilled workers in fact find out about employment opportunities most frequently through friends or other acquaintances, and by seeing 'help wanted' signs while passing by and enquiring about job vacancies in this regard (Kain, 1968: 179). Thus, in terms of job search methods, it would appear as though place-to-place searches and searches through networks are more popular than any other job search method (Franzen and Hangartner, 2006: 353). Thus, in instances where mobility is limited, it could serve as a barrier to job seekers and influences their ability to access employed opportunities (Kawabata, 2003: 1651).

In terms of acquisition, there is also a relatively vast amount of literature on the use of informal social networks in the acquisition of low-skilled work (Ponzo and Scoppa, 2009: 89, Portes, 1998: 12). Evidence supporting the notion that people find work through family, friends or other employed acquaintances has grown and is largely

supported by quantitative analysis suggesting the frequency of these occurrences (Ponzo and Scoppa, 2009: 89), especially in the case of entry level jobs.

Elliot (1999: 206, 207) provides further justification for this where he statistically shows that the prevalence of informal methods used among the low-skilled workforce is 77.5%. He also shows that job seekers from high-poverty, job-poor, neighbourhoods are more likely to use informal job search and job acquisition methods, 88.3% and 73.2% respectively, in comparison to those who live in low-poverty areas. Thus, the popularity of informal methods is clear for the low-skilled, low-wage job seekers, especially those living in areas of concentrated poverty.

In addition to this, Henly (2000: 148) argues that the literature dictates a distinct pattern of informal networks and referrals being the most used and most effective method, in terms of gaining access to employment, employed by job seekers and employers in the low-wage, low-skilled labour market.

### 2.3 The Effects of Space and Distance on Job Search Methods

A central issue around the SMH is that central city low-skilled, low-wage, black workers are disconnected from job opportunities (Gobillion *et al*, 2007: 2402). Information flow is argued to be affected by distance and, as such, job search efficacy, when using informal search methods, is said to be negatively impacted by distance (McQuaid and Greig, 2001: 157), and exacerbated by transit difficulties.

#### 2.3.1 Place-to-place job searches and the impact of distance

The argument is that there is a spatial barrier to the potential attainment of jobs because low-skilled, low-wage job seekers in distant, job-poor, areas have a decreased ability to conduct effective place-to-place job searches without being in the vicinity of where job opportunities are located. Additionally, it is argued that these job seekers are unaware of opportunities in job-rich areas and experience transit difficulties in accessing these neighbourhoods therefore lacking access to information about vacancies in these areas (Houston, 2001: 149;

Naudé, 2008: 269; Ihlanfeldt & Sjoquist, 2000: 119; Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998: 885-886; Wilson, 2003: 1106; Wilson, 1992: 642).

Direct applications and walk-ins, are argued as being spatially limited to those who live within close proximity to where employment is located. The fact that using such job search methods are spatially limiting would be exacerbated in instances where access to employment is hindered by high transit costs, long commutes and transit inadequacies, the latter of which refers to the lack of access to bus and rail transit systems. In such a case where direct applications and walk-ins are hindered by transit barriers, which consist of the aforementioned costs, commutes and inadequacies, the effects of the spatial mismatch for those living in distant areas could lead to the adverse labour market outcomes for those low-skilled job seekers who live far from job-rich areas. This is in line with Wilson's (1997: 41) argument in that he notes that transportation could hinder the ability for those living in isolated ghettos to travel to job-rich areas to search for employment.

### 2.3.2 Social networks and the impact of distance

Kain (1992: 378) notes a counter-argument to the SMH – although he does not agree with it – that if the workforce is spatially isolated because of housing market segregation, this does not necessarily directly result in limiting employment opportunities for the poor, black, low-skilled, low-wage population. This suggests that the neighbourhood in which this population lives has little bearing their job prospects. Thus, despite low-skilled, low-wage neighbourhoods being spatially isolated from where job-rich suburban areas, job seekers still have the ability to learn about job vacancies and opportunities by using other job search methods, such as informal social networks.

Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist (1998: 856) concur with this in that they argue that the low-skilled, low-wage workers potentially have less information concerning employment in distant areas because of their reliance on informal strategies, like informal social networks and place-to-place job searches, to access job information (Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998: 856; Ihlanfeldt, 1999: 344).

The authors here are talking specifically about the youth and their reliance on informal network strategies to find work, because of their inability to access adequate transit and conduct adequate and efficient place-to-place job searches, like walk-ins or direct applications. Here they appear to be associating the informal youth networks as being employment-poor, and constricted by the neighbourhood boundary. Employment-poor networks are conceptualised as being social networks, often constricted to concentrated poor neighbourhoods (where the low-skilled, low-wage workforce is said to live), that contain poor quality and low quantity information about job vacancies and opportunities for low-skilled, low-wage work. This would perpetuate the effects of the mismatch, in that this group of low-skilled, low-wage workers are unable to overcome the necessary spatial barriers to access employment. This would, theoretically, leave them socially isolated, with virtually no employment-rich networks. As such, information regarding employment opportunities and job vacancies would be lost, and this will impact negatively on job search methods and employment (O'Regan, 1993: 331; Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996: 180).

With regard to accessing information about job vacancies through informal networks, information flow is not spatially constrained in any way which counters the argument set out by the SMH. Thus, even those in distant areas would have access to information concerning employment opportunities when they are part of an employment-rich social network (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996). Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996) argue that, based on their study of the Red Hook district in New York, many low-skilled, low-wage jobs are filled through using informal social networks that exclude local low-skilled residents. Thus, they argue that networks are not neighbourhood bound and extend beyond the job seekers neighbourhood allowing access to information on job opportunities in distant, employment-rich areas.

They also argue that social networks are needed in order to access information about vacancies and acquire employment. As such, they argue the irrelevance of distance between where low-skilled work is located and where the low-skilled, low-wage job seekers live and that jobs that are close to where the low-skilled, low-

wage workers live does not lead to improved access to employment opportunities (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996).

The implication of this is that, because distance to job access is not an issue, there would be no spatial mismatch effect, or it would be significantly reduced because employment-rich networks are able to extend beyond neighbourhood boundaries. This is in line with Elliot's (1999) argument that job networks are not constricted to the neighbourhood of the job seekers and that spatial isolation does not necessarily result in social network isolation (Elliot, 1999: 200, 201).

#### 2.4 Job Access: transit barriers, access to information and social isolation

The spatial mismatch literature often illustrates that accessibility to jobs, or employment, matters and that it is an important explanation concerning the perpetuation and existence of the mismatch effects, thus often quantifying job access but rarely explaining the determinants of what underlies such an effect and why (Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998: 882). Once again, job access concerns access to information around employment opportunities, and where there is an increased distance between where low-skilled work opportunities are located and where the low-skilled workforce lives, issues of transit could exacerbate difficulty in accessing these job opportunities. What has been discussed above is that job search methods are argued to be influenced by space but if these constraints concerning job access are overcome then the effects of the spatial mismatch would be overcome as well. This would, then, mean that adverse labour market outcomes are not a causal result of distance.

##### 2.4.1 Issues of Transit

Job access encompasses issues of transit, including travelling to work, cost and the time that it takes (Holzer, 1991: 116). Houston (2001: 142) argues that commuting constraints to employment are considerable because, according to his study conducted with firms that had relocated, there are barriers or limits as to how far people are willing to commute between home and work, and can reasonably do so. McQuaid and Greig (2001: 156)

argue that poor transit accessibility may serve as a barrier to those low-skilled, low-wage employment seekers. Especially, where there is a relatively far distance between where the job seeker resides and where employment opportunities are located.

As explained earlier, issues of transit are mostly associated with informal place-to-place searches. The actual mismatch between job seekers and suitable jobs affects either the actual ability for those job seekers to travel further to a centre of employment or the willingness for them to do so (McQuaid and Greig, 2001: 152).

Low car ownership and the reliance on public transit, especially bus and rail systems, among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce is said to perpetuate the effects of the spatial mismatch in that those living in distant areas potentially experience a lack of transport, long commutes and it could also prove to be costly relative to the expected low wage (Wilson, 1997: 39, 40; Houston, 2001: 149, 144). In essence, if low-skilled, low-wage job seekers could afford to own and maintain a car then distances between where they live and where work is located becomes less of an obstacle because their commutes are quicker and they would not experience a lack of transport in getting to places further away. However, because many low-skilled, low-wage workers cannot afford to own and maintain a car, they would rely more heavily on public transit systems. This reliance on public transport would lead to longer commutes, high and unaffordable transport costs and potential inadequate access to these transit systems which, in turn, would not be feasible when looking for work in distant, employment-rich areas. Such barriers to employment, however, are more likely to be experienced as a problem in bigger cities (Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist, 1998: 881) and would be seen as less of an obstacle in smaller cities like Cape Town which is only approximately 2200 km<sup>2</sup> (Wilkinson, 2000: 198), thus problems regarding transport are easier to overcome.

These arguments concerning bus and rail transit systems might be true but Clark and Crouse (2002: 78) argue that, in South Africa, there was a growth in the mini-bus taxi industry, which is a prevalent phenomenon in Cape Town. This growth is attributed to the inefficiency of bus and rail systems to meet the needs of those

using it. An example of such inefficiency is the insufficient off-peak services and the structural inflexibility in accessing job-rich suburbs easily. Thus mini-bus taxis are used as an alternative means, and in some cases, an additional transit mode, despite being at a higher cost for the commuter, compared to other systems (Clark and Crouse, 2002: 81).

The mini-bus taxi industry is largely unregulated by the state and is much more flexible and thus able to better accommodate those travelling far distances compared to bus and rail transit (Clark and Crouse, 2002: 82). Where there are public transit gaps for bus and rail systems, or an access deficiency in these, that run between what would be termed the isolated ghettos and areas where work is located, there appears to be the alternative or additional usage of the mini-bus taxi.

It is for this reason that I would argue that the spatial mismatch effects, with regard to transportation issues, is not a major consideration within the context of Cape Town, because there are mechanisms in place to overcome spatial constraints and gain access to employment regardless of distance. Thus, adverse labour market outcomes are not necessarily caused by transit difficulties and the distance between where work is located and where job seekers live.

#### 2.4.2 Information and Social Isolation

As mentioned earlier, there is an argument that information regarding the labour market, for the low-skilled, low-wage workforce, is primarily attained or accessed via social networks. This line of argument contends that job seekers from concentrated poor neighbourhoods rely on and are associated with networks that contain less information concerning job vacancies and opportunities because their social network, through which referrals flow, is confined within the boundaries of their job-poor neighbourhood (Holzer and Ihlanfeldt, 1996: 20). Thus, this leads to a considerable barrier to job access, in employment-rich areas, and potentially results in the adverse labour market outcomes of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce (O'Regan, 1993; Portes, 1998; Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996; Ponzio and Scoppa, 2009).

The argument, embedded in the SMH, is that social networks are neighbourhood bound and job-poor. This stems from Wilson's (1987) concept of social isolation. He argues that social isolation stems from the infrequent interaction that those, living in areas of concentrated poverty, have with family and friends who live in job-rich areas with more secure and constant employment records (Wilson, 1987: 60). Thus, social isolation serves as a barrier to job seekers in that it is difficult for them to be linked to employment-rich networks because of the lack of interaction with employed individuals (Wilson, 1987: 60). However, as Elliot (1999) argues, this assumption to be flawed to the extent that there is interaction with those employed in distant areas and albeit minimal, it still exists (Elliot, 1999: 201).

The SMH argues that ghetto neighbourhoods are isolated and is shown to be this way by drawing evidence that shows the adverse labour market outcomes of those residents. Because of this isolation their networks would be socially isolated because the SMH only recognises and accounts for neighbourhood networks. Thus, the adverse labour market outcomes of the black, urban low-skilled low-wage workforce are said to be caused by their spatial isolation and distance to employment-rich areas.

The argument that the neighbourhood in which one lives is likely to influence and determine the social circles that one is exposed to, serves as a justification for the assumption that work is only found through neighbourhood networks (O'Regan, 1993: 330). Thus, O'Regan argues that low-skilled, low-wage networks are spatially limited (O'Regan, 1993: 330). And if this is the case, then access to information for the low-skilled, low-wage workforce, living in high-poverty neighbourhoods would have significantly less access to information on job opportunities in employment-rich areas (O'Regan, 1993: 327).

O'Regan (1993), neither supports nor rejects the spatial mismatch hypothesis directly, but where she argues that social networks are spatially limited, could mean that there is potential for social isolation and that this potentially results in adverse labour market outcomes. O'Regan (1993: 331, 333) argues that in areas of

concentrated poverty the employment level of its residents could be affected negatively because of the social isolation and, thus, the barriers to information about jobs.

This point is also argued by Wilson (1992: 650) in that “the central problem of the underclass is joblessness reinforced by increasing social isolation in impoverished neighbourhoods, as reflected, for example, in the residents’ declining access to job information network systems”. The idea of social isolation is an important one. In essence this concept pertains to the idea that the underclass has a lack of contact or interaction with resources, such as institutions and other members of mainstream society, that other mainstream neighbourhoods and individuals may have (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996: 180) and that this social isolation leads to a decrease in the likelihood that they will have access to information about, for example, job opportunities and vacancies (Wilson, 2003: 1106; Elliot, 1999: 200).

Elliot (1999) counter-argues this, where he statistically shows that neighbourhood poverty has little to do with searching and acquiring work through social networks. Elliot (1999: 210) argues that job seekers are likely to use informal neighbourhood networks to find work but also that low-skilled, low-wage workers who live in isolated ghettos are equally likely to use non-neighbourhood networks to gain employment. Elliot (1999: 210) argues that in cases where non-neighbourhood contacts live in other isolated areas and concentrated poor neighbourhoods, the fact that the networks are still used shows that employment-rich networks are stretched beyond the confines of a neighbourhood and thus would mean that neighbourhood poverty has no effect on the level of adverse labour market outcomes, specifically unemployment.

However, information barriers could be overcome if one is involved or part of an employment-rich network. Not only that, but that employment-rich networks are not bound and constricted to the neighbourhood of the individual, as the SMH argues, but that employment-rich networks are in fact boundary-less.

Social isolation tends to neglect the fact that employment-rich networks are not restricted to neighbourhoods. It is very possible for these networks to extend beyond these geographical boundaries (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996: 185 & 193; Crankshaw and Goetz, 2010: 8). This point is echoed by Elliot's (1999) argument, where his findings suggest that within high-poverty neighbourhoods, there may well be a lack of access to contacts from other neighbourhoods, which would limit the access to information about job vacancies outside of the job seekers neighbourhood, but he argues that not all resident of concentrated poor, job-poor, areas are affected in the same way. Thus, there is no denial of the fact that neighbourhood networks exist and are used to find employment but that there are others who live in the same neighbourhood who have networks that extend beyond the neighbourhood boundary (Elliot, 1999: 201, 208. 210).

Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996: 193) share the same sentiments, where they find, as mentioned earlier, that the issue of job access is not overcome by simply placing low-skilled job opportunities within close proximity to where the low-skilled, low-wage workforce lives because this still does not guarantee job access, in terms of accessing information regarding vacancies, if social networks are used in finding low-skilled, low-wage workers by the employer and used by job seekers in accessing job information. They argue, also mentioned earlier, that their findings suggest that there are cases where local low-skilled jobs are occupied by non-local employees and that these non-locals were primarily hired through social networks (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996). This clearly shows that social networks extend beyond neighbourhood boundaries, if job seekers access information and acquire employment through social networks in areas outside of their own neighbourhoods.

This illustrates the relevance of networks in gaining access to information with regard to these opportunities and job vacancies. It also shows that where work is located becomes irrelevant, and much less of a barrier to accessing job or employment information. Thus, being part of a network becomes the most important means by which information about low-skilled employment opportunities is distributed. In terms of the effects of the spatial mismatch, it is clear that space and distance have little relevance to employment and thus is not a causal contributory to unemployment.

This is hinted at by Wilson, despite his strongly argued point on social isolation, where he notes that even in cases where job vacancies are within the neighbourhood or close proximity to where the low-skilled, low-wage workforce lives, job seekers outside of the neighbourhood can find out about these employment opportunities sooner than those job seekers within the neighbourhood because those within the neighbourhood are not part of an employment-rich network (Wilson, 1987: 60).

This argument is qualified by Portes (1998: 13), where he also states that often it seems to be the case that those who are given work are from areas that are not in the vicinity of the centre for employment. Thus those who live within close proximity to employment opportunities are potentially excluded from the employment process (Portes, 1998: 13). Portes (1998) argues that often people find jobs or work for others or through others, and that often entry-level vacancies are filled through kin or friendship networks. He takes this latter notion further, where he notes that these job seekers who acquire employment are from areas that are far or spatially distant to where the work is located, rather than job seekers from within the local vicinity of the business or company.

It would seem that the biggest barrier for the low skilled workforce and job access relates to the information regarding work opportunities in, not only, distant areas but neighbouring areas as well. This is evident in my research, and is argued and shown by Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996).

Thus there are really two kinds of networks which are at play. The first of which, being the ghetto neighbourhood which would be a source of weak, little or no information regarding jobs and which is generally termed as being a job poor network with more unemployed people than employed. The second kind of network is the network of employed people, so an employee network, which is a job rich network with better information regarding job vacancies and opportunities regardless of how close or far one lives from the job. Thus, this network does not discriminate against distance. This is a work based network.

These networks are means by which people in isolated ghettos find jobs or potential jobs and hear about information regarding job opportunities. However, I am not implying that this is the only way that employment is found because other job search methods can be employed and may be used in combination with this job search method.

Despite the fact that social networks benefit one group, implicitly through the inclusion of one group there is the exclusion of another (Portes, 1998: 16). Networks could have different characteristics but for work information to be acquired within the network, inherently there needs to be someone who is employed within the network. Henly (2000: 149) contends that not being part of a job-rich network would exclude those individuals from gaining access to various information and opportunities concerning job vacancies and employment. This is not specifically a geographic consequence of the mismatch but could result in the unemployment among those who are not part of the network, regardless of distance.

What this means for the spatial mismatch hypothesis, is that the geographical mismatch between where potential employees live and where the unskilled or semi-skilled work is located has no necessary bearing on access to job information if the job seeker is part of an employment-rich network, because such networks extend beyond the neighbourhood. So even though the SMH argues that the concentrated, black, urban poor, living in the ghettos only use neighbourhood networks, which is counter argued by Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996) who argue that workers use networks that which are not necessarily constrained to the ghetto neighbourhood, but that employment networks are used regardless of where workers live and where employment is located.

Despite these SMH arguments surrounding social isolation, evidence from other research suggests that social isolation is not a consequence of spatial isolation, such as the sentiment echoed in the research of Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996), where they conclude that despite the workforce living within close proximity to employment

opportunities or job vacancies, they remain unemployed and still do not have sufficient access to these jobs if they are not within an employment-rich network.

In sum, the SMH only conceptualises one kind of a social network which is a job-poor, neighbourhood network. Thus, the SMH assumes that low-skilled, low-wage workers only find out about jobs through this neighbourhood network and that because this network is socially isolated the effects of the mismatch are likely to be perpetuated. So the theory argues that because people do not live in the same neighbourhood as where jobs or potential employment centres are located, they have no information about suitable job vacancies in employment-rich areas. Thus they are left unemployed because of where they live. However, a job-poor neighbourhood network is not the only kind of network that exists. There are other social networks that consist of employed individuals that transcend geographical boundaries because such employee-rich networks are not isolated to one neighbourhood or area.

## 2.5 Why Employers use Employee Networks

Employment opportunities may potentially be reduced and may result in keeping low-skilled, low-wage job seekers out of the loop completely with regard to job opportunities if positions are filled through social networks (Reingold, 1999: 1908). Thus, the spatial mismatch may not necessarily directly cause unemployment and adverse labour market outcomes of job seekers if they are part of an employment-rich network. But in cases where low-skilled job seekers are not part of a job-rich network, unemployment could be affected by employers mostly or only use word-of-mouth and referrals to find employees, and vouching when hiring employees.

Henly (2000: 145) notes that employers potentially face the same issue as the workforce in terms of having poor or inaccurate information about workers or potential employees with increased distance. As such, they are likely to use informal methods to advertise low-skilled, low-wage positions and hire employees.

Grieco (1987: 37) puts forward three rationales for the use of familial and friendship networks of those existing employees as used by employers. The first reason is the use of such networks is that referrals from employees that are already employed is the most cost effective, or cheapest, means of recruiting workers (Grieco, 1987: 37; Ponzo and Scoppa, 2009: 91; Reingold, 1999: 1909). So, when the referral system and word-of-mouth is used there is no need to advertise via formal means which would inherently save cost, because advertising often costs money (Ponzo and Scoppa, 2009: 91; Reingold, 1999: 1909). The only instance where it does not cost money is when using a free advertising means, such as [www.gumtree.co.za](http://www.gumtree.co.za). Thus, albeit a rare occurrence, free formal methods are available for use. In addition to the avoidance of advertising costs, the cost and time of processing applications could also be avoided (Grieco, 1987: 37; Henly, 2000: 152).

The use of informal networks to recruit workers also serve as a method of screening candidates which other informal methods do not allow for (Henly, 2000: 147). This links to the argument that contends that individuals “know people who resemble themselves” (Reingold, 1999: 1907). From the evidence in this research, this notion is a prevalent perception shown by employers. The literature, takes this a step further in suggesting that it is for this reason that informal information regarding employment opportunities is, thus, likely to flow between those with similar socio-economic and demographic characteristics (Reingold, 1999: 1908). This relates to the targeted recruitment of those who are within the scope of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce.

The second reason for using informal networks by businesses is that it allows for targeted recruiting. Thus, this form of recruitment would generate a potential pool of employees with similar characteristics to those that are already employed and suitable characteristics in terms of what the employer is looking for within their workforce (Grieco, 1987: 38). This appears to be a very important notion with regard to referrals, or those being vouched for, being of a similar character. Vouching is when a sponsor who is already employed with the company vouches for a job seeker. In addition to this, businesses are more likely to accept referrals from good and reliable employees based on the assumption that referrals are comparable to the already employed, and

that the job seeker is being vouched for which allows for a degree of candidate screening (Ponzo and Scoppa, 2009: 91; Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996).

Related to targeted recruitment is the concept of quality of worker. O'Regan (1993: 328) notes that employers contend that using employee referrals results in a "higher quality" of worker and a low employee turnover, compared to other methods. Essentially this could be formulated as being part of the 'fitting in' concept that employers appear to look for. Targeted recruitment allows for better fit within the company based on the perception of similar characteristics.

The third rationale for the use of such networks is that these networks then form a mechanism of control within the workforce. The logic behind this is that the control exists in terms of the responsibility of the newly recruited employee to their sponsor in terms of maintaining their interest and reputation (Grieco, 1987: 39). Ponzo and Scoppa (2009: 91) refer to this as being peer pressure, and as a mechanism used by businesses in order to monitor those who are new employees (Portes, 1998: 10).

## 2.6 Why Job Searchers use Employee-Rich Networks

An obvious reason for low-skilled, low-wage job seekers to use employment-rich networks, that extend beyond the confines of the neighbourhood, is that it is a cheap and cost effective method, (O'Regan, 1993: 328; Franzen and Hangartner, 2006: 364) and an efficient way of finding out about job opportunities outside of the confines of the neighbourhood. Place-to-place searchers and formal methods often results in the job seeker incurring costs to either get to an employment-rich area and conduct a search or buy a newspaper or pay commissions to employment agencies. Whereas word-of-mouth is free, because interacting within an employment-rich network is free. As such, low-skilled, low-wage workers who live far from employment-rich areas and thus far from suitable employment opportunities would use social networks to access employment information because it overcomes the cost of travelling to distant job-rich areas.

Another reason for job seekers to use networks that are employment-rich includes the fact that such networks allows for the attainment of job information at an intensive margin (Grieco, 1987: 40). Thus, those who are in search of employment are able to exploit these networks in gaining intricate details about the job, such as the problems or disadvantages of the job rather than only the positive elements, which employers are usually only willing to reveal (Grieco, 1987: 40). Compared to other methods, job seekers that make use of employment-rich networks, are able to access and gain better information with regard to job characteristics and job opportunities and availability (Franzen and Hangartner, 2006: 353). And as such, there would be a better job match between the job and the employee (Franzen and Hangartner, 2006: 354).

## 2.7 The Context of Cape Town and the Spatial Mismatch that Exists

The spatial mismatch hypothesis argues that part of the problem and the cause of the physical and spatial mismatch, between where many low-skilled workers live and where work is located, is because economic activity has decentralised (Bluestone and Stevenson, 2000: 8). This shift is noted within the context of Cape Town, as well, where many businesses are moving out of the Cape Town CBD, and thus spreading economic activity into the higher income northern and southern suburbs of Cape Town because it is a cheaper option for businesses and it is closer to their client base (Turok, 2001: 2358). However, the difference in Cape Town is that the low-skilled, low-wage workforce does not necessarily live in the city centre. A better comparison to the American inner-city, would be the south east township areas. The reason for this comparison is because many low-skilled, low-wage workers live in south east township areas where it is cheaper, despite being further to the suburbs and CBD where work is located.

Thus, the context of Cape Town, does not serve as an exact replica of the structure of the American metropolitan model with the inner-city degradation at the centre and the affluence of the suburbs which surround the inner-city (Naudé, 2008: 270). However, because of the past apartheid system, and the fact that the real effects of such a system are still prevalent in today's society, there is a spatial disconnection between

home and work, in terms of the township areas where many low-skilled, low wage-workers live, and suburban employment nodes (Rospabe and Selod, 2006: 262; Turok, 2001: 2350).

The past apartheid legislation resulted in the suburbanisation of many black, low-wage residents because they were forcibly removed, due to the Group Areas Act, from the centre or inner-city neighbourhoods, like District Six (close to where employment is located), to low-income council housing in the south east sector of the city, like Khayelitsha, Blue Downs and Mitchell's Plain (where there is little employment). These townships and low-income housing settlements were built along the south-east, extreme periphery of the city (Wilkinson, 2000: 197, 198; Clark and Crouse, 2002: 78; Turok, 2001: 2350).

Presently, this spatial and physical mismatch persists to the extent that, post-apartheid, low-cost housing development on this south east periphery persists (Turok, 2001: 2351). Thus, the south east area is geographically isolated and far from employment districts such as the northern and southern suburbs and CBD. It is also characterised as being an area of concentrated poverty owing to the effects of past legislation. The persistence of spatial divisions in Cape Town is also reinforced by various institutions and the market, which would be in line with the SMH. He also notes that those who are impoverished or disadvantaged and reside in impoverished areas, very seldom move out of these areas to areas which have better location attributes relative to where employment opportunities are located (Turok, 2001: 2371).

Owing to this mismatch, Turok (2001: 2371) notes that there is little access for the poorer population, living in isolated ghetto type areas (like the south east townships), to opportunities regarding social activity and economic or market related activity. The low-skilled, low-wage impoverished population would have limited opportunities in accessing these suburban areas, where there is a high growth in low-skilled employment, compared to the CBD because these suburbs lack sufficient rail and bus access which commuters need, compared to the CBD which has sufficient rail and bus access (Turok, 2001: 2359).

Based on this, the context of Cape Town seems to correspond to the SMH, in terms of the housing market segregation and the reduced access to employment opportunities of those living in distant, impoverished communities. Thus there is a clear mismatch in Cape Town between where the majority of low-skilled work is located and where many of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce lives (see appendix one for an illustration of the mismatch in Cape Town, posed by Turok, 2001).

## 2.8 Summary

In sum, the SMH is based on the physical disconnection between where the low-skilled, low-wage workforce lives and where suitable work opportunities are located leads to the adverse labour market outcomes of this workforce, what I conceptualise as being the mismatch effect.

Barriers to job access include access to information concerning employment opportunities, which can be exacerbated through transit difficulties associated with distance and commuting to areas of employment that are spatially far from where the job seeker lives. When these barriers are overcome, the effects of the spatial mismatch are either non-existent or greatly minimised. Thus, spatial constraints and distance are not an adequate causal effect on unemployment and low-wage of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. Also, in Cape Town, there is a definite spatial mismatch, but that this leads to adverse labour market outcomes is not so definitive.

Informal job search methods, like place-to-place and informal social networks, are the most frequently used methods among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. Place-to-place searches can be spatially limiting, but where transit barriers are overcome the effects of distance are overcome. There is a stronger, and more sensible, counter-argument to the SMH that shows that social networks are boundary-less and as such spatial limitations are overcome to this extent.

Ultimately, the arguments above suggest that adverse labour market outcomes are not caused by distance and the existence of the spatial mismatch, because even in cases where difficulties associated with distance are overcome, unemployment and low wages still persist.

## Research Methodology

### 3.1 Conceptual Framework

*It is difficult, if not impossible, however, for a researcher to enter into a line of enquiry without having some existing problem or theory in mind.*

(Muchinsky, 2006: 33)

This quote is relevant to many studies conducted and especially relevant to this one, because upon entering the field, I had the mechanisms of a specific theory in mind – the SMH. Thus, the questions that were asked was in line with the elements related to this theory, but being open and sensitive to other emerging concepts and theories was also a priority.

According to Seibolt (2002), within the realm of qualitative research the distinctions between a Theoretical Framework and a Conceptual Framework appear less apparent compared to quantitative research. She defines the term theoretical framework as being based on one theory and the explanation of the relationship between concepts of research interest and the theory (Seibolt, 2002: 3). This differs slightly from the conceptual framework in that the conceptual framework serves as a force for the creation of a theory through the linking of various concepts from many theories, not just one (Seibolt, 2002: 4).

Following these definitions the qualitative research that I embark on for my dissertation encompasses both of these frameworks, but more so the former rather than the latter. My dissertation is based on the spatial mismatch hypothesis, which is one theory, but then the aim of the exploratory study is to draw out concepts regarding job access, in a broad sense, zoning in on a seemingly major barrier concerning information about job opportunities through employment-rich networks and perhaps link those concepts to other theories, thus hopefully, formulate a new theory linked to the spatial mismatch hypothesis, and job access.

The spatial mismatch hypothesis is based on theory that stems from American literature where, in American cities, there is said to be high unemployment rates among the African-American manual and lower-skilled population in the central and inner cities. (Houston, 2001: 135). Theoretically the aim is at understanding unemployment at various skill levels and within various region or districts that persist in today's society and to understand these issues in relation to the change in the dynamics of the labour market and the economy (Abraham, 1991: 453).

Thus, the purpose of my dissertation is to explore the notions around the cause of the spatial mismatch and job access (which is an underlying premise of the SMH) in terms of where businesses are located, their location in terms of the type of economic activity and skill levels required, where their low skilled employees reside and how potential low skilled employees acquire information regarding job vacancies and how employers recruit their low skilled workforce. That is the rationale behind the research question which is an enquiry and exploration into the job information section of the spatial mismatch theory with regard to a South African context, but more specifically to the context of the Cape Town metropolitan and the greater Cape Town area.

### 3.2 Research Design

Despite the fact that this study is based on the SMH, it is still very much an exploratory study and as such the most appropriate methodology for such a case is qualitative research. The essence and central aim of the qualitative research paradigm is to describe and understand certain social phenomenon or actions that take place rather than trying to predict or generalise the findings to a broader population (Babbie and Mouton, 2006: 270; Punch, 2005: 141; Willig, 2001: 9). So with regard to this research, we know from other studies that certain mechanisms occur and add to the SMH and the said effects of the actual spatial mismatch, but the questions of how and why such mechanisms occur are less clear. And that is what this research is focused on, job access –transit difficulties which exacerbate poor information access, how job seekers hear about job vacancies, why low-skilled job seekers use social networks, why or why not they use other means, and likewise for employers.

Qualitative research allows for new ways to understand theory in response to research questions (Muchinsky, 2006: 32). The actual research process is inductive which allows for the occurrence of new theoretical elements and new evidence which could in fact add to the current debates. Also an important conceptualisation of the qualitative research paradigm is that it emphasises the emic perspective, which in this case would mean that the perspective of the owners or managers that would be interviewed is most relevant (Babbie and Mouton, 2006: 270; Kvale, 1996: 27; Rubin and Rubin, 1995: 17; Muchinsky, 2006: 33). This is an important aspect because in many other studies related to this topic, mechanisms are stated and the prevalence of the use of these methods shown, but it is rare to find the exploration of the use of these and the dynamics of the mechanisms. Thus, for the purpose of this research it was important for the interviewee to express, from their perspective, their reasons for their use of certain mechanisms of recruiting the workforce within their respective companies. This gives us greater depth and understanding with regard to the mechanisms in place.

The normative occurrence within the qualitative research paradigm is to study people in a setting or space that would be familiar to them (Willig, 2001: 9). Thus, in most cases, interviewees were interviewed at their work place. There is one case where the interviewee requested to be interviewed after hours in an alternate setting which was more convenient for him. This, however, also had a negative side-effect, to the extent that often there were work interruptions that would come up and require their attention, which potentially disrupted the flow of the interview.

A combination of cultural interviews and topical interviews were used. Both of these methods fall under qualitative interviewing (Rubin and Rubin, 1995: 28). The focus of the former interviewing style tends to focus on the “norms, values, understandings, and taken for granted rules of behaviour of a group” (Rubin and Rubin, 1995: 28). Thus, in terms of applying this notion to the interviews conducted in this study, the main focus was on the norms, understanding and rules of business owners or managers and low skilled workers’ search for employment through various mechanisms. In addition to this, the notion of topical interviews corresponds to

the way in which the focus of the interview narrowed toward a more specific process (Rubin and Rubin, 1995: 28). In this case later we narrowed our interviews to focus more on how the unskilled and semi-skilled labour force is recruited by companies using various methods and how potential employees hear about job vacancies and the conditions that lead to the acquiring of low skilled jobs. This often occurred during re-interviews.

### 3.3 Sampling

A type of non-probability sampling was used in this study, namely *purposive sampling*. Purposive sampling entails selecting a sample based on the researchers knowledge of the group under investigation, and is also based on the actual aim of the research (Babbie and Mouton, 2006: 166). Another element that defined the sample was the willingness of owners, managers or employees, to be interviewed and was subject to their availability as well, thus convenience of finding a willing participant became a crucial element in harvesting the final sample.

The sample included owners (or, in most cases, co-owners) or managers of small to medium size business within the Cape Town region. Conceptually, I define small businesses as having less than 50 permanent employees and medium would be between 50 to 200 permanent employees. Thus, the majority of the business used fall under the small category and only the Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store would fall under the medium size business category.

The sample consisted of business that employed low skilled workers, thus the majority of their workforce consisted of unskilled or semi-skilled employees. I would conceptualise unskilled labour as not requiring any high degree formal education, thus those who are unskilled can perform tasks that are manual and menial, and it is not necessary to have a matric or the equivalent to perform such menial tasks. This would differ from those who are semi-skilled in that they either have a matric qualification, or other qualification or have acquired job specific skills, this could include clerical work, drivers and the like.

In addition to the owners and managers, three employees, either current or former of two different businesses, also formed part of the sample.

### 3.4 Data Collection

Ten in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted within the Cape Town region. Seven in-depth interviews were conducted with either the owner or the manager of five small to medium sized businesses, in the Cape Town metropolis – namely these areas included Plumstead, Montague Gardens in Milnerton, Brakenfell, Maitland and Mowbray. The owners (or co-owners) of CNS Trailers in Brakenfell, Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store in Plumstead and the Wild Fig Restaurant in Mowbray were interviewed once, with the exception of the latter whom which I conducted a follow-up via email.

The manager and owner of S.E.A.T Electrics in Montague Gardens and All Weather Enclosures in Maitland, respectively, were interviewed in 2009 and a follow-up interview conducted later in 2010, with the latter taking the form of a follow-up telephonic interview. In addition to that, three other interviews were conducted with previous or current employees of certain business that we had covered, namely a previous employee and current employee of Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store (in Plumstead), and a current employee of the Wild Fig Restaurant (in Mowbray). Besides these interviews, other interviews conducted in 2008, for my Honours project, are also used and applied where appropriate and will aid in backing up certain points of interest (see appendix one for a tabulation of the above information).

Semi-structured interviews allow for maintaining control over the direction of the interview by the interviewer, yet also allowing for flexibility for both the interviewer and interviewee with respect to various issues, subject matter or questions that may develop while the interview is in progress (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007: 84). This is a great advantage and really allowed for the interviewees to express themselves while remaining on topic. Thus, semi-structured interviews were the most appropriate method to utilise.

Generally the field work was conducted by the research team, which consisted of two Masters students, however each of us were responsible for a minimum of eight interviews. Initial interviews were conducted, and in certain instances, a second interview was conducted and 'follow-ups' done via a short telephonic interview, as with the case of All Weather Enclosures, or an email follow-up, as with the case of the Wild Fig Restaurant. The approximate time span or length of the interviews range between about 20 minutes to about 2 hours. Also the interviews were conducted in 2009 and 2010.

Because the data were collected through the use of semi-structured interviews, the interview did not take the form of a highly structured questionnaire nor was it completely unstructured with no prepared themes to be discussed. The various interviews were conducted according to a pre-established interview schedule (Kvale, 1996: 27; Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007: 83). The interview schedule consisted of various themes that pertains to the research and was used in conjunction with another interview guide that consisted of more recently formulated themes on social employment networks, which had in fact come out of other interviews (see appendix two for interview schedules).

The first interview schedule was formulated and pre-designed coming into this project, and the consisted of queries related to five main themes. These themes included the economic activity of the business, the characteristics of the premises, the ownership characteristics, labour issues and location issues. As the interviews progressed, the focus zoned in more on the labour issues of the company and job acquisition of the workforce.

Thus, a second interview schedule was compiled by Anya van Wyk and I, and this schedule encompassed the theme of the ways in which businesses recruit their workforce, and why they do it in this way. Linked to this schedule was a separate section for employees. These queried the ways in which they heard about job vacancies, if they used social networks in the acquisition of their employment and the like. This was then used

in conjunction with some of the notions of the life-history interview schedule, once again constructed by Prof. Owen Crankshaw.

The interviews were then transcribed, and the transcriptions as well as the field notes, taken during the interview, serves as the empirical data of this paper because the transcript essentially contains all information from the interview and the field notes serve as extra data (Kvale, 1996: 27; Wengraf, 2002: 7).

Despite the small amount of in-depth interviews conducted, definite patterns and trends emerged from the data and similarities can be seen despite the fact that business orientation differed from business to business.

### 3.5 Limitations

The issue of reliability and validity in qualitative research is a contested topic. Triangulation is what qualitative research aims for to enhance and assume that the study is reliable and valid (Babbie and Mouton, 2006: 275). Triangulation refers to the utilisation of multiple methods in order to minimise researcher subjectivity within a study. In order to achieve this often extensive field notes are taken, multiple researchers used, member checks and so on (Babbie and Mouton, 2006: 275).

Within the context of this research field notes were taken at every interview, the interview was recorded and transcribed, there were two researchers working on this study and after the interviews that we had conducted together, we would have a debriefing session to clarify that our thoughts and finding were in line with each other and in certain instances follow ups were done, which I would include as being member checks. Thus, it would be my consideration that this study is as valid and reliable as what we could achieve.

However, a limitation with regard to this study, is that we could have employed more procedures to make the research more valid and reliable such as audit trials, which would entail handing over all of the data collected including all notes and interpretations to an examiner who would be able to point out problems within the

study, and the like (Babbie and Mouton, 2006: 276). Another limitation is that it would have been more beneficial to interview more than three employees and to actually conduct interviews with those unskilled workers in the kitchens of restaurants or those workers who are semi-skilled in the workshops of the businesses that served as part of the sample.

Perhaps another limitation, albeit to the spatial mismatch hypothesis in general, is that only the formal employment sector is considered. However, there is a degree, albeit a small percentage, of informal employment in South Africa, and in Cape Town. It is my experience that those who fill informal unskilled employment are from isolated ghettos where there is a great amount of the concentrated poor, yet they are employed outside of their neighbourhood and in the more affluent suburbs of Cape Town. Informal employment such as domestic work, gardening and the like could be considered as informal unskilled work and it would be interesting to find out how the mechanisms of the spatial mismatch hypothesis would fit with the informal employment sector.

### 3.6 Ethics within the Research

Owing to the nature of qualitative studies, ethical considerations need to be taken into account because the actual context of the interview, and the interaction between those conducting it and those participating in it, can affect the interviewee. As such their dignity and human rights needs to be taken into consideration (Kvale, 1996: 109). To achieve this, the interviews were conducted with informed consent, thus the interviewees were made aware of the research purpose (Kvale, 1996: 112), in most cases they were given a copy of the interview schedule before hand, and they had also given verbal consent to participate in the study and to allow the session to be recorded. Also, they were made aware of the fact that their participation is voluntary (Kvale, 1996: 112) and that they did not have to feel obligated to speak to topics that they were uncomfortable with.

## Findings and Discussion

### 4.1 Mechanisms of the Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis

As discussed earlier, in the literature review, Gobillion *et al* (2007: 2408) discuss two mechanisms, related to job access, that are said to perpetuate the effects of the spatial mismatch. The first being that the low-skilled, low-wage workforce refuse to accept jobs that are in distant, employment-rich areas because of the long commutes, inadequate transit systems and high transit costs that are associated with such distance. The second, is that an increase in distance between where the job seeker lives and where work is located leads to a decreased efficiency in gaining information concerning employment opportunities. Additionally, effects of the mismatch are said to be perpetuated by employers who hire their workforce within a close proximity to the company's location.

To address these, I proceed with a discussion of my findings concerning the frequency and preference of informal search methods, especially the use of informal social networks in searching and acquiring work. This is then followed by a discussion on the employer's preference for using social networks of those already employed. I then discuss how distance is irrelevant in acquiring and gaining access to employment and thus, unemployment cannot be attributed to the effects of the mismatch between home and work among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. For this part I also draw on close proximity hiring and conclusively show that despite employers having fair reasons for practising this, distance to employment is still irrelevant and being part of a social network is a more important aspect in job access.

### 4.2 Access to Employment Information

As noted earlier, in the literature review, there are different job search methods that are employed by job seekers, including formal and informal methods. Informal methods appear to be the more popular methods that are used, especially using informal networks. This is consistent with the findings in this research. Often networks are used by both, job seekers and employers, and appear to be a preferred method. Place-to-place

searches, using media advertisements and employment agencies were not as prevalent in the interviews but did occur on the rare occasion.

The SMH argues that with an increase in distance from where the low-skilled live to where opportunities are located, there is a decrease in the quality and quantity of information regarding job opportunities. Thus, because of the mismatch access to information becomes a barrier to job access, which is said to lead to the adverse labour market outcomes of distant workers.

However, when one is in a network of employed people or a network of people who know people who are employed then, in other words an employment-rich network, the area of employment does not seem to be a major consideration if the potential employee is able to get to work from where ever they live. Thus, there is the potential for those living in isolated ghettos to have access to information about job opportunities if they are in the right kind of network. This would contrast to the SMH which assumes only the possibility of neighbourhood networks consisting of those who are unemployed and have little contact or interaction with members of society outside of the isolated ghetto, which is discussed at length in the literature review.

In terms of transit difficulties, addressed in the literature review, these could exacerbate the difficulty in conducting place-to-place job searches for those low-skilled job seekers who live in the south-east township areas, like Khayelitsha for example because it would be costly. However, despite the difficulties associated with searching for work in distant areas, transit difficulties are, excluding cost, are able to be overcome.

These aspects of the SMH is said to influence unemployment among the poor and socially isolated residents of the isolated ghettos, however, the interviews that were conducted paint a slightly different picture, in that it becomes prevalent that those who are employed in various areas around the Cape Town region have in fact found out about job vacancies and employment opportunities via networks – either through strong ties (family members) or weak ties (friends or acquaintances). Thus, information about various job opportunities seemingly

have no borders with regard to the fact that networks extend beyond one's neighbourhood and that hearing about job vacancies through networks are not restricted in terms of where potential employees reside.

#### 4.2.1 Prevalence and frequency of informal networks

Networks seem to account for information flow on job opportunities in many instances. During the course of my research, quite a few of the companies used 'word of mouth' in order to recruit employees. 'Word of mouth' refers to the flow of information through informal networks. This concept entails employers using the networks of their good employees to find potential job candidates when they have vacancies that need to be filled. Often this method leads to more casual or contract based work rather than direct permanent employment, although there are cases where permanent employment is gained.

The prevalence of 'word of mouth' is undeniable. I would interpret my findings as suggesting that using 'word of mouth' by employers relates to the perception that they have a greater degree of control over their recruitment and hiring process, when hiring low-skilled workers compared to other methods. They seem to hold the perception that they would have greater control over the distribution of information and that they would have a greater degree of control in terms of targeting specific candidates as opposed to having no control over 'walk-ins'. This corresponds to Henly's (2000: 152) suggestion that employers have the ability to exert control over the size and calibre of pool of candidates. The latter refers to only requesting referrals from their good workers or better employees, or only accepting candidates referred by this group.

Despite the fact that often multiple methods of recruitment and job search are employed, the use of informal network systems are often more commonly used among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. This is noted in the literature and is also evident from my research. This phenomenon corresponds to Henly's (2000: 148) research, in that the same notion is documented with regard to the low-wage labour market. Henly (2000: 149) also notes that the use of this network and referral system is disproportionately used within the realm of low-skilled, low-wage entry-level jobs compared to higher skilled work.

This correspond to the findings of my research in that, where a higher degree of skill is required, often other methods are used instead of the use of the employee referral system, or networks. This can be seen in the case of the Wild Fig Restaurant (Wild Fig Restaurant, 2010), when talking about how they recruit more skilled chefs and managers. The Wild Fig Restaurant is an upmarket restaurant located in Mowbray, but on the boarder of Observatory, and is situated next a hotel, in Valkenberg Estate. Largely their workforce consists of low-skilled employees. They have unskilled kitchen staff, semi-skilled waiters and bar-men (which form the majority of their workforce) and two managers.

The co-owner of the Wild Fig Restaurant notes that most of their waiting staff is from areas within close proximity to the establishment, such as Observatory, Pinelands and Rondebosch. The Wild Fig Restaurant employee seconds this, and adds that staff also comes from Salt River and Woodstock. However, there are two employees that live further away in Ottery and Table View (Wild Fig Restaurant, 2010; Wild Fig Restaurant employee, 2010). In terms of their kitchen staff, most of which would be termed as being part of their unskilled workforce, they live in more distant areas like Khayelitsha, Nyanga and Mandalay (Wild Fig Restaurant, 2010; Wild Fig Restaurant employee, 2010).

Getting back to the point on skill levels and the use of social networks, the co-owner notes,

We will either advertise that, for that, on our own steam, so, in newspapers or online, website. We have also used, we have also used, um, employment agencies to find, to find chefs ... Um, ja, you know we may put it out there but, no, generally [word of mouth] that doesn't work for hiring chefs and managers.

From the above, it would seem that more formal methods are used to distribute information concerning job vacancies such as using media advertisements and employment agencies for higher skilled work. This differs to their practise of using informal networks to recruit their 'back of house' or kitchen staff, which largely get recruited as unskilled employees. Even, in terms of hiring semi-skilled waiting staff they advertise via the

media, but still prefer using informal networks to recruit them. What this ultimately shows is that there is an inverse type of relationship between using informal networks and skill levels. Thus the lower the skill level requirement, the greater the use of informal, 'word of mouth' recruiting method.

CNS Trailers also use employment agencies and newspapers for the recruitment and hiring of higher skilled employees. However, they first recruit 'internally' before moving to more 'external' methods (CNS Trailers, 2009). CNS Trailers is a company that manufactures large goods trailers and also provides maintenance and services them. The company is located in an industrial area in Brakenfell close to Stikland. The majority of their workforce is low-skilled, but they also have more skilled employees such as journeymen and tradesmen who have passed certain trade tests. The co-owner also notes that many of the company's employees live in neighbouring areas within close proximity to the company, such as Kuilsriver, Belhar and Belville (CNS Trailers, 2009).

In terms of their recruitment, what this means is that even in cases where higher skill levels are required, they first try to use informal recruitment methods, by distributing information concerning job vacancies among their, already employed, workforce before using newspapers and employment agencies. This corresponds to the argument of employers having a preference for recruiting through informal networks, to as great an extent as possible.

The co-owner of the Wild fig Restaurant notes that using informal networks for recruiting those who are higher skilled does not always prove to be the most viable method to use, despite the fact that there is a preference for this method shown. The preference is illustrated in the previous quote used, in that she says that they "may put it out there", stating that they try to distribute information concerning higher skilled vacancies through networks, but that generally it does not work. In a follow-up email with the Wild Fig Restaurant (2010b), the co-owner states the reason for 'word of mouth' not working for higher skilled recruitment,

Because generally these positions require a certain skill set, people who have professional qualifications [...] word of mouth does not generally yield good

candidates or enough candidates. Newspaper and Internet advertising reaches a bigger pool of candidates whereas word of mouth does not in terms of qualified people.

The above suggests that using informal social networks to find higher skilled employees does not yield a sufficient pool of suitably qualified higher skilled candidates. Using more formal methods, however, reach a bigger target of suited candidates. As such, using 'word of mouth' is more appropriate in finding and hiring lower skilled employees. Likewise job searchers would be more inclined to use formal methods to find employment where their skill sets are higher, that is why formal methods create a larger pool of suitably qualified job seekers. This is in line with Henly's (2000: 150) findings in that media advertisements are more geared toward clerical or entry-level managerial positions.

Although lack of a network does not mean exclusion from a job, in all cases, within the hiring of lower-skilled employees having a social network does in fact place one in an advantaged position with regard to both job information and with regard to the attainment employment. There are cases where 'walk-ins' are given jobs, such as in the case of the Wild Fig Restaurant (Wild Fig Restaurant, 2010), and another restaurant-bakery establishment, in the Cape Town CBD, called Knead (Knead, 2008). Evidence from these would suggest that sometimes the reasons for employing 'walk-ins', is out of the urgent need for staff and out of convenience, in that the company would save time trying to recruit employees.

However, those outside of an employment-rich network would have a more difficulty in acquiring good information regarding job vacancies in distant, or as argued here close, areas and because they do not have an inside connection through which the information can be obtained. In terms of actual employment acquisition, if the job seeker is outside of a network they would not have a lack of sponsor to vouch for them and, to this extent, are disadvantaged in terms of actually being employed by that establishment (Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996: 189).

All things considered, why then, do these employers of vastly different businesses place so much weight on referrals from employees and why do they use their employees' networks when they are looking to hire employees? Often, quantitative research on this gives us the frequency of cases in which networks are used, and the prevalence is clear but the reasons for their use is not really considered. As such, following section aims at giving a degree of insight into the use of employment-rich networks as used by employers and job seekers.

#### 4.2.2 Why employers use employees' networks over other methods

The most cited reason that comes out of the interviews, for employers using employees' networks, concerns trust and credibility. Other reasons include employee fit; that it is a time efficient method; and from the literature there is also a suggestion of the cost effectiveness of using such a method, which is a possible and plausible deduction that can be made from the interviews. In terms of 'employee fit', the literature notes that businesses prefer to use employee referrals because this results in finding a higher quality of employee and a lower turnover of such employees (O'Regan, 1993: 328). With regard to 'time efficiency', using networks is a quick method of employing assumedly reliable employees when there is a time constraint or a level of urgency. Discipline is another reason that also prevailed in a few interviews but and only one interview will be drawn on to illustrate this.

From the interviews conducted, employers noted that there is an element of credibility and trust attached to those who are referred by current employees. This was also their main reason for using such networks, in recruiting their low-skilled workers. The underlying reason for this assumption of credibility and trust, on the part of the employers goes two ways, in the sense that they trust the current employee based on their work ethic and trust that they will recommend someone of equal value, and that the job seeker is as credible and trustworthy as the person vouching for them. There is an assumption, which is documented in the literature as well as evident from the interviews, that individuals within the same networks have similar characteristics. First

I shall provide evidence for the argument concerning the assumption of similar characteristics, and then I will show how this relates to credibility and trust.

Just a brief note on characteristics, from the point of view of the employer, it appears as though character would refer to how trustworthiness the jobseeker is, their credibility, reliability and the like. Character, in appears to be a vital component in who employers recruit as employees.

S.E.A.T Electrics is a specialised electrical company that repairs welding machines. The welding machines that they repair range from large scale heavy duty ones to more light industry machines. Their head office is located in a business park in Montague Gardens, in Milnerton. They have two other premises, one in Airport Industria and one in Elsie's River. Their work on the other two sites consist of repairs to welding machines of two companies that they share premises with, on the two sites respectively. The workforce of their main office largely comes from the southern suburbs, which the manager notes as being the Cape Flats, including Wynberg, Athlone and Nyanga. There is one employee in Airport Industria and two in Elsie's River, and they live in the northern suburbs, including Parow and Belville. The workforce is largely semi-skilled, in that they work with electricity but they are not necessarily qualified electricians as such (S.E.A.T Electrics, 2009; S.E.A.T Electrics, 2010).

The manager of S.E.A.T Electrics notes the link between character and trustworthiness where she states that someone of good character would not steal or be dishonest. Also, she also notes what she would term as 'character' as opposed to personality. Thus illustrating the point noted earlier in that character relates to credibility and so on. She notes,

[P]ersonalities are different, but your character is the same. Are you going to steal from me, 'no', okay will any of them going to steal from me, they'll be too shit scared to steal from me, but that's the type of person, your character has to be the same.

The assumption of similar characteristics of those in the same network can be seen in the interview with the co-owner of Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store (2010) where he notes that,

[...] if they are referring friends to us, one would expect them to be of a similar, sort of, um, class is not the right word, but a similar type of person, you know, that we would require.

The quote above shows that the employers associate or ascribe similar characteristics to the individuals within the same social network. Thus, I would interpret that this is also part of the reason for them attaching so much weight to a referral from an employee with a good track record. I would also interpret that it is for this reason that they prefer to find employees and recruit using informal networks as opposed to using other informal methods such as direct applications and walk-ins. This is because they have no prescribed idea of the character of a walk-in or a direct applicant, which would place this group at a disadvantage in being selected or recruited. Kasinitz and Rosenberg (2000: 153), also find that in their research there is also this notion of similar characteristics within the employee network, where they note that employers expected their employees to “be embedded in social networks of similar others”.

The co-owner of the Wild Fig Restaurant states,

[...] you know when you work with someone for a year and you know that they're a good, solid, stable, honest, reliable sort of person you gauge that most of the people that they know are going to be of a similar sort [...]

This further emphasises the point of assumed characteristics, and the weight that is attached to a referral from a good employee. The notion that a good employee would only recommend another person who they feel would be a suitable and good worker is well documented in network literature and is also evident in my findings. This is justified when drawing on what the Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store owner (Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2010) notes,

[...] if you've got a friend, for example that you know is a bit dicey, you know and, you're not gonna come recommend them to me for a job, when your credibility's at

stake, you know. So certainly that's why when someone, especially a good, honest, reputable staff member comes and refers someone to us, we do attach weight to that, or family member.

The above is consistent with the findings of Henly (2000: 153) in that she also notes the element of self-interest of employees' to recommend or refer high quality workers because poor quality workers would result in a bad reflection on themselves. Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996: 189) concur in that when an employee vouches for a job seeker, within their personal network, if the vouched for employee is a good worker this would be a positive reflection on the employee that recommended that person or alternatively where the vouched for employee is a bad worker this would be a negative reflection on the other employee. Companies accept referrals from already employed individuals based on the assumption that they would only refer those who are suitable for the job because they would want to maintain a good reputation with their current employer (Ponzo and Scoppa, 2009: 91).

In a few cases, there were instances where individuals that were referred to certain employers without the individual referring them being an employee. This could be seen in the case of All Weather Enclosures and S.E.A.T Electrics. All Weather Enclosures is primarily a construction company that builds braai-rooms, carports, patios and sun-rooms. Besides this, there is also a project management division which entails tendering to manage bigger projects such as hotels and the like. The three permanent employees are low-skilled workers who live in Mitchell's Plain and Bridgetown. Because of the nature of the building industry, work is never really located in one place for long, so there is a need for workers to travel to multiple sites. However, in essence the workers only need to get to their base in Ottery and then from that point they have the provision of a pick-up truck that they use to get to their actual site where work is being done (All Weather Enclosures, 2009; 2010).

This point that non-employees refer job seekers corresponds to Henly's (2000: 147) notion where jobs are filled by non-searchers. This encompasses the way in which individuals, either outside of the workforce or those already employed, acquire employment without any form of an active search. In these cases a person, outside

of the employee network, asks for work or about vacancies on behalf of someone else. These 'askers', however, would need to have some form of contact with the employer though. In the case of All Weather Enclosures the owner (All Weather Enclosures, 2009) notes,

[...] you try to take things on face value, his father said he can work, mother said, and he said "no, I'll do anything".

The manager of S.E.A.T Electrics conceptualises an instance where a referral came outside of their employees' network,

Damien's brother worked [two] premises away from us, [two] workshops away from us. And from seeing them every morning, greeting every morning, um, he got to hear that we were looking for staff. So [he] recommended Ashley. Ashley started here.

This asking about job vacancies on behalf of someone else and employers considering a recommendation that is given by someone outside of their employee circle is not, to my knowledge, documented extensively in the literature. So the question is, why would they hire such a referral?

In a telephonic follow-up interview with the owner of All Weather Enclosures, when asked why he would be willing to consider a referral from someone outside of his employee pool, he notes that the reason is that he knows a part of that person. Thus he indicates that even though he might not know the actual recommended individual, he would be inclined to recruit them based on the fact that he knows someone connected to them. He says that if he knows the father, or whoever, there is a line or connection, and even if he does not know that person he feels that he knows 'a part' of that person, and thus he can always go back to, for example, the father and say "you know, your son...". He states that it's a calculated risk that he takes when hiring such a case (All Weather Enclosures, 2010b).

I would interpret this evidence to suggest that the preference for using networks could also be related to the element of knowing something about someone rather than absolutely nothing, such as in the case of a walk-in.

So where there is a connection to someone that the employer knows, and to who they can trace the job seeker back to should something go wrong there is a stronger preference to recruit such a person.

This brings me to another point regarding referrals, concerning the degree of knowledge about a job seeker that the owners or managers have access to. When using referrals, the employer has a certain amount of access to knowledge about the job seeker, so they are not seen as being complete strangers. The employer would have access to background information, such as where they live, where they have worked and the like before they even conduct their first interview. This idea is noted in the literature, in that networks are used as a mechanism for targeted recruitment (Henly, 2000: 153). So even here, the evidence suggests a degree of targeted recruitment of job seekers involved in an employee's social network. This came through in the S.E.A.T Electrics (S.E.A.T Electrics, 2010) interview and the Wild Fig Restaurant (Wild Fig Restaurant, 2010) interview and corresponds to some of the sentiment stated above, in that you know a part of the person, by knowing someone that they are connected to.

The manager of S.E.A.T Electrics notes,

[...] the people that we work with that's recommended, word of mouth, it's the easiest thing because it's not really a stranger that you interviewing. So it's easy, easier.

The co-owner of the Wild Fig has similar sentiments in that she mentions,

And we prefer to hire...people that there's a connection with. So that's a friend of a friend or a cousin, or a sister or a brother or [...] I think you have a bit of knowledge of who they are and where they come from. And employing someone off the street, to me, is risky and, ja, um, we would rather not do it. We don't do it.

These two quotes correspond to the notion of informal networks being used as a screening method. The Wild Fig Restaurant co-owner makes the point that it is a less 'risky' option. What she means by this is that it is safer, in terms of actual danger, and also in terms of dishonesty and theft. Her reasons are embedded in experience

of actually being robbed at the restaurant by people posing as walk-in job seekers. This also illustrates the preference for hiring the low-skilled workforce through informal networks because the possibility for screening is more feasible than for a walk-in or a direct applicant.

O'Regan's (1993: 328) concept of "higher quality" worker and low employee turnover, because of referrals, pertains to employee fit, as spoken to in the literature review. This can be seen in many of the interviews that were done, except in the case of the Wild Fig Restaurant among the waiting staff. S.E.A.T Electrics, boasts a low employee turnover and the success of their business to using word-of-mouth (S.E.A.T Electrics, 2010).

In terms of 'employee fit', this was also seen to be an import issue, besides trust and credibility. This comes through very strongly in the S.E.A.T Electrics interviews (S.E.A.T Electrics, 2009; S.E.A.T Electrics, 2010), where the manager states in the initial interview,

Generally I look for how will he fit in with the rest of the company [...]

And in the follow-up interview this sentiment is re-stated,

Um, we just knew that they would be perfect for us, that they would fit in with us [...]

The evidence would thus suggest that the issue of fit appears to be an import notion in that, employers want a degree of harmony within their company and would prefer their employees to get along as much as possible. This would also be a substantial explanation for employers preferring to hire through informal networks of already employed individuals. There is an underlying assumption that, in addition to them being of similar character, that if they are friends or know each other that they would get along well in the workplace. This is not always the case, however, as explained by the manager of S.E.A.T Electrics (S.E.A.T Electrics, 2010) where in some cases friends end up back-stabbing each other. Nonetheless, the assumption is that they will get along within the realm of the workplace.

Also, there needs to be a fit not only with other employees but in terms of the company's value system and culture. This can be seen in the case of CNS Trailers, where the co-owner (CNS Trailers, 2009) states

[...] if you look at it there, we got our values which is up there now, the company can see which is our company values and you've got to you know, fit into the value system of the company before we employ you.

From the above quote, I would suggest that through using informal networks and the assumption of similar characteristics that employers hold, employers would prefer to hire through networks based on the notion that they will fit into the culture and value system of the company because the workers that vouch for them fit into the companies value system.

It is fairly obvious that transferring information via word-of-mouth is very cost effective. Employers would not need to pay for this 'service', if we could call it that. Thus, it is cheaper than placing an advertisement in the newspaper or using any other formal media means, and it is cheaper than using employment agencies which usually require a commission, as noted by the Wild Fig Restaurant co-owner,

[...]obviously doing our own advertising and employing, it's beneficial to us if we don't have to pay, um, commissions to an employment agency, so, yes, in terms of that, those two methods [word of mouth and newspaper advertisements] are preferable [...]

In terms of referrals being used in cases where time is a constraint and employees are required rather urgently, then using employees' networks serve as a means to gain, assumedly reliable employees, quickly and with less effort. This was noted in the telephonic follow-up with All Weather Enclosures where the owner notes that most of the time he would interview people before employing them even if they come recommended, but when there is a time constraint, then he just gets a referral and calls them up to see if they are available, and if they are then they become employed.

The last notion relates to the issue of maintaining discipline and control through the use of employee networks, and this would also related to the issue spoken to earlier concerning the idea of vouching for someone and having the performance of that person reflect on the employee that vouched for them.

In some cases, networks are used to uphold discipline and to endorse and encourage obedience within a group (Portes, 1998: 10). An example of such a case is Knead, a trendy and relatively upmarket restaurant-bakery establishment located in the Cape Town CBD. The company largely hires low-skilled employees to work in the kitchens and as waiters. The owner of Knead did not recruit people on the sole basis of their networks but, during the interview, he did explicitly note that having networks help in keeping order among employees, when he states

I've had a lot of good walk-ins [...] you know, this is my brother and sister...can you give this person a go. I find that's quite nice.... Cause then you got...I wouldn't say you've got a hold... but then you've got something to fall back on...if Nandi doesn't come to work then I phone her Mom because her Mom has been working for my father's company for the last five years. And with the bakers the one brother works over here, in African culture they respect their elders and if I've got a problem at work...if he doesn't come to work or if he comes to work drunk the family will sort it out. So, it is nice.

The prevalence of the preference to use employees' networks by employers is clear, and the reasons presented above, however, this does not mean that other methods are neglected. Even in cases where word-of-mouth is a preferred method in finding their workforce, newspapers and employment agencies are also used, albeit not as often and more in cases where higher skill levels are required, as mentioned earlier. So, the main enquiry here would be as to why employers prefer the word-of-mouth method over methods, like newspapers, employment agencies, walk-ins, and 'help wanted' signs, especially for their low-skilled workers.

The main reason for this appears to be the way in which newspapers attract too large a pool of unsuitable candidates and that it poses a risk, in terms of safety when there is no connection to a known individual. The

point of recruiting is to generate few applicants for a position, yet to have them be “sufficiently qualified to justify further investigation” rather than to generate large amounts of applicants that do not have the relevant qualifications (Grieco, 1987: 37) and in some instances the relevant amount of experience as well and because media adverts and employment agencies appear to be used more where a higher level of skill is required, rather than when low-skilled employment is available.

The co-owner of the Wild Fig Restaurant (Wild Fig Restaurant , 2010) notes the reason for them preferring to use informal networks as opposed to media adverts for low-skilled workers is that the pool is too large because anyone can apply for such positions, thus there is little control over who the pool of applicants are by the employer,

Okay, back of house is usually, um, word-of-mouth and it's through the people in the kitchen. So we advertise to them that we are looking for extra staff and they will bring in someone that they know, that they can vouch for. Um, we never advertise for back of house, we never advertise anywhere in any publication or gumtree or newspaper at all [...]Um, primarily because the response would be too vast. And we prefer to hire...people that there's a connection with [...]Um, I just think it's in, in, in, this country and in this day and age, it's a safer way to employ people [...], in terms of you, there's really no way of doing background checks on people that you're hiring, um, it's virtually impossible. You don't know what sort of background they've had, where they've come from, if they've been involved in crime, um, also when you advertise in newspapers, you get a lot of people just showing up here, um, and, um, I've been held up by people who've come here posing as, someone looking for a job. That is one of the main reasons why.

The Wild Fig Restaurant preferred to use word of mouth for their back of house staff (kitchen staff) and some of their front of house staff, mostly the waiters, because it is less of a risk and you have a degree of knowledge about the person that you are interviewing. The risk factor incorporates the fact that you can't really do a background check of the potential employee and thus if they are connected to someone already in the restaurant it serves as less of a risk for them being seriously undesirable employees or people in general. Also using this method, there is a degree of screening that occurs.

S.E.A.T Electrics, also notes the way that the newspaper attracts unsuitable candidates,

[...] we don't advertise. First of all, we don't advertise, 'cause if you're gonna advertise you gonna get a lot of tryers, you gonna have people that, we don't repair fridges and stoves, we are a welding machine repair company, it's word of mouth, it's connections. You know someone in the engineering industry, do you know someone who's a boiler maker, do you know some who's a welder, do you know someone that's an electrician? It's all word of mouth.

S.E.A.T Electrics does not use newspaper advertising because they get too big a pool of applicants who are not eligible or do not suit the vacancy available. The manager notes that they get too many "tryers", or "chancers" that are not actually suitable electricians for fixing or repairing welding machines, but they get lots who sort of think that they are electricians on the basis that they can fix a light bulb or other basic electronics rather than sophisticated computerised welding machines (S.E.A.T Electrics, 2010). This concurs with the sentiments of the Wild Fig Restaurant as well.

The Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store also concurs with the sentiments of S.E.A.T Electrics and the Wild Fig Restaurant, in noting that there are also unsuitable candidates that apply for low-skilled jobs (Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2010). Briefly, Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store is located in Plumstead, in the southern suburbs of Cape Town. It is a convenience store that mainly sells groceries (perishable and non-perishable goods) and other everyday type items, such as clothing, toys and basic household accessories. They employ mostly unskilled workers and fewer semi-skilled and skilled workers. In most cases, however, they employ unskilled workers who then move up within the ranks of the store and in fact become the semi-skilled employees. So, in this case the low-skilled workforce is vital to their business and forms part of the majority within their company. The majority of their workforce comes from either the same neighbourhood or neighbouring areas within close proximity to the store, such as Retreat and Lavender Hill – the reasons for this will be discussed at a later stage. (Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2008; Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2010).

The co-owner of Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store (2010) notes,

You know we get a lot of chancers, and people who are just not suitable, you know.

Considering the above evidence, I would interpret this in terms of employers using social networks of their employees to target a specific type of worker which is competent and suited for the vacancy. Because low-skilled work, does not really require a qualification there is a vast amount of technically suited candidates, employers would use the networks in an attempt to limit applicants and filter job seekers with a greater degree of proficiency.

The co-owner of Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store notes his reason for not using newspaper adverts, which is slightly different to the reasons mentioned above,

Because we don't need to, so why would spend that money on, when we've got a sufficient pool [...] And that waiting list just keeps going, you know, we also, as I say it gets filled up from the bottom all the time. And we move, we phone, and people wait, that list is between 6 months to a year before people get called in.

The Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store does not use newspaper advertising because their labour supply (from the waiting list) is much more than their demand for employees. Thus, because there is such a large pool of people who want to work for PnP Plumstead, there is no real reason to spend money on advertising vacancies. Instead they just go to the list and interview from there, also once one group is chosen there are still others on the list and over time more and more names gets added to it and thus the list, seemingly, has an endless supply of potential employees. Thus advertising in newspapers is unnecessary to find low-skilled employees and an unnecessary cost.

The Wild Fig Restaurant uses online, newspapers and employment agencies for their more skilled workforce, such as management and their head chef. However, for their unskilled labour force, they prefer to use word of

mouth, although for the front house people (such as the waiters) they do also use newspaper advertisements. The reason for using word of mouth over other methods for their unskilled workforce is that it is a safer, in terms of actual crime prevention.

The element of online advertising only really prevailed in the interview with the Wild Fig Restaurant. The online advertising is free (they use gumtree) compared to newspaper adverts, which is part of the reason as to why they use this method. Also by using online advertising, they already screen people, in terms of computer literacy which is an important aspect when it comes to waiting and management positions. The use of the internet seems to be rare for advertising unskilled and semi-skilled job opportunities. Empirical evidence would suggest that there is a link between higher levels of income and higher skill levels and those who seek employment via the internet (McQuaid, Green and Danson, 2005: 194).

The use of employment agencies is rare among the interviews, but also used where higher skill levels are required. The Wild Fig Restaurant uses employment agencies, but if they need someone more urgently then they use employment agencies because they take care of the primary interview process (Wild Fig Restaurant, 2010),

[...] employment agencies also have their benefits in that they handle, they handle all the primary interviews and they find your candidates for you. So if you are under pressure or pressed for time or...it's, it's useful to use an agency.

Thus, in sum, the use of word-of-mouth for finding unskilled labour appears to be the most effective mechanism compared to others. Also, employers feel that this method poses less of a risk and allows for employers to target suitable candidates, rather than having to sift through a large number of candidates that are essentially unsuitable for the position, not necessarily in terms of skill but in other ways as well.

In terms of the spatial mismatch effects, distance would have little to do with job access, if employers use networks to recruit their workforce. Thus, distance would not cause unemployment but not being part of an

employee-network, could be a considerable barrier to job access and could lead to the adverse labour market outcomes of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce, but it has no relation to distance nor the spatial mismatch.

#### 4.2.3 Why job seekers use employment-rich networks

The literature suggests a few reasons as to why job seekers use their informal networks in order to acquire information about various job opportunities and vacancies as opposed to other methods. Although I would imagine that the reasons mentioned in the literature, such as it being an effective method of job search because of its cost efficiency, the degree of information that one would acquire and the like, do come into play, it did not really come through very strongly in the interviews conducted with the three employees that were interviewed.

It did, however, seem to be a more convenient method of finding a job, in the sense that the information is given to the job searcher without the job searcher actively looking at that specific business, or without the job seeker having to actively find out about job vacancies directly at the company.

This would be as in the case of the Wild Fig Restaurant employee (Wild Fig Restaurant employee, 2010),

[...] first a friend from school, who had been in the UK, um, Emily and she said she was working at the Wild Fig and they were actually, and I said, “ah, I’m actually looking for a job”, she said well they were actually looking for staff, and I headed that way. I went for an interview, I phoned them up, I said “hi, I’m a friend of Emily’s, um she said to give you a call regarding vacancies at the restaurant, could I organise to come and meet with you maybe, like are you still looking” that type of thing [...]

Here the element of convenience becomes clear in that, the job seeker puts it to the network that they are looking for a job, and the employee of the company where there is a vacancy gives them a ‘lead’ as to where to find employment. So because of the convenience of such a method, it is also easier, and cheaper, than having to buy a newspaper or search online.

Another reason, which to my knowledge does not really exist in the literature, and only really came up once in the interviews conducted, was the idea that newspapers always require experience within a field, and if the job seeker does not have experience then it becomes a form of a barrier and a de-motivation for using newspapers in the future.

The current Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store employee ( Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store employee, 2010), illustrates this point in that, in the past he did not use newspapers to find employment because he felt that they always asked for or required experience, which he did not have. The said employee, would be regarded as an unskilled worker based on his job description as a shop assistant and that his duties consist of unskilled work such as packing out and checking stock, and assisting customers on the shop floor (Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store Employee, 2010). He states,

I found that very difficult, for the main reason that, the moment you open up a newspaper, the first thing you see there, you need to have maximum 3 years experience, 5 years experience. But how you gonna gain that experience if they don't give you the opportunity to work so, I found it very tough to get a job like that, because I didn't have experience – I mean you can have computer skills and do all sorts of certificates but, they want 5, 3 to 5 years minimum, that was minimum requirements so if you don't get the opportunity to work the where you going to get the experience? So, I left the newspaper completely.

This does differ to the Wild Fig Employee who has used newspapers to find work as well as online searches. The Wild Fig Restaurant employee, referenced here, is a 23 year old female and forms part of the waiting staffing at the restaurant and occasionally hostesses as well. She lives in the vicinity of Rondebosch and travels to work by car. She found out about vacancies for waiting staff via a friend of hers who was already a waitress at the same establishment. She has worked part-time at the Wild Fig Restaurant for a number of years, while studying full time and as such she seems to have an extensive knowledge about the employees and the practices of the company (Wild Fig Restaurant employee, 2010). However, the difference as to why she uses newspapers to locate employment opportunities (compared to the Pick 'n Pay Plumstead employee), is that

she had experience in waiting because of the job that she had gotten through her brother when she was 16 years old, and worked at the restaurant that her brother managed as a runner and then proceeded to becoming a waitress. So, there is an element here which would suggest that newspaper are for a certain skill set and if one does not possess that then there is little point in using such means.

I would interpret the above as indicative of the low-skilled, low-wage workforce being less inclined to use methods other than social networks because they may lack the required level of experience and skill. Also, it re-emphasises the fact that newspapers are more suited to the higher skilled workforce and less appropriate for the unskilled.

#### 4.2.4 Connection does not necessarily lead to acquisition

Despite the weight that is attached to those who come recommended and who are vouched for by those already employed, this does not necessarily lead to direct acquisition of employment, often there are interviews that take place with the recommended job seeker. This can be seen in quite a few of the interviews that had been conducted, although there were instances where knowing someone who is already employed does lead to job acquisition without going through the formal screening process of interviews.

Thus, being part of a social network seems to be an important factor in accessing job information but not necessarily in the attainment of a job. In most of the cases, from the perspective of the employer, the passing on of information via a network appeared to be a form of screening because many of the employers assumed that recommendations and people within the current employee's network have similar characteristics. This process was then followed up by an interview and thus attainment of a job was not a guarantee based on the network that the potential employee is in. A case in point would be the Wild Fig Restaurant. The co-owner (Wild Fig Restaurant, 2010) mentions that,

[...]I mean look they still go through an interview process, so even if a friend brings them along, it doesn't mean they automatically going to be hired, they still, we still sit them down, interview them, look at their CV and take all of that into consideration.

The Wild Fig Restaurant employee (Wild Fig Restaurant employee, 2010) concurs with this notion when she notes that,

Um...a lot of it happens through friends of friends, hey. I know somebody who's looking for a job, or somebody's like "I need to start earning some money", I'll be like "well, why don't you try waitressing, have you waitresses before?", if they haven't I could probably assess whether they'll pick it up or not. You've gotta be the a type of person who won't like stress out, but then be like "well, I'll ask at work if they need somebody, and tell them I've got a friend". If you're reliable as a waitress they'll take your recommendation, or they say "bring your friend in, we'll interview her but not promising anything", or that kind of thing.

Thus, once again, the above shows that being part of an employment-rich network gives you access to information regarding job vacancies, in other words it gives the job seeker a 'lead', but that this lead does not, in all cases, lead to actually landing the job. However, a stronger weighting is attached to a recommendation that comes from a reliable employee.

In terms of where this fits in with my thesis, the point is that even though job acquisition is not a given when it comes to using social networks, the fact remains that information is accessed and attained by job seekers through these social networks and information is also distributed through these networks.

#### 4.2.5 Close Proximity Hires, Networks and Information Flow

In some cases employers hire their workforce from the same neighbourhood or within close proximity and neighbouring areas as to where the business is located. From the interviews, the evidence would suggest that this is done either purposefully, and with fair logic behind it, or not purposefully but on the basis of other considerations. However, even in cases where employers draw their workforce from the same or neighbouring areas, there is still considerable weight attached to recommendations from those already employed, and those who hear about vacancies still need to be part of the employment-rich network.

This would perpetuate the effects of the spatial mismatch in that those who reside in distant, isolated ghettos, would experience a barrier to accessing employment if preference is given to those who reside in the same neighbourhood. An example that illustrates the purposeful hiring of employees from within a close proximity is Sharon Taljaard Consultancy (Sharon Taljaard Consultancy, 2008).

Sharon Taljaard Consultancy is a financial accountant consultancy and also deals with sectional title management. The premises are located in Plumstead and the workforce consists of two permanent employees and another employed on a more casual basis. The two permanent workers perform more clerical duties, such as bookkeeping, data capturing and reception work while the other casual employee answers phones and deals with business correspondents – I would not bracket this as being clerical work, rather unskilled. The workforce lives within very close proximity to the business premises, namely Bergvliet, Retreat and Constantia (Sharon Taljaard Consultancy, 2008). Getting back to the argument, the owner notes,

I didn't want, um, to employ anybody who had to travel further than, um, a half an hour away from where I am, whether it is, was by train or 15 minutes by car, because I just felt that you have far happ[ier] staff when they can get to work quicker and get home quicker and you don't waste time ... and yes it did weigh, it was very, um, um, important aspect [...]

In this case, although her reasoning of “happy staff” seems slightly eccentric, in essence her reason relates to the productivity of her employees. This is one of the mechanisms mentioned by Gobillion *et al* (2007: 2408), that employers refuse to hire those in distant areas because the long commute makes them less productive at work (noted in literature review). Gobillion *et al* (2007) only notes this reason for employers hiring their workforce from a close proximity, however, from the interviews for my research, there would appear to be more reasons for this which do not link to worker productivity. Therefore, I would argue that this is a shortfall in their argument, to only argue one reason when there are multiple.

To further illustrate the preferences for drawing the workforce from the same area and the surrounding areas, I'll draw on the interview with the co-owner of Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store (Pick 'n Pay Plumstead, 2010). His reasoning is shown in this quote,

We tend to, in terms of our recruitment, try and employ from as close as possible to the store. For a number of reasons; a) it's good business practice to employ, you're putting the money back into the sort of micro-economy of the local area, and secondly the travelling aspect with our long, extended hours, till 8 o'clock, they usually get home about 9 o'clock, um, at night is, you know, from a transport point of view it is more practical, and secure as well. Having said that, we do have staff who come from Mitchells Plain and out that, but they tend to be staff that started off here and have subsequently moved, you know, over time.

The above quote suggests that part of the reason for the owners of Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store wanting to recruit from the area is that it forms part of their business strategy. The co-owner explains, later in the interview that by employing people from the same area, their families would have more disposable income which would be put back into the store when they do their grocery shopping because of the sense of loyalty that they feel toward the business (Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2010). Thus, the idea is that money is circulated rather than lost between their employees, who are also customers and shoppers, and their business.

Another possible reason that contributes to employers wanting to hire staff who live close to the establishment is that it is more convenient for them when there is an urgent need for staff, such as a shortage in staff on a given day. Such shortages in staff could occur if those employees that are scheduled to work do not come in for whatever reason and a replacement is needed quickly. This point is expressed in the initial Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store interview (Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2008), by the same, who co-owner notes

Um, you also want them nearby, if there's ever a staff shortage or whatever, you wanna get someone in quickly, you know.

This is elaborated on by the Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store ex-employee (2010). When talking about hiring employees who live in the same area as the business establishment and the close surrounds he states,

It's for convenience sake man, like say they having something extreme coming up, just call you know "can you work for me this Friday urgently?", it's not like I'm driving out from Athlone in peak hour traffic to go pick up a shift at 3pm sometime, sometimes from 3 to 8pm, and I must drive from 8 o'clock as well. So it would just be like call at half past 3, "can you come in I need you urgently, is it possible?" and there's always a 50/50 chance that I can come in or not.

Thus, it seems a viable consideration in terms of having a preference to hire people within a closer proximity because in times of emergency or urgent need for staff, it is easier to find a quick replacement when the employees live close by because there is a greater chance of finding someone to come in quickly. It might be easier to get a replacement who lives within a close proximity because it is not too inconvenient for them to get to work in terms of time (length of commute) and transport.

However, if we specifically look at the case of Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store who show a strong preference for recruiting from within a close proximity, they also show a very strong preference for recruiting through employees' social networks. Thus, I would interpret this to show that even though there would be suitable potential employees within the neighbourhood of the company, these job seekers would have limited access with regard to job vacancies and are also disadvantaged in terms of being recruited because they lack the social capital needed to acquire the job. In essence, this shows that distance to employment opportunities are irrelevant without social networks.

In sum, hiring from a close proximity could impact on the access to information for those low-skilled job seekers who live in more distant areas. This would then seem to perpetuate the effects of the spatial mismatch in that those in distant areas are at a disadvantage in acquiring these jobs, and thus are potentially left unemployed because of this barrier. However, if we consider the findings, previously discussed, on the preference for employers to use networks to disperse information and hire their workforce, then it becomes clear that even within a close proximity to where employment is located, if one is not involved in an employment-rich network, then job access is still a considerable barrier because employers add considerable

weight (in terms of decisions to hire) to referrals and vouching. Thus, distance between work and home is proven to be irrelevant.

#### 4.2.6 Information access has no boundaries, and distance is irrelevant

Regardless of employers' preference for hiring employees within the same area, as explained earlier, or not job seekers do not have an equal chance of acquiring employment. The reason for this unequal chance is that, those job seekers who are not part of an employment-rich network are at a disadvantage compared to those within an employment-rich network. Where it concerns gaining meaningful information concerning job vacancies and acquiring employment in the same neighbourhood as where they live, those who are part of a network would have better access to information which would be a barrier not easy to overcome for those without a network.

Another issue that could be seen as a barrier to employment access, is the weighting that is given to those who form part of an employment-rich network within the proximity of the business or company. This echoes the sentiments of Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996) in that being close to job opportunities does not necessarily allow for adequate job access if the job seeker does not form part of an employment-rich network. What this would mean in terms of the spatial mismatch is that it would substantiate my argument that distance with regard to job access, in terms of gaining information concerning job opportunities, is irrelevant. Physical distance has little to do with accessing information about job vacancies and job opportunities, because even in the case where workers are in close proximity to suitable employment opportunities, they are not guaranteed to be acquire the information nor employment.

To illustrate the argument above, that being part of a network counts in the job searchers favour despite close neighbourhood proximity, I draw on the Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store interview. The co-owner states that despite getting walk-ins and having a waiting list from which they draw their pool of employees, they would attach greater weight to a referral from an already employed individual. During the interview he clarifies and

points out that the most of the walk-ins and job seekers who put their names on the waiting list are from the area. He says when discussing who the walk-ins and direct applicants consist of, that they are “people coming and asking, mostly they’re customers or customer’s children or customer’s friends that come here” and he links being a customer to mostly being from the area or close neighbouring areas (Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2010). But getting back to the argument that being part of an employment-rich network, overcoming the barrier to job information, and job acquisition, becomes easier,

We basically just have people that come put their names on a, on some sort of waiting list and we call them in and we interview them [but] If a good staff member comes to us and says, I know of a friend at school or whatever, who’s capable, we put them on the list. We still obviously go through the interview process, but it does sort of add a bit of weight, um, to the, in the interview, when they come recommended by a friend.

Thus, from the above I would conclude that, despite the fact that there are job opportunities for those who are unskilled, and living in the same area or neighbouring areas of the business, if they form part of an employment-rich network linked to this business, they have an advantage over those who live in the area but do not form part of this network. Thus, echoing the findings of Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996: 189) and even the works of Wilson (1987: 60), in that they advocate the importance of social networks because there is a lack of access to local jobs because local job seekers do not have access to information regarding local job opportunities which are not advertised. Even when they do hear about vacancies they do not have a link, or what they term a sponsor, to vouch for them which puts them at a disadvantage. Thus, it is possible for the effects of the mismatch to be perpetuated in terms of those without employment-rich network access, having adverse labour market outcomes but I would argue that space is not a necessary constraint in this situation. This would mean that, being without a network in any area, even in a job-rich area could lead to a degree of adverse labour market outcomes.

Going back to the element of vouching and the idea, argued earlier, that regardless of neighbourhood proximity or where the low-skilled job seeker lives, being part of an employment-rich network counts in the job

seekers favour in terms of having someone to vouch for them. Kasinitz and Rosenberg (1996: 188), note a similar element in that, what they term “off the street”— or what I conceptualise as ‘walk-ins’ –hiring is rare. They draw on an interview, from their research, which corresponds to the idea of giving anyone an application but that them having a referral from someone in the company counts in their favour. This is similar to the way in which the Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store allows anyone who walks in to put their names on a waiting list, which would be a direct application (Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store, 2010). However, the actual hiring of such cases is rare compared to hiring a ‘walk-in’ with a reference and someone who could vouch for them within the company, and this is only possible if they are part of an employment-rich network.

Another illustration of this corresponds to what the Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store ex-employee notes that even through there was a waiting list, which would contain names of applicants, he acquired low-skilled packing and shop assistant, or as he puts it ‘floor custodian’, job because of the employment-rich network that he was part of. The 23 year old male ex-employee, now works for a marketing company doing marketing promotions. While working at the Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family store he was an unskilled shop assistant and then moved on to more skilled work by becoming a cashier. He heard about vacancies through a familial network, because his cousin and sister both worked for Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store and they had both informed him about vacancies and referred him to the employer. At his current place of employment, the marketing company, there is no real professional skill requirement but it does entail a degree of inter-personal skills and a drivers’ licence (Pick ‘n Pay Plumstead Family Store ex-employee, 2010). He states,

[T]here was a few vacant jobs and she, there was actually a waiting list, but I jumped the waiting list somehow because my cousin was the supervisor, as well as my sister was working there and she had a good track record.

The above validates the argument that despite having walk-ins and allowing them to apply or put their names down on a waiting list, there is a preference to and greater weight attached to hiring someone who forms part of a referral system and who has someone to vouch for them, especially when the person vouching for them has a good employee track record.

In addition to what has already been mentioned, to show that employment-rich networks, that contain information around job vacancies, extend beyond neighbourhoods can be seen in the case of the Wild Fig Restaurant employee (2010). She found out about job vacancies at the restaurant through a friend, who was already an employee of the establishment, who had passed on this information to her. However, this flow of information was not bound to the Wild Fig Restaurant employee's, or job seekers, neighbourhood because her friend, in fact, lives in a different area and the restaurant's location is outside of both of their neighbourhoods. Thus, it is clear that gaining access to information concerning employment opportunities is not restricted to the confines of the job seekers neighbourhood. Also, when she was looking for employment overseas, she used social networks that extended beyond continental boundaries as well.

In Cape Town, if we look at distance, the south-east township of Khayelitsha is one of the furthest points from the CBD and the southern suburbs. To further illustrate that distance is irrelevant in gaining access to information regarding employment, I draw on the case of an employee, who lives in Khayelitsha and works for Peggy's Place and Plate Hiring in the southern suburbs. Peggy's Place and Plate Hiring is primarily an events hiring company located in a business park in Diep River. They hire out crockery, cutlery, glassware, linen and anything else that needs to go on top of the table but besides the primary hiring service, they also provide an events planning service as well. In terms of their workforce, two employees perform more clerical work, one is a driver and the other two are general unskilled warehouse staff. Their workforce appears to come from all round Cape Town, such as Mitchell's Plain, Gugulettu, Southfield and Khayelitsha (Peggy's Place and Plate Hiring, 2008).

Getting back to the point concerning the unskilled employee living in Khayelitsha, she accesses information concerning her job through a social network. Her mother had worked for one of the co-owners of the establishment and she was employed on this basis. Thus, my point here is that, despite this low-skilled job seeker being physically and spatially far from where an employment opportunity was located she still managed

to gain access to information about the vacancy and acquire employment because she was part of an employment-rich network.

In relation to what has been said so far in this paper, I would argue that not only are informal networks a channel through which job search occurs, as noted earlier in this paper, but it is also a mechanism used by employers to send out information and then to hire employees. Thus, the importance of social networks with regard to gaining access to employment and distributing information about employment vacancies is a notion that persisted in almost every interview conducted.

#### 4.2.7 Summary

To summarise the above arguments, the evidence from my research suggests that information does not necessarily decrease with distance when employment-rich networks are used by the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. Proof that distance is irrelevant with regard to information and social networks can be shown in instances where those who live in close proximity to employment opportunities have a better chance of acquiring information about employment and actual employment when they are linked to an employment-rich network.

The above also illustrates that the use of networks are prevalent for job searchers and employers and are a preferred method, in comparison to other methods, to be used in finding out about employment opportunities and distributing information about employment opportunities. This means that, once again, space has little to do with the quality and quantity of information and as such cannot be attributed as a causal effect of unemployment for the low-skilled, low-wage workforce.

#### 4.3 What this means in terms of the Spatial Mismatch Hypothesis

To conclude, it is clear that the use of employment-rich networks is a dominant source of information about the labour market (O'Regan, 1993: 331), and serves as a major barrier to job access.

From the evidence presented in this section, I would contend that within the context of Cape Town, issues regarding transportation are not adequate barrier to the employment of those in distant areas and does not have a sufficient grounding in accounting for the adverse labour market outcomes of those low skilled workers, and those living in, seemingly, isolated ghettos.

The only real barrier which could contribute to the adverse labour market outcomes of low-skilled workers, is the lack of or poor information concerning job vacancies and suitable job opportunities. From the evidence presented above, I would deduce that, if one forms part of an employment-rich network that this does not serve as an adequate barrier to employment. In fact that being part of an employment-rich network advantages those in it regardless of where they live and where work is located.

Even in cases where employers select their workforce within a close proximity, if one is not part of an employment-rich network, they would not have adequate access to job opportunities because there is a high potential for there to be a lack in information regarding these opportunities because of the preference for employers' to use the networks of employees', already employed. In cases where there is a greater reliance on place-to-place search methods by the job searcher, the mismatch would be exacerbated because it may prove to be a spatially limiting exercise (Henly, 2000: 154). In addition to this though, such methods may also lead to adverse labour market because of the employer preference to hire through informal networks, but because spatial transit barriers can be overcome, there is no support for it serving as a sufficient barrier.

Thus, where information regarding vacancies is only subjected to those in employment-rich networks, there is a loss of information available to those outside of the network which would greatly affect their job search in a negative manner. But this has little to do with actual space, and more to do with the spatially unlimited networks.

To this extent, I would thus assert that the spatial mismatch effects concerning job or employment access, in Cape Town does not exist to the extent that it would not result in the adverse labour market outcomes of the low-skilled workforce living in isolated ghettos.

## Conclusion

With the issue of job access being at the centre of this paper, I have shown that within the context of the Cape Town area, the spatial mismatch does not causally result in unemployment among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce and to this extent does not exist as a viable theory. However, whether it exists in terms of housing market and mortgage discrimination, or because of the spatial shift of low-skilled work, at this point I cannot say because I have not researched it, although I do believe that there is potential for a mismatch to exist because of these elements.

I have conceptualised job access to encompass access to information about employment vacancies and opportunities, which could be exacerbated by transit difficulties. I have shown that the barriers to job access, which when not overcome could lead to the mismatch affecting unemployment among the low-skilled job seekers, but in Cape Town the job access barriers related to distance are in fact able to be overcome.

I have shown and explained different job search methods and the preference for both job seekers and employers to use informal networks. Preferences by employers include credibility and trustworthiness of those vouching and referring; employee fit; time efficiency and discipline. For the job seeker, it is a cheap and effective means of acquiring good information about job vacancies.

Typically, when informal networks are used by employers, they would encourage or ask their current employees to refer suitable candidates to them or to spread the word that they are looking for employees and to find out who is interested in applying within their networks, and likewise job seekers often turn to those in their networks to gain meaningful information about job vacancies and opportunities (Henly, 2000: 147).

The greatest barrier to job access concerns the information about job opportunities, which the spatial mismatch hypothesis argues as having an inverse relationship with distance, the greater the distance the

poorer the quality and quantity of information about job vacancies outside of the job seekers' neighbourhood. However, I have argued and shown that this concept is null when job searchers are part of an employment-rich network. This is because distance is irrelevant when accessing information through social networks, so access to information is not limited to distance and space because employment-rich social networks are boundary-less, which is a counter-argument to the SMH. To this extent, information has little to do with space and more to do with either forming part of an employment-rich network or not.

This is also linked to the preference that employers have in terms of recruiting their low-skilled workforce through employees' social networks. The main reason for this practice concerns credibility, reliability and trust of both those recommending job seekers and the assumed characteristics of the job seeker. Informal job search methods are also more frequently used to find out information around job opportunities primarily because it is a cost effective and efficient method.

I have also argued that in Cape Town, the effects of the mismatch are not viable to the extent that adverse labour market outcomes are not a causal result of spatial difference between home and work, for the low-skilled, low-wage workforce. As shown earlier, job access is not dependent on space and distance, because, based on my research, issues of job access can be overcome. Therefore, unemployment among the low-skilled, low-wage workforce cannot causally be attributed to the spatial mismatch.

For future research, I would suggest or recommend a greater collaboration between the spatial mismatch, job-search and network literature. Spatial mismatch theorists should be open to the findings within other realms besides their own, and consider what other authors say on related topics, and relate it back in terms of the spatial mismatch hypothesis and its mechanisms. Thus adding to the SMH rather than keeping it in a state of academic isolation.

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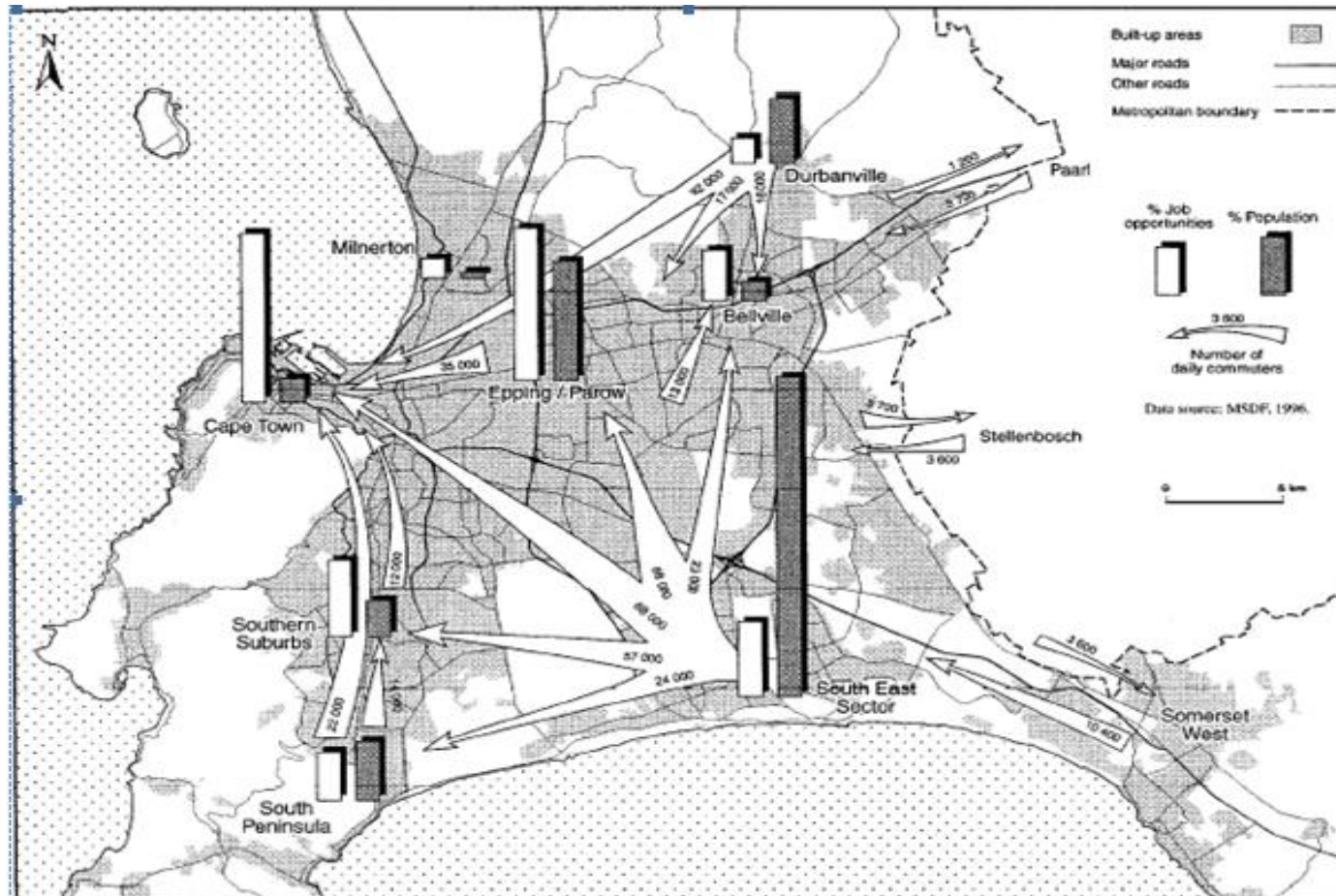
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University of Cape Town

## Appendix One: Illustration of the Mismatch in Cape Town

Graphic Illustration of Cape Town: This graphic representation of Cape Town shows the location of employment opportunities compared to the population. The south east sector is where Khayelitsha is located, where many low-skilled, low-wage workers live,.



(Above) Mismatch between places of work and residence in Cape Town (reproduced from Turok, 2001: 2353)

## Appendix Two: Tabulation of Interviews Conducted

### Interviews Conducted

Name of Company	Owner, Manager or Employee interviewed	Date Interviewed	Area	Follow-up Conducted	Date of follow-up
CNS Trailers	Co-owner interviewed	20.03.2009	Brackenfell		
All Weather Enclosures	Owner interviewed	16.03.2009	Maitland	Via telephone	04.08.2010
S.E.A.T Electrics	Manager interviewed	23.03.2009	Montague Gardens	In-depth interview	28.04.2010
Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store	Co-owner interviewed	29.04.2010	Plumstead		
The Wild Fig Restaurant	Co-owner interviewed	10.05.2010	Mowbray	Via email	
Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store	Ex-employee interviewed	10.05.2010	Current: Rondebosch Previous: Plumstead		
Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store	Current employee	29.04.2010	Grassy Park		
The Wild Fig Restaurant	Current employee	17.05.2010	Rondebosch		

### Honours Project Interviews Used

Name of Company	Owner, Manager or Employee interviewed	Date Interviewed	Area
Pick 'n Pay Plumstead Family Store	Co-owner interviewed	2008	Plumstead
Peggy's Place & Plate Hiring CC	Co-owner interviewed	2008	Diep River
Knead	Owner interviewed	2008	Cape Town CBD
Sharon Taljaard Consultancy	Owner interviewed	2008	Plumstead

## **Appendix Three: Interview Schedules**

University of Cape Town



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**Interview Topics for Spatial and Skills Mismatch**

1. Economic activity of the company:

What commodities does it produce or what services does it offer? Who are the clients? Where are they located?

2. Characteristics of the premises:

Location? Owned or rented? Has the company always been located at these premises or did it move from other premises? Why? Has the company expanded onto these premises from another site? Why did the company choose this location?

3. Ownership characteristics of the company

Is the owner the manager? Does the manager have any influence over the choice of location? Is the company a branch of a larger company or franchise? Is it locally owned or foreign owned? Is this relevant to locational choice? What is the cost of renting or owning per month (per sq.metre)? How does this compare to other locations?

4. Labour Issues

What are the different occupational and skill levels (qualifications) of the workforce? Where does the workforce live? How do they commute to the premises? How much time does the commute take? What does it cost? Break this down by occupational and skill characteristics. What are the racial, gender and language characteristics of the workforce? Are the workers employed full time, part time, casually, temporarily, sub-contracted or permanent? Break this down by occupational and skill characteristics. How is labour recruited? Does the location of the premises have any bearing on recruitment?

5. Location Issues

Does the product/service influence the choice of the company's location? For example, what is the location of the clients that are provided with products or services? Is this important for their location? Is the question of highway, air or rail access important for the delivery of products to clients or of raw materials to the premises? Is the service provided face to face or by telephone or email? Does this have an impact on choice of location?



Revised Interview Schedule: recruitment and networks

1 Economic activity of the company:

What commodities does it produce or what services does it offer? Who are the clients? Where are they located?

2 Characteristics of the premises:

Location? Owned or rented? Has the company always been located at these premises or did it move from other premises? Why? Has the company expanded onto these premises from another site? Why did the company choose this location?

3 Ownership characteristics of the company

Is the owner the manager? Does the manager have any influence over the choice of location? Is the company a branch of a larger company or franchise? Is it locally owned or foreign owned? Is this relevant to locational choice? What is the cost of renting or owning per month (per sq.metre)? How does this compare to other locations?

4 Labour Issues

What are the different occupational and skill levels (qualifications) of the workforce? Where does the workforce live? How do they commute to the premises? How much time does the commute take? What does it cost? Break this down by occupational and skill characteristics. Are the workers employed full time, part time, casually, temporarily, sub-contracted or permanent? Break this down by occupational and skill characteristics.

5 Recruitment Issues

How is labour recruited? How do potential employees hear about vacancies? How long have you been using this method/strategy? Where do most of the workers live? Does the worker's neighbourhood influence hiring? Different recruitment method for different skill levels? How would you recruit unskilled/clerical/semi-skilled/high-skilled/professional staff? Why do you use this method? Why not other methods? If several methods, which one is more frequently used? Why? Level of success of recruitment method? Reasons and effects for using recruitment method?

## Interview schedule for employees

### Social Networks

Do these social activities give rise to social networks through which they find out about job opportunities?

Why do some people live so far from work? What are their constraints? Try to find out what options they had with respect to housing and why they ended up in housing that was so far from their place of employment.

### Employment History

Find out about all the jobs that the respondent has held. Get dates, detailed job descriptions, names of employer, types of businesses/employers and places of employment. Also ask about how they commuted from home to work. Get the details of the geography, types of transport used and time taken. Was transport to work a problem for securing and holding down their jobs?

What were their reasons for taking the jobs and leaving them?

How did they find their jobs? Were they constrained in their search by living far from the workplace where they found a job? Did they use social networks? What is the character of their social networks? (friends, relatives, employers, workmates, travelmates?). What is the geographical character of their social networks? Did they find out about jobs through their neighbours or through geographically-dispersed networks?

### Unemployment History

Ask about their periods of unemployment. How did they become unemployed? How did they search for jobs? What methods did they use and why? Why did they fail to find jobs? Or did they find jobs and fail to get selected for the job? Why were they unsuccessful?

## **Appendix four: Interview Transcripts**

Transcripts 2009-2010

University of Cape Town

Date: 16 March 2009  
Interviewer: Hayley Petersen  
Company: All Weather Enclosures  
Address: Palm Mannor  
Highgate Street  
Maitland  
Tel: 021 510 6133

**Interviewer** Um, just to get it on the recorder that you don't mind this interview being recorded.

**Interviewee** I've got no problem.

**Interviewer** So, um, basically I'm just gonna ask you about your business, what you do really and then also about your business premises, and basically why you had chosen those grounds because I know that you kind of moved offices.

**Interviewee** Yes, yes, ja.

**Interviewer** So just like why you moved, if it's better, that kind of thing. So I've just got, well feel free to say anything and talk whenever...

**Interviewee** Ja, ja, fine.

**Interviewer** So the characteristics of your business premises, um, how would you describe the area in which it is at the moment?

**Interviewee** Okay um...there's um...how can I tell it now, there's a lot of reasons why I had to review, er, moving to a more...let's call it a more permanent definite business premises. The first aspect was the safety...um...because sometimes I have to deal with large sums of money, um, and also some clientele they have to pay me cash or want to deal with me directly, um, we usually meet in various places, hotels, restaurants, wherever, that's fine but I felt the need for a professional service, or a professional look, um I also want to feel comfortable, you know, so...um...it's a security complex, they've got...in fact in the process now, I'm a body of the corporate, a trustee member so we've already recommended, I've strongly recommended and it's gonna be done, um, electric fencing also, we've secured it further with, we're busy now having, to man, a security man to patrol...so yes, that all excites any person that I'm doing business with, in certain type of businesses, so yes, um, that was **one** of the main factors, **one** of the factors, um, other factors include, I thought in terms of location, location, location, ja, people use it as a pun or whatever...I find, if you look at the M5, M3, where it runs off, it meets just perfectly before you get into the major traffic jams going onto the M, N2, or where you're going to the N7, um, what do you call it, um, Milnerton's side, if you know the travelling that we do, people that's on the road a lot, if you go down that side you have a problem, but if you just come off there, you're right just where everything is happening. So if, you're coming from Town, and you hit into Maitland, where it is basically [referring to location of office space], perfect. Coming from anywhere, not anywhere, but practically its very close and accessible in terms of business wise, for a business person to meet me. It's very easy, it's been happening. Um, since I've, my location, I've had a number of meetings and everyone seems to make it...um, ja. That was a number, I can go from now and give you a whole page, I don't know how much you need me to expand on that. Um, ja, those are the main factors besides others also. There was other, er, reasons why I bought the property...that's also inclined with another issue...um, this associate, business associate of mine...was going to do the development, in other words he buys land, and, he has someone that does a study to see, a feasible study, if he can sell it at x-amount, um, taking into account the present economic situation and has the units reduced to a certain size, just enough space to put in a bed, cupboard, et cetera et cetera, and, um, yes what I did is, I said, fine I'll buy a unit here, but then I want to have

the right and the option to tender on the aluminium work...I did allude to it, but I think he understands I'm a business person, so I'll buy this for R450 000, but I want to have the option to tender for the aluminium work, the aluminium work was a R150 000, my profit was R50 000, so I paid R400 000 in really technical terms...um...I'm on the body corporate, and that of course also tells you a lot, because I have to certify who does work on the property, I have to certify if it's an acceptable price...um...we also will tender to do that work also. So I put myself in a kind of prime position also that, that I have because I've got a large, well three teams to feed, so, um, with work and literally feed them, so, ja, I've put myself in that position, um, so there's more than one reason why I did one thing and when I get into one thing, I try to make sure it sustains more, I get more out of it because that's what I learnt from the people I deal with – they buy one thing, it's not really for the purpose that everyone thinks they buying, it's a long lasting, passive income, or a passive, um, way of emerging yourself...I don't know if that makes kind of clear what I'm saying...

No, ja, um, and maybe you could just tell me the name of your business and what you actually do.

I've got two businesses, the one is, um, All Weather Enclosures, and that primarily is for braai-rooms, sun-rooms, patios, carports and, um, related services, um, aluminium...something similar to what we are sitting in now [referring the interview space which is an enclosed braai area or room]. Then also All Weather Enclosures encompasses, the, um, project management division. Project management, where I tender to be the project manager, to...take control of bigger projects, ur, guest houses, hotels, massive projects – where I ensure that the various contractors that report to me are ... that no substandard work is being done...and, um, of course they might give me a project management fee or they might be, also because they are so, they think I'm so reliable and I'm delivering everything, taking things out of their hands and making sure that everything's fine, especially with engineers and architects, people of that dynamics, um, they have to deal with someone that's familiar with the products and various technical information. More specific, building science, you must have a lot of knowledge and if you don't know that you, um, um, it just doesn't work. I'm not studied into that area, but I spend a lot of time with engineers, personal friends of mine, and what they guide me I read up and I go to the internet, I read up, and I can talk to any, most people about...moving with, I've dealt with the extension of roads, extensions of railway lines – I've dealt with it personally, managed, supervised and designed it myself, had to be certified, yes, by engineers, architects, but I could go to them, say no Rob this is right just change it here and there. So, um, yes, I've got the one section which is project management also and that, er, pays a good remuneration, because if they comfortable with you and your service, they'll ask you even to get your own sub-contractors. So I earn a fee on top of a fee that the sub-contractors charge. So if I get my own sub-contractors then it's even better. You know, you can...they can whatever and you can charge x because you know what it should be.

**Interviewer** Okay

**Interviewee** Ja, that is the one phase or the one business, the other is Senoj Properties...ja, um, that one I established very long ago. The main service or product that I'm offering there is where I do, um, I finance projects, more related to the property market. And let me just, i.e. give you an idea, in most instances the type of clientele that I deal with is where they...are short of the funds of the transfer or registration fees or the rates payable, sometimes even the deposit...and it is also then linked, which I link myself to...estate agents that wanted their commission in advance. Then I also then link it further to the client that wanted a further advancement of his proposed sale of his house. Can I elaborate on that?

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**Interviewer** Yes please do.

**Interviewee** Mr. A has a house which he's got a very small bond on it lets say for instance, he's got a small bond on it of 100 000. The equity of the house realised would be about 500 000. So he sees a house wherever, and he wants to buy that house. He's got cash, but the deposit and because of the excitement believe it or not, it happens fairly often...everything is fine, doesn't read the fine print and he says that the seller will be responsible for the costs, which means the transfer costs. And that's fine then he says oh yes I didn't have R20 000, then he says oh the rates must be paid up in advance before the house gets transferred. Oh my gosh, another R20 000. So he said no okay the new house I would like to move in now because these people are well...taking occupancy and they paying occupational rent. But I want to put it burglar bars and whatever there. So he needs an advancement, but because I sighted that in terms of the law...the managing company has to be the conveyencing attorneys that takes control, full control of all funds. And I'm regarded as a preferential creditor after the attorney. So in terms of the law, he has to pay himself first. Of course and then the program factors [inaudible] blah blah blah. And then I'm the next preferential one to pay. But not [inaudible] the clients or the seller, it goes to the attorneys. And these attorneys, I've spent time with them...again friends of mine, I got involved with them and now I understand the basic make up in terms of contract and those types of things. But there is always, shall I say areas where people can still get out or what's the word I could say ....ja there is still very ...its still a volatile business, let's put it this way...and there is small areas which is grey. Which unfortunately in this sad country, there is not a proper justice system that can do these things even the attorneys themselves. So you'd lose a lot of money [inaudible] that's basically the long story. But yet, then I sighted that opportunity, I've gone and marketed myself with various groups of attorneys, a hand full of them. Which I formulated a commission structure and said that it is kind of...not illegal but I wanted an admin fee, so I paid them for kind of, suppose to be managing it to a certain extent. Strangely I found out that they don't do very much. When things go wrong they say sorry and now your funds at a loss and now we're going to try and get it back cause there's some major problem. But yet, just briefly, So I finance that type of operations. So when the funds come back, and thankfully I can get my portion. I hope that answers you question.

**Interviewer** Yes

**Interviewee** You must tell me if there's certain things unclear.

**Interviewer** No, I think everything's fine so far...um, so you moved, I mean as you said earlier, that you changed locations. So, um, where did you move from exactly?

**Interviewee** Well, I worked office from home basically, that's what I did. I previously...when I started out I had an office in ...well a factory and an office in Claremont. Rented premises there, it was fine but there was just too much...and I would tell anybody never ever to consider renting unless...I don't know. I wouldn't ever ever encourage that. First of all, because you had a big bond out now you had accumulated a lot of expensive materials that you bought...there's pros and cons in those ways. It depends on how your business is set up. And you find out that you bought more goods that you didn't need, because you're getting it at a good price...which is good. The bad thing is now, there's something called shrinkage....which is very very difficult to control. Things just get missing, damaged, or whatever word you want to use and nobody knows, things broken. So now you've got a problem. Now you've got to have another management system in place for that. Then we had like...when I had an appointment somewhere else, I had to first go to the factory because people that worked in the factory, only the secretary could get in the main side and then the place that we opened and the expensive tools and the vehicles had to depart....So that was good and does work if you have people and you maybe set up an

infrastructure that can handle that type of running of the show. But it didn't work for me because the morning I might be here, next morning I might have to leave straight away, the next morning I'm here or [inaudible] So it didn't work right. And the worst...not I mean the last, was the rental, oh my gosh. And the landlords they don't give two hoots about you. There was a break in, [inaudible] cause I was sharing rental with two other persons, but they get crapped quite badly. Mine was...my legal office was in a more safer section and my thing was more (cannot hear what is being said ). Wasn't the tidiest....well not the ...wasn't the fanciest one, but my one...to get in there would be a nightmare. Or well, to get in anywhere, but it wasn't as easy to get in. Ja, the rental going up every year 10 to 15%, every year, that was ridiculous. And you find that out a bit...if you manage the receipt well, you looking at...you paying out quite a penny and it didn't appeal to me. And I said never ever again. So I'll move into anything that will be mine. I will never ever....It might change in some circumstances, but I don't think in my lifetime I'm going to ... rent a place from anybody. I just can't see it. It may be stupid of me I suppose.

**Interviewer** So in Claremont, what was the average rent that you were paying per square meter and how big was it?

**Interviewee** Um, that's a good one, well ... I paid, for my office and that time it was R 1500, the office was about 3X3...3X2.5...close to 3X3, um, and I shared a section for storing goods and stuff like that, that was about, say about 6X6 ... um, I was paying around about, roughly about R3000, R3500 ... and that's now roughly about 10 years ago.

**Interviewer** So would you say it was a pretty hefty price to pay that time?

**Interviewee** Not really, it wasn't really if you look at it. The turnover was very, you know business was, the economy was booming at that time...I wouldn't say that was the main issue that I moved but I just looked at it in retrospect, then next year you pay R3400, next year you're paying another on that and the landlords don't really do anything for you really, you really had to shout and fight before anything really happens, you know ... So, ja, I didn't think it was right to pay a ridiculous amount like that...bite the bullet, go through you first three, four years or five years, whatever, then it's yours, you might still struggle but it's yours [referring to purchased property], but I mean you struggle through yourself you struggling not to save anybody but yourself and that's basically my point on the issue of rental not a good feeling really.

**Interviewer** And your main reason for moving, you said that the rental wasn't your main reason...

**Interviewee** There was a number of reasons, you see there's never just one reason specifically. Because we shared the rental, three of us, it was a prime position, it was actually, um, in Claremont behind Venus, a prime spot...high, um, traffic for the type of clientele, what you call the upper income, Claremont, Rondebosch, Newlands, that was our main, and the type of business that we lend ourself is for that...but we had a little bit of our internal politics also...because certain clients came to see me and, now, while I was busy...somebody else spoke to him and then, they found they offer a similar product or a similar, and they spoke to them...then when I came the guy said "no, its fine" he'll deal with that guy...there was a lot of other politics that came, well not a lot, but things became unsavoury. Um, they were Afrikaners, but we got along very well because I'm fluent in Afrikaans...and, um, things just didn't work out right and I just said, you know, it's fine thank you guys, but I've had it, and we just parted. It was a bit (cannot hear what is being said ) but I mean I think I saw them most probably about five or six years later and they were very very kind to me. So I didn't have to do anything bad or good, I just kept myself...did....practiced proper business applications and that's it. No ducking and diving for anybody and I'm not prepared to do it for anybody also. I don't think I'm the most ...probably the most honest person or...but what I do, I believe in and give my utmost to do it. If I done a mistake, I will be the first to apologise and write a letter for a

thousand people to see that straight away. I can't say the same for the others. They were a bit suspect. So I always say every man for himself. Whatever you want to do, do it. As long as it's not around me. So it was also good from that point of view. I think I also had to realise my full potential when I left that premises. People (cannot hear what is being said ) immediately. Immediately I could see that I do have an effect you know...my advertisement when I moved from home, I set up what we call a...that time it was called Spoornet, not Spoornet...Radiospor. The facility I engage with where this company can man and take...the intake of calls could be twenty three calls per minute representing your company. So I engaged with them and they explained to me, they set up in Johannesburg, to show my company's force and the facade, the front, I mean that's the most important thing. You phone in, you want to be answered or heard immediately, that someone speaks to you. Not the phone ringing and an answering system and whatever nonsense. They had a system where twenty three to twenty four calls could be taken in one minute. They had signed a contract with them and they would answer everything politely and ask what the enquiry was about, then they would actually message switch it to me....word for word to my cell phone and there was a fee. But it was fantastic. I would then respond from my cell phone or my landline and say sorry I wasn't available, I was out for a minute but how can I help you? And they were (cannot hear what is being said ) So I used that business tool to really....because the clients was quite excited, they phoned in and its one of the first companies where people answered. Gee...okay. We get someone to call and someone called straight away. Look so...I could manage, where in the past we had a switch board that we shared. Paying for this lady, she did my filing and my this and my that and my books and things for me, but things go on amiss also because she was looking after three people, three companies. So ja...I could feel whatever I touched moved. Right or wrong, if I make a mistake, I know I made a mistake. Where...in a set up like I was, you don't really know, you just keep on going and you keep on going. So ja that was also a benefit and you could see you can fine tune certain areas of various products which you then had to engage with this company to train this people right regarding if someone asks you for a designer light or a steel unit, you can ask them what is the span, you can ask them...tell them what is a span. Some people didn't even know what it is. They say no how far is projection, it's got high medium low, etc. you know. Is it coastal? No. How much microns is applicable in that instance, like the thickness of steel and blah blah blah and you can go into that. But if you use all that valuable terms, people then get impressed, believe it or not, they get impressed. And you obviously know something about steel or buildings. It (cannot hear what is being said ) but I don't know much but John (cannot hear what is being said ) is who I can put you through. (cannot hear what is being said ). And what I don't know, I will find out and get someone to call you.

**Interviewer** And the people that you shared with, were they all in the same line of business?

**Interviewee** Similar, not the same, I was, er, the marketing consultant for that company for three years, in which I earned a lot of money, a lot of money...um, I knew it would come to an end when they spoke about renewing my contract because the bad thing I did there was, I was very good, I don't want to sound pompous but I was very good, with regard, I secured so much in contracts that I didn't have to come to work. And contracts were signed, practically, fairly big ones. Corporate companies like Woolworths, Wooltrue, what's it Pep Stores, Kensani, fairly big companies... So they could see they that they paid me a retainer which we agreed on which was quite a good one. And I was delivering every...more than I could believe, but then they found but that guy doesn't have to do that so we had renewed the contract cause there was still work sprinkling in as we were flying into the next year, the next quarter of the next year. So if they ask me to train somebody then I'm really excited that there's a reason it's coming close to my end. And

they got someone employed and this person just was a total mess up which was fine. When I, they didn't renew the contract, they said that they couldn't afford me...but they didn't want to lose me so, I said well I was going to start, and they said well why don't you rent the premises from us. So the idea was that I would do the building of the structures and I would do the marketing, the selling of it. But there were also certain things that were linked to the product. They would just do the roof and close, I would do the tiling, flooring, lighting, um, the burglar bars, the blinds, ceiling, various other things that went with that. Cupboard finishes were very expensive because it's wood. So I was actually put into that and they did it at an agreed price...then they start increasing the prices and they start changing what we agreed to and I could see...The reason why they want the pressure, nothing was happening their side...So the price that we agreed on they just inflated it, they said no sorry Rob you see its...doesn't work like that. But then I could see it wasn't happening. (cannot hear what is being said ). Ja and then I could see that things wasn't doing well and then they started doing funny things and it didn't work for me. And then I just said thank you very much and then we departed.

**Interviewer** And, um, just going back to your client base, how would you describe your clientele. You said that they were high-end when you were in Claremont, is that still the same?

**Interviewee** Yes, I, um...you see the type of product and service that my company renders is marked on the upper income group. That's why I would expose my company at times advertise in media, in certain magazines, that are expensive, R3500 a month. Those get delivered to those types of houses free of charge but the incitement is from that area. I might most probably get one or two jobs from Ottery or Wetton maybe or Kenwyn or whatever. Single carports are around R12000 where you could have one done – 3000, 4000, 5000 rand. The type of finishing, type of product, we give is superior...nothing wrong with 3, 4000 rand, but you can't compare the two. Like (cannot hear what is being said ) clients will ask me and I'll say its fine, what do you want...do you want a Mercedes Benz or do you want a Toyota Corolla? Nothing wrong with a Toyota Corolla, they beautiful cars. I mean it costs brand new R150 000. I bought myself one. But do you want a Mercedes? The cheapest Mercedes is going to cost you R280 000. Also take you to work, also take you to school, take you everywhere. But it's a total different type of approach...I mean people know who you are, what you drive. Not because I said, it just is as it is. So obviously you get a better feel if you driving to Checkers, makes you feel like you're driving on cloud nine. I don't know with a Corolla you might be driving on a cloud but not on cloud nine. You going to Jo'burg, you won't hardly feel the drive...on a Corolla you might feel it slightly, not uncomfortable but you can't compare the two. But yet, it can take you to Town, it can take you to wherever, nothing wrong with it. This is what would spend and what you want to show people you are. That's important. You could buy a house in Mitchells Plain, nothing wrong with Mitchells Plain...really there's nothing wrong. I know a minister that's living there, double story he made it real real smart and things but there again its location. He's got a client target that's for his type of sermon and whatever...who's from Mitchell's Plain. He does very well there, maybe economically, financially, I don't know. Maybe he wants to help the people, I don't know what it is, but it works for him. But he could've lived easily in Bishop's Court, but what type of clientele would he have to preach to there. Ja so I told the client look if you want this...because I can't give you that one, I can't do that for you, I don't deal with that. But I can tell you go deal with that person. But if you want this type of thing, that's what I can do for you. And I can mention all the top guys in the business, I'll say those are the four or five companies that does this, I'm one of them. So please let me tender on that for you. But that I can't do. There's nothing wrong with it, its fine, you want it to last three years and look like a dog's breakfast, its fine. But if you want a top, then you speak to me. Ja that is the exposure that we do in the home-makers field...in books like that or

	the Home focus or the home media...the various type of media that I use.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And sort of which areas would you say the clients are from?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes, as I said now, it would be all your affluent areas, Bergvliet, Tokai, Constantia, Bishops Court, Fishoek, Rondebosch, um, in the West Coast side, um, er, Sunningdale, Parklands, Blouberg Strand, that areas, then you look North, go North, out there, um, Plattekloof, Belville, Welgemoed, Durbanville, all that, um, Somerset West all those, um, one or two people, but generally that is my clientele, most. In fact, I'm generally very successful North because of...they believe I'm Afrikaans when I speak to them and I get there...are you Mr. Jones? So, ja...I do a lot of Afrikaans business. A lot. A lot.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how does your business premises influence, um, your clientele base, if at all or does it really not make a difference?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, um, you see, when a client is a rep, like myself or the guys on the road, it's fantastic, we meet each other at my premises or where ever, we can always seem to meet each other very easily. And then also for the Senoj Properties, er, location is important but not a major, it's a benefit of course, for us for a lot of people. For All Weather, yes, when the guys are on the road we can always meet. Because I've got a structure up of our product so you can see it right there and then. Can ask me fifty questions about it, he maybe doesn't understand what I'm talking about, I say have you seen one like that, he says 'oh, well I like this, or can't you change this here and can't you change this there'.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, so, you would get a client to come to a place where you are busy working at.
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, no...the advertisement and the photograph that I present changes monthly, it depends if it is rainy weather, I will put one that shows a cosy effect that protects assets and furniture or motor vehicle or whatever, I'll show you that kind of feel. So that client would site into that and want to know more about that. He's seen the picture already, so I go out there and I can explain to him more, based on the picture and based on his braai room or his potential open patio.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So you would actually go to the client's house where you are going to work.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes, they would call me and say, Mr. Jones 'would like to enclose, I saw your picture or I saw your website'. I don't have a website because it's a very complicated...I wouldn't say complicated. Our product changes quite a lot from time to time and people...then I have to have somebody that's going to have to keep on changing it and I don't have the time. We don't want to change and then somebody phones you about that and that product is no longer on the market. You know they talk and you don't know what they talking about. In the mean time they looking at something that is long time obsolete. So it's got to be upgraded or updated all the time. So now you have another problem. Rather update my new media focus and if it's sunny weather and really hot, I'll show that type of effect. Rainy, I'll show that, wind...I'll show a certain huge detail of how strong the certain anchors are and...this is now the year where there's a lot of media coverage about how people break in and I'll show the type of expander gates that I produce. And I like to show them my price, you know. So I give them something to question, you want them to question you know...why is that like this, why is this like that?.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, just going to sort of labour related issues. Um, how many people do you have that work for you.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, that is a ... er, how shall I say, er, a point that I haven't set straight, but the situation as I could understand it. I've got three guys working full time, um, report to me every day. And then I got another, two to three, in fact it's more, three, four (said softly, thinking) about five different sub-contracting companies that work for me. I allocate work to them all the time, so they must look after their own pay-roll, problems, vehicle problems, or whatever, that's not my problem – that's basically it, so I would basically say that I look after three people. In fact it's four, sorry, four. That's what I look after.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So would you say that you deal with the sub-contracting all the time really?

<b>Interviewee</b>	All the time...I've trained them up to the way that I want them to do things and to keep the flag up high for my company and they kind of know what I'm talking about. So if they can't get work of...well the type of work that I do, they can't because they have to have a rep that goes with a decent car, who presents himself decently. Also they must be able to pay three and a half thousand rand a month and be on phone calls all the time. They don't, they just need to do the work. That just is how it is.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And in terms of the skill level that is needed, um, for the full time, what are the various skill levels?
<b>Interviewee</b>	In fact, quite amazingly, they are going for training now – on Wednesday morning – they are booked for training at another company that I work with. Um, I'm basically looking for semi-skilled persons and trades persons...that's what I look for. Um, in a specific field, could be steel or carpentry, joinery carpentry. Then I will, though I'm not a trades person, myself, but there's very little that anyone can tell me about a certain trade. I must show you how to do any, most things. But because they are, I selected them, I know exactly what, and they know I know, and I will show them how to fit an aluminium door, I don't do it myself. You'll never see me with a screw-driver or a hammer in my hand, ever, I just – I dunno, I just don't do stuff like that. I can use a hammer, I can use a saw but I take so long to do it, so I'll show them how to do it, I'll show them how it should be, I'll show them where they make short. And they really...Coming from that way I think I can part what they need to do quite well and they seem to quite ja. They go alright.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, when you say semi-skilled, what exactly do you mean?
<b>Interviewee</b>	When I say, semi-skilled, if a guy is a full on carpenter, he's got, what EBC5, he knows about wood, he knows exactly how to cut that wood, perfectly. Now when I've got a section of steel, now he's got a major problem. He's just, his mind just, you know, it's not his fault, it's a problem for him to actually adjust, to do something else, the guy if he just works on wood he can do magic but give him a piece of steel, same principle you just have to this and this, it doesn't click – he's got a problem, or he sees it as a problem. This guy, he's so deep into something and he just can't. And it's difficult to get him to understand it...you must be able to think out the box, that's what I say. As a tradesperson in our field, which is more fitting, building, but more fitting. For building I get my sub-contractors in, but the core team do just about everything small, minor things. Get the big, the bigger teams come in. They must sort it out. A small piece of tile we do that that, anything. Electrical work, but is he an electrician? No. He's not an electrician. But he knows I'll show him listen here this fan is you know...the leads are going funny. why? There's no weights on it. But then he says but no but everything is fine no. (cannot hear what is being said ) the oscillation is because...and it's a basic thing which anybody, you yourself will work out but they can't think. Not they wrong, but because their mind is so deep into the woodwork or in mechanics, mechanical engineering that they out of it. And that is a problem in our business. You there to...if we do...that's why I do project management because if something goes wrong, I can't, I must have it fixed up. I can't say it's the carpenters, the tilers, the electricians. My job is to fix it up. I'm responsible for this sight. Problem...I got to look at it, find why its doing that, and sort it out. And if you are engaged with people that's working like that, they think the same way. It must be fixed up.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And would you say that all of them are semi-skilled, or are there varying degrees of skill levels?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, the team, my team that works with me, they are, ja, because it calls for that, it calls for that, um, I found out that they wouldn't do well at another job. They know a little bit about mechanical, a little bit of this, a little bit of this, because our work encompasses fitting. You need a number of skills to bake that cake. I've had of course, super skilled

	guys, welders, but they can just do, they've got limitations. Unless your work is in that line where you just have to do welding. My work is not like that...that's the situation.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And sort of where do they live, sort of which areas do they live in and how do they travel to...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Now that is now, you know, would you believe it if I think of all these years, all the years, they came from Mannenberg, er, Hanover Park, and Mitchells Plain. Ja they came from Ottery also, there was Ottery, Grassy Park, but mainly, Mitchells Plain, I would say has the most amount of talent that, well other areas as well but I'm saying sub-economic areas... I don't know I have to say they fantastic. I think it's because socio-economic pressures have made them....They quite good thinkers. I'm very impressed...I'm very impressed with people, well not all of them, but yet I would say very strongly Mitchells Plain. I had good guys from Hanover Park and Manenberg but now Mitchells Plain, two main guys are now Mitchells Plain, the one guy is from Bridgetown...the bad thing about those people when they know they are good, I won't say they exploit, they try to...put the bosses or the employers in a disposition, and try to do funny things and don't come in because there's always a social problem at home, or drinking or fights or tension, there's always something... <b>always</b> , that is guaranteed, I can tell you stories from now until you won't believe it. I mean I can give you books on it. And presently that's what I ex...but it's fine. It is as it is, you tolerate the situation.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And since you've moved now to a new location, how do they get to work?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, they are in fact on a taxi route which doesn't go to Maitland which is fine because the vehicle is here and the tools are here [referring to Ottery premises], they come and collect so I wait to brief them then they go off.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh, they don't actually have to travel to...
<b>Interviewee</b>	They don't have to travel, that what I, um, if I need to meet them I meet them outside or they come to meet me with my vehicles at my office or whatever.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So you actually supply the transport?
<b>Interviewee</b>	They just get here and they get transport.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So as long as they make it to Ottery, and how do they get here from where they live?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It's on route.
<b>Interviewer</b>	In terms of taxi...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Taxi. Well, they've got their own transport now, the one's got his own vehicle, two of them has their own vehicle...but usually taxi. I told them use the taxi but they Mr. Big stuff you know so...Strange things these people do but anyhow.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And sort of, what are the gender, language and racial characteristics of um, your workers.
<b>Interviewee</b>	What is the gender division?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, well, ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, well in my business it is basically just males, basically male.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, in terms of race?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, they are all coloured. I had a black fellow that died, shame he was long with me, hey...eight years, nine years, died of AIDS. And I had to pay for the funeral and all these things. But its fine you know, I'll do it. Certain black, Xhosa...ja he was Xhosa, he was a very good fellow. Very good, decent fellow. I think that was the only black guy I had working for me...hold on I tell lies, then I had Elvis, he was also Xhosa, then the other one was Zulu, what was his name...Headley, not Headley...Fletcher, his Zulu. He does the paving, paving you see at the back, but mostly coloured, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And language?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Afrikaans ... of course the black they speak, er, English, they don't know Afrikaans.
<b>Interviewer</b>	As you said, the workers that you have now are all full time, and then you sub-contact, but do you have any sort of part-time workers that come in...

<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes, ja, ja, ja, that is when the need arise, you know, um, certain contractors if it's a small job, I know they not gonna be, um, you know because of the cost also, and I can rather give somebody something to earn, then I'll give a casual worker for two or three days.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how would you find these casual...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Aaaah, that's more stress than anything else. They look for work but they really not prepared to work, they moan about the hours – they always moan, it's a lot of moaning. It's very difficult to help people that are unemployed, and you think it's, you doing good but you're causing more hassles for yourself. It is as it is. I can tell you stories also about that and my company as well, and you try to take things on face value, his father said he can work, mother said, and he said 'no I'll do anything'. Fine, get to the site 10 o'clock, just want to rest quickly, go to the shop to get a cool-drink, works for an hour, then go to the toilet, then he works then he says no he hurt his back. And you tell yourself not so long ago...yesterday, I mean you just hired you know. There's a lot of other things to do, you just want the guy to dig a whole, put this there that's all then you can go. I mean he must at least show that he is doing something, and you say nah it's alright go. Here's fifty rand or whatever, you know just go I don't want to see you here, otherwise we're going to have a problem. So you find people that are not working...I think they even become psychologically imbalanced also, they just can't keep a job. I don't think...They just want to scan man, some of them. They just want to give a story so at least they can get fifty rand and go do nothing. Another guy came outside here and I asked him to wash my car. Gave him a hose pipe and I gave him a nice pair of shoes, nothing wrong with it, nice pair...put it outside. It was Reagan's old here, school shoes. Still good. He got a big foot man. I mos don't want to wear Toughees. I put it out there, there was nothing wrong with it, still new. He just watered the car, he put (cannot hear what is being said ), close the pipe, took the shoes and walked off. The guy was gone. He looked like a nice guy. He looked like a ...he was a... (cannot hear what is being said ), but you trust people. The guy I mean he said ow...I gave him a half a loaf of bread also...( cannot hear what is being said ) the bread, ag man....and there he goes. What did I do wrong or what...ja but ag ja. There's someone you give and you just can't believe it. But there's more to it of course you know...as I said...I think something kind of gives in their mind, it's not really stable. I'm not saying it in a bad way. They just seem to want to catch somebody man. Where they can steal or do something and move to somebody else again. That's what I think it is. Well that's my version. Somebody might not agree with me or...ja I would say that's how they become. Not really aggressive or so but they would want to...It's like life owes them and so they want to get it back you know...short way or in an (cannot hear what is being said ) way.
<b>Interviewer</b>	But, your casual employment that you find, where do you find them...do you hear about them through people that work for you already and you just take it on their word or do you pick people up from the street...
<b>Interviewee</b>	I will never, ever in my whole pick someone up from the street. Never, never, never, never, it will be referred, depends who refers and you can only take so much and the guy can't tell you much, said look here Rob this guy was working, used to be a good worker, three years ago, or a year ago, or eight months ago, or whatever, they don't tell you much also. But they also want to help another friend, you know comradery, or brother or cousin whatever. Everybody, and ja, and you also have to think for yourself, Maybe the guy was a good worker, maybe he was and maybe he is, but he's definitely not showing that. But ja, I would never ever take someone off the road. Never. I mean you already have a headache with people that's referred to you, people on the road you don't know what you are dealing with.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And (cannot hear what is being said ) so how's your other labour recruited? How do you find your other (cannot hear what is being said )?

**Interviewee** : Its word of mouth, then also when I go to sights, people ask me...he's unhappy with where he's working, they took a liking to me. Lets just say they working on sites there and wherever, and he says hi Mr. Jones...we doing this for you...I got a sub-contracting company....please can't I come work for you? And he says die mense...jy wiet die bra hy betaal nie vir my reg nie or whatever. I said look here, no I don't want to get involved in this thing. Mr. Jones man you know...we doing this work for you and ...sometimes its small jobs and they call it sub-contracting. So now this guy wants to do it for me which is fine, and I said but then I'll have to go speak to your...Noooo, you know it's a whole thing. So I said to the guy sorry. Cause I don't know what this guy is up to. I don't know what's his story. And I said look here, I will give you a job...what you going to do and that's all I'm going to pay you. Whatever it pays you he said that's fine. I'll pay you this, I'll pay you this and this. But you must do this, but if you not going to, I'm going to say goodbye to you then. But you must go to your boss. I'm not going to tell him. I'm not going to go here behind his back. I don't have the time for that. He said nah and I said well then I can't help you. Not long...he comes and approaches me and says he's left there and whatever. And then I phoned his boss and he said no this guy wanted more money and he left or whatever the case, always some story. And I said what does he earn...no he earns this. And I said okay, fine is he a good worker? Ja he's a good worker, but he stays out Mondays or Tuesdays or whatever. And I said no its fine then I don't pay...I just pay him every fort night then or whatever. You know I have to work with the situation. But generally you get good workers. So you have to deal with these problems, these shortcomings...deal with effectively. You make them still employable. If he's drinking or whatever....if it's not that they womanisers, then it's again swearing. On my site, if you swear, you get one warning, next time sorry. I don't care who you swearing at ...the dog...don't swear. Even my sub-contractors...and I say sorry? Jammer Mr. Jones maar ek praat met hom. As jy weer vloek dan vloek jy vir my. I said to them... (cannot hear what is being said ) jy's af of julle almal is af van die site af. And the boss will come now and there'll be trouble. And I'm very strict with that. I f I say you must leave, you must leave today. I don't shout, I don't swear or whatever. (cannot hear what is being said ). Cause I'll tell you about if all of you people must leave now, Your boss will half kill you here. But I've got another way of moving you also by law so you will just leave. So ja...that's how I get also work and the team must be bigger. People...a lot of people call you also, they know you from working for you before with sub-contractors and they not working. With sub-contractors, they can't sustain their workers all the time. I f they were twenty now, now they only eight. Those eight just phone in or whatever phone in here regularly. I had a call...Yusuf phoned me from Mitchells Plain, Marco phoned me...Marco's a painter and Yusuf's a painter. Then I had a carpenter phone me from...I'll give you a good example this year.... I started with a new foreman, because my first foreman, he decided you know he'll work for himself, he'll get more money out of it. I said look here, I believe I'm giving you a fairly decent rate, because I look after your needs. The end of the year...all these years I give all you guys a bonus. Had a good year, I always give you some. So I pay you x amount so I always have something for you. I f you don't like it, you want more, I can't give do anything about it. So I said look here I'm sorry, but best of luck to you. So I needed a leading hand. It wasn't long...somebody else, well he phoned me, they put him on to somebody. This guy, I had an interview with him, he's from Manenberg, no...Manenberg ja. Fifty years old, four children and one baby...no or four year old or something like that. I don't know how that works now but anyhow... moving on. He was a fourty eight or fourty six, I can't recall now. Anyhow, so we sat and I gave him a whole lay out of what I expect of him and he can ask me anything he wants to ask me then and I'll tell him what I'm going to pay him and how I'm going to pay him and what I expect of him. If he drives fast, he has to pay for the fines, etc etc. If something

breaks, you pay for it. I will pay half or quarter, it depends on what. He said its fine, he's going to start now. I said okay, Then I'll get your uniform and stuff and start two days later. The day that he must just start, he phones me the morning. I got a sms, see he miss called and all that. He said the old company that he worked for just phoned him back now so he can't come today. Obviously he's getting benefits, medical aid and whatever and whatever. And he said thank you Mr. Jones I really want to work for you but I mean they called me back now. I was three years ago there, but they called me back. I said no it's alright man. He said no but he...I said no...He stays in Ottery, I said no it's fine. So he goes back to his company and its fine. So I was looking again. But he said no but my brother-in-law is looking...my brother-in-law's cousin's uncle's sister's...something like that. So anyhow I went and phoned this guy in Mitchells Plain. He comes here and I had a meeting with him the next day and told him...I said think about it. Don't make up your mind. And he said no Mr. Jones I would like to work here. I've been three years on my own, five years or whatever. Been here and there but gee you know...doing my own work and its good. But yet, every month he doesn't know how...every week, you know and this and that. And I said okay fine. So he's been with me since. After month and a half, I get a call from the first guy. Mr. Jones hi...but he's given miss calls and saw it and ...what the hell is people phoning me...He says he was working nice for that company, but it went so bad with the economy that they put a whole, I don't know how many people off. So he's again unemployed. Can't he get his job back? I didn't find it funny but I just said I'm sorry man I'm just...I said look here, but I'll tell you what...when there's extra then I will call you...you know. But please man you know...I said look here I'll...I mean this job is designed, the work that we do is designed for two to three guys on site. I can't put our people there then what are you going to do? Its designed the way...I designed the system just for two or three guys. I can't have four guys, there's nothing for him to do. Certain jobs yes, but unfortunately I can't you know...So ja. But this is how it happens. And I think this is the biggest the group...The guy who's with me now, is very good, very good. I think the other guy would've also been very good. But my guy that left me, I think he's most probably the best I had, will ever have, will ever have. Total all rounders. They (cannot hear what is being said ) all rounders. Totally flexible. Can think out the box. I can show him how to extend a railway line, and I know he'll do it right. I'll set a drawing...I'll have a...my board that's at the back there...I'll draw it for him, I'll show him the sections of steel, I can teach him, I can explain it to him and I can leave him to go with ten guys or three guys. He'll do it. But another guy who was just a bricklayer, the big bricklayer...he just knows the brickwork, he just perfect the brick. You ask him just to do something else there, his mind just can't click. He's trying but it doesn't, he's just not getting what I'm trying to say. It takes so much effort for him to do it and he's nervous, he's not confident. Many guys, they think out the box, they know what I mean. And if that goes wrong, they make another plan or they phone me. And I'll tell them oh okay, wag maak so, maak so, okay right. My phone rings and he says Mr. Jones ek weet nie weer hoe nou nie man, die ander goed...Ek se los die saak. Hy se okay. Sit 'n prop op daar, maak 'n yster bracket daar en...and I come there and it's looking very good. And that is so wonderful about these guys. They really think out the box. And they not even taught in that areas. I thinks it's just...I don't know if it's because of their background, they just...they seem to pick up things very easy. You know I send them to certain sites hey, and I might have even forgot the measurements, and they'll say Nee Mr. Jones its two point five seven o by drie honderd en twenty nine. And I looked in my diary, I thought they [inaudible] Ooh jinne die ou is nogal reg. Stuff like that, they amaze me man you know and I say there's a certain thing that's kind of inborn because of their (cannot hear what is being said ). Of course as well as the swearing you know, but they don't swear in front of me. They swear amongst each other but if I get there...The

drinking of course that's also kind of inborn but ja. [01:06:08-2](#)

**Interviewer** I think you basically answered all the questions really.

**Interviewee** Did I answer too much?

**Interviewer** No.

**Interviewee** I think I really spoke a lot now.

**Interviewer** Well, just another one on sort of mobility, How would sort of potential employees know about job opportunities within your...?

**Interviewee** There again, as I said now if...Unfortunately out there I'm...Why they move from one boss like...none of my people move from me to another boss. I'm not the highest payer. I'm definitely not the lowest payer. I'd like to believe I'm one of the most fairest. I believe so. If there's something wrong, I will address it to them and I'll say look here, what do you expect of a person your age (cannot hear what is being said ). I treat them like decent people. They cry in front of me. I tell them you know you've got a child, you've got a grandchild and this is what you do. You drinking, come in late, forgetting the tools, lost from their tools that costs R3 000 and you say you sorry. And now you've got to pay it off. R50 or R100 a week or whatever the case may be. You think it's nice? Or whatever they did you see. They haven't yet...They've gone to work for themselves yes, cause I've given them confidence so that they can do things. Nathan, I had a rep working for me, same story. Went to work on his own. Of course it went horribly wrong, I don't know, it just didn't work. It takes more than...I always tell Lyle...he said he also wants to be an entrepreneur. I said of course, you might even be ten times better than me. But there's an x factor that a person can't really relate to. It's more than just knowledge and commitment and passion. It's a lot more than that. Besides financial backing. It's a lot more than that. It's an x factor. And that could be a heck of a lot. You can't say it's the one specific thing, it's an x factor. But here commitment is all part and passion you know its all part, and financial backing, its all part of it only. But you must be able to see things a bit differently than most people. And where it's most probably not working, you might see that it can work or...It might take a bit long, but it can work. But don't just give it up. So there's a lot of young people or general people that want to do that. Do all this to get that. I mean if I look at my overheads, its well over round about R15 000 besides wages so I have to put something like R20 000 out, well over R20 000 out a month. Just to pay running costs. Looks like a small business, I started as a small business, but I have to make much more than that. So how many people do you know is prepared to work so hard and (cannot hear what is being said ) is trying to do that. And certain months you don't make it and certain months you make it and certain months you make triple. Certain months you could blow the books totally upside down. Cause you've got confidence in your staff and you know it's going to happen. As short as the day is going to come tomorrow, you are going to make a success. You will have a little bit of problems here, its fine, but sure it's going to happen. It's going to happen. But you just should keep on going and that's the difference. Sometimes I sit here, I told Reagan the other night... I mean I wasn't tired now cause I could tell he was a bit scared, And everybody come to me with the same line, dit gat nie werk nie. You know how busy I am? You know how many clients I've got? You know how many people I have to see? You know How many people's changing it? And they all on my case, they want things yesterday. I even slept for about twenty minutes at my office and I just, I couldn't anymore, I had to just sleep. Got up, in the shower, in the office, get done again. Pour the Energade. I was pushing myself, pushing myself. Not that I feel good or bad but I've got to do it. Can I blame somebody else? No. I must be thankful, the sun is shining on me. I got to do it. Tomorrow the sun is away from you. You always got to look at passive income, (cannot hear what is being said ) while the sun is shining. But ja you've got to put the time in

for the crime at this place. You've got to put the time in. There's no other way out. It's tough but ja...I told Lyle and Reagan, I would like to spend time with them and tell them the whole system, how the company runs. Okay the finances is a bit complicated, I wouldn't say complicated, but it's a bit... [inaudible] cause one mistake...oh my God. But on...they can immediately give me their comments but....Tell me how do you think I should expose...why not, what do you think? I said just get different type of feel. I (cannot hear what is being said ) no it's fine. I know ultimately what's going on. I can review certain issues. But ja, I'm hoping to do that hopefully in the near future. Tomorrow if I'm not able to do it, can they do it? Because it does earn money, it does earn money.

**Interviewer** Ja, I think...Oh just one more question. How important is sort of highway access with your location? Where you located at the moment...

**Interviewee** Ja. That's what I'm say...that's extremely important. I was able to meet with a number of people that was representers of companies. A lot. A lot. In fact, all the reps, I told my wife...all the reps are female. And you know...well there was one or two males as well, but they could meet with me very easy because it was acceptable because it's on the freeway. It's off the freeway. Very very easy. I mean it was easy for them and they all met me at my office. Yes it's a little bit out the way, they got lost a couple of times here. Shaftesburg on the map, on Shaftsbury circle. So they got a couple of times lost here no no it's messed up. Or to drive through the residential is a bit hard for them over here. But its fine...it definitely....Well I can only relate to when its reps that have to deal with me regarding to some products that I buy, or reps where I did a quote at their work or something like that. They say to me ja waar's julle nou? Ek se nee af die N3, net soen to of draai nood of regs en ek's net op die linke kant en daar...Dan moet mejuvrou net M5 parkway...

**Interviewer** And in terms of...does it have sort of any bearing on where your customers are located in terms of you wanting to be closer to the highway to...or does that not really...?

**Interviewee** Yes if you look at it, on that point of view also...you basically on a central point. I can go from there to anywhere. You see I'm on a central point. From there I can go wherever. Cause I have to get on a highway, I can go North, South, CBD, anywhere, I can go anywhere. So I don't go...if I go to Milnerton side, okay that's the only time when its pretty bad cause I have to go...oh my that's a terrible road. But if I don't go to Blouwberg side, then I go down...I drive towards Pinelands, I come through M7, going passed Vanguard Drive, passed Grand West. Then I go to the North again. I come back, I come back through Thornton, up again through Pinelands, back into Maitland. So I come from here...from here...its about six, make it ten minutes for the most if you like. Ten or whatever. My wife don't believe me herself. I say no no, I wasn't running....straight through here. If I want to go to Town, ten minutes to Town. If I go to Belville I go through here onto the M...okay I just go through Thornton there, there, When I hit here the M7, ten minutes to Belville. I just have to get through here, so let's say ten minutes, ten minutes there, call it twenty minutes, I'm in Belville. In Belville. You see, anywhere I want to go, I want to go onto the N2...shoop just over through Pinelands. I f I'm going to Somerset West, on the N2, right through. It's all just neatly...you know I'm just on the freeway you see. If you know where we are, we just off the freeway. It's like when you're... Kenilworth Centre, freeway just here, where you want to go, where you want to go? But I'm more because, I'm more central because if you look, if I'm feeling CBD, I don't do a lot CBD, but I'm more Newlands side. It's all very close man. Very close ja.

**Interviewer** And in terms of your storage space, where you keep ... (cannot hear what is being said )?

**Interviewee** What I've done is, I'm trying to get out...the type of component structure that I've looked at now...cause I sit down quite a lot and I try to make up the schedule and listing of

things that I need. So what I do with the company is I let them store it there, at my companies that fabricate it for me. And I buy in bulk and they store it for me and it seems to work quite nice. I'm trying to get rid of storage as in total. So my components are all powder coated, everything there they just deliver it to the site. All my guys will take their tools. The old system they used to bring it you know and no no no, there's the wind factor and all this nonsense...It works, but I try to get away from having material. I try to move away from that. Its fine but ...

**Interviewer** And the shrinkage that also goes with all that...

**Interviewee** Yes. Shrinkage...it's a problem. You buy expensive...I mean I've got still here left over of material that I bought in bulk last time. I still got about...maybe about six, seven thousand rand. I looked at one of them the other day, one piece, solid aluminum...It started being fit with rust. And the only reason I've got is because they cut and they work here so the burr...the burr means fine filings which become magnetic, it's not like sawdust...steel burr. Even if it touches like that, it doesn't spike your hand, it's so like sand. You know if you take a magnet and you rub it together, the filings come off...that's like that. Now that thing is (cannot hear what is being said ) now it attaches itself to the aluminum and it starts flaking like rust spots on it. You know how expensive that piece of aluminum is? It's like a thousand rand lying there and its now marked you know...because it's finished. Somebody, and nobody knows how it got on there of course nobody knows. And they know how expensive the stuff is. But yet, its going to get damaged and they all...no I'll never, not me, not me. And you thought you would save these. And that's as it is. And people use the wrong stuff. They see it there, they use it or it's missing. So now I'm really moving away not to have things...the bad thing is again now when you order and it's not immediately ready so you think now you've got a bit of a problem. That has been also a big problem this year. Because with the economy so bad, people don't want to just deliver three bags of this or three legs of that. Because you know, they want a bigger order before they do it. That's why the guys came half day today, I said no the material is not here today. I mean at the site. So tomorrow, I've confirmed with the suppliers, they're delivering all those things to the site. Two different sites, one there and one there. One is in Bergvliet, the other one is in Flamingo Flame Tableview. So we don't have a problem with the traveling and that. But ja the problem is again the stuff is not on time and you waiting and you lose time and money.

**Interviewer** So it isn't really a transport issue for you (cannot hear what is being said )?

**Interviewee** Ja look if there's certain type of material we have to cart and its very long...oooh I try not to, I try really no to because if there's wind and the planks blow, it can blow off or something like that. I try not to...rather leave it at the suppliers, pay that extra R150 just for traveling. So they can just go to the site and do the work. But now they get to the site now they wait three hours. So you lose three hours time...We had a couple of problems like that this year. Now I told this company they must pay me two and a half thousand rand because we waited on this like whole day. And the guy was stuck in traffic or I don't know, he couldn't find the place...I don't know what happened. I'm demanding two and a half thousand rand for them to pay me back. But look how windy it is today now...we took a specific, very expensive thing to work out in Warmer Estate Thursday. Lucky it wasn't as windy as this because it was a very flimsy type of aluminum thing. Lucky it wasn't windy otherwise we would've had a nightmare. If you put it up its all sturdy, but when they have it assembled...and this guy was suppose to drop it for me at Pinelands. And the idiot, sorry man, I said take the thing back and then the client was waiting for it so we had to drive all the way there. Sometimes it's a half days work. We had to drive there and back all the way slowly. It took us a whole day. So you lose like quite a bit of money. But ja...the idea is it fine tune every action, but there's so many types of things that spin off from somewhere and that's how a lot of things can go

wrong. So you can't...the idea is to tune it right. And do just one or two things but...you try but its not really...Every time you have to make a plan. Every time.

**Interviewer** And the service you provide, is it mostly face to face, telephone, e-mail or kind of all three methods?

**Interviewee** They first hear through media are the booklets that is advertised, that's the first. The other way is referrals...architects and engineers I've spent time with. They call me to enquire about certain products. I've spent the time with them. Other people don't because [inaudible] call in and say don't you want to come discuss this about global expansion and you know why would you do it? Why must I go see them? I don't maybe leave your card there and maybe next year or three years later they give you a call. Listen here, I got an assignment for you. I don't know of anybody else because nobody else wanted to come see us. I go do it. So the first way is they give you a call immediately you respond to the call through your message link. You ask them what they need to know or what's it about, they tell you and you try and give them guidance. Say why wouldn't you like me to show you some more ideas...what I would want for ideas. So then of course you set up an appointment and you see them. After that you have to formulate recommendations, suggest a patient based on what they ask you and then your [inaudible]. Say yes and then I'll work a copy figuratively with this type of approach. I have an approach that I'm coming out with that, where R90 000 or most probably about 50 000 or end up 60 or more than R100 000. And very much about skill improved writing, suggestive proposal and also you've got to be very decent with drawings, design. You've got to be ...know what you doing. If you draw lines like you know...now I've got a very good man because he's passionate about it...I'll go once to it and I can tell a guy everything about these. There's a tap, there's about three hundred high there to there, you got piping here, you got this there and you got that there. And he said yes...and I said yes I know that lines is two point four. He said how...I said no but I've been there and he said but you don't know how to...and I said no I know. Ask me anything. I've been there once, ask me I'll tell you anything. Ja and then I give him a quotation and he asked me now do you want plans or are you going to have plans drawn up for you with your certified engineer? And he said yes and he'll provide the service to have it (cannot hear what is being said ) by the drafts person and its fine. He'll put the deposit in my account and we continue. Don't give a deposit...I can't help you. Ja but you know people will pay there's no money then its fine, we can't help you. Finish, klaar. And it's fine you don't trust me...which is right I don't trust you. Next week, I don't even consider it. If you not prepared...if you going to go to the shop and you want to buy a can of baked beans, you going to say you first going to see if it tastes nice then you going to pay them? You can try that and they'll ask you if you mad. So you pay...you want that done, you pay for it. You go to the shop, you buy a sucker, you pay for it. So now you already had a plan, now I've already come out there...I'm hoping they come to the first world standards where they charge you for a quotation. A person who comes, they charge you. And of course if you get the sale, they take it off. But then they don't waste time with twenty people coming to quote. Which is happening now in the present economic climate. A lot of people come and quote. But it's fine it just makes you sharper. People don't know what they talking about. You got to know your material man. You got to know there is wood and steel. I also found a lot of guys out where they don't know what is going on. I don't care how long they are in it. They don't know. They ask me...ask me...I said ask me anything. Ask me I'll tell you. What I don't know I'll find out but I want you to ask me. Just don't take a quote and that's it. So our product is quite a very up market product you see. And it's no use you buy a Mercedes Benz and say ag man this is a car. I feel sad when you just say it's a car. It's not just a car. Definite. You going to have a lot of fun and people will know it is this thing. Nothing wrong with a Corolla. You bought a Corolla, you

	bought a Corolla. If you going to buy top of the range or something very expensive, you must at least know what it is. So you can say this and this is Emboja, this is (cannot hear what is being said ), this is curry or whatever.
<b>Interviewer</b>	No that's all really.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Really?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, do you have anything else that you would like to add or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I didn't...maybe I should've first read what it is. give me just a basic....well you see I can talk from various angles. I don't know which angle you referring to.
<b>Interviewer</b>	There is no angle really.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh is it...from a business perspective point of view...in launching, entrepreneurship...what?
<b>Interviewer</b>	It's just basically...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Or is it a focus on the skills of individuals or what factors would you say are factors that I would consider...or that's making the business challenging...I don't know. You see I'm leading here now. I don't know...I can talk of anything.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Well basically we investigating the social mismatch theory in the context of Cape Town. So the social mismatch theory is basically saying that where the lower skilled people live and where work opportunities are. It's far apart. So for example, lots of businesses are sort of moving from the CBD areas to the suburbs. So maybe Northern suburbs or Southern suburbs. We just want to see the sort of impact of it on the workforce in general. Skilled, non-skilled, semi-skilled.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Okay. Now seeing that you've opened that view point now...to my knowledge, I'm saying this with respect to my knowledge. My understanding is as far as that...The CBD was problematic for people to get to and expensive. And now it's become expensive for corporations to run there. I'm talking from industrial, there's some industrial types there also [inaudible]. And they've sort of become allocated to the more suburbs area. I found that out. Well, that's what I would say makes sense to me. Make it more accessible to people in the sub-economic areas to...like they can reach here. But getting to Maitland, that's been a little bit of and issue. From Manenberg or anywhere else or a taxi route that's two taxis or three taxis. And the traveling and all that types of things it's...Here they can get to here, its on route to Wynberg, its on route. That is what I ...and also why corporate and big companies moved out it's because it became expensive. Ja that's basically, I think that's answering that question but there was another...there was a second part to the question, I just missed it now. The mismatching...
<b>Interviewer</b>	Well, it's just a mismatch really that's based on American literature. So we just want to see if it really applies to the context within Cape Town. Its not really...it's just an investigation really into, to see whether it actually does exist within Cape Town or if it even impacts on the workforce in any way...
<b>Interviewee</b>	The bad thing about it being in the suburbs or close to the suburbs, it's got also disadvantages. You don't want to see groups of people walking passed your house here. That is not a pleasant sight really by no means. If it's a common area like you know the parade or so it's fine. People hustle and bustle there, but even though there's people walking up and down the road to the station and up and down...Well not to the station but to their factories which is around the corner here from mine...the factory is its own type of elements because you think it's working people but it's lots of guys checking out houses and things like that. Ja that's my opinion on that. But yet, I think moving to the suburbs has been...based on my knowledge now, yet a lot of companies have opened close to suburbs. Like in Ottery here, this Wetton circle, Wetton...ja. Quite a big place here, Wetton Park. They got quite a bit of people coming out there. Loads of them. And there's another one...Where's the other one? There's about two or three, I just saw one the ...off Lansdowne Road on the other side, you won't know that area that well. Over

there's also a couple of factories there. And I see people...even there behind Hyper, on that side. Also over there. It makes it easier for people. Look where they're situated. Its fine, big industrial area. Definitely. So you trying to fundamentally find it does, it has a impact on the workforce. Ja well from my perspective I...I don't think its bad once they move to the suburbs. I don't see that. It's more cost-effective, train fare is cheaper, taxi is cheaper or whatever. But the minute you use a taxi then it's problematic already. You know the striking and stuff like that.

**Interviewer** Prefer a train (cannot hear what is being said ); you can't control anything...

**Interviewee** Ja if you know people that's working, if you know people which I know of that's going to work with a train, they have much more problems than people that's with the taxis. And they pay more also and they got bigger problems in the train. They got bigger problems, robbing and stuff like that in a train than in a taxi. That's now what I...I'm basing it on my, my knowledge. Maybe other people would differ with me, possibly so.

**Interviewer** I think that covers everything really. So...

**Interviewee** Geez... (Cannot hear what is being said )

**Interviewer** No but thank you so much for your time and ...

**Interviewee** No it's only a pleasure. So now you going to join me to the gym now hey?

**Interviewer** Um....[laughter]. Thank you so much.

**Interviewee** No it's only a pleasure.

University of Cape Town

CTS Trailers Transcript

Date: 20 March 2009

Interviewer: Hayley Petersen

Company: CTS Trailers (PTY) Ltd

Address: Cecil Morgan Road

Stikland

Brakenfell

Tel: 021 948 6167 Fax: 021 945 2522

**Interviewer** Um, so the first question that I would like to ask is what commodities or services do you offer?

**Interviewee** I manufacture, er, trailers and I do service and maintenance on it as well.

**Interviewer** And does that influence your choice of location at all?

**Interviewee** To a certain extent, um. First of all, to answer your question there, the location was based, purely based on, an opportunity that I got. The land was vacant. Where we initially started was in an area that was conducive to our kind of work, with the transporters and, um, suppliers on our, basically, on our doorstep.

**Interviewer** And where was that?

**Interviewee** It was in Stukland, further down. Here it's also the case I've got Cummins right across the road. I've got Shotbottom Services next to me, I've got transporters on the other side of the road and SA Breweries, one of the leaders, transporters, is down the road here. And I've got a testing station, which is located so that most of the things I require is around here, you know. And my clients, er, they come from all over, so, you know, I've got (pause) um, as far as from Jo'burg, Paarl, and around here, you know. I'm basically well positioned for what I'm doing. And the freeways are running around here, so, close to, easy access, you know.

**Interviewer** I was going to ask about that, how important, so highways are very important in your line of work, obviously cos you do, um, the transporting comes to you?

**Interviewee** Ja, um, goods as well as the vehicle problems concerned. With the highways and freeways being close to us, it's easier for them to get to us. That's what I'm here for.

**Interviewer** And do you do the repairs when they're here?

**Interviewee** I do repairs here and, on, offsite as well.

**Interviewer** And when it happens offsite, how does that work?

**Interviewee** I have a vehicle that goes out with me ... and do repairs.

**Interviewer** Oh okay everything is done there. So at the premises of the other...

**Interviewee** Maybe at the premises, sometimes on the side of the road you get a breakage. Maintenance, I do most of it...90% I do maintenance on my plant. I've got the facilities to do maintenance.

**Interviewer** Oh okay.

**Interviewee** I've got a workshop where the maintenance is done.

**Interviewer** Um, and the area in which you are located, how would you describe it?

**Interviewee** The area, like I explained to you earlier, it's, first of all its conducive to the kind of work that I do because of the suppliers that's there close at hand. I've got the, just to give you an idea again, the road milling that I require when build new trailers. The road mill is just down the road, five hundred meters away from me. The Sashi training people is a kilometre away from me, and the people with the breakdown vehicles, the breakdown trucks, they five hundred meters away from me so the area is okay. And also for the workers, people that work for me, it's in close proximity to the neighbourhood Kuilsriver, Belhar, Belville and its you know...my people basically come from around the neighbourhood here.

<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, why is that the case that they come from around the area?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Fortunately they already lived here and I managed to get the skills, they used to work for me when I was on the other side, so I managed to get the skills, to maintain the skills and luckily for me they were located, they lived here, you know, initially lived here so they obviously didn't have to move away from their friends and family.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it was just out of convenience. It wasn't done purposely?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Convenience yes. It wasn't a purposely designed structure that they, that people adhered to. Also what you'll find is the station is around the corner and the buses and taxis they come down through here so they, you know.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And the skills...what sort of skill levels would you say exists?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Any skill and pulley skills like iron journeymen, people that's qualified, that has done N2, N3, N4, the old standard trade test, and then I have the internal training centre, you know where we do internal training with the help of the [inaudible], you know where we get someone out to come and train the guys, in house training, and then I have, for the office staff I have the computer training, um, and then I have professional people working for me as well. I got engineers, draftsmen, accountants that work for me. So, ja, and we got an ongoing...we've got a, what we call, an ongoing training programme for all our people where we do evaluations and so on.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, these...the different skill levels, are they all employed full-time or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Full-time.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Everyone?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Everyone.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So do you have any temporary workers ever?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Not in my branch here, but my branch in Gauteng. I have.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh. Is that ...your branch in Gauteng, is that run similarly?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Similar to this?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Actually I go like every second week or so to go and check on them. But there I've got a few contract workers.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay, and the skills of the contract workers, are they...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Basically I forward my requirements to the labour agency and they will give me the, whether semi-skilled or skilled. I very seldom get people that's unskilled hired you know, because clients needs skilled workers.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how do you recruit your workers? Or do you just send...
<b>Interviewee</b>	We ... no, what my permanent workers?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, permanent workers...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Permanent workers, I got a HR department and she goes through the...we've got a set of requirements for you know that you've got to fill in and you've got to have a CV with references and all that and then you will be tested and everything, and obviously your , there's a lot of things to go through. We follow a certain protocol you know...to make sure that you....because we've got a system here which we call....if you look at it there, we got our values which is up there now, the company can see which is our company values and you've got to you know, fit into the value system of the company before we employ you.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay. Um, and, let me see what we haven't covered. So what was the main reason for you say for your company moving from where it was to where it is now?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I couldn't afford....at the time I couldn't afford the property that side, it just, and then it was an old building as well that time and it needed upgrading which was an added burning to the crisis of the building itself. And then I got this opportunity which gave me the...you know....that place was smart, but here I could design something that would suit my kind of work specifically.

<b>Interviewer</b>	The other place, was that rented or....?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Rented for two years.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And here?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It's my building.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh so you own it now. So it makes it much easier.
<b>Interviewee</b>	And also that paying for rental and paying for you own things is two obviously different things. Renting you never own anything, rather own a building.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And the size of the premises there compared to here?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Here the, complete premises here is about seven and a half thousand square. There I had about ten thousand but it wasn't well developed for the kind of work that we do.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Was that also a motivating factor?
<b>Interviewee</b>	One of it...one of it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And if you don't mind me asking, how much about, in approximation, did you pay for rental at the ...per square meter?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Paid there...no there I paid...for the whole property I paid R79 000 a month.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay. Compared to owning you own....And, you spoke about it a bit earlier but maybe you can expand. Your client base, are they, I know you said they come from ...
<b>Interviewee</b>	They well spread, the client base, I work, because its transport and I, remember I do, not just transporters, I also worked for people who own factories where they do something around the thing, so all kinds of bodies and trailers. So my client base is from here right up into Namibia. Ja, I got one of the biggest clients in the industry, I've got the Imperial Group, the Cape Town division, who I build for. And then obviously I build for all the...the fitments for the, um, the people that does the roads and the parks and the dams and that kind of thing, you know, and, not excavating, um what's it called?... the transport tippers, and for the mines as well, we do the giant tippers you know.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it's quite extensive.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Kind of.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And they all obviously businesses...
<b>Interviewee</b>	All businesses, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	No private sort of...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well you do have the private little companies as well, but 99% is the conglomerates, the big business companies that I work for. And I only do work for the dealers as well who is your Mercedes Benz, M.A.N., Nissan, Isuzu...I work for them. Where they get orders for Sashi's and I build to fit the super body form or the no cut and tire bodies as well.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And your maintenance, do you just maintain or do maintenance on the trailers that you have done or..?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Anybody's, anybody's. If a client requires for me to do it, I do it. I can also...I can work on trade vehicles that has been built by anybody. The skills I have is of that nature so I can, you know. So there's no exception there.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, we've spoken about the qualifications, the, oh yes, spoken about the skills. How would potential employees hear about job vacancies or job opportunities?
<b>Interviewee</b>	First internal, and then external.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how do you...where do you advertise outside?
<b>Interviewee</b>	In the newspaper.
<b>Interviewer</b>	What kind of newspaper?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Die Burger, Times, that sort.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And any sort of localised...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No we don't. We also, at times, approach the agencies as well, the recruitment agencies, ja. For people for a higher skilled job and then we specify the requirements.
<b>Interviewer</b>	But for the, um, for the sort of semi-skilled, you just do it as you said...
<b>Interviewee</b>	We normally, what we do is, we've got a policy that I would employ people that work

	here, their children, see if I can't get them. And then also, obviously we do realise and we do know of people that work as accountants in this industry, and we try and see if they're available. But basically we use the newspaper. We say we need x amount of gentlemen.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And why would you use the children of...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It's a programme that we follow. The old history that we have in our country is that you'll find a lot of people that work here, their children are, either they've done matric, they've done grade eleven or twelve or eight or nine and that, and they sitting at home or they working at sort of, stores and that. And we bring them in, and after a year we give them the opportunity to study further to become a journeyman, we train them, make sure that we grow them. It's important that if we grow the family, we have a future.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, cause we've heard about that before, the people you hire sort of, their children and whatever. And it's supposed to keep discipline as well. Did you say that that also?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I can tell you what, what we found is that, the people that work here, most of the guys that work here, you'll find their kids, because of their situation they, er, um, say maybe the history that we come from is that a lot of these kids have no respect for their parents. They have no idea what their parents can do. Because if you go into this workshop and you see what people do with a simple piece of metal, alone what they can do, creates a certain level of respect. You have no choice but to respect the man for his capability. So when we bring them in here, their children, for the very first time they exposed to the, maybe the ability of the dad and see, you know, the respect we have for him and the responsibility he has. And in that way you make sure that, not only does he see his dad as a different person, but he sees this guy actually has got a lot of value and I'm not on his level. And from there we try and you know innovate respect and that kind of thing.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And I suppose that helps them at home as well...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, at home it's, you'll find that we've got a couple of successful cases here. Where guys came to me and said they never knew their fathers could perform what they doing, you know, and you could actually see the, you know, the admiration in their eyes and that you know. Which then makes me feel good and it also creates a very nice culture in the company you know.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And in just the community or in general?
<b>Interviewee</b>	In the community as well, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So this is kind of like a community thing. How would, okay we spoke about it a little bit earlier but people travelling to work, what are the main sort of transport systems that they use?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I'm very fortunate that most of the people that work for me have their own vehicles, which means I pay them okay. And then obviously they make use of public transport.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, which public transport?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Trains and taxis.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Mostly? And buses? Not really?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Not really.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Why is that do you think?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I think it's just easier for them to travel by train and by taxi.
<b>Interviewer</b>	More convenient...
<b>Interviewee</b>	More convenient, yes.
<b>Interviewer</b>	But are there bus routes that come through?
<b>Interviewee</b>	There's no bus route down here, but there's taxis that come up to Labelle Road and up to the station here.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay, and obviously the station is right there for the train.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.

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<b>Interviewer</b>	And what would you say are the racial, gender and language characteristics of your workforce?
<b>Interviewee</b>	We've got, on the shop floor, I have various cultures, I have five...or six White guys working. I have quite a few black and coloured. I've got a great mixture. In the office, management, I have also a smart mix, coloured...I've got a lady that's my store manager and I've got, um, a couple of coloured guys that's managers and a white female that's a manager. And three white guys that's managers as well.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, what's the, do you have a store?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, I've got a store, where my material that they buy and the material gets stored.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay. And where is that? Is it also on this property?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes, just out here.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay. What else, and the service that you provide, how do people sort of get to know about your business?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Word of mouth and also by the quality of our service. And obviously we promote. I've got a sales department as well. So they go out and they promote the company.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, the service you provide, is it face to face, by telephone or e-mail, what would you say?
<b>Interviewee</b>	E-mail, advertising in the scrubs magazine and by visitation.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay. Well I think that's everything...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Is that it?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja.

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University of Cape Town

S.E.A.T Electrics Transcript

Date: 23 March 2009

Interviewer: Hayley Petersen

Company: S.E.A.T Electrics

Address: Unit B6 Jigman Park, Montague Drive  
Montague Gardens

Tel: 021 552 8124 Fax: 021 552 8128

Email: [seatelectricscc@absamail.co.za](mailto:seatelectricscc@absamail.co.za)

**Interviewer** Okay, firstly, what is the name of your company?

**Interviewee** Okay, it's SEAT Electrics.

**Interviewer** Okay...and, um, what commodities or goods do you produce or services do you offer...

**Interviewee** Okay, we don't produce anything we repair welding machines, all types of welding machines. Um, the boss is actually quite brilliant at repairs [laughing] but seriously, he is, he's brilliant, and um, so it's any and all types of welding machines, I'll take you through later so you can visualise it and you can see for yourself what it is that we actually do, and it's a good industry.

**Interviewer** Why is it a good industry?

**Interviewee** Um, welding machines break [laughter], needs to be repaired, they are expensive, welding machines are expensive. So if you can have a machine repaired for 500 rand compared to buying a new one for 10, minimum of 10 thousand, what you going to do? Then you get the smaller, little machines, but, um, our customers generally bring in the big stuff or we go to them and go and repair it there on site.

**Interviewer** Oh, okay.

**Interviewee** Tiki boards involved in the welding machines, like in the computer, man, visualise it. You know, but there's tiki boards and those things need to be repaired, there's the welding rods that has to be repaired, other than the actual machine itself, yip fascinating.

**Interviewer** And, um, you talk about you go out to clients or they come here...

**Interviewee** Ya, we got this, this is our head office, where admin is, is head office. And, we have two workshops, at two different sites. Um, the one is in Elsie's River and the one is at Airport Industria. Um, instead of...because the customer requires, er, an electrician, all the time, um, it's better for the customer and us that we actually had opened a workshop on their premises. So, on the one premise we have three electricians and on the other one, we have one. So we don't even see the one, we don't see him, um, I just chat to him once a week when it comes time to pay him [laughing] and the other three, we regularly go there to drop off paper work, to drop off spares, to drop off parts, to go and check up of the guys, to give good customer service and find out if everything's still okay there, and lots of training involved and panels that need to be built, so yes, we kind of produce something but more a service than anything else, we very heavy in the service line.

**Interviewer** Um, the one that has the three electricians that you go to all the time, which one is that?

**Interviewee** That's in Elsie's River, called Gascon.

**Interviewer** And is that the more busier one?

**Interviewee** Ya, that's the big one. Do you remember Consani Engineering?

**Interviewer** Um, no.

**Interviewee** You don't know any of the engineering companies?

**Interviewer** No.

**Interviewee** Ag, no, girl [laughing]...there's the boss coming in. Um, they in Elsie's River, they were

a...anybody that's in the engineering trade, ask any guy, any male, they would know, this massive site, it was this big site, and Consani closed down a couple of years ago when they were sold to another company. Um, now that premises has been broken up into small little businesses and Gascon owns, already the bigger part of that premises. So, um, they make tanks, um, then if you want to get technical about it, um, easy for a woman to understand [giggle], picture a dairy farm with a big silver tank there and the milk is gonna go in there, picture Shell or any of the oil companies, and those tanks.

**Interviewer** Ya, oh, okay.

**Interviewee** That, that's what Gascon produces, tanks like that. Um, they're an international company, so um, if you want to you can check out their website and you can see what kind of tanks and stuff they produce. And, um, we basically deal with, from the labourer to the directors. We speak to everybody, we believe that we all equal, and um, how do you expect to provide a service when you nose is up in the air or you feet are too way under the ground, so you keep yourself even keeled and that's how you get your work done. You build a fantastic relationship with your supplier or your customer and that's what they remember, but above all, above all, service. You say...your word is your honour, that's basically our motto, is your word is your honour, and the other thing is, is if you wanna work here for this company, you have to be prepared to learn and you have to be prepared to teach, as well, because you not gonna just come and sit down and you either gonna glaze over, there's too much in this field to learn and there's something to learn everyday, everyday there is something to learn, fantastic field, never thought I'd be in it, but its fascinating. It's something I can share with...my husband [laughing].

**Interviewer** And your boys...

**Interviewee** Yes, actually funnily enough, Spencer just brought home one of these electrical books, and um, paid an arm and a leg for it, and he said 'look here honey I brought this home for the boys to learn this basic electronics, basic electrical work', and like, okay, I just saw square roots and lines going up and physics or science, I have no time, let them read it, I know nothing about that stuff, un un [no no].

**Interviewer** And, um, the one at Airport Industria, what, what is that?

**Interviewee** They, um, Grotto, Grotto Manufacturing, and um, they need an electrician on site to repair...

**Interviewee2** Hello. How are you?

**Interviewer** Fine thanks and you? [minor interruption; Owner walks in]

**Interviewee** [to Company Owner] What does Grotto do?

**Interviewee2** Grotto does wine tanks. They do 90 000 litre, ya, 90 000 litre and bigger wine tanks. They use it as fermenting tanks, because when you, um, it's a specialised tank because it's made of stainless steel and the second thing is that...the reason why it's special, is that...the reason why it's supposed to be of stainless steel and its specialised is that, if there's a pin hole in any, in any tank, fungus or bacteria erupt there and then that 90 000 litres of wine is useless, so that's why Grotto is one of the leading companies, or the leading company in South Africa for wine tanks, because they make it, and obviously they must give a guarantee, and 90 000 litres of red wine, costs a hell-of-a lot of money, and the other thing about red wine is, because they also leave the skin in the wine, it's very red, it becomes very heavy so they put an agitator in and the agitator must be situated or set at a certain point where it can actually erupt, um...the agitator is like a motor with a fan blades inside, so when the tank is full of wine those fan blades actually turns the wine and it moves the skin continuously, otherwise it starches at the bottom.

**Interviewer** So what do you do, just in the...

<b>Interviewee2</b>	We repair all machines
<b>Interviewee</b>	We repair, to make that welding machine...I mean to make that tank, basically what I'm doing with you, um, I want you to visualise all these things, um, here's a building okay four walls and from that building you need to build that tank, so obviously you know what a tank looks like but then to weld it, they gonna need overhead cranes, they gonna need guys climbing up there with whatever welding machines ...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	The height of the tanks is about, from where I'm standing now till, not this window, the next window of the next building, that's how high is the tanks standing. And the width of the tank is from that wall to this wall, that's how big the tank is...so you must understand, it's big it's massive.
<b>Interviewee</b>	So to weld it, um, the tools that's needed to make that tank, other than obviously the people involved, it's the electricity, just the normal electricity, the normal plus, the 3 stage...err... electricity that is required, the different types of welding machines that you have to cut out, to use...[inaudible].
<b>Interviewee2</b>	You still have the robotic welding machine. Infra-robotic is... there is operators that operate the machine. You press the button. Um... the stainless steel obviously doesn't come in that time. Stainless steel comes in 1.2 sheets and above a roll. So and that... I don't know if you... if you read on my phone, it is actually a buff polish. They buff polish stainless steel. Where the machine comes down and it buff polishes and buff. And then you get this tank with all these...
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, let me show you. You know um... when you go to a restaurant and you are sitting by a table and it is not wood. And it is metal and it is [inaudible] funny. Squiggles, like a funny patterns on it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh ya.
<b>Interviewee</b>	That is buff polish.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	So the whole plate looks like that. But the reason for that is because we... you also need to keep the tank cool. So now, what they put on the plate that is already formed already, they must have a water jacket. And the water jacket must have contact with the tank in order for the coolness to transfer from outside to inside so that you can have the wine at a temperature.
<b>Interviewee</b>	But what she is saying now is what do we do there.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	All those... everything that makes that. All the welding, all the automations, all the robotics, all the... everything involving electrical, electronics... All the electronics, all the electrical, parts of the mechanical, all the pneumatic or they hydraulics to keep the plant going completely...[inaudible]...
<b>Interviewee</b>	... require a computer and a pen, [Cannot hear due to too many people talking] and a calculator. Um... if you go to school you require your bag and your uniform. So to... in the electrical trade, the line of work that we are doing, you require your overall, you safety boots, your safety gear, your safety goggles. All that safety. You are working with electricity. And then your machine breaks and then out come our guy to repair it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh ok.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Don't you want to take her to Grotto and take her to Gascon?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, I'm just going to show her what the workshop looks like.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Do you want to go to Grotto and to Gascon?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Well ok if you have lots of time.
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, I don't.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No, I'm not talking about today. I'm talking about tomorrow. I make an appointment for you and then ma... ma... Makita, she will take you through and show you all the day. And then on Wednesday you want to I arrange for you and you can go and see Gascon

	and you will see we build 100 tons tank. The automation is superb. 100 tons. You see, it is difficult to explain it.
<b>Interviewee</b>	That is why I want to go show her now what it looks like there in the workshop so she has a better idea because I am telling her to visualise now... Come we go... [inaudible]. And help him produce it all on Sunday.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Can I take this with me?... Can I talk pictures also? I am going to go get my camera.
<b>Interviewee</b>	So this is the office obviously. That is out toilet. We are renting this space. This is our workshop. And these are the various types of machine. And the gas track requires for I don't know what.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	The gas thing... The gas... A welding machine, or a welding rod... Let me just show you what a welding rod looks like. Your daddy's welding already. You know what a welding...
<b>Interviewer</b>	My dad knows.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Now the outside part of a welding rod is the flux and the inside is steel. That is part that actually puts the material together. But the flux is there to clean. And with these welding processes, you don't use the rod. You actually use gas as a flux to clean the material in order for it to bond properly.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ok, that is our kitchen... One of our trainee electricians. He is um... assist the... our foreman. That is Ashley. This is Ashley's work area. All the cables and wires. If you would like to, you are welcome to ask them any questions. They are better able to explain what... for example we tend to in between now. We are testing this machine now. We repaired this machine... um... this customer we repaired their warranty machine. So um... you know machines are under warranty, it is valid for a year from date of purchase. So anytime in that year anything on this machine breaks then we repair it, and we don't charge the customer. We charge the company that sells these machines. There is PC boards in there.... Did you close it up already... So you can see the interior of the machine looks like that. And um... So the warranty that is held on this machine is only on treatables. So he is busy welding now and this is... what type of machine... a Sigmachine. So he will be welding aluminium with this machine. There is different types of welding machines obviously and different types of... what is this... that is a pig torch. There are different types of torches too. So he repairs the machines and now he is just testing to see if it works. Our guys are good. I am sorry to say, but they are. And you get the machines that... um... [inaudible].
<b>Interviewer</b>	Sounds like fun.
<b>Interviewee</b>	You have to have an eye for detail and have to be logical minded to... or think haphazardly, or like him, he will just come here, look at and say there is the fault. And if you were to take everybody, because we have been looking at spoon machine for ages there Mikey comes along and says there is the fault. So um... we build tables, all the foosball guns, or type of welding rod... that beam. Um, this is Mentae. Mentae is our foreman. He is in control of the workshop. (Introduces Hayley) [inaudible] she is doing her thesis. Her masters thesis in business. So she is interviewing um... a company to see what it is that we do, why we do what we do, and when we do what we do, and how we do what we do. And these machines are all ready. They need to be sent out... [inaudible] This is the board that we keep track of what machines are coming in, what is required, and when the machines are leaving. The machine that Mentae is working on now is a Migmachine and Ashley was working on the Sigmachine. And that is a wire feeder there. Remember Harold was telling you about the torches and that when you weld, you require something to work, that requires the wire... the wire feeder.
<b>Employee1</b>	The wire feeder... you put a water cooling system, not heat. You flush and use this. A water cool task. Like the welding cable inside the toss won't melt away because

<b>Interviewee</b>	[inaudible]. So it stays, torches... not only with the different types of machines, but with different torches as well. That big machine that I was telling you about, the big overhead crane [inaudible] Harold built this himself to lift off the heavier machines from the customer's bukkies to lift it off. There are machines that are bigger than this whole workshop. That is on the sites that we were talking about, or on other customer's site, and Harry then goes to them and um... that is what we call a call-out. And um... Harry is basically the rep of the company as well. Um... he has a good repertoire with customers. Because he knows what he is talking about, he comes across as reasonably confident and the same as Min as well. [Introduce Interviewee to another employee] Damien is our driver and um... our workshop assistance. He assists, Mentae the foreman. Assists Ashley in whatever is required. He is very good at making fortune. Yes, you can even make your own one. It is weird. Weird thing... [inaudible].
<b>Interviewer</b>	Creative [laughter].
<b>Interviewee</b>	This is our small little section with all our nails and tools... That's torch. Busy building it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh. Quite intense hey.
<b>Interviewee</b>	And this isn't even... [inaudible] Here we do whatever we can do. Um... just because I am sitting in the office doesn't mean must just stay in now because I can go out there, I can go and drive. I can help out on whatever is needed. Clinton is our invoice clerk, dispatch clerk, our part-time driver, he goes and helps out in the workshop, he goes and repairs machines as well. He does our invoices, he does our quotes. So we are not just restricted to, "oh, I am the office administrator", or Clinton is the office administrator. It is just a title. It is just a nice title. "Oh, what would you like to be today?", "Oh, I am the office administrator.", "There you go.", "And what are you?", "Oh, I am the manager", "Oh, ok". "And what do you do?" "Oh, I am the foreman" "And what do you do?" "I am the trainee electrician." "And I am the driver." But at the end of the day, um, it is just one... It is just a word. Um, working for this company, you have to want to learn. And not just be restricted to whatever a cup of coffee tastes like. How about a cup of tea, cappuccino, espresso, cool drink, don't just stick to one thing. And that is how you learn, you broaden your mind, you broaden your horizon, and you find things that you didn't know you were capable of. As you can hear, I am very heavy on the people's side of things. Um, because anybody can know... anybody can learn how to work that machine or how to repair that machine. Understanding the person that you will then rely. How to teach the person, what the person will understand somehow to repair something. And you build up on their confidence and that way they get to know things, feel confident about it, do it faster, get it out faster, and we get paid fast.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um...
<b>Interviewee</b>	So having seen the workshop now, you have a better understanding of what it is.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ya. Ya, much better. Quite intense hey. Seems like a very confusing kind of... (laugh). You really have to know what is going on all the time.
<b>Interviewee</b>	It is never the same thing, which makes it exciting. So I mean I will do the same paper work every day, and that is normal. Argh, then again, I like repetition. Um, they will never... you are never going to work on the same machine twice unless they mess up, which seldom happens because we have a high expectation of the people that work for us. Um, perfectionist if you want to call them that way. Because you can't be sloth cutting this work, it's sharp. "There you go, bye bye." Dead.
<b>Interviewer</b>	[laughter] That would be quite sad.
<b>Interviewee</b>	[laughter] We have had one injury on duty in all the time that we are here.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how long have the company been in existence for?

<b>Interviewee</b>	10 years. Um, Spencer started from home, and used to go to all these customers and ride around to all these customers and go and repair their machines there. And um, then he started about 4 years ago, 4 and a half, 5 years ago. Um, he rented the garage section, the entrance of Arch Engineering. Arch Engineering was so good, their company.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Where?
<b>Interviewee</b>	In Killarney Garden. Then, the work became too much and Arch Engineering needed their space. So Harold decided to rent in Montague Gardens, um, all the Engineering trade, um, you will find that you get different hub. Montague Gardens is one, Killarney Garden is one, um, Elsie River is another one, Airport Industria is another one, and where is the other one... um, on your way to Grand West.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Epping?
<b>Interviewee</b>	There we go, that is the other hub. And then there is obviously Ottery, and then Simon's Town side. You get all this different hub, and he has always wanted to be in Montague Garden. So he went... he found this place, because he knew what he wanted. It is his business. He knew what he wanted. I used to do the paper work at home. So then it meant getting up, coming in, and what was so fantastic about this is we set up everything. Um, the boards, the desk. And because we are a repair company, I don't see why we need to have fancy tables, and fancy chairs, and fancy cupboards, and fancy computers, and stuff. We don't sell anything here. So I don't need a program for how much the torches are going to cost. Cos it is something that has to be made up or something that we buy from our suppliers and then we sell. And we are here now, 2 and half year, in this premises. And in September, our lease expires. So we will probably be staying on. Um, I don't like debt, so my things get paid on time, if not before time, um, so we have a fantastic relationship with our landlord, technically, um, lovely lady. And we have a fantastic relationship with our neighbours. Um, we are old school. We believe you know your neighbours, and greeting is very important. I mean you don't have to be over friendly with the people, up in their faces, but at least know who your neighbours are. So that you know when they try to break in here, who you can blame and who you can't blame kind of a thing. But it 2 and a half years now, and we were looking for bigger premises, but um, due to the economic state, we decided to be cautious, and I think we will be staying here for another couple of years.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um, how big are these premises?
<b>Interviewee</b>	You are talking size now, ne? Let me just get it now. (goes look for something in the draw) We were actually talking about it about another... What did they do with the sizes... They actually don't give a size. Let me just find out. I think Harold knows... What is the square metre of the premises?... 162 sq meters.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um... earlier you were talking about your client and you go out to them and stuff like that. So where are they generally located, like which part of area?
<b>Interviewee</b>	You are talking about SA welding. That is the client. Here HJ Engineering. They are making welding and they are making security gates and burglar bars and stuff, so they need welding machines certainly. There is one on our door step. Here, this is Tammy over here. There are lines inside. Err... These also uses welding machines. And go to the doc. City welding machines for Africa. Spa Ocean is there, Louw Engineering is there. Doorsman and Dotman, and all the big names or the well known names. If you look in the yellow pages, you will basically find all out customers are in there. We don't advertise. Our names are not in the telephone directory. Somebody however did put it in, but out of our knowledge and out of our approval and it is incorrect. So we get people phoning through this fax machine because they gave our fax machine in, whoever this person is that gave our details. We are not in the yellow pages. We work

strictly word of mouth. Because he is so brilliant and because we are. Not full of nonsense company, we give good service, but we expect good service as well. Um, we give you respect, we expect respect in return. And if we don't get it, do we have no problem opening our mouth and demand it. So um... you can start... you can go to Killarney Garden and you can ride around and we can pick our customers there. We can pick off anybody that gives you welding machines. Um... anybody that needs like Harold said, the big companies, the big engineering companies. Um, robotics are the way to go, and that little PC board that you saw, interesting, on how those PC boards work. And we have... we subcontracting the guy who build machines. And between him and Harold... with Harold's knowledge and his computer knowledge and the PC board knowledge, they are busy building a machine right now. The machine is bigger than the workshop. You know, like that. Yes. So I'm just listed for my name and I... because he is the brain, he is the brain behind this company, his business. And I will not allow anyone to mess with his reputation. So um, and we very strict on your working hours, your working time, your work ethics. Very strict on that. And it is not difficult to respect him. He knows what he is talking about. So it is... and he is a lovely guy, he is a wonderful boss, he is fair. Above all his is fair. And um... he give credit for credit review, verbally as well as to mention. Our guys are some of the highest trade in the industry. Um... we give good service. So if we don't look after the person that is working for you, how do you expect him to give you 100% of his time, 100% of his effort. And like I said, when the machine comes in for repairs, and he is not motivated, and he just doesn't care, it will take that much longer for that machine to be repaired, that much longer for us to get paid. At the end of the day, yes, it is about the money, but it is also about the person who is going to make that money for you. And you have to be able to mesh that too. So ya, we have a fantastic working relationship. I digress. What was your original question? [laughter]

**Interviewer** Where your clients are located?

**Interviewee** Oh, all over. That hub that I was telling you about, all over. We actually had a guy, like I'm hiding, I go pick up the children at school, and um, I was parking next to someone's drive way and this guy caught up, "Oh, so he does welding" I got out and I gave him a card. And I mean you can pick up a customer anywhere. It just depends on what kind of a sales person you are. And as you can well hear, I am a very chatty chatty person. So whip out the business card to you, and because I am a woman and this is extremely sexist. I can get away with saying, "I don't know". You know. Um, because I am not very good on terminology, but I am good at making the person feel comfortable, and remembering, and in order to phone Harold for repair. So if we even have a cluster customer in our area, where they live, in Crawford, we even have a cluster of customer in the area. And um... you can pick them up anywhere. It is all word of mouth. If you mess one customer around, or one customer is unhappy, that one customer can ruin your business. And we have had a few, but Harold's reputation is too good. I mean there is not a lot in this industry that repairs welding machines. And he is the best.

**Interviewer** How like roughly how many are there in Cape Town?

**Interviewee** Who have their own businesses?

**Interviewer** Ja.

**Interviewee** Um... we have got like... fly by mice, flash in the pan type, who actually established um... I know two others, NAC welding, and Harold used to work with him with Alan. Um... and... the other one... he is more... he used to repair the welding machines, but now he is more into the sales of the big machines. And even Harold. And Harold also used to work with him.

**Interviewer** Oh, very close knit... close ties.

<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes, and it is a small community. Everybody knows everybody. Um... you will hop from one company to another, you are a sales person. You will work with this company, you go and work for that company, and you will work for that company. But you know everybody. Um... you need quotes, you need parts, spare parts, um... you phone your suppliers, they all know one another. The SA welding guy, Manuel, used to work for [OOSA?], which is just at Delft, further down the road. And it is a small business. It is a small World. And um... [Flagirlb?] Engineering is a big company. They are busy downsizing right now. Spa Ocean was taken over and they are now called Damon. And I mean I can drop names like a game at discussion. But that is not the point. The point is just that if you look in the yellow pages under electrical repairs, we don't repair kettles, stoves, fridges, and people's household electrical wires, we don't do that. It is too much work. Harold did that back in the day. He did cabling of houses and he repairs people's electrical appliances. He doesn't do that anymore. It is too much time, too little money. However, um... the senior citizens of our area, or like our shop-keeper who is getting 80. Um... if his fridges breaks or anything goes wrong in his company, in his shop, then Harold will just go over and go and repair it there. No charge. Isn't that lovely?
<b>Interviewer</b>	It is very nice [laughter]. So yes, so you were talking about earlier about the... so the client would you say influences where you decided to situate because of the habit you're talking about.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Harold believes... Harold always wanted to be here in Montague Garden.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Why did he want to be here?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um... you know when you are growing up, and you picture of how your wedding day is going to be, or you picture the house you are going to live in with a picket fence. Um, he pictured a workshop in Montague Garden, in Montague Drive. Ok, now Jigman Park is in Montague Drive, but as you yourself called trying to get here to us, we are in the Jigman Park in Montague Drive, but our premises is at the back. The premises in front didn't suit us. Um... we had to look at how our customers were going to bring their machines in to us. We had to look at the traffic, we had to look at the flow of traffic through here. We had to look at where you were located, how easy it is for the customers to get here, um... how long will it take the customers to get here. We had customers that comes from Hermanus to bring their machines here for us to repair. And what they do is they come to town for a day and they go do lots of business. They are coming to town. First thing they do is they come in and drop off their machine, they go and do their business, they come back and they pick it up, and off they go. We have few customers on the West Coast, Vredendale, Vredenberg, Delphndrift, um... Langebaan, Saldanha obviously, and um... they come from all over to come because they hear of Harold. And with... like I said, it is a small industry, so you get to pick up who is where and Harold used to work for Arch Engineering about 10, 11, 12 years ago, and um... ya, around about that time, he used to work for Arch Engineering and that was in Montague Garden before they moved. It was in Montague Garden and he could see that working in Montague Garden is where you are going to get lots of customers coming to you. Montague Garden customers are not gonna go to Elsie River. They will then rather go to NAC welding who also happens to be in Montague Garden. However, Killarney Garden, he was working... when he had his workshop section there by Arch Engineering, he built up is customers and his connections, and his suppliers in Killarney Garden. So now Killarney Garden bring their machines here to be repaired.
<b>Interviewer</b>	How far is Killarney Gardens from here? Next door?
<b>Interviewee</b>	20 minutes. Driving 20 minutes. 20 minutes driving. It's opposite um... the racing track.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay. Oh, I see.

<b>Interviewee</b>	So it is just down the road.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay.
<b>Interviewee</b>	So I mean this is an industrial area and that is basically where he wanted to be. We looked around at Ottery, but there wasn't much going on there in terms of welding trade. More like um... suite warehouse. More warehouses instead of workshops. Whereas here in Montague Garden you will find lots of workshops and lots of warehouses as well. And that is why he wanted to move here. He felt that it was a good area for good business and a good flow of business in and out. That is why he wanted to be here.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um... You said this was rented.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, we are renting these premises.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how much do you pay per square meter for rent about?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well it is 162 sq meters and um we pay 7 and a half to 8 thousand a month. Depending on the rate, err the water usage, sewage, and the interest rate, depending on that we pay between 7 and a half and 8 and a half a month.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And relative to other premises, um, of the same size, in which case that is like...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Which is the going rate. Ya, that is the going rate nowadays. Um... like what I said, we started off on... we are here 2 and a half years ago we started off on round around 6 and a half. In the last year it has been 7 and a half, 8 and a half. And um... I mean it is fair. I have never had a problem with them, they have never had a problem with me. So you send me your bill, I pay, and um... we wanted the premises next door to us, but it was just an extra 20, 22. So we weren't going to pay for just an extra 20 sq meter. It wasn't worth it. And um... we were looking at a bigger premises and this is 162 sq meter and we are looking for more or less 200 sq meters. Um... but the only other premises we could find was 250 sq meters. That is too big. That is too big. We have our feet firmly planted on the ground and you have to envision what are we going to use that extra space for? And we will rather have the workshop looking like all hell broke loose in it than having a workshop looking pretty and now work. And no machines and we are paying for a waste of space. You utilise all the space that you have got. Top of the game, you have to utilise.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um... the space that you were looking at, the 250, where was that?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Further down, Montague...
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh, also in Montague Garden.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, it is all in Montague Garden. He doesn't want to move out of here. Everything is in Montague Garden. Um, the businesses are... some businesses are closing down, some businesses are downsizing. Um, but at the end of the day, this is the business hub, industrial area. There is always going to be businesses coming and going, you know what I am saying?
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um... Is the owner the manager?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No. I am the manager. I am the only wife. I am also the only woman that works in the company. Um, for personal reasons. I am jealous. Plain and simple. I am a jealous woman. I am having no woman coming in here working with my husband. I... not that I am saying my husband would do anything, but rather safe than sorry. Um...
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it is all male...
<b>Interviewee</b>	All male. There are 9 males and me. And I am barely here. So um... it's an all male business. If you want to call me sexist, go ahead.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um... language characteristics, what would you say are the... what language do you use predominantly?
<b>Interviewee</b>	English. Afrikaans.

<b>Interviewee3</b>	When we are very upset, Afrikaans.
<b>Interviewee</b>	When we are very upset, Afrikaans and swearing. And Xhosa. The guy that works at Grotto, he is now... um... worker from Nigeria. He is Congolese. He speaks French. Um, but Mentae is our foreman. Mentae is also the longest with us. Nearly 2 and a half years. When we opened up here, err... ya, he is here with us for 2 and a half years. Mentae was the first one that was employed. Um... gees, when you think. Clinton, no, Clinton, Tommy, Makita, and Nadeeb were employed more or less the same time. Ashley is the youngest in the company. He just turned 21 last week. We have a diverse group of men, ages, personality. But at the end of the day, we work together. Um, we have head butting, and, err, butting you can get over it now. Finish now. Right. Back to work. You know? [inaudible], back to work. Um, but it is fantastic coming here. Fantastic coming to work. I am a... I only do... I do admin. [inaudible] The time keeping. I do the developing of the book. We have an accountant who does the stuff that I can't do. The receiver of revenues.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Very little.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. Receive of revenues, the VAT [inaudible] The registering us... everything that is needed to be registered for. I used to work with lawyers, the debt collector. For me everything is above board and legal. Boring, yet safe. Above board and legal. So whatever... if ever we should have a Chartered Accountant coming in here, or SARS coming in here, they will be bored. We account for every corporative paper and that is just the administrative side of things. Let me tell you something. I have been meaning to tell you. A machine comes in for repair. One machine comes in here for repair. Clinton signs it in. Ok, paper trail, I believe in the paper trail. Clinton signs it in, it goes on that white board that you saw there. Then... ya, Clinton implemented the board. Then the machine goes to Ashley or Mentae, the trainee electrician or the foreman. And they then do the fault finding on the machine. Give... place on a job card on what they discovered, what is the fault, what is wrong with the machine. Clinton then does the quote to the customer, gets faxed through to the customer, sometimes we have to phone the customer to remind them to give us the order number on that machine. The customer then gives us the order number of that machine. We then go back into the workshop and tell whoever was working on that machine that machine can now be repaired. You get repair, you get seal up, clean and if proper service is done, on all our machine, full services. Clinton then faxes the invoice through to the customer. Then the machine has to be collected by the customer, sign it out in our dispatch book and removed from the board. That is one machine. If the customer does not pay, it then comes to me, statements are done, phone calls are done, rep cards are politely given. Nag nag nag... and that is just on one machine.
<b>Interviewer</b>	It is a lot of work
<b>Interviewee</b>	Just on one machine. One machine that everybody touches. Everybody has to handle on one machine. When we started out here, and it was just Harold, and Mentae, and myself, um, it was quite easy. The machine came in, I signed it in, everything that is under... I never worked on the board. Everything went on my computer. Mentae fixed it, and the customer can pay before he took it. He paid and off he went. Now it's touched. Touches everybody. But... we all know what happen to one little machine, or one big machine. But that way we all know. We all know the customers, and we all know who you are, and why you are here. And that is how you build up relationship with the customers. On one machine.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Also if anything goes wrong then you sort of have like... lots of...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh the paper trail is there. If Clinton didn't sign it in, which never happens, but if Clinton

didn't sign it in, it will be on the board. If not, there is a job card for it. If not, there is a book for that. And no machine go without an invoice. [Laughter] So there is that too. And then all the other extras, administrative work involved, um, and just balancing everything. But that is boring. We stick to the machines and the repairs section and stuff.

**Interviewer** Um, and what is the different occupational skill level of your work. Well first how many people are in your work?

**Interviewee** We are 10 all together. And I am glad that you asked that question that. Tell you something. Um, Harold used to work at Consigning Engineering that company that I mentioned to you earlier on. And then he worked at Arch Engineering the other company I mentioned to you earlier on. And um, he is always... even when he was working for Consigning Engineering, the guy, his colleague always used to tell me what a fantastic guy he is and how easy and how fast and how quick he can repair the machines and how like he knows, you get him to look at the machine and he knows what is wrong with it. He is an electrician, um, and electrical technician, or a technical electrician. I myself don't know what to call it now. That like I said is just title. And he like I said, he was the one that started the whole company. Um, I come from debt collecting background, I come from working in a law firm background. Um, Mentae used to work at Ratanga Junction. He used to assist the electrician or the repair guy... the mechanical guy to fix the Cobra if it breaks. Climb all the way up there with the tools and whatever is required to go on the repair. Whatever is breaking anywhere in Ratanga Junction, um, ride. Ashley comes from school. Makita comes from The Reef. And like we said earlier on he is Congolese. Um, Tommy is...

**Interviewee3** Qualified armature winder, and a [inaudible].

**Interviewee** Ja, he is presently a doing his trade test this week to get his papers to be an electrician. Azeez has a welding background.

**Interviewee3** He is the Cobra welder.

**Interviewee** And Clinton comes from, um, the printing industry.

**Interviewer** Oh wow, quite diverse.

**Interviewee** Yes, so that is why I said earlier on, how much do you want to learn, how interested are you in what it is that you do, how much do you want to broaden your horizon. Because in the electrical trade, you can do it anywhere. Anywhere you can broaden your horizon. And we are quite proud of the diverse group of people that we have. This type of diverse group of people we have working for us, um, we try to communicate that we are an electrical company and we only have one electrician, and that would be Harold. And now we are having our first Apprentice doing his trade test and it is exciting. It is like having babies. And they really are like babies. They have their in-house fights, and they have their in-house competitions, and would a man, would a big man, would a baby... and um, they are extremely possessive. And it sounds strange, they are a bunch of men that we are talking about here, but they all have a great respect for Harold. And um, they have all been working for 2 years plus for us. Expect Dainnen, the driver, we just took him on for a month ago. He is on a 3 months contract. We believe heavily on contract. And um, he is on a 3 months contract. I believe that you can find our something about someone in the first 2 weeks. Some working with them, if not for a day. If it was in an interview they just give you this nice pretty little stay and then... it is like living with them. Oh my god, where did I go wrong kind of thing. But um, like I say, the longer you work here, the more appreciative you become. Um, because we are one of the few companies that December gave the guys bonuses and I am talking huge bonuses here. And um, we would rather suffer or come home with less money and let

the guys have a fantastic holiday. You want them to be up and stuff. You don't want to do that. "Oh damn, look at them, they can go here and they can go there for their holiday, and look at us, look what we got." Just because. I mean you know Hayley take it ne, guys who are working for a whole year, it comes to October, November, December, you hear things like recession, you hear things like, um, downsizing, you hear things like you are only going to work twice or thrice a week. And um, these guys are all worried, they are all nervous, like a worker coming in, for plenty there is work, so what are they complaining about? But it just shows... it proves to us the standard of our company. The fact that these guys take it personally, it is their work, it is their business. They are livelihood as well. And comes the end of the year we give them bonuses, like we have been doing every year, we give them bonuses. "Yoh, other people didn't even get a 13th check. Let alone a holiday bonus." But have got your holiday pay and that was it, their month's salary. And some of the guys prefer getting paid on a monthly basis and some of them prefer to be paid on a weekly basis. It doesn't bother me. Either way, you are going to get paid. That is how you want it, so that is how you are going to get it. Um, we are very easy here, not hard and fixed and fasted that's how we must do it. It doesn't work like that. Um, like I say, we are all willing to learn. And we were quite proud of ourselves that we could see these guys, bonus. I mean they work themselves vrek the first 9 months of the year. Now all of a sudden the last few months, "oops, sorry, we as the employers, we didn't spare for this money. Sorry we don't have money in the bank ne. Or we have to prepare for whatever is happening next week. Sometimes we're just not paying you. Suffer. Have a junk holiday." We won't be able to. We invest in theses people to work with us, work for us, work around us, to trust them when we are not here and now we are telling them, "oh ya, you work, but you are worth nothing here, I am not paying you". Not fair. And like I said, we are fair people. So they have fantastic holiday. We heard no moaning, no nagging, no bitching, no err... "Ya, what kind of a boss are they man? Nothing was given! "Oh, it was fantastic". They all were eager to come back to work. They were all excited to get back to work, and like I said they are a bunch of men. And um, you know during holiday, spending so much time with the wife and the children, ooh, wife's mom is not good for some people. And um, they... most of them came back to work a week early. We had to actually open our workshop a week early, and our customers also demanded that we open a week early because who the hell are going to fix their machines in the week that we are still on leave? So we had to open a week early. So the guys got holiday pay, their normal pay, holiday pay, and their bonus, plus they got an extra week's pay because we started early, and they did not mind. And I must just say hey, I was chatting to somebody over the weekend, um, our actual season rate on average for the... if I exclude myself and Harold, the 8 guys that is working here, together for the 8 of them, um, maybe 10 days a year. Maybe. I mean that was just. Ok, no, I lie, 20. After once or twice a year maybe they will stay out. Maybe. But they come to work sick, so much is their commitment to the company. That is what we are proud of. But I also come sit in here sit, and he is sitting here sick, Ashley is sitting here sick.

**Interviewee3** So tomorrow you will be sick.

**Interviewee** Ja, so tomorrow you will be sick.

**Interviewer** I am already starting to get sick now. Um, ok, and, let me see what else. Um, where do most of your work force... um... live?

**Interviewee** Wynberg, Athlone, Langa.

**Interviewee3** Not Langa.

**Interviewee** Nyanga. Where does Ashley live, Silvertown, Queenstown, Bridgetown?

**Interviewee3** Um, Silvertown.

<b>Interviewee</b>	Silvertown, and then Parow and Bellville.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it is mostly Southern suburbs, and then only few from the Northern suburbs.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, there is only the 2 from the Northern suburb and they work in Elsie's River, and um, we are not Southern Suburbs, we're Cape Flats...[laughter]... Until town Cape Flat, and we met up.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um, how do... so the ones from... who work at Elsie's River, they are from Parow and Bellville.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Parow and Bellville. The one can walk to work if he wants to. Um, but he is lazy, so he takes a car. And the other one drives in. He lives close to N1 city, compared to Elsie's River. So the one that works at Grotto, he live in...
<b>Interviewee3</b>	Parow.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Does he also live in Parow? Oh well there we go. You know and they [inaudible] So he probably goes in with his car as well. And um a few other guys take public transport of they would come in their own vehicles. Depends on their mood on a given day. If they are running late, they come in with their own cars, otherwise they come in with public transport.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um, what public transport do they use?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Taxis or buses. Getting to Montague Garden is a little bit difficult. Um, travel wise. If you are coming from the Southern suburb, you have to take the train through to town, and from town get taxis to here. Um, the taxi rank is there by Du Noon. It is a little bit difficult to get here. Or you have to take the train, I mean you have to pass Paarden Eiland to get here. So it is very difficult getting here. So but the bus, there is a bus that runs in the morning, it comes straight here. If passes the main road, so the guys.
<b>Interviewer</b>	From where though?
<b>Interviewee</b>	From Athlone, Nyanga.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And then it comes straight to, right up to?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It comes to Montague Garden, it goes thought to Du Noon, Table View, through there.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And the taxis?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Taxis ranks and the... they don't really ride down Montague Garden. They ride down Koeberg Road.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, and then other times they just come in with their own cars?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Mmm. Our hours are 7:30 to 4.
<b>Interviewer</b>	7:30 [laughter].
<b>Interviewee</b>	7:30 to 4. Monday to Thursday. And on a Friday 7:30 to 2.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh okay.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, there was a time when we were very busy, where we unofficially our hours used to be 7:30 to 5. Um, in the engineering industry um, that is the time that they start work. Our one site is from 7:00 to 4:15. 7:00 to 12, that is Gascon. Then the Grotto site is from 7:00 to 3:45 and on a Friday 7:00 to 2:00.
<b>Interviewee3</b>	No man.
<b>Interviewee</b>	No man. This is...
<b>Interviewee3</b>	No man.
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, the hours have changed now.
<b>Interviewee3</b>	Grotto is 7:30 to 4:45.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So I mean public transport is still fine at those time?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh yes, they get off here in the morning they get mad, but then again, we realise that we can't open 8:00, we can't open 9:00. We are not an office. We work with our hands. We need work to get done here. And that is how in the morning the people come in to work that is when things break and that is when they wants them repaired, you know.

So we have to be available. We have to be around. Sometimes he goes on callouts in the middle of the night when the companies are working night shift and they require things get done. He... what's the cool drink company?

**Interviewee3** Um... Bashu.

**Interviewee** Bashu. He build tunnels for them.

**Interviewee3** For making their whole paper.

**Interviewee** Better...

**Interviewee3** Bashu bought um...

**Interviewee** You know Bahsu is a cool drink company, you know the bottles with the red cool drink, yellow cool drink [inaudible] Right, now he has repaired their machine.

**Interviewee3** They buy machine from Coca cola, which was 40, 50 years old and then we strip it completely, and um, those machines require 4, 5 operations to operate them. And then what we do is we go in and we automate that machine, so that to have only 1 operator operating on the machine.

**Interviewee** Then you know you use toilet rolls, I assume you use toilet rolls. We don't use toilet roll. One of our customers with toilet roll. They make the toilet roll. So the machine...

**Interviewee3** They make your paper, they make the toilet roll, they do everything.

**Interviewee** So the machine required to make that, Harry has repaired and rebuilt, reorganised it, refixed it. You know.

**Interviewee3** Not anymore.

**Interviewee** Ja, but we haven't done that for ages now. [Inaudible] And then, then you get the too big machine that obviously can't come into the workshop. And um, like a car, all these machines [inaudible] So sometimes then at the end of the year, um, some of our customers have what we call a shut down. Um, basically, we all go on leave man, you know you close up for the annual leave, um, some customers call that shut down, where they keep the minimum of skeleton staff on duty and then our guys go in and service machines, repair machines and service machines. You want a lot hey. You're wanting quite very intricacy of the business. Ja, it's a lot. I will smutch. [Laughter] He do what I want.

**Interviewee3** 2000, so thousand a month

**Interviewer** Um, your workers. Are they full time, casual?

**Interviewee** All full time, except the driver that is on the 3 month contract.

**Interviewee3** No, he is full time....

**Interviewee** Ja, he is full time, he work... (interviewee 3 argues), yes, but he is not permanently into it yet. All the others are permanently employed.

**Interviewee3** He comes to work every day and that is 8 hours every day, full time employed.

**Interviewee** Yes, he is on a 3 months contract.

**Interviewee3** And then we also have the guys... the company that subcontract for us, called Acuca, they do the software engineering...

**Interviewee** That is what I told you earlier only with the big machines.

**Interviewee3** And then there is the heavy current um, [infectionotolgy?], called Picstix that also does work.

**Interviewer** So you just subcontract when you need them for...

**Interviewee** Yes.

**Interviewer** Um, how important is it to have highway access, because you are very close to N1.

**Interviewee** That is one of my pet peeves, let's not go there.

**Interviewer** Why, have you [inaudible]

**Interviewee** There is 3. They are working on the N2, I ride on the M5. So I come from Crawford. So at Athlone already, I am stuck in traffic. I so ne, the pet peeve of mine. Then you have to

pass the N2, then you have to come to the Koeberg bridge that they are working on the N1, pass the N1, getting here, they are working on Koeberg road, so they were... and they are working on the M7, so yes, um.... ja. But yes, we are here in Montague Garden and um, it is easy to get here... I don't know. You drove here. How did you find it?

**Interviewer** Ja, no, it is easy.

**Interviewee** It is just straight out [inaudible] M5, N2, N1, it's a lot. Koeberg road, Bosmandam road, Montague Drive, here you are. And um, the only thing is... the only problem is when you come in, when you come off Montague Drive, you find that little alternate avenue to find the park. That is the only difference. But no, I didn't understand your questions. [Laughter].

**Interviewer** How important is it to have highway access. Is it very important, or not really too important?

**Interviewee2** Basically for the reason that we have certain company, and so for me to run out here now and get to a certain place as quicker as possible, I am going to take the N1, or I'm going to take the N2, and um, this N7 which is not exactly a highway however, it is a main road, so there's problem because we lose a lot of time there. Especially with delivering.

**Interviewee** It is a lot of traffic.

So which... do you take like the side route or...

**Interviewee3** No, you would still use the freeway because the freeway is still quicker, but um, if it could be a lot more big one, we would have a lot less down time.

**Interviewee** Most of our driving is to go to our suppliers to get our parts. To go and deliver to Gascon. We don't collect machines. We don't deliver machines as Clinton said as a law because you are my customer you are going to be charged for us to collect your machine, to repair your machine, and to deliver your machine to you. And um, we are going to charge you for petrol, the labour involved, whereas all you need to do is come and drop off your machine. It is cheaper for you, to drop off the machine. They way is far, but um, you obviously need bus and to get the driver for when you get the customer what say, argh, fine, come and fetch it. And um, our big customers that we got more work, um, we prefer not to give preferential treatment, um, everybody that walks in here, their machine is urgent to everybody. It is money that has been wasted, time that has been wasted on the machine that is standing here waiting to be repair when the customers can be using it to make himself money and after we do the repair it makes us the money as well. Um, I don't like comebacks, meaning when the machine is broken, we repair it, we give it back to you, and err, within the next 3 months you come back to me and say the machine is broken again. That to me is a treatable problem. If it is not a treatable problem, and if we didn't do your job properly, it is not good. It's the standard of work was then poor, give him, his name a bad name. I don't like that. So comebacks are huge and hard and I don't do comebacks. We fix the machine, fix it, and must stay fixed, and when it leaves here, it had better be still fixed by the time it gets to the customers. That is it.

**Interviewer** And um, [inaudible], do you ever get temporary workers in...

**Interviewee** No. We um, we get people in that have retired now.

**Interviewer** Okay.

**Interviewee** Like you are on a 3 months, you are on a 3 months probation period. Um, there are certain rules that you have to follow. It is just certain work ethics, in the [inaudible] And um, because in our line of work we get paid per hour, if you are late for work, I don't like that. I am very strict on that. Um, if you are absent from work, I don't like that. I am very strict on that too. Um, because, you work as a team. For the business load if you are not

here, I have to fill in for you, Clinton must fill in for you, or Mentae must fill in for Clinton, Ashley must fill in for Clinton and that business flow is disturbed. And um, we see every potential in... so every employee is an asset. So we don't have time to fill in somebody quick quick and return for a day. So when you are employed here on your 3 months probationary contract, um, within that 3 months, we can pick up what's your time keeping like, what's your work performance like, what is your attitude like, um [so fine or offensive?]. Um, just like that. It is not only our choice for have you working here. It is also your choice to decide that you want to work here. Do you like working for this company? Where do you see yourself in 5 years time working for this company. And um, what I'll like is that when to people do come in for interviews, um, they come in as like "oh, so this is it". Ja, because as you see it, this is it. It is only when we mention um, and we have this site and we have that site that the people go... "oh". You know, they don't even know what the site looks like, but they go "oh" because there is potential for growth. There is growth potential and those are actually people that don't get too hooked about growth potential. They just want to see how much money they can make. That is it. Those people, we sift through very quickly and um, but generally no, we don't use temp.

**Interviewer** And how do you increase your labourer?

**Interviewee** We interview, we advertised once. We prefer the CVs to be sent through, faxed through, posted through, or whatever. And um, we interview, me on the personality side, and Harold on the work side. Um, together we decide how good are you, um, on lots to do with attitude, because you can be working, um, every company is different. Um, you could have worked for that company A, and then you go and work for company B, same work but their work ethics, you have the basics, and then you have departmental rules and regulations, different company rules and regulations and then you come and work here. Like, ooo, it's lekke working here, I didn't know it was so nice, oh and we get cool drink, and on Friday we get lunch from the boss, and that is all appreciation. And um, on the interview stage, we unrenown for both of us that we look for certain things and certain character, um, like in [inaudible] honour. And um, there is perspective person, type of person that we look for. Generally I look for how will he fit in with the rest of the company, the rest of the staff personality wise. You get all definitely different types. Um, we believe a happy worker is a productive worker. A satisfied worker is a productive worker. Um, you don't want to come to work everybody dipping and [inaudible], but you do get those type and you are going to be like that. And you need people around do that, can be positive, and cannot freak out. Not um, be upset with you because you are upset. You know, and um, given diversity of the task and their lines of work and the non-[inaudible] that they have, it is crystal clear that we don't deal with those issue because um, anybody can say they are an electrician. Just because they change the plug or change the bulb, I am an electrician. And I believe there are 2 things, 2 lines of work we don't mess with. You don't mess with electricity and you don't mess with plumbing. [laughter].

**Interviewer** Ja, I agree

**Interviewee** So as far as I am concerned um, he will check you out, Spencer will check you out on um, what your basic electronic, you basic electrical knowledge. And um, try undo the ugly habit that you have picked up over the years and teach you...

**Interviewee2** It is mainly got to do with your attitude. It is mainly... the guy doesn't have to know anything. But if he has a good attitude, then within 1 year or 2 years, you can... I was just speaking to Mentae who was just speaking to 2 other guys inside now that as soon as you have got a positive attitude, you can approach anything with um, a mindset that

"yes, I do it, I just need to ask somebody to help me". And once that happens then you can start moulding that person and turning into a very good technician within 2 years, however the experience will be there, but the qualification won't. So what we did was, we um, we are now being audited by... well we have been audited by Makita to be able to being qualify people because our first apprentice now we have qualified him out of our own pocket and it cost a hell of a lot of money, even though he already had the... all the theory because he is already a qualified armature winder. So now tomorrow, he is going for the training and he will be a qualified armature winder and a qualified electrician. But to get people to that level is expensive because the whole structure had changed completely. Previously when I was an apprentice, um, I would work for 9 months and 2 months of the year I go to tech and then get an entrancy 1, and then the following year I will do the same, get an entrancy 2 and then the following year I will get an entrancy 3. So then um, all the theory I will then have. And then all I need to then do is have the practical and um... then the... well the... apprentice authority will then say, "ok, this guy qualified for the first 6 months, do you want to send you for a training so then we used to go to [inaudible] apprentice there, where everybody from South Africa came together. However now, it is all done in wherever you stay. Like in Cape Town, you need to go to the UCA, and that is in Woodstock, and you can do apprentice there. But your Entrancy 1, Entrancy 2, and Entrancy 3, that um, that theory is done over a full time period of 3 years. And obviously you cannot have a guy out of work first for 3 years, and then after that you are not going to make any money out of him firstly, and then after that you need to get him involved in a program where you can log the amount of work that he has done in certain areas. The electrical field is a very diverse field. So you have got to get him involved with motors, you have got to get him involved with housing, you have got to get him involved with wiring, you have got to get him involved with tubing, all kinds of things. And then once you fall out of logging system, you say ok, this is how I evaluated this guy, and you send it. So then they say, based on this, I think this guy can qualify. But the Seater then is to come to your company and say you look like you are able to handle it. So what they do is, they inspect our premises, they inspect our tools, they inspect the qualification of the people that are training you. And if all those things fall into place, then it's fine, you can qualify people. However, the trade test is still done by a separate authority, which is the UCA...

**Interviewee** Which reminds me, there is an email from Service Seater. I don't know if our accountant spoke to them, but all of a sudden, this email popped up from them, if you want to, you can come read it.

**Interviewee2** All you need to now do is, you need to say to Services Seater, I need you guys to come and audit us in order for us then to...

**Interviewer** And then um, the services that you provide, I know that everything is done by word of mouth, um, so if they want to get hold of you, then do they phone you, email you?

**Interviewee** They generally phone us and his cellphone number, he has had for the last 10 years. And um, they will phone him, or they will get our number, I don't know where, not listed. So get our phone number from business cards that I've handed out to I don't know who. Or um, like I said, it is a small industry. So someone will phone you. They remembered you said you know someone that can repair welding machines. They will phone you, and they you will say, "the guy's name is Harold, here is his cellphone number", or "here is his work number". And they phone us. And um, that why there is always... people talk, you know, and especially in your line of work, or in... err you meet somebody in your line of work, you tend to talk shop. You have to talk work. And that is... how can I say, go to him. He is fast, he is quick, and he is cheap.

<b>Interviewer</b>	And then they will... do they come here ever or...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, no, they must all come here. Um, most of them will come here to drop off their machine. Otherwise err, we send Mentae and Ashley our, or Harold will go out to go and repair the machine. Um, there is different sites. There is this one site in the Northern suburb that doesn't like sending their machines here. So maybe once a month Mentae and Ashley will go through. Or Harold will go through and go and repair whatever machines are broken. Because they don't like to send their machines [inaudible] And um, these are basically my customers. My book. I do everything on hard copy. Um, in the book, on the computer, I save everything everywhere. Um, our customers are diverse, or should I say, different areas, and they themselves on different lines of work. Um, that yellow machine that I showed you earlier on, that customer is actually from Johannesburg. And um, they're selling their machine all over the show.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	They sell 3000 small unit a month. And they have got about 40 or 50 different models. But the small units, they sell 3000 a month. And we do the repair for all their machines. Not only us though cos we are limited. We used to be the only once doing it and um, there was a time when there was so many of their machines breaking that they decided to use another two service centres.
<b>Interviewee</b>	One in the Northern suburb and one in the Southern suburb, and then us here. And um, they have now opened a branch here in Montague Garden, err, selling their machines from here instead of letting a company in Cape Town sell it for them. And, um, we basically deal with the spare parts that's required to repair those machines. And um, we're in contact with them on a daily basis. Cos there is always a machine. What I call a yellow machine. There is always a yellow machine in the workshop.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, and that was for warranty.
<b>Interviewee</b>	: That is for warranty repair. And if it is out of warranty and you bring your machine in, err we speak with the budget centre and that way we sort of quote you and see if you want it repaired and you would have to pay to have it repaired. Cos a lot of people wants machine that is out of warranty don't actually realise the cost involved in repairing it. People don't abuse the warranty aspect of it. Because it is more important to actually have the machine working than trying to get a replacement machine. And um, our guys are that good on these machines that they can tell you, "You are wasting my time, stop using the machine". And we also have no counter, no fear, in telling our customers um, "Stop messing with the machine man. Stop pulling the machine around. It is not a toy, it is a tool". And you heard Harry speaking earlier on about the tools, you saw in the workshop all the... So each guy has their own toolbox. Clinton is quite proud of himself. He hides his here in the office... All very possessive over their tools. Ja, quite fun actually. The customers actually realise you do such a lot. You know you take it for granted that you automatically come into your work and you sit a lot on the internet and you play games. Um, but that is the thing. That is the type of boss that Harry is. If you have got nothing to do, why make it that you are working. In the workshop, oh, there is always something to do in the workshop. Um, I pride myself on the fact that Clinton are always up-to-date on our work. And um, that when Harry does come in, cos Harry's hours are flexible because he has to go to this site, that site, the two workshops, whichever customers he has to go to, whichever parts and equipment he has to go and purchase, interviews, appointments with other people. That is what Harry does. So if Harry rocks up there today, whoohoo. We run the workshop or this premises, head office. What is so nice about it is I'm not here, Clinton is, if Clinton is not here, which seldom happens, then I am here. If not, Mentae has been with us since we started here. So Mentae knows the customers. Ashley knows the customers. Um, I believe it is very

important that I took you through there. Err... and I think it's their moment. I'm locked away. I just take it like this. Why, err... shouldn't I have introduced you to the guys. Why shouldn't I have told the guys why you are here. And that is what we do. There is nothing to hide. My good grief. We are all here. We all work together. And um, what is the big secret, and why are you here, and what are you doing here? I just... it makes for... I know why she didn't though. I am kwaai, I am the ou, and um, it makes you feel good about yourself. And it's good manners to have introduced you. And what I liked about you is that but now, you have watched my head. Or what I liked about you is the fact that you shook their hand and, let's face it, they are working with oil and grease and machines and dust there. Me, I wash my hands. I can't take that feel on my hands. I would wash my hands long ago. But I feel you are very nice. You are covered in grease there on your fingers.

**Interviewer** Um, I just have one more question. Um, how would potential employees hear about job opportunities?

**Interviewee** With all the customers that we have, and the fact that Harold is a friendly person, and all the sites that he goes to, and all the companies that he goes around to, um, everybody is asking him for a job. The fact that our guys speak um, not just at the head office, but at our tool workshop as well, about how lekker it is working for this company financially as well as emotionally, um.

**Interviewer** Psychologically.

**Interviewee** Ja. That all their friends want to come and work here. All their brothers want to come and work. Everybody wants to work for him. And err... they had to get unfortunately um, pass me. And we're at the moment not looking for extra employee. Like I said we are at the times 1 that was 2 and a half years ago when we moved in here, there at the times 1. Never again. Never again. And like we work by word of mouth. So we get our employees by word of mouth. We got Mentae through Harold having worked with Mentae's um, mechanical boss. At the... Harold knew him and he recommended Mentae to us. Harold said, "I am looking for someone good man". And he recommended Mentae. And um, Clinton is my brother. Um, I always... I grew up with him obviously... well not obviously, but obviously I grew up with him. I consider him extremely intelligent. I considered and consider him still to be extremely intelligent, logical, um, very good with numbers, um, I feel his intelligence... ja. I feel his intelligence is wasted here, but I am glad that we could get him. Um, he worked for his previous company for 9 years.

**Interviewee3** 10 years.

**Interviewee** Well there we go. But there I am not that good with numbers. (everyone laugh). For 7 years and we've been trying to get him to... we always knew that one day our dream of vision was that when we reach the stage that we are at now, that we want him to work with us and for us, and trust him completely and so that Harold can trust him completely. He knows lots of me. If he nick himself anywhere and he seldom does. What I like about our guys on the rare occasion when they do mess up, it's just nobody spoke it. But on the rare occasion when we do mess up, we confess. "I messed up." "Oh great. What did you learn from it?" There is no time for a wrap over the knuckles. Treat people here for Heaven's sake. We are not children, although sometimes we do act like it. I digress. What was the main question again? (everyone laugh) Um, how did they get to hear about it? From his brother-in-law, used to work with Harold. And you know, the men the... because Harold goes on the road, he is always seeing people. And then somebody mentioned about the in-laws, blah blah blah. That was how come he got the job. The brother-in-law knowing Harold. And he's work for one of our biggest customers

when Harold started on his own. One of our biggest customers. Um, they since closed down. And Nadeeb was, oh on this main modelling machine, spinning. And first machine always used to break. Harold always used to go fix it and they developed a repertoire between themselves. Then Nadeeb went on his own after the company closed down Nadeeb started making burglar bars and security gates and stuff. Decided that he prefers getting paid straight wage than working with admission rate. He always, like I said, had a fantastic repertoire with Harold, phoned Harold, and Harold said come in for an interview. And um, I didn't even interview him. I didn't interview Tommy. I didn't interview Clinton. I didn't interview Mentae. I didn't interview Ashley. I didn't interview Makita. I didn't interview um, Richard. I only interviewed David. And um, it's what Harold as certain as a man saw in these guys and it was all word of mouth. All of them. Um, Ashley...Damien's brother worked 2 premises away from us, 2 workshops away from us. And from seeing them every morning, greeting every morning, um, he got to hear that we were looking for staff. So they recommended Ashley. Ashley started here. And now his brother Damien, err, was looking for work and Ashley also recommended him. So now Damien is here and he has another month to go on his contract. We had a guy working here. We had another guy work before Damien. Um, his name was Ajanda. He was recommended um by Mentae. My thing is that I can recommend you for anything. But when you walk in here, and me and you, we don't click, then it is no use. We have to click. And um, well first of all, like I said, sexist, I ain't having no woman working here. Um, I believe no woman mustn't be getting her hands dirty. Although there is a lot of women in this line of work, in this trade. Um, mine is basically just a jealousy factor. And a [inaudible] factor. And I'm not here to control. I protect what's mine. Um, and at the end of the day, um, you require some friends. Need to hold those machines around and you need to be able to have a certain physical friend in doing this thing. Um, some men do and some men don't. Some women do and some women don't. It's just that you have to land up with a fantastic group of guys, and that's it. Should we require more, there are. There is this one guy that is from Debaman. Um, he used to work with Harold 10, 15 years ago. Um, but we are not hiring at the moment. Um, we would like to open more workshops on more sites, especially the ones in the Northern suburb. But they have their own electrical department. If we bring... the electrician there, can't repair that machine, then our guys go out. Which is why I say our guys are fantastic. Because um, what I would say a normal electrician can't repair I call in the big guns. You know, and Harold has had conversations with guys, overseas engineers. Man, to me, just I talk. At the end of the day, it is just a title because if I could give Harold a title, I would say he is an engineer. Um, because he gets involved in his work, simply cares about it. He lives, his work. And um, I mean putting aside his personal life, his work, his need and um, if you have such a talent, then flaunt it. Why keep it to yourself? Flaunt it. So I brag for him. But um, yes, we have... like myself for example, she wants her husband to come and work here, I said, send me the CV. She's sending me the CV for the past 2 and a half years. And I find that people want you to hire them or employ them based on, "give me a job man". So to overcome that, depending on your line of work because you have no electrical experience, you're looking for work. I actually have someone um, a friend of mine, who has her own company. And um, woman power. So I would recommend you to her, because the line... she is an agent. So you can go to her. Um, I actually had a guy who repairs my fridge, and my stove, and my dishwasher, and stuff like that. Um, Harold doesn't do that. So when you phone looking for an electrician, I'll give you my appliance guy's phone number. And that is just to... it is nothing to be ashamed of. It is just that I cannot tell the customer how much is going to charge to

come out. And, that is how... we do everything word of mouth. We find it works out best. Advertising, anybody can advertise in the newspaper or in the yellow pages, put their names in the telephone directory, or on the internet, and we are not there either. Um, anybody can do it. I don't know who you are. I'm going to have to phone you. And, or I'm going to have to come to you, or I'm going to have to have some form of communication from you first of all approach opening your book. And the first thing you hear is um, "hey, tell Harold man. Harold is a... he is in Montague Garden. Location is good." He is recommended by somebody whether I like that person that recommended him or not, the fact is that he was recommended. And that is already your one foot in the door. The job is yours, like that.

**Interviewer** I think that is all the questions that I have.

**Interviewee** Oh my god. Did I go on too much?

**Interviewer** Is there anything else that you want to add?

**Interviewee** : Is there more? Do you want me to talk on? We... to be a BEE company, you have to earn 5 million plus. We don't earn 5 million plus an annum. We are an exempted micro-enterprise for card. Um, our bigger customers, they're BEE. They... here is an example of one of them, sending a questionnaire out. We are black owned. Harold is the only... is the director of the company. It is a closed corporation. Um, like I said, everything is registered. We are registered for VAT, um, we are registered for whatever our accountant, Dean register it, and register us for. And it is an advantage for us to be a black owned company. Um, if you want a permit in terms of colour, we are... we have 2 Africans working for us, 1 Congolese, 4 Coloureds, 3 Christian, 1 Muslim. Um, 1 woman, and 1 white guy. Um, so, it is not a case of we are just strictly coloureds, or we're strictly black, or we're strictly white. We are a company where we require your expertise or whatever it is that we see in you to enhance our business, um, because as far as we are concerned, we are not just an electrical company. We're not just an electrical repair company. We... if it's so true... and if we win the straight for millions, billions lotto, we can actually have our own company where we make our own fans, cos we have the expertise, we have the welder, we have the transformer guy, we have the mechanic background Mentae, and we have the administrative guy, got Clinton, and the initiative of all our guys. That yes, in one of our dreamy dreamy moments, um, that's possible because of diversity. We are not just electricians, or technicians, electrical technicians, or technical electricians. We are all that. And um, let that go. I consider it a small company. Harold doesn't. Harold thinks we are a big company. To me big is Pick n Pay. You know, this is the head office. We are 10 people in the company. And um, he doesn't like it when I speak like that because we are something to be proud of. We seldom talk about our business to people which is why it's a big weird that the more I'm talking I'm realising, "damn, we are not all". We seldom talk to people. They don't understand. Um, we repair welding machines. "Whoohoo. What the hell is a welding machine?" You know what I mean? What do welding machines do? What instruments are you talking about? So we don't. We don't talk about business to other people. Not even to customers. Because at the end of the day, some of them don't even know what we do. All they know is that there is something that is broken, that is called a welding machine, that needs to go in to that Harry guy over there, and when they come out, it will be fixed and we can go on and use it. And my dad is a boiler maker and my dad fully understand. So I enjoy talking to my dad about it. But talking about my dad, I can't talk about the financial side of things. We don't do that. We don't even talk to Clinton about financial side of things. Um, that invites animosity, that invites [inaudible]. Um, we have to be very careful, or respectful. So having this over there and its wonderful, I could chat, chat,

chat, and chat all I please. And then the more you speak about it, you realise, wow, I actually, I see now why Harry has what he has. Um, or why he speaks the way he speaks. And on a company level, it is only now recently actually since January that we started applying for credit at our various suppliers. And I don't like a credit. Like I said, I'm a debt collector. So I don't like credit. And um, we also um have a couple of people, our key customers that have applied for credit because it is too much money at the end of a given month to pay us. And um, that EME certificate on jumping around with thought. That EME certificate there has helped us a lot with um, being a BEE owned company, with I'll be the customers with Gascon, Grotto, Tankalink, with Spa Ocean Darman. They were all sending this lovely paperwork that I must fill out just that ticket to say that... they work on score, on merit, on some point system that I have no knowledge of. And um, we're not... in this company we are not afraid to show our ignorance. [inaudible]. So we don't walk around with attitude of... arrogant attitude. We don't have time for that. Arrogance... put your foot in here with arrogance, your foot get buried with what we shove out of here. There is no time for arrogance here. So like Harry said, it's a lot about personality and character. You know, I'll never have someone like your working in here. You are too pretty. Hell no. Like the guys and I will... disturbed and, I don't need to have that in my life. Harry, what did you do today? Did you behave? You know. And I'm not shy to face off. I'm not trying to challenge the next person, um... because we all are. It's just that... how far are you prepared to let your man know. But I digressed again. Um, so these are some of our petrol account, and one of our suppliers and he also do... I don't agree enough. Most of our suppliers are also customers. Most of our suppliers are customers.

**Interviewer** Oh, ok. That's quite nice though. Close and has it... close as well cos they get to hear about you and they know... well their relationship with you as well.

**Interviewee** I married a man up. And um, you will notice that we basically speak about Harry. We don't speak about SEAT Electric. Cos Harry is SEAT Electric. Well we don't know what we will do without Harry here, but we hope that they don't come anytime too soon. But um, yes, I'm quite proud of us, that's from scratch. Um, coming into an empty workshop, we've done all this. We've put this whole system together and um, I had to do the administrative side of things. And like I said, you need logic, you need common sense I don't know one common cos if there is a common, we don't have it. Um, so ja, I'm quite chapped with myself. Whoohoo. Go girl. I set up this whole thing here, having to get the computers in and the phone in and stuff. Um, most people just walk into a business and do it. Having to set up from scratch makes you appreciate it all the more. And now Hayley you have to stop me to put finger on. You have to stop me.

**Interviewer** No, that's fine. Um, I just want to ask you, your accountant, that person is... are they also subcontracted or...

**Interviewee** No, they um... when Harold started 10 years ago, he wanted everything above board. At the end of the day all you have is your name, and how you would like to be known, and how would you like to be remembered. And um, when Harry said to me, "Honey, I want to do my own business", I supported him all the way, but you are going to do it right. So I'm speaking to people, the accountant, he's recommended. And um, they are in Rondebosch, so down the road from us, and Harold went to go speak to them and found out that this guy is well known at SARS. He has a fantastic reputation at SARS and um... we didn't want lots of skelms doing our books. You know, because that skelm will affect our name. And the accountant... the trainee accountant, whoever that was there, we hear they're there. We're her first account. And um, she did everything that was supposed to be done. Like, it's 10 years. We registered in 1999. Um, registered our close

corp. The reason why I say we're married in community of property to Harold. 50% is mine. Um, when we registered in 1999, um, she registered us for things that I only found out last month about err... what was it for... skills development levies and this the Seater, and Service Seater, um, things that I don't know about. Accounting stuff and... that I took out no knowledge of, like I said, I just do the basic book keeping here. And um, which made me realise we're clear. We're above board. We've got our ducting role and um, strangely enough, um, one of our... when Harold was working there by Arch Engineering, the guy that had um, working for him, now works for SARS. So it was interesting and fun to speak to him because he would tell us um... discuss this... this company did this and this company did that, and how the company went wrong. Um, discuss that we paid that, and pay as you earn, and gee what else the guy say... unemployment funds. And we're registered for all those things. And like I said we're registered for things I don't even know we're registered with. But at the end... and we pay this annual levies and workman's compensation, and you know when something happens, like I said we've only had one, we've only ever claimed once, we've only ever had one injury on duty, where Mentae cut himself and he didn't clean it properly and the next day he came, that was standing like this and we rushed him off to the doctor and... the workman's compent... to get involved and paperwork, a lot of paper work. Paperwork and paperwork and he took off a 5 days with this hectic medication that he was on... antibiotics that he was on... and um... like I thought was if only the accountant, "oh there is was man come, here, here is your paperwork". You know, and that is what's so fantastic about this accounting firm is that I will just phone and say, "do we have..." "Yes, here is your number", or "Here is your paperwork", or "Go onto this site and you'll see this and you'll see that". So um, I have no worries there. I've total trust in those people and um, very important that you have a one on one relationship with them. I go once a month down there to the accountant. It's great and I can pick up the phone and phone them at anytime and they're willing to help. Whereas if it was my lawyer, or my doctor, I'd be paying fees like the gain of a passion now, because the accountant that is handling our account, she is also of a light mind of um, I don't mind teaching you. Cos there's no way you're going to know everything that I know. So she is not scared to tell me these things cos at the end of the day, there is no way I'm going to be able to do her work. Unless I'm going to go for course, after course, after course. Um, so she has no worries or why too scared to teach you. You know, and that is fantastic relationship we have with her. Did I digress again?

**Interviewer** No, that's all. Ja, I think that's about everything.

**Interviewee** I hope I helped you.

**Interviewer** You did, I think.

**Interviewee** I hope you understood what it is that we do here.

S.E.A.T Electrics Transcript  
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**Interviewer** Hey?

**Interviewee** We have a very weird way of recruiting people.

**Interviewer** Why? [Laughter] the last time you said that, um, you use kind of like informal networks, but then you interviewed, I think, um, one person...

**Interviewee** Like I said, I don't know how other people do it but we have a weird way of doing it, um, I need to...let's just take the two of you for example, I need to interview you for a modelling position, because the two of you look like models, you're gonna send in your CV, your portfolio, ne, um, you get a feel for the person, you, um, you meet people for the first time, either you like them or you don't like them, we women, we make judgement calls immediately. Either you like them or you don't like them, so, um, that is a very big criteria for who we hire here. If I like you, you get an interview here. I interview you and I don't have a standard way of interviewing, I ask weird questions, I catch you off guard, and then I hand you over to the boss. He knows the electrical side of things and then he interviews you on that side of things. And like I said, the last time I forgot that you were recording me, this time I'm not gonna put emphasis the thing is standing there, but um, you can't bullshit me, plain and simple. You can come here, all here with your lovely certificates, for an example this one [shows us an example of a Curriculum Vita that she had received and was going through that had copies of various certificates]. First thing you do is look at the age of the guy, he's born in 1982, how old is he? And then you see, my good grief, very nice, very nice, oh you got that and oh you have that and that, you have everything that we need, so when did you do all these things? Okay, what year did you do this, 2001, 2001, 2001, 2003, and what have you done since then, so you go back, where did the guy work, okay, one, two, three, four, five. Five different companies and how did he work, two months, em, a year and four years there, oh this is strange...Clinton check this out [speaking to a colleague]...like I say I just got this CV now. Good guy, born in 1982, worked there for two months, there for a year, from 2003 to 2007 he worked there, then tell me how he could work there from 2003 to 2005. Okay, so there's a mistake...okay, and the first thing I do when I get a CV, other than getting a feel for it, I'm anal about spelling, but that's just me. So I look and I see there, uh uh, oh no, spell check brother. If you did a spell check, you typed it, who types now-a-days on a type-writer? You've got spell check, if you didn't take the time to even do a spell check then how methodical are you? How logical are you? How good are you at your job? Um, we work in the electrical industry here, you cannot just shoddily go through something, you will shoddily shock in your hell in, so, no, very nice CV but something's not right. And the first thing I'll ask him is what did you do from 2000 to 2003, is this a typo of what? You know, something's not right. And, that's what I do. Now, I'm very sceptical. when the person comes in, like I say, I've got a weird way of interviewing, do you smoke? Smoke? Okay, most men do, in this trade, they do. First

thing is how do they greet, first impressions, first impressions – how do they greet? If they don't take my hand then clearly they're not gonna take orders from me, clearly you've got issues with a woman telling you what to do, strike one. Um, I smoke, do you smoke? Ya, ya. I light a cigarette, I offer, they take a cigarette, oh hell no, strike two. Oh its tea time now, would you like something to drink? I'm interviewing you, why are you saying yes? Strike three, and I don't bother to hand him over to Harold, I don't care how pretty that CV looks, clearly if you come in like that in an interview then how are you going to be in there [referring to the workshop]. And how, and, and, what time is our appointment? 10 o'clock? And what time do you come in here? Come strolling in at 10 past 10? Why? Because I deal with everything, I phone the people, I speak to them, I'm friendly, they don't know who I am, got no idea who I am, they just think, oh the secretary phoned, you know - issues? Sexist? No, sorry man you can't work for me. I did mention that you, you'll be working for me – I'll be telling you what you must do, and I'll be giving you your orders and instructions here, and if I don't like you, we don't click, then you're not gonna be able to work here. Strange interview skills. And I don't ask, so how did you work there? And why did you leave there? I'm not interested, that's in the past, if I want to know these things, I would phone all these references, which by the way, I never do. Because, um, it's an unspoken rule...say I phone you, what's your name – Anya – “hello, Hayley, my name is Eileen phoning from SEAT Electrics, I'd just like to know from you, Anya sent me her CV, Hayley can you tell me, is Anya punctual? 'Yes'. Is Anya nice to work with? 'Yes'. Did Anya fit in with your company? Yes. Does Anya have any bad habits? 'Nooooo'. Oh, okay, thank you”. So what did I learn? Nothing, you are not allowed to divulge, it's like a doctor-patient confidentiality, I can't say “what? That bitch, are you crazy, she comes in here whenever she feels like it, she does whatever she wants to do, she doesn't listen, she's most of the time off sick and she...” they can't tell you that, and I cannot fax your profile, your records through to her, so I have to base that one my judgement and how I feel about it. If you go for a job interview, as much as what the person is interviewing you, you must interview that person, but people are so desperate for work, they come in here – “hi, I'm perfect, I'm pretty, I know just what to do, but I don't even know how to type, but that's besides the point, I'll learn while I'm here” – no, it doesn't work like that, in that interview I go through all those things, and if something is wrong, I will dig until I find out what is wrong with you - that guy that was here, he's gone.

**Interviewer** Oh, the last one...

**Interviewee** Had an interview with this guy, recommended by one of the guys...

**Interviewer** That was a driver position?

**Interviewee** Ya, we got complaints about him, remember, from our customers. We are, this is a big industry, yet it's small – it's like the coloured community – everybody knows everybody. So, um, you'll find out that this person has worked, here, there, here and there. Now, I don't know all these people but the chances are that I'll know Ashraf, he's great and I'll phone him, and this is what people do, they send in their CVs and then you check, ah, I know you – where is it now, it was funny [looking for a CV that she had received] this guy sent in, just got a big contract now with a customer, so we saw that he works for the customer, so we phoned the customer, now that is an informal conversation, it's two buddies chatting, found out this guy took them to the CCMA, that people, CCMA? No, out, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone. 'Cause, here you must work for your money, you're nogal not gonna get it for free here - where is this guy's CV – 'cause when we interviewed him, it was a telephonic interview, we told this guy, um...” Anya, we see on your CV you worked for Hayley. 'Yes'. Oh 'cause I'm a

buddy of Hayley's I'm gonna phone her now. 'um, oh, you see, you see, um, what actually happened was, the people...' yes, okay Anya, it's cool, thank you" – hell no. But I will still phone you just to confirm that something wasn't right, 'cause everyone lies on their CV, everybody, I don't know why...I got this CV [looks for CV]...where did I put it, oh it was weird...

**Interviewer** So are you recruiting now, is that why you have all these CVs?

**Interviewee** That's why I'm getting all these CVs in. Um, your CV, a standard boring CV, starts off with personal details, my name is Hayley, my surname is Petersen, ID number, I don't smoke, I've got my driver's licence, my health is excellent, yes, and all that. This chicks CV starts with, I'm a go-getter and I'm a...I'm checking, it's like I'm reading a novel, what the hell, oh I'm friggin everywhere and dah dah dah dah dah. Perfect little women and ah. So I phoned, how many people do you know with Woolworths Cards?

**Interviewer** Lots.

**Interviewee** Mm, I'm phoning from debt collectors...yah yah yah [shouting]...oh, okay, nice person thank you bye. Thank you, but no, don't send me this perfect CV, how's my health, good, not excellent, show me somebody whose health is excellent, not excellent, it's good. Do you smoke? No. Do you drink? Ya. Oh, social drinker? What's a social drinker? Weekends? You get a weekend drinker, then you get a social drinker, 'cause if you socialise everyday, that means you drink during the week. So, we in the electrical trade, you can't come to work babbalas [hung over]. You going to shock, you'll make a mistake and you'll shock. I must pay for you, I must pay your wife and children because you came to work babbalas, sorry. So like I said I have weird criteria for how you get a job here and Mentae's working here, we now 11 years in existence, we 3, September, October, November, December, January...3 years and 7 months, here [referring to premises in Montague Gardens]. Mentae's been working here 3 and a half years, Clinton's been working here 3 years, Ashley's been working here, 3, ya, 3 years 3 months, um, then we got our site, and all of them are working for us 3 years plus, anywhere between 3 years and 3 and a half years...[goes to file organiser draws] my CV file.

**Interviewer** Of all the people who work here?

**Interviewee** No, all the people that applied here and I denied. Before they even get, oh it's lovely to have such power by the way, before you even get to speak to Harold. You didn't meet my husband, you see how I'm dressed, that's how my husband dresses, his jeans is broken and his sweater is dirty. When he's here, he'll work there [referring to the workshop], he's a hands on boss, he will work there. I love it when people come in and, um, they've got attitude, they don't know he's the boss. Now Mentae's our foreman, they have to speak to Mentae, they don't want to speak to Mentae, they come here into the office, see a woman sitting here, they don't want to speak to me, they speak to Clinton, then Harold will come in and out, 'cause we've already picked up an attitude vibe, we don't do attitude here, 'cause we all already have attitude so we don't do attitude lekker here, and um, as the customer's busy acting like he's the boss you know, we will very nice and gently tell him to go speak to the boss, ya where's the boss? Daai ou wat daar sit – you do understand Afrikaans ne? – Daai ou wat daar sit, die ene met die stukende jeans, daai's die baas. Oh, then either the ou comes with an even bigger attitude or he'd deflated, one of the two. If he comes with an even bigger attitude, Harold politely walks him out, go somewhere else 'cause I don't need that here. So we have, like I say a weird way, a strange way. But ask me questions and I'll see how weirdly I can answer the questions. [laughter]

**Interviewer** Um, well you said that you're recruiting now, so how would, well how do these people

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hear about...

**Interviewee**

Um, we don't advertise. First of all, we don't advertise, 'cause if you're gonna advertise you gonna get a lot of tryers, you gonna have people that, we don't repair fridges and stoves, we are a welding machine repair company, it's word of mouth, it's connections. You know someone in the engineering industry, do you know someone who's a boiler maker, do you know some who's a welder, do you know someone that's an electrician? It's all word of mouth. And when you recommend, um, say you recommend your brother, as an example, or your uncle, who desperately needed to get work, um, we friends, my first question to you is, so tell me if you have an engineering company would you hire your brother? No, mm, so why must I hire your brother? And like I say, everything is based on instinct. Um, people's body language, people's reactions to things, um, so why are you recommending him, what has he done? And, my God, why are you recommending your brother? How old is he, can't he do it himself, can't he find his own job? You know, and people are lazy, um, you now "oh, my brother, my brother", I say, okay, here's my card, can he email me, um fax me? I make a note, spoke to Anya, 25<sup>th</sup> of April, when I get your brother's CV, and I get it next week, then clearly you not that desperate for work, ne. You want Anya to work for you and then give you the money. So, no, then you off the list, but um, it's all through word of mouth, I know somebody who knows somebody, everybody's looking for a job and, um, now-a-days, even though they looking for work, they are choosy and you don't send me your CV when you worked as an assistant, 20 years ago, you worked for an electric company 20 years ago, since then you've been doing a whole lot of other stuff, you so desperate for work that you think that what you did 20 years ago is gonna help you now. And my husband believes that if you have worked 40 years in the same industry, and I have worked 5 years in that same industry, it doesn't mean you know more than me. Not about how long you've worked, what have you done at that company when you worked there? How did you work there? And, for me very important is loyalty and how long have you worked at your previous job? Why have you only worked there for a year? So you expect me to train you for 3 months and then afterwards you gonna come here and think I'm dependent on you now and I cannot do without you so you wanna come slut me [ask me] with and increase, increase your ass right out of here. Okay, um, how you look when you come in for an interview, is very important, do you really want this job, okay then, why are you dressed like that, how I look is besides the point, it's how you look in that first initial interview, you come here wearing a sweater for an interview, where's your shirt? You might not be wearing a tie, good grief if the men aren't church goer the men don't go and wear ties, why you wearing, why're you dressed that way? And if you come in here empty handed, just because you faxed or emailed your CV through to me, doesn't mean I have it at hand, where are your original documentations? And if I asked you, do you have your driver's licence on you now? 'No', but you coming here for a driver's position, how did you get here, what, really, so it's more, I meet the person, I like the person, I will allow things to slide, um, I talk a lot, and I talk a lot during an interview, all I do is I watch you, how are you going to answer me? Body language. How long do you take to answer a question? Are you going to answer even? If you talk as much as what I talk, no, uh uh [oh no], not gonna work, no, 'cause then gonna want to come stand there [points to door between the office and the workshop] the whole day and talk to me when you should be there working. And if you creep me out, not gonna work here with me, I'm alone here with you, no ways, uh uh, I don't think so you out. So, um, they say don't discriminate, I don't know what they talking about, I really don't know what they talking about

because good grief you can't tell me that if you get that feeling that somebody's watching you, you know what I'm talking about, if you feel someone's watching you or someone wants to come on to you, like the hair here [points to back of neck], everything is standing on end, And I must hire you? No. So it's like I say I have a weird style. It's not a case of I need someone here, so I'll just take anybody, and I don't take females. [laughter]

**Interviewer** I was telling her what you said the last time...

**Interviewee** I seriously don't, I don't take women. I'm sexist, women should not be in this trade. Go do your nails, go look pretty, what the hell are you doing working here? Looking for a man? 'Cause I mean believe me, women that work in this trade are not married. So what did you do last night? Mm, I slept with him and him and tomorrow I'm gonna sleep with him and him. Okay, so that means you gonna go through my people, no, sorry, no, no. It won't work here with me. So the first thing is, when the people come in for an interview, go through there, they mos looking around, Mentae's checking them out, Clinton's checking them out, Harry's checking them out, 'cause they mos don't know he's the boss. Let them wait there, especially if they early, I said 10 o'clock, what you doing here at 9.30? you will wait. So everything has an effect. Your appointment's at 10 o'clock, what are you doing here 9.30? How did you get here? You eager, you nervous, you know, and while the conversation's going on I will find out, um, how punctual are you, are you an early riser? Are you a night person or a morning person? Are you moody? I'm moody, I don't need moody men working for me. You married? Lovely, how long you been married? Oh, you have children? Where does your wife work? What does your wife do? I ask very weird questions, questions that you wouldn't expect in a normal interview. That way you catch people off guard. And you don't know somebody until you live with them, or until you work with them, I need to know them before I even get to work with me, I need to get a feel of who you are, how you are, where you are. Do you do drugs? Outrage, how dare you ask that? Are you allowed to ask that question? Oh, I see u don't do drugs. Dou you do drugs?...No. oh okay so which one do you do? Tik? Dagga? Cocaine? Hi stakes, hi roller? What, what, what are you? Where do you get your stuff? You know, and it may sound like silly questions, but when you have people that are working for you on drugs, you have to actually rehabilitate them, I'm not your mother okay, I'm your boss, I'm not your mother. You take me to the CCMA and we have a lovely meeting and we find out that, um, there is no responsibility on the part of him, um mm, you can come to work drugged out of your skull, drunk out of your mind, and I must help you rehabilitate yourself. How old are you? How, are you married? Do you have children? Okay, if you not married and you don't have children, do you live with mommy? Mm, okay, why you still living with your mother? Are you divorced? No. Why you still living with your mommy, what's wrong with you? No, no, no, no, and do you drive? Yes. Whose car? Mommy's car? Ah, I think I need to speak to mommy. Really, then I phone mommy, I phone mommy. Then mommy gives glowing references here. It depends what tone of voice mommy uses, which will make me decide, okay you a mommy's boy or, um, so how many times have you had a mental breakdown? How many times have you, you know, who's your GP? And if you can rattle of you GP's name like that, wow, that means you go a lot to the doctor, ne. Take off a lot? Uh uh, we actually need people here that work. Our stats for our employees, as you can see they all working here for 3 years plus, our stats for our employees is, yes I am entitled to have 10 sick working days per annum, or 30 over a 3 year cycle by law, we are entitled to, unless if you work for the government it's 300 a year, yes you are entitled to but that doesn't mean you must take it. You entitled to

take it, doesn't mean you must take it, twelve months out of the year, don't have to take off in April, lots of public holidays, I'll take off one in January, one in February, and wait, wait, wait, wait, public holidays coming up, hoe werk dit uit? I don't have time for that, if you not at work, you not at work, you don't get paid, it's in your contract, read your contract, it's all there, in your contract. So, no, it might sound like silly little questions, but it's not. Everything, um, there's method to my madness, but it's my method, it might not work for someone who can't read body language, somebody who's not really interested. You go for an interview and people go – oh, so tell me about yourself...I'm perfect. Oh, and what else can you tell me about yourself? I'm kwaai. Um, and what else, what else? Give me the vark job, okay, just give me the job, that's all I want, what the hell we talking here for? – I interview you, I dig and I dig, until I find out...we sometimes, what I've been doing recently is going onto gum-tree, every jan raap en sy maat, go onto gum-tree. I was looking for a dog, want to buy me another puppy. So I see here, oh look here's people looking for work, they call themselves electricians. Now you get, what do you do?

**Interviewer** Masters, in Sociology.

**Interviewee** And ... you give that whole long thing the last time.

**Interviewer** Oh, no, um, that was just what our thesis is on, on the Spatial Mismatch theory, but she's doing development studies though.

**Interviewee** I still have no idea...what is development studies?

**Interviewer** It's just, um, a different branch of Sociology, so we focus on social development.

**Interviewee** I still don't know what you're talking about [laughter], okay let me put it to you this way...

**Interviewer** They go to poor people then they say, this is how you can make your life better...[tape gets cut – recorder is full and I have to download the data before I can record again, thus for this part there is a reliance on notes that have been taken]...um, I was going to ask you, how happy are you with your word of mouth recruitment...

**Interviewee** Very happy, we're still here, 3 and a half years later, we still here. The companies that have gone bankrupt, freaks me out. Everything is about a personal touch, once you've met me and I talk, [inaudible] Harry is, look he's my husband, as I told you the last time, and I might be biased but he is charming, and he's just naturally a nice guy, me, I'm not, plain and simple, I'm not. If I don't like you when I meet you and I make my judgement call the minute I met you, I'll talk to Hayley [turns back to other interviewer] and I'm rude enough to do that, and I'm confident enough within myself to do that. And so is Harold, and when we did this whole email story, emailing the whole customer base to, we wanted them to check out the website, we actually found out that they thought we went bankrupt. Here in this complex alone, 3 companies closed down, um, 3 of our biggest suppliers closed down, went under liquidation. So your suppliers and your customers they are the people that talk. How can I...“oh! I went to Melts, I bought myself a mal pair of boots, that come up to here, bought jerseys buy one get one free and...okay, Hayley when we leave here lets go to Melts and check out the sale that she's talking about” – it's all word of mouth. What's that new dragon movie that's out? Have you seen it?

**Interviewer** Um, how to train your dragon? No I haven't seen it.

**Interviewee** But say now you saw it man, okay it's a kwaai movie, I'll go check it out. If you tell me no, the circus wasn't so lekker, don't bother to waste your money going to the circus, then, you were already in two minds whether you wanted to go or not, now you getting opinions, word of mouth, either you do or you don't. The person that you're talking to, do you trust that persons opinion, do you value that persons opinion? Yes,

so there you go or you don't go. And that's what our business is all about. Um, we have a handful of people that we've had bad experiences with because, um, we don't do attitude, we done need your work, go to somebody else that's going to take your shit, we don't take your shit. And I've had people who has owed us money, and um, either you get rude, or you get rude. There is a polite way to be rude and there is a rude way to be rude, so you decide, do you want this person back as a customer? No, why, 'cause you struggle to get your money out of the person, why are we in business? For the money! Let's face it, it's all about the money. But while we are busy earning our money, we want a lekker working environment. We want, everybody...most of your time is spent at work, unless you me and you work half day and don't work on Fridays, but most of your time is spent at work. What must I do, must I come in, sit here and be moody? What am I...moody people are unhappy people, I'm moody 'cause I'm full of shit, but moody people are unhappy people. So, do you want to work with an unhappy person all day, walk around with a suur bek whole day, you know, what's your problem now again [emphasis], what's your issue now again [emphasis], you know, and no I don't want to work with people like that. Um, generally, I talk, but when you leave now, as fast as what I talk, I work...I'm a woman, I can multi-task [laughter]. So, um, all these things...this customer coming in, you can be familiar with the customer [inaudible], familiarity for some people means "um mm, sy het met my ge-flirt", there's no time for flirting, and I can't flirt in any event [laughter], there's no time for flirting, this is a workplace, the guy that works with me, he's my brother, why? 'Cause my husband is about as jealous as what I am [laughter], so ja, I have my brother working here. Mentae, is inside...when I met Mentae, I liked him immediately and when Harry met him, Harry liked him immediately. Now like I said, that's good enough, so if I like you and Harry doesn't like you, I don't even ask why, you out, 'cause Harry likes everybody. If Harry picks up a vibe from somebody, whoa, I don't even want to know what is wrong with that person, how evil that person is if Harry...he's like a dog, he likes everybody and then there's one person that he doesn't like, and if he doesn't like that person, I, my back won't be turned towards that person [she means that she will side with her husband], whereas me, I don't like a lot of people, surprisingly [laughter], I love a lot of people, but I don't like a lot of people. It's a condition, because I have a set mind of morals and values and scruples and dignity and respect and...all the nice big words, if you wanna throw it into the pot, just throw it in to the pot...so, ja, because of that, um, why we take people on and how, we take people on, is a big role. You have to trust the person that you're working with. If you don't trust her, "oh my god, she's driving the car, we gonna drive all the way to Montague Gardens, my nerves are gonna break", if you don't trust her, then the choice is yours...and I suppose that is why, so far we have succeeded in our business. Because, we have an 'I don't care' attitude, and, um, 'I'm not gonna lean on you' attitude, work is work...need perfection. We do the work, we done with the work, now pay me. You don't pay me, mm, now you see, what work is all about. And the same applies to, I'm gonna interview you now, how did I get hold of you, where did you get hold of me...I don't wanna hear where did you hear about me, I don't wanna hear. I don't know why I must go for an interview and go quickly go and research up on the company, don't you walk in here and tell me you know more about my company than what I do, uh uh, it don't work like that, this information that you've got on the internet...what do you know? Who are you as a person, for me, it's all about who are you as a person – what's your character like, what's your personality like? And if you don't have it...what I'm looking for, then you can come in here and tell me that you Bill Gates and you can turn this company into a

billion dollar business, ne? I say, do you have your own company? No. Oh, so why do you want to turn my company into a billion dollar thing, why don't you go do it for yourself? Ja, and there's a...there's a retort for everything. There is, I'm cynical, and I'm negative, and Spencer is positive, flowers and sunshine and roses, so we make a good 50/50 partnership thing going on there. And that's purely upon our own thought. Here I got interviews from creepy, creepy things, it's your choice, you decide if you want to do the interview...you decide who you going to fall in love with. Don't tell me you didn't decide that, you decided that [laughter]. You decided, it's your choice, because if you decide to fall in love with her boyfriend, it's your choice. No man, what are you thinking you know she's got a boyfriend, why you falling in love with him, go get your own man. No...it's, it's all about choice...I'm talking too much, hey?

**Interviewer 2** [laughter] No...I was just wondering, the people who work here now, are they the ones who have been recommended?

**Interviewee** I am so glad you asked that question...um, you don't know people until you work with them, or until you've lived with them. So, you have a buddy, best friend, beautiful girl, lovely, lovely person...um, I don't know I'm just using her as an example...

**Interviewer** [laughter] I am a lovely person though [laughter]

**Interviewee** And, you'd like her to work with you. And before I even interview her, before she even sends in her CV, I ask you about her. What kind of person is she? How long do you know her? How well do you know her? Does she do drugs? Does she drink? That's very important questions. Um, ja, tell her she must give me her CV. No, tell her she must fax her CV through to me...you come in tomorrow with her CV, strike one, okay. And in she comes, what a lovely girl, oh my word I can't believe I've struck it lucky, she's so nice, look at her, ag jinne ma...why the hell is she wearing a silver top to an interview, did she come from a party last night...okay, not so good after all, you know. But, it's just clothing, she can come tomorrow. Can you start immediately? Yes. Okay, why are you hesitating, what do you need to sort out? Do you need to tell your mother you've got a job, do you need to put your child in day-care, what, what, why are you hesitating to start now, I thought you wanted a job. Okay, so you start. I leave to two of you...I just sit back and I watch, just watch. Pretty soon, she'll be stabbing you in the back, you'll be coming in here to bitch and moan about her, and um, okay you are on a one month trial basis, or a three month trial basis, it depends. And, um, you're here longer. I know you, you here three years, I know you. And she's only here for a week, and already, this one is moaning, that one is moaning, 'cause she's backstabbing you – we've really been through this, hey, all true. So, the other thing is also, you recommend her, she comes in. You do social drinking, ne? But you didn't know that she drinks every night, man. When you go home, when you take her home, 'cause she's now lekker aan [drunk], when you take her home, when she gets home, she's still lekker aan, twelve o'clock at night, past, so she goes and takes daddy's bottle of what what and what what, and she goes to drink it. Drunk out of her skull, so she'll be late for work the next morning or, she'll still be 'by the way' [hung-over]. You can make up your own scenarios or whatever. But at the end of the day you don't know somebody until you live with them, or work with them. And, everything becomes a habit after two weeks. Live with her for two weeks, then we talk again [laughter]. Have you lived with her? No. Just live with her for two weeks then we talk again. She won't be so nice after all [laughter]. You can only keep up an act for so long. Go can go every weekend with people, lovely...what do they call it, bell of the ball. You can be the party girl, the 'it' factor, ne, can you keep it up for two weeks? Uh uh, you gonna burn, you gonna burn somewhere, unless you are a generally very nice person and pretty much, tell me how many very nice people do

you know...so it's nice to recommend the friend for a job, and the question I ask again is would you hire the person, yes, if you wanna hire that person it's fine, but don't say I haven't warn you. Jobs, or living together makes or breaks relationships. The only reason, my husband and I can survive working together is because, here at work, he's the boss, I respect him like I would any other boss, I treat him the way I would treat any other boss, other than the occasional sexual harassment here in the corner [laughter]. But when we get home, you're no longer my boss, you are now my husband! How dare you, blah blah blah, how could you say blah blah blah. And then tomorrow morning it's like I've changed again, I'm at work, I'm a professional. And that's the only reason that it works. Otherwise, if I must be here at work, trying to be a wife, I would be fired long ago, I would fire myself, I would be out of here long ago, so yes it's very nice, very nice if you can. But be very careful, be very careful. Because everybody has their own idea of what they like and what they don't like. She can't just bring anybody here, 'cause she has interviewed me already...[interruption]...Ashley, you know Hayley...he's that youngest...

**Interviewer** Ja, I think he just started the last time I was here...

**Interviewee** No, that was that other asshole that got fired. No, he's been here for three years. He's the baby of the company, um, I'm old enough to be his mother, so he's my baby of the company and, very important, did you see how he greeted? See I like manners, man, manners make a man. Even Mentae would greet you there, he cannot greet you like this, their hands are dirty, really their hands are dirty. But, greet properly, greet, if you can't greet properly, okay I now didn't greet so lekker when I came out of the toilet, ne [laughter] but if you can't greet properly, what does that say about you as a person, know what I mean. What is your work like? By the way, let me ask you this question, you know pontificating now recently...does your job decide who you are, question mark, does your job decide who you are as a person, question mark.

**Interviewer** Are you asking?

**Interviewee** Ja, I don't feel like thinking about it. Just thought of the question, I still have to think about the answer to that question. But, do you want to give a quick answer? Sociology and all that goedes...

**Interviewer** I think that people see their job as part of the definition of who they are.

**Interviewee** As a person?

**Interviewer** Ja, if you're a manager then you're cool. And you think you are cool because you're a manager. I think.

**Interviewee** It's all about the title.

**Interviewer** I think so, ja. Never mind if you're a manager and you get paid like what a normal worker would get paid, as long as you're a manager, you're better than everyone else because you're a manager...that's what I think.

**Interviewee** Oh, 'cause I was speaking to my doctor, I speak to my doctor like I would speak to anybody, and, um, I was telling him about our holiday, man. Blah blah blah, and I was so, not so happy with the holiday and I spent and sent a letter to these people and, um, so he said, no, you had to threaten them that you going to the newspaper. So I said, well I got what I wanted, I got my money back, that's what I wanted, so he says 'No!', he threatens to go to the newspaper, then he gets free holidays and what what and what what. So I said, 'Ja, that's because you're a doctor', he says 'No', they don't care if he's a doctor or what he is, it is the threat that you make, so I said it's too late, I mean 5 months later, I would look like, I'm not a greedy person, um, I go to the Spur and if my meal is not lekker, I call the waitress over and him, this is raw, this is not lekker, this is hard, bring me fresh ones please, a clean one please, I don't need not to pay for my

meal, I wanna pay for my meal, that's why I'm here, and don't give me this suck up nonsense, give me what I ordered, I just want a nice baked potato, that doesn't look like it's been stabbed and I want my rice, I don't want hard rice, it's all about service. Everything, and I must just remember I'm talking, must stop digressing, everything is about service and employees seem to have forgotten, that the reason they are there, they are here to do a job. There are so many people out there looking for work, do your job properly, have pride in your work. But I can't have a bunch of robots working here, I can't have a bunch of the same type of people working here. Your personalities are different, but your character is the same. Are you going to steal from me, 'no', okay will any of them going to steal from me, they'll be too shit scared to steal from me, but that's the type of person, your character has to be the same. When I interview I look for, what I would call, according to me, floors in a character, why, 'cause I don't agree with it. Whereas you would be looking for a certain kind of character to do something with or to, I'm looking for a certain type of character to work here. And like I said, my interview process is very weird, and a lot of people, and I tell them immediately, I don't let you wait until next week, I tell them immediately 'sorry the job is not yours'. I'm a straight talker, if you ask me why, I'll explain to you why...you come late, you drink, you do drugs, you, um, killed a person – we had someone like that here – killed a person, you, um, "ja, you can't hold that against me", I said "fine, you basically didn't hear the part where I asked you, will you be able to be in work every day? You said 'yes' now you presenting afterwards me with a card, telling me I have to appear in court on that day and then I have to go and do community service on that day, and I can't come in on that day 'cause I have to go to the clinic to go and get my tablets, so now tell me again, you haven't even started working here but you're already telling me that in the next 4 weeks you gonna be out, absent 3 times". I don't care whether it's paid or unpaid, I need you here. When you start working on that machine, you have to finish off working on that machine. It's not a case of, I'm gonna work on this machine, but I'm not gonna be in tomorrow and somebody else is going to take over, our customers want service. If I tell a customer you will have a machine within an hour, in 59 minutes that machine better be ready and because we know our guys, we can say how long something is going to take to get done. Or we gonna say, when he starts at that machine, we are dependent on our suppliers, it can take anywhere up to three months to get the parts. The parts need to come in from China, want me to go fetch it, the parts have to come from China, and if it has to come by boat, my god, I hope there isn't a tsunami along the way [laughter]. But as long as you're honest and upfront with these people, being your customer or your supplier, how can you go wrong? Honesty's the best policy, so all these things, um, you base everything, you can't, I can't interview you one way and her another because she's, I know her, I will dig there like you won't believe as much as I would dig by you. Because at the end of the day you gonna be working here. I have a little cousin...Yoshka, lovely girl, stunning; I won't let her work here. She'll drive me nuts! Can't have her working her, shame the poor thing needs a job. How's she gonna get her? Must I go fetch her every morning? She lives in Kraaifontein – I don't think so. Now darling I believe in girl power, here's this chick that I know, she has a recruitment agency, go look for a job there. 'Cause here you aint gonna do it, it's not gonna work here, can you add without a calculator? Can you add? You know, and her personality is fantastic, her character – I've heard about how many relationships she's broken up, oh hell no, she's not gonna, she's my cousin not my husband's [laughter]...nooo, you won't work here. So, ja, every woman is a threat. And every man that walks in here, whoa, I can't have Brad Pitt walking in here, and I tell my husband, he's nice...my

husband would say “come let me go talk with you nicely, look at your hands and you say you work in the engineering place? I don’t think so.” So, people who walk in here, they see this. They form their own impressions – ag, it’s small, small fry, ‘kyk hier, kan almal sien’, ne? Attitude? I don’t even bother to give you the full interview. I smell it, you out of here, sorry but the job is not yours, good luck, better luck somewhere else ‘cause you aint gonna get it here. And, I can say we lay low, people don’t need to know, unless they ask, about the other sites, unless I’m interviewing them for the other sites. If that happens then I interview you, Harold interviews you and our foreman on our other site interviews you. And, the manager of the site. So you go through a hell-of-a process, to get a job there.

**Interviewer** So would this be like a panel interview, or like at separate times?

**Interviewee** Separate times, separate times. We go on...you know how intimidating it would be to sit in front of a panel of people. And...you’re a ‘wannabe’ or I know my work...I can’t use me as an example, I’m very confident person. Um, let me just take anybody, um, I come for an interview, two of you are interviewing me, ne, but you better dressed than me. God, for me already that’s a strike one. Um, a panel interview, is you ask, you ask, you ask, then you ask, then you ask, then you keep quite ‘cause you don’t need to ask any more questions, ‘cause you formed your own opinion already, and she’s waiting for you to ask so that she can remember what it is that she needs to ask again. Boring. Or, you gonna get somebody like me, and Harold and our foreman, and our, oh, that poor guy – he’s already lost the job before he’s even sat down – because we’re all judging him. I might like him, as a character, as a personality, I might like him. These three guys, Harry might think ‘okay’, you kinda know what you’re talking about, but we gonna have to train you. But the foreman has to train you, not Harry, ‘cause Harry’s here. Harry’s all over the show, but Harry’s basically here. And that boss, if you’re working on his site, if you get injured there it’s a hell-of-a thing between him and us, but it’s our site, it’s...it gets very confusing. So sometimes I don’t even have a, I don’t even get involved in those interviews. I get to meet the person only afterwards, when the contracts need to be signed then I only get to meet the person. Then they’ve already told me they hired him, then it’s too late. I take one look at you and I say “honey, uh uh”, major wrong with this dude, something’s not right, I’m giving you the one month, I won’t even give you the three month, soema you the one month, ‘cause something’s major wrong. So I cannot interview you because you’ve already been through the process, I just met you – oh, hell what a disaster that was. Had to get rid of that guy, oh god. Because the contract is with us, but our contract is with the company, so I said this guy is not going to work out, I’ll give him a month, won’t even give him three months, I’ll just give him a month. But he goes and sucks up to the boss of that company. And then it was a whole big thing, then that boss signed him on, on a three month contract. But our contract is only for a month, but he’s on our books, so we have to terminate our one month contract and whose books is he going to go on? Then it was a whole money thingy because our rates is different to their rates and paying rates and...they have a guy there that takes on people, that’s all that, er, that’s his job, he just recruits for them. But here we also recruiting because it’s for our site [emphasis], not for him. Now, it’s a whole big thing. Well eventually the guy’s gone ‘cause they realised it after a while. But at the end of the day, um, you have to, we know who, who we want working here. Then it’s a different set of standards for who’s gonna be working on that site. Because of the personalities of the people that work there. And if I don’t like you working here then you go there. And if you’re a trouble maker here, then you go there.

**Interviewer** Um, could you just explain the other two sites again because the last time, I know you

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did explain it, but just for some more clarity? How they actually all fit together.

**Interviewee** Okay, this is us here. We, um, we head-office. We do the repairs to the welding machines and repairs to torches or whatever comes in, whatever machines come in here. Then you have the engineering company, whose machines are bigger than this room, who – you know when you’re riding and you see abnormal loads on the road, um, now bigger than that, and we not talking about actual equipment, we talking about machines, um, like having a thousand computers that you have to repair in this room right now instead of just one. So they, the staff that works there, they don’t come in here, we don’t even see them. I don’t even see them. They do the work there; that is called our site. We have, say this is the whole electrical company, say this is the whole engineering company now, that area there, that workshop area is our site. That is our site and that is where our guys will be working. So when there’s a breakdown on a machine over there, then our guys walk out, take care of what work needs to be done and they go and fix that over there. And because, we here we wait for people to bring something in to be repaired, there we are there already and if something breaks we go to it, our guys go to it and our guys repair it. On our other site, it’s also an engineering company, there we only have one guy. An engineering company, so they mechanic, and um...

**Interviewer** Um, is that the one at Airport Industria? And the other engineering company is in Elsie River.

**Interviewee** Yes, it’s also tanks, um, most of them make tanks, cryogenic tanks and ek weet nie watter nie, and wine tanks and stuff like that, some of it local, some of it to be sent overseas. Um, their contracts are like say with a company overseas, we need 10 of that by the end of May, now you know you cannot do 10 of this by the end of may so you have to work day shift and night shift. So it’s what is called a production line, and that person over there puts that down, and when I say person I mean that workshop over there does that and then that machine comes along here and we put that on and then the machine goes along there, ‘cause it’s called a production line, so that people do that, that people do that, this people do that, that people do that and that people do that. If anything breaks, it holds up the whole line of production. They can’t be phoning us and saying ‘hey, do you guys have time to come out to us like soema now, please’. Our guys need to be there, immediately, and go and repair it as fast as possible or have a machine in stock ready to go there to go and do that and we take that broken thing into our workshop and we repair it there, as fast as possible. So that’s what our site work is all about. Site work is immediately, here we are dependent on suppliers, depending what is wrong with the machine of course. And that’s what we do.

**Interviewer** And, um, how do you recruit the people who work on the actual site? Is that also through recommendations?

**Interviewee** Word of mouth, also word of mouth. Harry has been working in the engineering industry for more than 25 years, wait 40 years, wait, how old is he? 30 years. He’s been working for 30 years in this industry and he’s a nice guy, and he’s friendly and he chats to everybody. So, um, he was working with Clinton, er, fifteen years ago and 15 years ago he liked Clinton and Clinton spoke to us about his brother Bob and they happened to hook up with one another coincidentally at N1 City, and they busy chatting and “hey, hoe gaan dit met jou broer, Bob?”. “Naai, Bob is nah eh eh eh eh” and Bob is looking for a job. Is it? Okay I want Bob. We head-hunted Clinton, and we headhunted our foreman at the one site. Um, we just knew that they would be perfect for us, that they would fit in with us, that they are, um...I see Clinton’s ears turning red next to me [laughter]. We knew what they are capable of and what more they can do for us. Um,

and we wanted them. We wanted Clinton here and we wanted that foreman there. And, Mentae was recommended through an associate of Spencer's, or Harry, and Ashley was recommended through somebody and all our guys, either know Harry, worked with Harry, um, seen Harry coming into places, 'cause he's a nice guy everybody wants to work for him. Everybody thinks – oh, ja, nice guy, I wanna work for this nice guy. And that's basically how we get all our people. Um, if you say to me, "ooh, Eileen, you know Roscoe, Roscoe would like to come in here and dirty his hands and repair machines, he's very good on the IT side, on the PC board side of things, and that's more his forte but he knows how to change a light bulb and fix a plug, kind of thing, he knows the basics – he knows what a starter screw driver is stuff like that." What would be my next comment?

**Interviewer** Would you hire him?

**Interviewee** No, fax your CV through. I need to see if, everybody knows somebody who's looking for a job – but how are they gonna fit in, where're they gonna fit in, what experience do they have, what knowledge do they have. I've got no knowledge of what they do there inside and how they repair it but put it on paper here in front of me and I'll tell you exactly what's going on. And that is how we learnt what is happening in there and we build the machines, and sell parts for the machines and stuff like that and the people that we work with that's recommended, word of mouth, it's the easiest thing because it's not really a stranger that you interviewing. So it's easy, easier. [Battery of MP3 recorder goes flat].

University of Cape

Pick 'n Pay (PnP) Plumstead Re-interview

Date: 29 April 2010

Interviewer: Anya Van Wyk; Hayley Petersen; Owen Crankshaw

Transcribed by Hayley Petersen

Company: Pick 'n Pay Family Store Plumstead

Address: Plumstead Pick 'n Pay Family Centre

Gabriel Road

Plumstead

Tel: 021 762 1124

Fax: 021 762 1244

**Interviewer** ...how you recruit your workers, why you use this strategy to...

**Interviewee** Okay.

**Interviewer** So that's the main focus.

**Interviewee** Okay, no problem.

**Interviewer** Okay can we start?

**Interviewee** Ja, sure.

**Interviewer** Um, so what are your recruitment strategies?

**Interviewee** Okay we have a fairly low level of staff, in fact we don't have skilled workers as such most of our staff get employed, um, are unskilled and then sort of progress through the company. We're just a one site store, so, um, movement is limited in that we're not part of a big corporate like Pick 'n Pay where you can move from store to store and from department to department, but, generally our staff start off, um, they come out of school or from, you know, from unemployed and then they work here and they work their way up through the years, so it's not a fast track thing 'cause we don't have as many opportunities. We don't have a high staff turnover in our store, um, all our training, or most of it is on-the-job training and they get experience, um, in that way and, er, obviously the ones who, who are more capable, sort of float to the top, you know. We tend to, in terms of our recruitment, try and employ from as close as possible to the store. For a number of reasons; a) it's good business practice to employ, you're putting the money back into the sort of micro-economy of the local area, and secondly the travelling aspect with our long, extended hours, till 8 o'clock, they usually get home about 9 o'clock, um, at night is, you know, from a transport point of view it is more practical, and secure as well. Having said that, we do have staff who come from Mitchells Plain and out that, but they tend to be staff that started off here and have subsequently moved, you know, over time.

**Interviewer** Okay, but what is your specific method of recruiting? How do you...

**Interviewee** We basically just have people that come put their names on a, on some sort of waiting list and we call them in and we interview them, the different, um, the owners who sort of manage, oversee that department of business, so frontline, for example I would look in. I would get involved in that interview process, and it's a brief interview, it's about 10 minutes per person, and we just ask them questions of, you know, about health and, you know, their backgrounds and previous, um, experience, if any, um, and then just alternative questions about what would you do if a customer came to the floor, so you can get some kind of feeling about how they, what their customer skills are or how they would deal with it, in the future.

**Interviewer** How do they get on to the list?

**Interviewee** That's just people coming and asking, mostly they're customers or customer's children or customer's friends that come here.

<b>Interviewer2</b>	So sort of like walk ins?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, it's very informal type of thing, we don't advertise, we never do any formal advertising, it's all just as you say walk ins.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	How do they know the list is there?
<b>Interviewee</b>	They don't necessarily, they obviously speak to their friends and, or they come here and they ask "do have vacancies?", I say "we've got a waiting list, put your name on the list and when your name comes up, we'll call you in for an interview". So it's not a, we don't advertise it or anything like that, there's far more supply than, you know, than is demand, so there're more than enough people on that list without having to, to go and sort of advertise it formally or widely.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	So would that be your main reason for not using sort of newspapers?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, exactly, because we don't require any skills you know, generally, so people come here, you know, all our, if one of our senior staff were to leave tomorrow, we would then, um, look at the most suitable candidate from, from below that. Even to the extent, that if we were to open new store, we've got people here that would, we would, um, bring in as partners into the business. We've got quite highly skilled staff that started off packing shelves, and that's actually the Pick 'n Pay way, you know. Pick 'n Pay very seldom employs, and I'm talking about the corporate Pick 'n Pay, most of the staff, the CEO, the previous two CEOs, all started off as shelf packers in Pick 'n Pay and they moved up through the ranks. The only people that they would employ, from outside directly in, are, um, accountants, skills and IT people. Certainly all the store people, all the people outside on the, who're running the store side they are all employed, they've all come through the ranks.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	IT and...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	IT and accounting, that sort of skilled, maybe a few, skilled human resource person, you know, would come in. But 95% of all Pick 'n Pay senior staff have started off through the, the ranks. Well I did that. I had a degree when I came in, on the corporate Pick 'n Pay side, and started on receiving and that's what they need people to be fully, um, work with all aspects of the business. What happens on occasion as well is that sometimes, you know, now you only got a pool of so many people, you not getting fresh blood or fresh thinking and sort of promoting from, from within.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, in the last interview you just mentioned the word of mouth. Do your current employers aid that process?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, they do a lot of that. They would go out and tell their friend, you know, the waiting list is there or that we looking to do interviews and that sort of generates more people, that seems to be.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how effective has that been?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Very effective, very effective, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	In what way?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Because, it's often someone's, um, there's a credibility issue. When you refer a friend, to employ, you know you wanna make sure that they, that they the right person, because if they're not, it reflects on you as a person. The most effective form of advertising is when it comes from somebody. If a good staff member comes to us and says, I know of a friend at school or whatever, who's capable, we put them on the list. We still obviously go through the interview process, but it does sort of add a bit of weight, um, to the, in the interview, when they come recommended by a friend.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay, and generally what kind of people do they, is it mostly friends that they refer, family members, neighbours?
<b>Interviewee</b>	A bit of everything, it's a bit of everything. There's no one sort of, um, dominant, um,

	type, you know. All friends, family and that sort.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, um, what would you say the main business decisions incurs that drive your decisions to mostly use word of mouth.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um...
<b>Interviewer</b>	The running of the business, how does that, um, influence your decision to make work, or word of mouth?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I'm not quite sure what you're referring to...the type of business that we're in, the retail business that we run, how would that effect the decision to employ by word of mouth or whatever?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Sorry I don't know, I don't know if there's and answer to that. I think, um, I think that we, we, as I say it's a credibility thing and we employ a certain level of staff that we have sort of, um, expectations of and if they, if they are referring friends to us, one would expect them to be of a similar, sort of, um, class is not the right word, but a similar type of person, you know, that we would require. Don't know if that's really answering what the question is though.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Now try, um, why would you not use newspapers as a way...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	For advertising?
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Because we don't need to, so why would spend that money on, when we've got a sufficient pool. We, of, of every four people that come here, and we get lots of them when we interview, you probably only take one. And then there's still a lot of people that we don't call in. And that waiting list just keeps going, you know, we also, as I say it gets filled up from the bottom all the time. And we move, we phone, and people wait, that list is between 6 months to a year before people get called in. Often by then they've found other employment, so you know, we, of those one in four would probably get an opportunity. You know we get a lot of chancers, and people who are just not suitable, you know. Often, you know, you can't judge a person visually but often customers don't like, we wouldn't employ a heavily tattooed person, I know it might be discriminating but the customers don't want someone like that, so, you we don't employ them.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Remind us again, what sort of qualifications do you expect from them?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well, anything, when I do the front line I expect a matric. Um, the shelf packers they tend to go for a grade 10 or standard 8.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, you mentioned that some of the workers have different skills, do you use the same recruitment strategy, well you did sort of mention that, but do you use the same recruitment strategy for all your workers across...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, we only, as I say, employed unskilled. In the 15 years since we started the business, where we had to employ certain skilled people, since then we've never brought someone in at a skilled level, they've all come up through the ranks, that's been our, our strategy of building those staff members, and if they do leave they're quite well qualified.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	When you say skilled, is that management?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, management skills and obviously, um, job specific, skills as well.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Like?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well, if someone who would work in the, um, for example, in the butchery would come in as a sausage-maker, which is quite a low level, it's quite easy, would later become a block-man because they watch the guys cut the meat and how they, you know, how they cut it and then the bakery, some of the counter-hands have gone into the baking side which is more skilled, you know.

<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, you mentioned the credibility that sort comes with recruiting the recruitment within the group, are there any other benefits or reasons behind the recruitment strategy? I mean that's one aspect of it.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, listen obviously, if they, they friends with the person or they're neighbours there obviously a, a synergy maybe in transport issues, whatever, you know. Some of them share cars, or lifts, or taxis, or whatever to get to work, so from that point of view, very basic stuff, you know, um, and obviously as I said, before, when, when, um, when it's within a very close proximity you putting money in, you know, you also benefitting the family because they've now got more disposable income, so, a family, you know, where the parents are unemployed, the child gets a job here and they are able to make that family better, and there's a loyalty aspect as well, to the business.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Sorry, just on the close proximity aspect, and the waiting list, do you find that people sort of outside the area also put their names down on the waiting list?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes they do, ja, ja.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And then do you sort of not call them up?
<b>Interviewee</b>	We weight it slightly against them, then, if they outside of the 5 kilometre zone, you know. Because it would mean, for us, we trade till after 8 o'clock, so we have to provide transport for the staff. And we also look at, we've got about eight taxis that come every night and take them and if one area is, fully sort of utilised on the taxis then you would tend to employ someone from another area, if it's a 50/50 decision, you know, then one uses that just for practical and logistical reasons.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, as Hayley was saying, I just want to know a bit more about the characteristics of the list, so it would be mostly people from the area?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And low skilled workers?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Fairly unskilled workers, ja, or ...
<b>Interviewer</b>	Family?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. There's a lot of unemployment out there, you know, I mean there's, so we can get quite good calibre staff here, matric, especially in the front line, you know, so if they not skilled in their job they pick up that skills very quickly, you know. Cashiers, it doesn't take too long, it's very repetitive after a while, um, and then obviously other skills like interpersonal skills play a big part in it.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	I know that you also hire lots of students, sort of like a part time...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja, because of the nature of the business, and um, the peaks that we have in the weekends, over Christmas time and holidays there's quite a bit of students, um, we won't employ anyone under the age of 16, but we will, anyone over the age of 16, so we've got some school kids, grade 8, 9, 10 – I'm talking about the frontline now – um, and then weekends, er, and varsity students, you know, techs and that sort of thing, there're quite a few of them, and they mainly come out weekends and peak trading areas, peak trading times, so in the evenings they will come and work from 4 o'clock to 8 o'clock, in the afternoon through to the evening.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And they would also put their names down on the waiting list?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, exactly, just like everybody else. So we end up with a portion of people, what we call our mid or our week day staff, the housewives and the, those people, and then we have the few who are then obviously part of school or varsity or whatever, and then they work evenings or weekends, whatever.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And do they say that they sort of looking for part time work?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, they'll tell us, or if they don't tell us, we'll interview them, because normally as a rule with the people, when we do the interview process, if we looking for someone of a sort

of category. On the, um, on the shelf packers, they tend to go for males, and there's, they look for grade 8 [meant standard 8] as a, grade 10 and above, grade 10, and again it's weekends so it's sometimes students, and, um, weekdays. Um when I say, there are some females especially on the lighter areas, like toiletries and then the service areas, like the delis the counters that sort of thing, you know, but the heavy grocery merchandise tends to be more male.

**Interviewer3** Frontline jobs? Cashiers...

**Interviewee** Cashiers, till packers, and to a lesser extent, porters, you know the guys who push the trolleys around, and we obviously have, the good sort of casuals, frontline, we have supervisors.

**Interviewer** Um, so with the list, um, you said it's narrowed down by area, but is it sort of first come, first serve?

**Interviewee** Ja, ja, ja, ja. So what we do is they come and put the name on the waiting list and their phone number, and we just phone them on a, um, chronological sort of time scale, first come first serve, and then when we interview them, then we assess where they live and what their, you know, qualifications are et cetera, et cetera. And then they also, when they put their name on the waiting list is, if they have their CV, then we take that in as well. We use that as a, when we phone them, as a starting point.

**Interviewer3** Did we establish that you do give preference to people on the list who known by staff?

**Interviewee** Er, no, the list works straight chronologically, so we take that chunk of people, we want to employ let's say four more frontline staff, we will phone about 20 people and tell them to come in. Then, um, at that stage we then, um, try and ascertain, do you know any, probably true though, "do you have any friends here?" "What made you put your name down here?", "my mother shops here", whatever, or "my friend referred me to it", whatever that sort of thing and then find out where they live, what their transport situation is, how they'd get here, you know things like, do they have children, do they have babies, that doesn't prejudice anybody, but we wanna make sure that they don't say, you know, then you find they haven't got a crèche or the mother isn't looking after the children or something, and you don't want to, you know...have any sort of repercussions, so we ask them those questions. It's never been an issue where we turn anyone down, we just want to make sure that the child is well, or they've had a baby two months ago and they wanna come and work – they not really ready to start working.

**Interviewer3** The question I'm getting at is, do you favour people that know staff who work here?

**Interviewee** Generally, ja, if they come recommended, and that, especially if they're a good staff member, if they mention that they have friends or they were recommended by someone who's particularly good, then it will definitely, um, put a tick against their name.

**Interviewer3** And the reason for that?

**Interviewee** Is because of the credibility issue, that if someone, you know, has recommended someone else, that you, then you tend to have sort of, put more, um, strength to that sort of referral.

**Interviewer** And, if you were to describe your current staff, do they know each other? How do their relationships work with...

**Interviewee** Ja, they do...They generally work very well, listen there's conflict like in any workplace, there's some very good relationships [slight giggle], we've even had one or two marriages here, from people on the shop floor [laughter]. So when they call it a family store...[laughter] we really mean it, but, certainly I mean listen we generally have a good working relationship, you know, um, and obviously there's conflict issues that gets

resolved from time to time, but not very often, fortunately. And I, you know, we tell everyone when you come to work, you work together, you don't have to socialise or party together or anything like that, but you know, just your work is a working relationship, and that's by and large, works like that.

**Interviewer2** Do you think that it's also maybe partly because they know each other through recommendation...?

**Interviewee** That may well...ja that may well be the case, yes. Um, ja, there's already a connection, ja, and that helps. Also helps them settle in here knowing someone who already, ja, it's like going to a new school or something and knowing, already knowing someone, breaks a bit of ice.

**Interviewer2** Um, sorry also, if they know someone who works here already, do you sort of expect the person that they know to kind of help with training them...?

**Interviewee** There's no expectation of that, no. We would never, and they might not even work in the same department so, some girl start from the frontline, for example, and knows someone in the deli, you know, there's not, but one would, certainly there would be, you know one would think that there is some, you know, sort of, um er ...advice given, in terms of when your lunch breaks are, where the toilets are, er, where you get, how you make tea, or where you get the tea made, all that sort of thing. So it could certainly help with that ...[interruption]...

**Interviewer** Okay, so it's quite a supportive environment.

**Interviewee** Ja, ja. We've got a fantastic, and I say we've got, sho, probably 50% of our staff have been here for more than 10 years, so we have a very stable workforce. Um, I'm talking about our permanent staff now, the casuals, obviously the school kids come and go, you know, you see them going off and getting married and having children, we've been here 15 years, so, you know, we've seen them leave and come back, shop here as parents.

**Interviewer3** I'm quite interested in the way you, fill posts from, you know, from, less, you know more experienced job goes to somebody from the floor...

**Interviewee** Ja. From within, ja, ja.

**Interviewer3** And, what's the logic in that?

**Interviewee** Well, a) we've, they've got a track record, we know them, um, but they've also got the experience, they know the culture of the business, the values, you know there's no, they're not coming in at a high level and then imposing some new, sort of, a new store or way of doing things, you know. It's been, it's worked successfully for us, um, in the business over the years, and there's no reason to change. And that is exactly the Pick 'n Pay culture. Um, we are Pick 'n Pay people so we tend to, retain that sort of same, um, and also because our business is, doesn't require brain surgeons, it just needs, you know, you don't need people with skills...ja exactly

**Interviewer3** Ja, don't need, sort of not necessary [overlapping speech between interviewee and interviewer3].

**Interviewee** The most important thing is good interpersonal skills because 95% of the day involves interacting with customers, and with other staff, you know. So, if you've got that right, and nothing else, you know, you certainly, you know, doing 80% of your job correctly, and that's what we want.

**Interviewer2** And do you find that when you, when someone moves up in the ranks, sort of, from being a shelf packer, then the rest of the shelf packers sort of respond to them more positively, do you think?

**Interviewee** Listen, ja, generally, but there are always people that feel that they've been overlooked or hard done by, or they might have had a clash with that person, whatever, but generally, ja, we do and they, um, they do respect that person, and the persons quality.

	But we don't really have problems in that regard.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Arguably the interpersonal skills are partly a function of knowing people and being, what's the word for it, being familiar with people and being comfortable with them...
<b>Interviewee</b>	With customers or with other staff?
<b>Interviewer3</b>	With other staff, so, that's something that you could know from employing a person, working with the person, you know so, you know that from seeing them at work and interacting with them. And also they've acquired that ability and they've, camaraderie with fellow staff members over time and that's a match within itself.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Absolutely, ja.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	And also, you actually know it. If you had a factory of a thousand workers, you wouldn't be able to, you wouldn't know their interpersonal skills or you wouldn't be in a position to say "oh, so and so would be good for this job, we know more or less, been here 5 years"...
<b>Interviewee</b>	I think that what works in our favour is that we've been here so long, you know, we started here with all the same people, so we know all the staff, we get to know their skills and their problems, you know, you know we've seen, get married, get divorced, have children, whatever you know. And, um, so we able to, sort of, very quickly pick up if there's a problem or a vibe, or a bad vibe.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Sorry, I just wanted to know how many permanent people and how many temporary people, if you could...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, it's probably a bit more permanent, but I'll give you the...it's somewhere here...[looks for numbers in file]
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Oh, the last time you said 180 permanent staff, and 120 part-time.
<b>Interviewee</b>	180...ja...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	That's quite a lot...180 people.
<b>Interviewee</b>	[Finds file] 182 to be exact, ja.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And all of them were from the waiting list?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja. There's about 20 of them that we brought, no maybe about 10 of them that were employed right up front, you know, from previous jobs in Pick 'n Pay or, you know, or...[interruption].
<b>Interviewer</b>	And can you trace, I know this is going to be hard, but like the current staff you have back to these 10, you know...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, store manager, butcher manageress, um, couple of the shelf packers, supervisor...
<b>Interviewer2</b>	So they all came from other PnP stores?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Up front, ja.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Head office?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. Head office, that time there was a, Pick 'n Pay was doing a voluntary retrenchment, at one stage and quite a few of those people, all retirees, you know, we've even taken on a couple of people who retired out of Pick 'n Pay at 55 and have still gotten offers from us, we got one or two people who are over 65, we've got very experienced receiving managers, um, one or two shelf packs who're very wise and know the products and know, you know, supervisor, butchery manager, bakery manager, you know, um, store manager, store men, you know, some guys who've been in the business for 30 years. And they've got a wealth of knowledge to impart to them, you know, the new people and other store men who come up, you know.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Um, and would they be responsible for training people on the shop floor?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, but it's very much on the job training. We don't do a lot of formal training sessions, you know. Formal training sessions would be like, um, first aid training or, um, when they go off and learn new products, you know, like the, um, bakery training school, um,

	it's very job specific sort of training. The butchery, they go and learn about new cuts of meat or new varieties or new marinade or whatever it might be.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	I've got a little note here to myself, um, it's about the breakdown of the workforce, how would you, could you give us a rough estimate of how many people in different kinds of jobs? How many packers, how many cashiers?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yoh.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Just roughly, you know if you did, what's the most numerous?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Shelf packers, ja, the most labour intensive is the frontline. Um...[looks through file]...if I went to the computer and did and extract of that I might be able to know, is it important? I mean, do you need that breakdown?
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Exactly is not so important, so much as the general, you know. How many managers are there? Or roughly how many?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, about 8 managers.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	And clerks?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, clerks about 6, you know, let me get my employment equity...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Sho, that's actually very few isn't it? Ja...I'm trying to get a sense of how the numbers are of those less skilled workers, um, you said about 80%.
<b>Interviewee</b>	[looking for file] Ja, ja, about 80%...okay, sorry. Ja, no that's right 8 and then supervisors 15...and then the rest, we call them semi-skilled and discretionary decision makers or, you know, all the other staff fall into that, you know. It's quite a fat structure.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Packers, cashiers...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, packers, cashiers, um...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	What would you call them, um, porters?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Porters, counter-hands, um ... it's a horrible word though, counter-hands...service area personnel, um, and ja that's just, um, ja, shelf-packers, till-packers, shelf-packers...Do you want the male, female breakdown is that important at all? The total? Not really...
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Well, might as well...
<b>Interviewee</b>	130 males and 180 females, approximately.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Is that from the total staff, permanent and ...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Casual, and part-time as well.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Someone's going to definitely query me if I claim that, you know, you managers have got quite intimate knowledge of 180 workers. How would you persuade them that this is possible? I believe you but I'm trying to...
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, but if you've got 180 staff and there's 10 managers, its 18, you know. I think it's...well how intimate is intimate you know. They've got a very good knowledge, like the butchery manageress would know everything and it's the first you know, but they're all pretty well...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	So because the managers have little units, they look after a particular department...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja. And we've got supervisors who've got a very good knowledge of all the 'gaanings' on of the staff. So they know exactly what's going on and who's got problems and who's got, you know. You know, they all...I would say that they have a, they've got a good knowledge of the staff...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Ja, I believe you, that makes sense so that would support your point. Because that's actually, if you wanted to know about somebody, or you were looking for a post to fill, you would speak to the supervisors.
<b>Interviewee</b>	In fact when we interview, then there's always the supervisors, the supervisors are always with me. So I'll interview as the owner, with frontline, um, my partners will interview with their sort of, the one does the service area, the perishable products, with the perishable manager and the other owner will do the general floor area, the

storeroom, the general, the normal merchandise area. That's how we sort of do it, [inaudible].

**Interviewer** Um, I think most of its been covered. Not sure if there's anything...

**Interviewee** Just, I mean our business is a very simple business, it's not, it's not highly technical and you know it's just, you know people and looking after people and making sure that the customers are satisfied and that means having the stock on the shelves and having the, um, and having the service to wrap around it, to offer them, the customer. So it's a, a, you know, a quite a bit of straight forward basis. Having said that, I mean, obviously there's a lot of stock control...a lot of work involved in making sure that the stock is properly controlled, our margins are very thin in this business. I mean our net profit is only 2.2% of turnover, so you know it's, if someone goes and steals, you know, a tin of baked beans, you have to sell like another 20 just to recover, your cost on that, you know. You've got to have very strict financial, and, um, security control you know – in terms of physical security and undercover and all that sort of thing.

**Interviewer3** Ja, that must be crucial, trusting staff...

**Interviewee** Ja, absolutely. There's a huge trust, I mean there's so many things that are so, um, desirable in our business – food, cash for the cashiers, dealing with a lot of cash. The things, the most basic things that people need. You've gotta have very strict control, you know things like searching staff physically, searching everyone, you don't do in most businesses, but an accepted part of all retailing is when someone goes out there they get body searched, you know, and 'cause unfortunately stuff happens, you know, there's so many – I could give you a hundred different ways of people trying to get things out, you know, and it is a problem in, in our business you know. Um, so trust is a huge, huge issue and that's why in the labour, in the courts, you know, if someone steals a banana, for example, it's immaterial but it's the whole breach of trust, once someone does that how can you trust them to do anything? And you just don't have enough eyes and ears to go around checking people so you've got to trust them. So the courts, you know, well [inaudible] just for the basis of trust, breach of trust. So, ja, that's the negative dealing with it in that fashion, and customers too, you know. Customers on a daily basis steal, unfortunately, especially now in these recessionary times, it's definitely increased. You've gotta take a tough line because if you tolerate anything like that, you know, word gets out, you know "you can go steal at this Pick ' Pay and they won't, they won't do anything", then everyone sort of picks up on that. Unfortunately it's part of the business. And that's the one issue that you can't, um, you know you can't trust someone for trustworthiness when you interview them, you've gotta take them on, you know and just try to, no facial or how the person appears or how they present themselves, ever gives you an indication of, of how trustworthy – you know, we've had some of the most pleasant, nicest, best ever staff who stole and we had to deal with it. It's unfortunate but, the least likely people and customers, who're from Constantia, you know, you think that they're well off, they steal.

**Interviewer3** But they, I'm just thinking of the recruitment strategy and, you know, finding people who are know by staff, that would come into it, the more trust worthy...

**Interviewee** One would think, ja, one would – and I think it is to an extent – someone, if you've got a friend, for example that you know is a bit dicey, you know and, you're not gonna come recommend them to me for a job, when your credibility's at stake, you know. So certainly that's why when someone, especially a good, honest, reputable staff member comes and refers someone to us, we do attach weight to that, or family member. And there's always, unfortunately, exceptions where things don't work out as well, but generally, it's it's a, quite a solid sort of approach to take.

**Interviewer** Um, I think that's it, although we did want to speak to a worker. Is that at all possible?

**Interviewee** Um, ja, what sort of questions, I don't wanna...

**Interviewer** We just wanna ask them, um, how they heard about the job vacancy, who maybe in the company were they connected to just to see how their networks work.

**Interviewer3** Transport issues, how they get to and from work, sort of...do you wanna do it now?

**Interviewee** Do you wanna do it now?

**Interviewer** Ja.

**Interviewee** Okay [walks to the office door to try to get an employee walking past the office in which the interview is taking place].

**Interviewer3** We finding a definite pattern here, fascinating.

**Interviewer2** The trust issues...

**Interviewer** Ja.

**Interviewee3** And the recruiting from below, giving jobs to people from the, in the business.

**Interviewee** Do you want me out of here, or do you want me – is it preferable if I'm not around?

**Interviewer** No it doesn't matter.

#### INTERVIEW WITH PICK 'N PAY EMPLOYEE COMMENCES [...separate transcript]

**Interviewee** Was he of any use?

**Interviewer** Yes, ja.

**Interviewee** Contradict everything I said or?

**Interviewer** No

**Interviewer3** Not at all [laughter]. We seem to be getting a real pattern here.

**Interviewee** Some of the best information is from the guys, from the shop floor, you know. Always useful. Have you got everything that you needed, hey guys?

**Interviewer3** Ja. We may call you.

**Interviewee** Are you doing a lot of different stores or...?

**Interviewer** Um, different businesses.

**Interviewee** Ja.

**Interviewer3** Ja it's kind of getting to...

**Interviewee** So what do you have to do now? Do you have to do a whole, what's your topic?

**Interviewer** Um...[laughter].

**Interviewer2** Well it's from the Spatial Mismatch Theory, um, which basically [laughter], Owen's our supervisor [laughter]. My understanding of it, I should say...

**Interviewee** Putting you on the spot now [laughter]. Owen you tell me [laughter].

**Interviewer2** Well basically what happens is, that there's this geographic mismatch between where the unskilled sector lives and where they can actually find work.

**Interviewee** Oh okay. Because of the past? Because of the...group areas...?

**Interviewer2** Well it's essentially from American literature, ja, so we're trying to see how it fits into the Cape Town situation.

**Interviewer** Well, it is dues to apartheid in part, but then businesses have also been moving to the suburbs.

**Interviewee** They've sort of moved out of the...

**Interviewer** Ja, and away from the CBD.

**Interviewee** Especially, ja, the admin base as opposed to the manufacturing.

**Interviewer** But then it's quite interesting seeing how people find jobs, because they are.

**Interviewee** And transport that obviously plays a big part in the whole transport infrastructure...or lack of or whatever, ja.

**Interviewer2** Ja. I mean most people use taxis and taxis tend to get everywhere.

<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. I would say, all of our staff coming in, 90% of them use taxis, some of them use rail and some bus, but it's mostly taxis. And going home also taxis, and then we for the late shift guys, we provide taxis for them.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Do you have a contract with the taxis?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. We pay some of the staff, because it also helps their cost if you know, it helps them you know they can earn a bit, they also bring the other staff in to work, which we don't pay them for, but going home we pay them so, you know, another form of income for them. But generally the major part...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Is this staff with vehicles?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja. Staff with vehicles. But majority go home on the shuttles, you know, [inaudible] taxis every night.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	So it's sort of like car pooling.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja, ja. It's car pooling from the staff sort of thing, ja. But the taxis [inaudible]. So that also, as I said earlier, plays a bit of a role because if you've got a taxi that, you know, can only take 10 people, covering let's say lavender hill, for example, you know you can't, when I employ I make sure there's, we're not sort of over-staffing in that, in the Lavender Hill area then, for example, 'cause then it would throw out the whole transport thing.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	How does it work with the taxi? I mean, is it a particular shuttle company or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. There's these guys that we, we've got 8 taxis, let's say, we'll do ours in the night and he might do Clicks at 6 o'clock in the evening, and then he'll do, and then in the morning, they'll pick up the bakery staff, you know, because the bakery staff starts at 2 o'clock, I didn't mention that but they, ja, they all bake – you become a baker, you know you gonna work different hours because, you know, they start baking at, pruning or whatever, mixing dough, at 2 o'clock so that at 8 o'clock when the store opens, you've got the full range or as much as possible of your rolls and that, you know, so all bakers work funny hours, you go and work in a hotel – you know all those pastry chefs and that, they all work those funny hours. Sleep by day and work at night. So, anyway, so they have to, you know, we, they live all over the place, and the taxi picks them up to bring them to work by 4 o'clock, because there's no normal taxi service, you've got to use your own dedicated shuttle people.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	These aren't taxi operators that have permanent shuttles...
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, no, no they permanent, ja...what he does is these guys, they get a whole lot of, maybe you're unemployed and you got a taxi or a mini-bus or whatever, and you go to this guy and you say, "listen I can provide my taxi", and you get 8 different people and they all in like sub-contracting, then he'll come to us and say, "I've got 8 taxis, I mean, I can come and supply you with your transport needs", and he's doing it to other companies as well, so he's always providing a, you know [inaudible] like an umbrella to all these little, you know, independent contractible. So it works quite well, you know.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And is there like sort of a designated spot where, in an area where everyone meets up or do they get dropped and picked up from their houses?
<b>Interviewee</b>	What do you mean when they go home or when they come in?
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Well both.
<b>Interviewee</b>	When they come in, obviously it's up to their own devices then they just find a local taxi, so, I suppose they walk to the end of the street or whatever, if there's a communal area or where the taxis tend to...
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And what about the bakery staff?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh the bakery staff he goes to their houses, he'll go to each house and pick them up at their front door – if they're awake, sometimes their alarms don't go off, guy's don't

	wake up or [laughter].
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And then at night, do they get dropped off at their houses as well?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, they get dropped off, as close to or on the corner so they'll walk, you know, because of security or whatever so, in fact effectively they're always right there, and they'll, if their house is down that road, they'll drop them off at the corner, and they just walk home, you know. Lavender Hill is the problem sometimes, they've had a lot of shootings and stuff, gang related stuff there, you know ... .. Ja, so it's an interesting thing, has anyone done it before? Do you give them different topics every year or, 'cause last year's honours people have done something similar to this?
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Been rolling for a few years. I think you were the first, the second batch, yes.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Can you tap into that sort of research that was done?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, and then build on that, a few questions come out of that, ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	So you've got a whole lot of...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Well every year, I've got a group of honours students that come in.
<b>Interviewee</b>	And you also lecture as well?
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	In sociology?
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Yes. And I've got a few masters, they're two years so they're around for a bit longer. And, er, ja, I don't have anyone doing a PhD. Ja, I've got a draft paper out, not quite written, still working on it. Might send it to you, it's a bit academic, but just trying to, but the big picture is just trying to understand the extent to which spatial problems that cities sort of have is very segregated with poorer people and low skilled poor people being far from jobs, whereas with word of mouth it not actually being like that. You know, and that's the big question. In America they use this explanation to explain the situation with racial inequality and employment. 'Cause they've got huge rates of unemployment ...[inaudible]...and they don't really understand why, and they think it's because all the jobs are sub-urbanised and they've left Americans stuck in the inner-city without any transport. Can't get out cheaply or at all. They can't afford to live out there. Cheaper in the inner-city.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Cape Town's pretty no different. You see the squalor in those sort of slum, or whatever type thing – Woodstock and all that, you know.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	The remnants, there would have been more if, there weren't forced removals probably, um, [inaudible] situation with our jobs are still probably in a central area. It's a complicated feature, we've probably got better transport, even though we don't think that.
<b>Interviewee</b>	In Cape Town as opposed to the rest of South Africa?
<b>Interviewer3</b>	No, as opposed to American commuters...like Los Angeles. It's got 150 cities they say, all the busses, you've only got local busses [inaudible]. There is an underground system but it doesn't reach very far and it's also within Los Angeles, so it's funny only in the city. [inaudible] but I don't think they actually dig into the transport systems they use, but they claim that people have fair access to transport. But I don't know if that's evidence based [inaudible].
<b>Interviewee</b>	The taxis, with all their faults, are providing an incredible form of transport. They're much more flexible than any rigid bus and rail system. From that point of view they're...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	If we could regulate them.
<b>Interviewee</b>	If we could regulate them, we'd be...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Stop them from carrying on, obey the rules.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, there's a lot of social ills that go with them.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Ja, it's basically poor regulation, the taxi industry has been poorly governed as opposed

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to ...

**Interviewee** But you don't want to over-regulate it, you know, but then there's always conflict, guy's can't drive on my route or whatever...[irrelevant discussion on taxi regulation].

**Interviewer3** But our results are interesting, because what we're really finding out is that, the use of social networks is a very wide spread method to find jobs and recruit. Both to find a job and then to be recruit. So a lot of different people are looking for jobs through social connections, companies actively use word-of-mouth to recruit and so what that means is that, once you're in that network, exactly being far from work doesn't really make a difference. And your company is different, a company with normal working hours it's not really a problem, people commute long distances to get to work, and they find out about a job despite being a two hour commute from work.

**Interviewee** Have you found that a lot.

**Interviewer3** Ja, it's quite a common thing. long commute from Macassar to Constantia, 'cause it's quite a...that's new to the debate, no-one in the literature on this topic has really being saying that, as far as they're concerned, word of mouth, it doesn't actually...

**Interviewee** And other social networking like facebook, employing or recommending people and creating maybe employment opportunities through there. I don't know, it's a whole new thing. wouldn't really apply to us, because we've got all the staff, don't really have access to technology [inaudible]...[irrelevant conversation]... if you need anything else.

**Interviewer** Thank you.

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Pick 'n Pay (PnP) Plumstead Employee

Date: 29 April 2010

Interviewer: Anya Van Wyk; Hayley Petersen; Owen Crankshaw

Transcribed by Hayley Petersen

Company: Pick 'n Pay Family Store Plumstead

Interviewee: Anonymous

<b>Interviewee</b>	You not going to ask him what a nice person I am [laughter]...[introduces employee to the interviewers]...they just gonna ask you, they've just been asking me about recruitment and how we recruit staff, et cetera, et cetera. I didn't interview him initially so, who interviewed you when you first came here?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Um, Mr. Lezeno.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Okay, so you can just tell them what happened. Whatever they ask you, just answer honestly [laughter].
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay, if we could just start off with general questions – where do you live?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	In Grassy Park.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, and how do you get to work?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	I travel by taxi.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, how long is that journey?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Um, depends. If I'm late, then obviously the peak is done, so it takes about 20minutes 'cause the taxi circles and circles. But in general, like 30 minutes round about.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And it's just one...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No it's two taxis. One to Wynberg and one to, a Constantia taxi that goes past, then I just get off right here.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Goes past where?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It goes just down this road over here.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	The main road?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No, no, no – Gabriel road right over here. So we get off on the field next to the buss stop.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Oh the one that takes you to Constantia Pick 'n Pay?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Um, mm.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Is that an end point for the taxi. Have they got a...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No, in Constantia, there's like a little rank over there, but this is like a permanent route for them.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Ja, so that's where they end at...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Mm mm, Constantia.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Okay, and where's the taxi rank in Grassy Park?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	In Grassy Park, um, there isn't a rank. See, the taxi comes from Wynberg and it turns off from the M5, it goes through the Park Wood suburb and it goes all the way through to Plantation Road – I don't know if you know where that is.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Ottery...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Ja, there where the old...
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Where the traffic department is – Hillstar?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Ja, in that road, but further down to Clip Road side, down Blackwood Avenue. If you know where the reformatory school used to be...but further up as you get to Clip Road, I live on Plantation Road – so the taxi turns around there and picks up all the...so I walk out my door and into a taxi.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Got all of that details, so we can look it up on the map.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, and how much does it cost you per month, um, for transport?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Well it's R10 a day, and obviously from late, we, um, get transport from the company,

	that takes us home, so, um it's not that much.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	So it's basically, say you're working a normal sort of day shift, then it's...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Then it's R20 a day.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Two taxis here and then two back, and it would take you about an hour in total, you said half an hour here, is it half an hour back as well?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Mm mm.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay, what is your position in Pick 'n Pay?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	I work on perishables, permanent, and um, a shop assistant.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	And what does that entail?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Um, customer service, I take care of the outside, um, refrigerator, I'm inside on the inside refrigerators, filling up of stock. Basic, um, well everything to do with perishables basically, but, um, your job description doesn't stop there, obviously it entails customer service – you help customers with whether its non-foods or groceries like, you all over, but mainly I'm on perishables.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Ja, so you've gotta keep the fridges stocked and just need to...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Check dates and gotta deal with the inspectors that come around, check temperatures, and basically be with the receiving manager outside when, especially when we receiving ice-cream and stuff like that. We have to check the temperature of the ice-cream that they're delivering and also the refrigerators temperature and things like that.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, um, and how long have you been working with Pick 'n Pay?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	I started in 2008, September.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Okay – about a year and a half.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja. And how were you able to hear about this vacancy?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	My brother is permanent for Clover in this shop. So they needed a casual and then he asked, er, his manager, and then the manager sent a rep around to him, he obviously had my CV with him, then I went for an interview, and then I applied for Pick 'n Pay, because my contract was coming to an end with Clover, and then I started casual-ing up until last year...December, ja.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Sorry how did you get it – I don't understand...sounds very complex.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So how you...ja
<b>Interviewer2</b>	So you first started working for Clover...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Clover, ja.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	That was based in Pick 'n Pay.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Oh, in Pick 'n Pay. How does that work?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	You like a merchandiser. Pick 'n Pay buys Clover milk, yoghurts, those type of things and then we merchandise it on the shelf, and then I saw my contract coming to an end and, because Clover, there wasn't a way for me to re-new it, I applied at Pick 'n Pay.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And your brother works close...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Ja, he still at Clover, but he's permanent, so.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So he gave your CV in to Pick 'n Pay?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No, he gave my CV in to Clover.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	And how long did you work for Clover?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	It was 3 months, it was just for the December period, in this store, yes.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	How does the merchandising work, I mean, so you work and your work place is here in Pick 'n Pay, but Clover employs you...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	For example if a company like, say [Coal Chain?] employs you as a merchandiser, Pick 'n Pay buys stock from [Coal Chain], and then [Coal Chain] allocates like a merchandiser to pack out the stock, up until about 4 o'clock, 5 o'clock, depending on how long they work, then after that obviously the Pick 'n Pay staff will carry on, because the shop

	operates until 8 o'clock, we have staff working until 8. But, for instance like me now, then I'll carry on with the merchandiser's work.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Mm, I didn't know that. I came across it today in another interview.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	That's why, um, if you walk on the floor you'll see, um, okay maybe not now, but you'll see merchandisers of different companies, Tiger Brands, um, Nestle, during the day but at night you mainly see Pick 'n Pay staff, because they don't work until...
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay so, while working here have you been able to connect anyone else to a job in Pick 'n Pay?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	I got my wife a job, yes. But not Pick 'n Pay – at PNA [in the same centre as the Pick 'n Pay].
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Oh in the centre?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Mm, hm.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay so, so you get jobs through family and friends? Is that how it all connects, and that how you find out about jobs, um...?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Ja, it's on the basis of if your CV's here and you get chosen, it's not through the fact that you family and you gonna bring your CV here you gonna get a job so.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Ja there is an interview.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	There's some recommendations that you...
<b>Interviewer3</b>	It helps hey.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Um, and how did you hear about the PNA vacancy for your wife?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Because she was in management, and in the sales business, things like that, um, I gave in her CV.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	Oh so you just, you didn't hear about a vacancy?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	She came back from maternity actually, then she was at home, just thought maybe a little bit of help could help me.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	But you didn't hear about a specific vacancy? You just gave her...oh okay.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No...I actually gave it in for Pick 'n Pay, but the boss decided that, because we married, it would be better maybe if we were not in the same store, or something.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	Oh. Um, I'm still not clear how you got the Pick 'n Pay job. You were merchandising for Clover in Pick 'n Pay, and so you...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	And then I applied...via Pick 'n Pay.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	You applied via... not because you knew somebody here or anything like that.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No, I went to the store manager and I asked him, um, "listen my contract is coming to an end, don't you have a vacancy?", at the moment he didn't and then one of the guys left, he went to study, and then he told me "okay".
<b>Interviewer</b>	So how long, long did you wait from the time that you...?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	A month, two months.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, so you were put on a list?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	I don't know. I don't know if I was put on a list.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	What about previous jobs?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, I did actually want to ask you about that. How have you found work in the past? Okay, where have you worked in the past?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	I worked for, when I left school there was this guy that owned a carpentry business around the corner, built in cupboards and stuff like that, I think for the, if you can say the normal South African, because jobs are so scarce and not everyone is available to fund, to study further and stuff like that, not that I'm saying that that's an excuse but I'm saying, in most cases, the easiest job to find is on the building trade. And that's where I found myself, for about 8 years I think.

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<b>Interviewer3</b>	How did you find it?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	It was a guy around the corner, who lives around the corner from me who has his own little business, ja, built-in cupboards. I grew up in front of him. So it was just stopping him one day and asking him if I could help him out and so.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	When did you finish school, I mean how...?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	1998.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	And how far did you get?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Matric.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Sorry, which year?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	1998.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And then for 8 years you worked for this building industry. At this place for 8 years or, different places?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	No, no at one place for 8 years.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so that's 2006. So from 2006 to 2008...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Ja and then I left and I was like casual-ing at different places and stuff.
<b>Interviewer</b>	How did you get those jobs?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Well it was quite easy, it was just friends.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, friends in your neighbourhood, or...
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Mm, hm. Friends in the neighbourhood, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, any other friends? Or was it specifically in your neighbourhood.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Man, I'll tell you a funny story it was just one guy, he's very goal orientated, wherever he went, I followed him. It was first at Go Banking, I got in there but it was just like, contract as well, and then he went to, um, Marcel's, no, no, no, sorry. First Marcel's, and then Go Banking, and today he's still at Nedbank. And I just, he always just had a way for me.
<b>Interviewer2</b>	So it was one friend that used to get you in.
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Ja, he was like.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	How did he get the job?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Oh no, he's very goal orientated. He aims very high.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	How does he, how does he do it?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	I don't know. I really don't know. He's just one of those guys that goes all out.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay. And you wife, how did she get a job previously?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Um, her sister worked for Dion's first. It was first Dion's then it changed to Game. Her sister's a manager, but because family can't work in one store, they re-located her to Promenade, the area she was working in was a Game sales consultant.
<b>Interviewer</b>	They re-located...your wife?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	My wife. 'Cause her sister was first in Wynberg – Mynard Mall – then the branch moved to Kenilworth Centre.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, so how did that connect to, did you say her sister gave her the job?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Mm, her sister, before Game was anything, it was Dion's and her sister was working there from when she left school, then her sister worked her way up to become a manager, then her sister got her in...my wife, yes. And because family members can't work in the same store, my wife was re-located to Promenade.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, so she was able to find her job through family...?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	Through her sister. Mm, mm.
<b>Interviewer3</b>	So there've been no long periods of unemployment?
<b>Interviewee2</b>	For me? Uh mm.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, are there any other ways that you've used to find jobs, or just, have you used newspapers or...?

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**Interviewee2** Ja.

**Interviewer** And how has that journey been?

**Interviewee2** I found that very difficult, for the main reason that, the moment you open up a newspaper, the first thing you see there, you need to have maximum 3 years experience, 5 years experience. But how you gonna gain that experience if they don't give you the opportunity to work so, I found it very tough to get a job like that, because I didn't have experience – I mean you can have computer skills and do all sorts of certificates but, they want 5, 3 to 5 years minimum, that was minimum requirements so if you don't get the opportunity to work the where you going to get the experience? So, I left the newspaper completely.

**Interviewer2** But you did go for interviews, from the newspaper?

**Interviewee2** No. Like I said, most of them wanted 3 to 5 years minimum experience so, I don't have that, it was useless me going for an interview, because they didn't want.

**Interviewer** That was the main reason you don't use newspapers ... .. Er, I think everything's been covered, um.

**Interviewer3** Ja. Thanks so much.

**Interviewer** Thanks so much.

**Interviewer2** Thank you. Thanks.

**Interviewee2** Not a problem. Enjoy the rest of your day.

**Interviewer** Bye.

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University of Cape Town

Wild Fig Restaurant Transcript

Date: 10 May 2010

Interviewer: Hayley Petersen

Company: The Wild Fig Restaurant

Address: Liesbeeck Avenue  
Mowbray

Tel: 021 448 0507 Fax: 086 605 3936

Email: info@wildfig.co.za

<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, thank you so much for...
<b>Interviewee</b>	It's a pleasure. I just hope that I'm useful.
<b>Interviewer</b>	I'm sure you will be. Um, so I sent you the questions...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes, um, I looked at them briefly.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, that's great. Um, most of the questions are just about where you're located, that sort of thing, but what I'm really interested in is, how you recruit your labour, um, that kind of thing. Okay, well firstly what is the name of the company?
<b>Interviewee</b>	The Wild Fig Restaurant.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, and what commodities or services do you offer?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, we serve meals and we have a separate bar attached to us. So we serve drinks as well. We also do conferences, and we also do private functions, weddings, 21 <sup>st</sup> s, corporate events, cocktail functions, that about covers it, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, who are the clients?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, our lunch time trade is majority, um, business, business people from surrounding neighbourhoods. Our evening trade is, um, a mix of corporate and private, or families that come out to dinner, and we also get a fair amount of clientele from the hotel next door to us.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, so, is this classified as Observatory?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, it's really on the border, it's actually, the Hotels address is Mowbray, so it's classified as Mowbray.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, it's kind of seems more Obs though.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well ja, but um, ja but on the boundaries and our address is Valkenberg Estate, Mowbray.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh, okay.
<b>Interviewee</b>	A lot of people associate us with Observatory, but it is Mowbray...[interruption]...
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, and sort of why did you decide to locate here, in Mowbray?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It was an existing business that we bought, so locating wasn't a decision that we made.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So, why did you decide to buy here though?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, it was just the right business at the right time. It wasn't location specific, although I guess, it did have a fair amount to do with it. It's, um, it is a convenient location in that it's close enough to the suburbs as well as to the city of Cape Town as well as to the airport, as well as to a hotel and obviously it's a good location.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, so you decided based on that...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well that was one of them, one of the factors, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, so that was one, and other factors?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um...[interruption]...okay, other factors, er, right business at the right time, the right size, um, there were going to be three of us in the family that were going to be working here, so it was a big enough business for us to all be able to work in and, what was the

	other factors? Right clientele...ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it's a family owned business?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So are you one of the owners?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I'm one of the owners.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So there's three of you?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Four of us, my three brothers, my husband and I.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, and how's that working, quite nicely?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, working with family has its challenges [laughter].
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so I'm assuming that the premises are owned.
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, they leased, they rented, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh, and do you pay per square meter?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, well, no it's not charged per square meter, not as in shopping centres or, it's a fixed rental not based on sizes of property.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, and the bar?
<b>Interviewee</b>	All part of the same premises, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, so how long have you owned...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, just over eight years.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And for how long has it been in existence?
<b>Interviewee</b>	For 15 years.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, ja, so on labour issues, um, I assuming that you've got sort of different levels...
<b>Interviewee</b>	What, in terms of our labour force?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, look we've got, um, what we call our back of house staff, which are, um, mostly women that work in the kitchen. Um, there are, um...[interruption]...um, okay so we've got our back of house staff, so those are our kitchen hands, and our chefs and grillers. Um, then, um, we have a chef that oversees the kitchen. So he would be a qualified person, most of the kitchen hands are, are, I guess you would call unskilled labour although they obviously have acquired skills through their years of working in the kitchen, and then, management; we usually run with two managers, and then we talk about front of house staff, which comprises of waiters which at the moment mostly comprises of, er, of students.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, do you have any that aren't students?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, we do have a few who aren't students. Um, okay at the moment probably only 3 or 4 of them that aren't students, and the bulk would be, we have about 18, so the rest would all be studying either full time or part-time.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, are any of them permanent?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well, permanent is dictated by number of hours worked, um, so look, managers, chefs, all the back of house staff they're all permanent and, um, the waiters that work here are...um, ja, I guess essentially they are permanent because they all have contracts with us and they all work more than 24 hours, in a week.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Does that determine whether they are permanent – more than 24 hours?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, actually, it's something like that, ja, just have to go check.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how do you find all of these people? Um, if you could maybe break it down from the sort of back of house, kitchen staff, and then management and then front of house.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Okay, back of house is usually, um, word-of-mouth and it's through the people in the kitchen. So we advertise to them that we are looking for extra staff and they will bring in someone that they know, that they can vouch for. Um, we never advertise for back of

	house, we never advertise anywhere in any publication or gumtree or newspaper at all.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Why not?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, primarily because the response would be too vast. And we prefer to hire...people that there's a connection with. So that's a friend of a friend or a cousin, or a sister or a brother or ...
<b>Interviewer</b>	And why do you prefer to use that method rather?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, I just think it's in, in, in, this country and in this day and age, it's a safer way to employ people. I think you have a bit of knowledge of who they are and where they come from. And employing someone off the street, to me, is risky and, ja, um, we would rather not do it. We don't do it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, when you say risky, risky in terms of?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, in terms of you, there's really no way of doing background checks on people that you're hiring, um, it's virtually impossible. You don't know what sort of background they've had, where they've come from, if they've been involved in crime, um, also when you advertise in newspapers, you get a lot of people just showing up here, um, and, um, I've been held up by people who've come here posing as, someone looking for a job. That is one of the main reasons why.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Is that, did you advertise in the newspaper and then they just came or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No we didn't. They come in and said, it's a ruse that they use a lot to get into premises, oh they've seen an advert, oh they're applying for a job, oh this and this and that, and then they get in, um, ja. Just held you up, ja [awkward laughter by interviewee].
<b>Interviewer</b>	That's quite hectic, so when did that happen?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, it happened like 6 years ago.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So that kind of also maybe changed your mind to use word-of-mouth rather...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, sure, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how do they get to work?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, they use public transport to get to work and we provide transport at, at night, to take them home.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So if they're working a late shift and then, what kind of transport...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, we employ a mini-bus driver.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so when they use public transport, what is it mostly sort of taxis or trains or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Probably mostly trains, I'd say maybe 70/80% trains, obviously on weekends it's different, Sundays they use more taxis.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And where do they all live, sort of which areas do they come from?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, Nyanga, Khayelitsha, oh, we'd have to go ask them.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay so that's the back of house.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, then the sort of head chef that you said was in charge...
<b>Interviewee</b>	We will either advertise that, for that, on our own steam, so, in newspapers or online, website. We have also used, we have also used, um, employment agencies to find, to find chefs.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So you don't use the word of mouth kind of thing for the chefs?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, ja, you know we may put it out there but, no, generally that doesn't work for hiring chefs and managers.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And out of those three methods online, newspapers, employment agencies which one do you prefer more...or which ones do you use more often?
<b>Interviewee</b>	We probably use them, use all three equally. Look, obviously doing our own advertising and employing, it's beneficial to us if we don't have to pay, um, commissions to an

	employment agency, so, yes, in terms of that, those two methods are preferable, but um, employment agencies also have their benefits in that they handle, they handle all the primary interviews and they find your candidates for you. So if you are under pressure or pressed for time or...it's, it's useful to use an agency.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So the employment agencies are really when you need someone desperately...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Urgently, ja, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, the online website, which online...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Gumtree.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Only gumtree or are there others?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, no, pretty much only gumtree.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, the response that you get from those are they quite, I'm sure it's online and newspapers, are they quite...not as vast as what you would for normal kitchen staff, or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, no. Not, because er, ja, because it's, it requires a qualification and it's stated in the advert whereas, er, someone to work in the kitchens, work in the scullery or whatever, it doesn't necessarily require any qualification and anyone can, and does, apply. So, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, the head chef that you have now, how did you find him?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Through an employment agency.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, does he also use public transport or, um...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, he uses his own vehicle.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, and then for, the front of house, how do you recruit your waiters?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, that's gumtree and word of mouth.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, for gumtree, the response is it as...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, it's, still not quite as much as with, um, other parts of the kitchen staff but it is quite extreme. So, I also with waiters prefer to hire friends of friends or...ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Is it the same reason as for the kitchen staff, or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, it's, you know more about, similar reasons obviously not the security... well security as well, we've had waiters steal from us as well, that have, that we've hired off the street, so, you know when you work with someone for a year and you know that they're a good, solid, stable, honest, reliable sort of person you gauge that most of the people that they know are going to be of a similar sort, so, um.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, okay for gumtree, does that sort of, um, there's no real way of screening people...
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, I mean we look at CVs and say if they have relevant experience, um, they generally will interview people but a lot of people will apply for the job and not have the experience required and then we don't even consider them.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So between gumtree and word of mouth, then, which one do you prefer?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh, word of mouth definitely...[interruption]...sorry, it's crazy.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay so you prefer using word of mouth?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, definitely.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And sort of where do most of your waiters come from?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Er, we get a big contingency from Observatory, um, obviously because it's, it's very close and, um, um, Pinelands, Rondebosch, I mean mostly, mostly Southern Suburbs, sort of all fairly close. But I'd say that Pinelands and Observatory are probably more dominant, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, do you specifically, when you recruit, um, people, do you specifically look at the areas in which they live or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I specifically look at if they have their own transport. And that then determines...if they don't have their own transport and they live in Ottery, I'm not really going to look at

	employing them because transport is going to be an issue. If they don't have their own transport and they live in Observatory, then it's something we can look at because walking to and from work is feasible. Um, so not necessarily area but that they have transport to wherever they're going.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, um, and how long have you been using the word of mouth, for your waiters?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, since we started, the beginning.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And have you ever had off-the-street, kind of...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And have you ever hired anyone that just comes to ask for work...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, yes we have. And some of them have worked out very well and others haven't. So, I mean it's like anyone, Christopher who's here today was, he came in, he lives in Observatory, he walked down, he asked for a job and um, we took him on and he's brilliant but we've also had people who've walked in and, um, who have really not been very nice people at all and have stolen and, um, so it is risky, there is risk attached.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And does it happen quite often the whole walk in thing 'cause you can't sort of, you can't really see ...
<b>Interviewee</b>	We're sort of off the beaten path, um. No, we don't get a lot of people walking into our offices, we don't, we don't, at all. So...
<b>Interviewer</b>	How do you think that the walk ins kind of hear about this restaurant?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I think also word of mouth, um, they would have met someone at a bar and discussed where they're working and mentioned that we are here and, ja, mostly through word of mouth.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, for management, how do you recruit management?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, also placing our own adverts in newspapers and on gumtree and I have also used employment agencies.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So just sort of the unskilled you use word of mouth, as the main thing, and the skilled you use employment agencies and newspapers...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, I had another question in mind...um, so you said that, ja, most of the people are actually permanent.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, do you sort of, have any form of, you hire a specific kind of person for your front...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, for waiters?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Look, ja, you need someone who is, who can communicate well, is obviously key, er, who is fairly competent, um, we don't hire waiters with no experience, they need to have worked in a similar restaurant, um, they need to have a fair knowledge of wine and food. Um, and they obviously need to be presentable. So, um, ja, neat and presentable.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So when you hire people, who have sort of experience already, do you still train them?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, always, always. They always go through the same training process. Um, 'cause every restaurant will have its own little things that it does differently, um, and they need to be trained in the kitchen to learn about our food, how our food is prepped, um, they get trained in our bar so they can learn our, all our products and they get trained on the floor, so that they learn how we serve, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And um, the bar, is there a separate sort of method for recruiting bar staff, or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, the bar staff is also word of mouth, um, and some of our waiters are cross trained, so some of the waiting staff can also do bar shifts and then we've got two permanent barmen who have been with us for years. Bar staff, there's not a big turnover of bar

	staff, or back of house staff, really – it’s mostly the waiting staff, managers and chefs that turn, um, we’ve got staff in the kitchen that have been here for fifteen, that have been with the restaurant for 15 years, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Since the very beginning?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja. So most of the turnaround of staff, is, is the waiting staff and managers and chefs.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, um, ja, so about the whole, you said that your recruitment isn’t geographically limited, but, um, is there sort of a preference, you know, kind of if you’re closer...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, ja, of course there needs to be a preference, I mean most of our waiters are close, there are only two that are far away, and one is in Tableview and the other one lives in, I think he actually may live in Ottery, and...ja, it doesn’t prevent us from hiring them, so as long as they have reliable transport, um, look if someone lives 45 minutes away, I don’t think we’re going to hire them, but I guess 25 minutes away is, ja, otherwise we don’t really have a preference for area, no.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So if they can get to work on time...
<b>Interviewee</b>	And get home at night on their own steam then, ja, it’s not an issue, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, ja, we’ve spoken a bit about turnover as well, um, so you use referrals quite a lot, have there been instances where it wasn’t, where a referral wasn’t that great?
<b>Interviewee</b>	[sigh] Mm, I have to think back...ja, I mean, ja there definitely have been, um...not common, and I mean look they still go through an interview process, so even if a friend brings them along, it doesn’t mean they automatically going to be hired, they still, we still sit them down, interview them, look at their CV and take all of that into consideration. So, ja, we’ve had one or two, bad apples that have come through referrals.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so, if someone gets referred, then you ask for a CV and they go through an interview process, there’s no sort of just because you’re my friend you’re going to hired...
<b>Interviewee</b>	No.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So there’s still a screening process...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Yes.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, ja, I think that’s everything from me.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Is that it?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Yes, that’s about...
<b>Interviewee</b>	If you need, if you need anything else then you can just email me or phone me or whatever.
<b>Interviewer</b>	You see the thing is that we’re finding that, what we are finding is that everyone likes to use referrals and word of mouth because of the safety aspect, and because it’s like a smaller...
<b>Interviewee</b>	So what other, what other businesses have you interviewed?
<b>Interviewer</b>	We’ve interviewed like Pick ‘n Pay in Plumstead, um, Knead, and um, just sort of very small places as well in Montague Gardens and they all, like everyone uses referrals. So it’s interesting [inaudible].
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well that’s interesting to know all citing the same reasons for doing it?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja. No one really uses the recruitment agencies, although you do use online, we haven’t found that.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh are people not using online?
<b>Interviewer</b>	No, newspapers.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Really?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja [inaudible]
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh and also the benefit of gumtree is that it is free. You don’t pay for it. Newspaper ads,

	you do pay for so that is another.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Also it's only certain people that go online as well...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, but if you know that they are people who are, well, educated enough that they have access and they know how to use a computer, which is also beneficial, obviously especially for the waiters and, so even that is a kind of screening process in itself.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, for newspapers the pool is just too much. Ja, and apparently lots of people who don't sort of fit the criteria.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja. They'll just apply randomly to a whole lot of jobs.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And also, found that people tend to use word of mouth for the whole discipline issue. Like in the sort of back of house kind of thing so if one person kind of doesn't pitch you kind of have a line of you know, okay well why didn't they pitch...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh I see. Okay yes, ja, ja, ja. I understand, ja, no we haven't done that but ja, it makes sense.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it kind of keeps everyone in check.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, it's been interesting that everyone uses the same recruitment...
<b>Interviewee</b>	So when are you, how many more businesses do you have – are you doing this as a group?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Well it's just two of us, so well ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Okay.
<b>Interviewer</b>	There were four, but two of them had stopped after honours.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Okay.
<b>Interviewer</b>	But, ja, lots of different businesses use the same method despite the fact that they're so vastly different. I spoke to an electrical company and they're all the same, so.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Interesting.
<b>Interviewer</b>	But thank you so much.

Follow-up via email

Hi Jan

Hope you are well. I've been transcribing the interview that we did for my master's thesis and I just have a few question that I would like some clarity on and it would be wonderful if you could maybe just write something in response to these questions;

1. you said that you do make use of newspaper adverts to advertise some job vacancies for management, chefs and waiting staff - which newspapers have you used in the past or presently?

**Cape Times Job Shop, Argus career Times**

2. in the interview you also said that you use different methods of recruitment for management and chefs - what is the motivation for doing this?

**Because generally these positions require a certain skill set, people who have professional qualifications. The "pool" is much smaller and word of mouth does not generally yield good candidates or enough candidates. Newspaper and Internet advertising reaches a bigger pool of candidates whereas word of mouth does not in terms of qualified people.**

- you said the the word of mouth method does not work for the recruitment of managers and chefs. what is the motivation for not using this method?

- have you used word of mouth to recruit them in the past? and if you did why did you decide that it wasn't the most appropriate method to use?

**We have attempted to use word of mouth but have never actively recruited a manager or chef via this method**

Ex-PnP Plumstead Employee Transcript

Date: 10 May 2010

Interviewer: Hayley Petersen

Current Company: Jigsaw Marketing

Interviewee: Anonymous

**Interviewer** Okay, so, maybe you can start by like telling me when you worked for Pick 'n Pay.

**Interviewee** I started working for Pick 'n Pay between the periods of, it was end of matric, so it was my first year at varsity, I worked from January till about, I think round about October. So it lasted for about eight months.

**Interviewer** And, so you were working there while you were a student?

**Interviewee** I was working there while I was a student, ja, full time student.

**Interviewer** And how did you find out about the job vacancy?

**Interviewee** Okay, basically my, I know they spoke of not using social networking – Mr. Robbins at least – but mine was actually through social networking. My eldest cousin was a supervisor there, she was also studying full time, but she worked there as a high school student through to her tertiary studies, then she became a supervisor and there was a few vacant jobs and she, there was actually a waiting list, but I jumped the waiting list somehow because my cousin was the supervisor, as well as my sister was working there and she had a good track record.

**Interviewer** Oh, okay. So your sister was working there as well.

**Interviewee** Ja.

**Interviewer** And how long was she working there for?

**Interviewee** She probably worked there for a duration of one and a half, one and a half years I reckon. Also while studying full time at UCT.

**Interviewer** So did you go through an interview process through?

**Interviewee** Er, ja. But it wasn't that intricate, it was just like walk up to, walk up into the office, asked me maybe two or three questions, that was about it. Got the call the next day.

**Interviewer** Okay. So there was a vacancy?

**Interviewee** There was a vacancy, they had a waiting list though, and they should, I mean ethically they should go according to the waiting list but for some or other reason I got, I think it was my sister and my cousin, I got the opportunity to get the job there.

**Interviewer** And how did your sister get a job there?

**Interviewee** Same as me, exactly the same as me, through my cousin, ja.

**Interviewer** Um, and...

**Interviewee** And might I just add, it was not by choice. It was kind of forced onto me by my, um, mother.

**Interviewer** Why was it forced, explain why...

**Interviewee** Okay, I was basically working as a waiter at Spur, not much better, but, um, there wasn't any guaranteed sort of income, if you can call it that. There wasn't any guaranteed flow of money, so one day I'd make a R20, for example, and I'd been working my whole day, and the next day I'd work for, um, I'll make like a 100 bucks, nothing was guaranteed. And my mom was like look, we not going to give you money anymore, gotta start making your own money and things, you know make a decent amount of money plus the hours at Spur is terrible. Work there 9 till 12, um, and at the end your dad has to pick you up, or you like a stubborn guy who's gonna walk home at that time f night, just for safety sake as well. And for convenience sake rather work at, rather work at Pick 'n pay, and I was totally anti it, I was absolutely against it. But being like a 17 year old guy, your mom still kinda, kinda has a say in your life, I reckon, so that kinda added to it.

<b>Interviewer</b>	And how did you find out about the job at Spur?
<b>Interviewee</b>	At Spur, I just walked in there. Like I stayed in Plumstead, and Spur was in Plumstead, and I was in Checkers, and my cousin and I were messing around actually one day, and we walked in there and asked for a job, as a joke, and they said ja, they can train us up and we can get a job. So that was pretty wicked, and that's how I got the job at Spur.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh, so you just kind of walked in and asked, so you didn't hear about any vacancies?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Nothing, no. I just walked in there.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Just walked in there...okay, um, and after Pick 'n pay did you have any other job?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, yes, I did. I actually left Pick 'n Pay to go work as a waiter at Bukhara, it's an Indian restaurant there in Town. Um, ja, that's it, and I also worked with a marketing company, they called Jigsaw, they all about brand awareness and promoting, that type of thing. Um, ja. Those are the companies I worked for, besides, after Pick 'n Pay I mean.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So, Spur and Pick 'n Pay was in Plumstead, Bukhara was in Town...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Town, Jigsaw is in Ndabeni, but the work is not constrained to Ndabeni. That's just their, um, their offices.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Most of the work would be, will be round the Southern Suburbs, for me. And if they extend out the Southern Suburbs, it's, um, petrol money, that type of thing. But I don't generally take jobs outside the Southern Suburbs.
<b>Interviewer</b>	You don't?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I don't.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Why not?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Just for basic wear and tear of your car and stuff, maintenance that type of thing, petrol and that. They pay you petrol but you have to wait 6 weeks for your money. So I would need to drive out for example, okay I did one, I drove out to Vredenberg, and they paid me for two days, they paid me, er, actually works out to, for an hour, an hour on the Wednesday, an hour on the Thursday, they paid me R1600, but the petrol came from, the money came from petrol, they paid me R1400 for petrol and a 100 an hour for the actual promo itself. So, it can work out depending, I mean I'm not going to drive to Brakenfell, and get R80 petrol and it just doesn't work out, it's not feasible for me.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay, so how did you find out about Bukhara?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, okay my mom's client, he had an antique shop like opposite, opposite Bukhara, and he told my mom he can get me in there. And once again, my mom was instrumental in me, waiting once again.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, so, were you unemployed when you did all these...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Nooit, I was like juggling it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Explain...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, okay whenever, basically, I never, I never enjoyed Spur – it was shocking. So that kind of helped my move to Pick 'n Pay, but I was totally anti Pick 'n Pay, like I had this mental knock, mental black against working at Pick 'n Pay or being employed at Pick 'n Pay. Um, I was working simultaneously at Spur and Pick 'n Pay. Once I left Spur, I worked full, I worked at Pick 'n Pay, focused on that and after a while I started to try, to be honest with you, I started to, um, to lose like the interest in going to work, I wasn't, I wasn't like passionate about being a cashier at a till, I mean especially a guy, you get what I'm saying? So, um, I went to Bukhara, got the job, trained a bit there, but they don't pay you while you training. So I trained there, trained up at Bukhara. Once I was fully trained at Bukhara, I left the Pick 'n Pay, randomly one day I was like look guys, er, the Saturday I was like "tomorrow's my last day", they were like "okay, cool, that's fine". But I don't think I had much of a good record there either.

<b>Interviewer</b>	Where, at Pick 'n Pay?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Pick 'n Pay, ja. But I hated every second of it, I honestly hated every second of it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And what exactly did you have to do there?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I was a, er, floor custodian, that's the posh word for it – sales assistant but in fact I was actually just a, in layman's terms a cashier or a packer at the till.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, so what did you have to do?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, I had to pack, pack people's bags, pack their goods into bags, I had to scan their, if I wasn't packing, if I was working at the till, I had to scan people's goods. And ensure that everything was correct; basically that's it, without mistakes also.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, and did you train for that?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I think I got one day of training.
<b>Interviewer</b>	For the cashier thing?
<b>Interviewee</b>	For the packing, I mean can't really, all you need to know perishables with perishable, non-perishables with non-perishables. Hot cold, I mean, hot not with cold. Um, cold by itself packed in a special bag, I mean you know it's obvious, that doesn't require much training. But cashing, just getting used to the whole system, their, um, their computer system that they have there. But it takes about a day, maximum, shouldn't take longer than a day.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So, a day for training for the cashier?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, a day for training with the cashier thing.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, and, um, and then for Bukhara you said that you have to do training but you weren't paid for ...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, it wasn't paid for. Training took about, probably took about a week. I reckon about 5 to 7 days...
<b>Interviewer</b>	For training?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So, that's quite hectic actually.
<b>Interviewee</b>	It is, I mean, for Bukhara it's about, first of all it's about knowing your food, it's about knowing your brand, they say knowing your brand is the most important thing. Be passionate about your brand, understanding your brand. Understanding their ideals and what they want to get out to the public, what kind of food they want to serve. Also, um, the food itself, I mean, it was a totally new cuisine for me. I was not used, I didn't even know that butter [inaudible] existed, didn't even know butter chicken existed for that matter. And, um, it's quite a popular dish, and I obviously wasn't aware of it, so training there, you know, getting the lingo right, the um, new jargon that goes with the job and stuff. So that was quite a difficult part, and then also, all the, the foods are, they look very similar. And most are basted in chilli so having the same basting and the same foundation of a curry, the only thing that's really, discrepancy between them is some is for example spinach and the other is chilli, like a pinch of red and green, otherwise all the kinds look the same, and um, the way they garnish their curry is different, that's the other way to like distinguish between the, one curry or another. So ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how long did you work at Bukhara...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Bukhara I actually worked there the longest. I worked there from, 206, I worked there for let's say almost 2 and a half years I reckon.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, and then you went on to the marketing company?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, Jigsaw Experiential.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And were you doing the Bukhara and the Jigsaw...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, I was actually doing it simultaneously. The thing you shouldn't, I never created a, like a persona or a name per se at Jigsaw yet, I mean at Jigsaw, so that's also based on how

they know you, your charisma, your character, your personality, what kind of guy you are. So, um, in that, look subject to that, your track record, how often you work for them. So I couldn't exactly leave Bukhara and go to Jigsaw and commit myself to jigsaw, 'cause it's also sporadic. So the working always, not like "okay, cool I worked today I'm guaranteed to work tomorrow". It's like okay "we don't have work today, or this week, sorry everything's booked up, we can maybe only book you in two weeks time". So until I made a decent name for myself and they continuously booked me, that's when I actually left Bukhara completely, and worked for, worked for Jigsaw.

**Interviewer** And how did you hear about the jigsaw vacancy?

**Interviewee** Er, Jigsaw vacancy, I heard from word of mouth.

**Interviewer** Okay...

**Interviewee** Um, it was friend, of mine, um, a friend of mine worked for them and he was telling me about this insane money that he was making, obviously was a complete fallacy, um, but ja, that's how I actually got onto it. But it's fine, it was easy money, I mean they pay nothing under R100 an hour, so if I get a stint for 5 hours that's R500. Er, sometimes I MC [master of ceremonies] for Grand Slots, um, it could be things like they pay me petrol money, er, plus I get like 140 an hour and I'd be working like maybe 8 hours, 8 hours a day. I'll do a 2 hour show here, 2 hour show and hour later, 2 hour show, then altogether maybe 15 hours of MCing for the week, for the weekend, and that would earn me an excess of one eight [R1800], pretty cool, do that four times a week earning like next to like 7400 bucks. So, ja, it works out like that, but as I said it's all about the accounts they have, so they usually locked on Phillip Morris accounts, my big account I used to work on. I used to work as a road manager on, on Phillip Morris's account and the pay was very decent, in fact, like the guys used to tell me "you making good money with them". But they recently not got the account this year. Obviously now things are very slowly, as they picking up new accounts, trying to supplement that account they lost. And mostly, most of those jobs require, females, like a copious amount of females, looking at maybe 10 females and one road manager, for example. So the pool for females is larger, way greater than the pool for guys, like maybe four guys a weekend and the chicks are booked at, for the database 400 000 on the database. So you really have to be in their good books and if you working hard, giving them everything that they want, satisfaction, complete satisfaction they will book you.

**Interviewer** And, just to go back to the [inaudible] did you through an interview process?

**Interviewee** Nooit. I just walked in there and like cool they're training up, you got some lank dodgy characters there, Hayley. I promise you, they've got some dodgy characters. I got some stuff, but I can't put it on tape...[laughter]...got some dodgy shit to tell you, dodgy stuff to tell you about.

**Interviewer** Um, but for all of the others there was an interview process.

**Interviewee** Um, yes there was. Not, not really Bukhara...[interruption]...oki doki.

**Interviewer** I just want to go through the questions, we've covered, oh, when you worked at, um the Spur and, um, Pick 'n pay, were you, where were you living?

**Interviewee** When I worked at the Spur I lived in Plumstead, around the corner, literally a stone throw away from... Pick 'n Pay, Spur.

**Interviewer** Pick 'n Pay? Plumstead as well?

**Interviewee** Plumstead as well.

**Interviewer** And Bukhara?

**Interviewee** Bukhara, initially I stayed in Plumstead and then Rondebosch as well.

**Interviewer** And for Jigsaw you stayed in...?

**Interviewee** Rondebosch.

<b>Interviewer</b>	So do you mind travelling from Rondebosch to Town, Rondebosch to wherever you have to go...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well if the pay is good enough, I'll travel. But I'm not gonna go earn 100 bucks when my travel expenses are R40 a day. I mean that's just stupidity. But the money was decent at the restaurant and Jigsaw also pays pretty decent if you do a job for them, so the driving wasn't a problem at all.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So you don't mind working, sort of outside of your area if they pay quite well?
<b>Interviewee</b>	As long as it's still in like a certain limit, I'm not gonna drive like to the extents of Brakenfell, Bellville side and that type of thing, not a chance, um, then there's still the wear and tear on your car over the year and stuff, and that type of thing. So, within the confines of the City of Cape Town area, like Southern Suburbs at least, that I'll do.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um, transport, how do you get to, well when you were in Plumstead...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Plumstead, okay, Plumstead I used to walk or my father used to fetch me. Up until I got a car, in my first year and I drove, okay Pick 'n Pay I used to walk, it wasn't a big thing; it was around the corner from my house. So that was fine to walk to those places – Spur and Pick 'n Pay. Then with Bukhara I used to drive though, like obviously drive to Town 'cause it was late night shift as well.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So you didn't use public transport at all?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, I never used public transport, not to Bukhara, no.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And the Jigsaw place also...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Also car, ja. A basic requirement for them is that you've got to have a car and a valid driver's licence.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Oh, okay. So it's a requirement before they even put you down?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Before they even hire you, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, ja I think we've covered everything.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Is this social theory, or...
<b>Interviewer</b>	Hm?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Social theory.
<b>Interviewer</b>	What?
<b>Interviewee</b>	You doing sociology hey?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	And your major, or your thesis is based on?
<b>Interviewer</b>	It's on the spatial mismatch hypothesis, which basically states that people who live far away from employment centres can't really find work because they don't have the means to get there and hear about job vacancies or whatever.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Right, okay.
<b>Interviewer</b>	But then, the fact that people are involved in networks, kind of, they do hear about vacancies far away from where they live, because like people tell them.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh so you looking at like, for example, the people coming down here and staying in the townships?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Well anyone really, we just finding out that it doesn't really apply, you know what I mean.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Oh I see.
<b>Interviewer</b>	I know with Pick 'n Pay, they like to sort of get people from the area.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, the area.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Did you also find that?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, I'm sure that helped, aided in me getting the job there.
<b>Interviewer</b>	'Cause you lived in the area?
<b>Interviewee</b>	'Cause I lived in the area, ja. It's for convenience sake man, like say they having

something extreme coming up, just call you know “can you work for me this Friday urgently?”, it’s not like I’m driving out from Athlone in peak hour traffic to go pick up a shift at 3pm sometime, sometimes from 3 to 8pm, and I must drive from 8 o’clock as well. So it would just be like call at half past 3, “can you come in I need you urgently, is it possible?” and there’s always a 50/50 chance that I can come in or not. I’m sure that aided in me getting a job there.

**Interviewer** And, um, they did provide transport home for you at night though.

**Interviewee** Uh uh, not for us who stays in the region [means area or Plumstead].

**Interviewer** Oh is it?

**Interviewee** Mr. Robbins is talking nonsense.

**Interviewer** So you have to like find your own way home?

**Interviewee** Ja. They claim to provide, um, a lift club but it’s more for like Retreat, Lavender Hill.

**Interviewer** So those who stay further away from Plumstead?

**Interviewee** Mm.

**Interviewer** Okay, cool man.

**Interviewee** Is that it?

**Interviewer** Ja. Thank you so much.

University of Cape Town

Wild Fig Restaurant Employee

Date: 17 May 2010

Interviewer: Hayley Petersen

Interviewee: Anonymous

**Interviewer** So, um, basically what we're trying to find out is where you've worked, how you've found you jobs in the past and your present one as well, um, 'cause currently you are a Wild Fig employee, um, so I just want to know how you got that job, um, that kind of thing. So, um, just some background, would be helpful maybe, um, if you could just tell or like just speak about where you've lived and worked, um, and ja.

**Interviewee** Local and internationally?

**Interviewer** Ja that would be great, and then when, which times as well.

**Interviewee** Um, my first job was when I was in, about standard 8, I was working at a restaurant as a runner. Um, my brother was manager of the restaurant and he got me into it. Came to me one day and said "it's about time you work, come I'll give you a job". So he did, and um, ja, I was at a restaurant as a runner and then moved to another restaurant, I became a waitress there [referring to the first restaurant], so then I started waiting tables, making money, like proper money without like being paid per the hour. Um, then I got, another waiting job, I got that through the newspaper at JB Rivers in Cavendish, ja, I got that from the newspaper, I went for an interview – that was age 18, that was after school, 2004, end of 2004 beginning of 2005. Um, then I went overseas and I went and worked in pubs. The first pub work I did was, through my sister, I went to the pub where she was working, stayed with her for a while and then I moved, when she moved, from that pub to another pub which I found via the internet on gumtree. Um, I worked there for 18 months then returned home to Cape Town to study. When I got back I found my job at the Wild Fig. I found it through a friend, Emily, who was working there, um, I obviously still work there but in-between that time, I worked there for 2, 2 and a half years, then I went back to the UK for 6 months, to do an internship which I found over the internet and email, went for an interview, um, obviously flew back to South Africa to finish off 3 months of studies then went back, and during that 3 months I worked at the Wild Fig again, and after the 6 months in the UK at a sports agency, I returned back to the Wild Fig, waitressing, I also used to hostess at the Wild Fig as like a second thing, which paid me by the hour. Um, that kind of thing you get when you show competency ... [interruption] ... ja, you show competency and they let you handle the floor. 'Cause, that's a big part of a restaurant – person who greets you and seats you and makes sure that you're comfortable and alright and knows a lot about the wine, to recommend the wine if you're looking at wines, that kind of thing, um, I currently still work at the Wild Fig, more as a waitress, when they need me, when I can fit it in, that kind of thing, um, as I'm extremely busy, I'm assistant, a research assistant, I'm doing research for the National Research Foundation, um, and I'm also a student tutor, slash assistant, and I'm studying, if that matters. Ja.

**Interviewer** That's great. So all of these were, um, I'm assuming part time, sort of work...

**Interviewee** Um, ja, maybe JB Rivers wasn't because I wasn't, I just finished school and I was working there 3 times, 4 times a week. It's still part time, hey?

**Interviewer** Well, like it would be a temporary kind of thing...

**Interviewee** Ja, ja, ja, ja.

**Interviewer** It wasn't a permanent position?

**Interviewee** No.

**Interviewer** Um, okay but that was the closest one you got sort of working full, you worked four days straight?

<b>Interviewee</b>	Like, 4 days a week, sorry 4 or 5 shifts per week which is often a day shift, a whole day shift, or a whole night shift, like that.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay. Um, okay so for the first one as a runner, your brother got you that job. Where was it, sort of which...
<b>Interviewee</b>	In Table View.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And where were you living at the time?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Here in Rondebosch, but I used to go and stay with my brother for the weekend. And I only used to work weekends.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay. So it wasn't, or do you think it was, quite inconvenient?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It was inconvenient, but it was a way in.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Way in for?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Way into like the job, into waitressing. 'Cause you can't just walk into a restaurant and go "I wanna be a waitress", you need experience and the only way to learn how to waitress is to see it happen. So once you realise what the method behind waitressing is, like what the order of things, 'cause runners take like the plates with the knives and forks on, and, um, drinks and that kind of thing, they run basically. If somebody asks for a napkin, the waitress would be like "do you mind taking this table a napkin". So you learn when to fit things in, when to take bread to a table, when to order more drinks, when to get their food order, just to make sure that everyone's happy.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, did you get paid for that though?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Mm, mm. You get paid per the hour I think, from what I remember. Um, I think you get paid a minimum, like a basic and then the waiters put in 10, or 20 rand, 30 or 40 or whatever, and that's split between the runners, on top of your very basic wage.
<b>Interviewer</b>	For all of your hard work...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	That's more hard work.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Its okay, it kept me thin [laughter].
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay, so what was some of the constraints, do you think, of working in Table View but living in Rondebosch?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um...
<b>Interviewer</b>	'Cause in standard 8 you can't drive.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, my dad used to take me on a Friday night, and I'll come home on Sunday. My dad would come and fetch me again. So, in a way it was cheap, because it was one trip there and back, well two for him, I was only travelling one way, one there and back. But, um, staying over at my brother.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And where did your brother live?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Literally, walking distance from the restaurant.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So would you only work when he worked or would you...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No I'd work whenever. I didn't, like the first few shifts I worked with him 'cause he wanted to show me the ropes, um, which was an easy way in, like I said. It's an easy way in, it's comfortable, you know the person, if they irritate you, you can tell them even though they're your manager. But, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay so it's within walking distance. So did you walk most of the time?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja most of the time, unless he was driving. Like literally round the block.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, what was the name of that restaurant?
<b>Interviewee</b>	The Drift Wood Cafe...in Parklands.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay and then for JB Rivers, you found that one in the newspaper.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Mm, mm.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Which newspaper, do you remember?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Think it was the Cape Times.

<b>Interviewer</b>	And what did, sort of, what did they ask for in their advert?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um...they were looking for waiting staff. Experience. And I went in with the chance that I had enough experience. I probably worked there for about 6 months, before I went to the UK. Um, and obviously I had had the experience of the Drift Wood. So, I just went with the chance that maybe they would take that as enough experience.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, how long were you working for the other place?
<b>Interviewee</b>	The Drift Wood?
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja, the Drift Wood.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Probably about 2 years, 2 and a half, 2 years.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And the experience that they had asked for, at JB Rivers?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I don't remember. They probably would have said, waitressing experience required, something like that, not 2 years or, 'cause they took me on obviously. I had references.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And you went through an interview process, you said.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Mm, mm, just one interview.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And what sort of things did they ask you, do you remember? Was it very basic or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Very basic, I think. Asked me about what I was doing, where I'd waitressed, what I've...obviously, you need to take a CV with you. So they look through your CV, asking questions on the CV.
<b>Interviewer</b>	What did they want to know?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I can't remember. That was 6 years ago.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, um...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Well, 8 years ago.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And you worked there for 6 months though. And how did you get to work?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Er, my dad. 'Cause I didn't drive yet. On his way to work which was very close by, he'd drop me off. In the morning.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it wasn't too inconvenient then.
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, he worked in Kenilworth and that was in Claremont.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay.
<b>Interviewee</b>	So it was right next to each other.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so it was the runner job, JB Rivers and then you went overseas and you worked in a pub. So where was it, in which...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	In London. In Wimbledon Village.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And, so your sister got you the job?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. I was going to her, like as a first time in London, she asked her boss, she said "my younger sister, first time, do you mind if she stays with me and if you want her to work, she can work, if you can fit her in". Um, ja, as we were going away, to Croatia, so I needed to get some money behind me.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So you stayed with her as well?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Mm, mm. I stayed upstairs above the pub with her. Shared her room for a while and then moved on, when she moved from that pub, I moved.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So how long did you work at that one for?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, not long, 2 months, 2, 3 months.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And then you went on gumtree?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Mm, mm. That's where I found my job in Coburn in Surrey.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Are those quite far from each other?
<b>Interviewee</b>	20 minutes on the train.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Not bad...
<b>Interviewee</b>	It's really quick.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And where did you stay?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I stayed, I moved to the pub, I moved to Coburn.

<b>Interviewer</b>	So did you stay above the pub as well?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, in the UK that's what most people do.
<b>Interviewer</b>	In a room?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, they provide you accommodation with your pub work.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And what's the accommodation like?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, depending on which pub you go to. If you staying in somewhere like Young's, which is a chain, which is huge in the UK, a multi-million pound industry. Um, there're alright, they not great because that's not what they're looking at, they're not looking to make money off of you. They just giving you somewhere to sleep basically. You go to like a free house, it all depends on the boss – and how much the boss cares. Because some bosses, like the free house where I worked in Coburn, the accommodation was disgusting – but I was hardly paying for it. So I'll take it and I'll just deal with it. But at, in, um, Wimbledon and stuff, it was really nice, it was alright.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So what does it consist of though, one bedroom?
<b>Interviewee</b>	A room, basically, you've got to share a bathroom, depending on where you live, you've a fridge, ironing board, washing facilities like a tumble dryer and a washing machine, showers obviously, TVs, they give you TVs, that kind of thing, obviously a bed, cupboard, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so when you were living in Wimbledon, and you were looking on gumtree, were you looking in a specific area to work in or a specific sort of radius?
<b>Interviewee</b>	I wanted to get out of London. It's very hard to not spend money as soon as you step out the door. And I went through, I was looking for country, I didn't like the – coming from Cape Town where you can walk down the street and somebody you don't know will walk past you and just say "hi" or "good morning" or, and you'll say it back. London nobody speaks to anybody. You on your own mission, you just carry on doing what you wanna do. Um, like when you travel on the bus and on the tube, you literally sitting next to the same person for like 2 hours maybe, and you don't speak to them once. People will think you weird. So I wanted to go to the country. And when I went for my interview at that place, it was perfect, like farms surrounding the place and, ja, it was nice.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So would you say that's more rural, not urban?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, no. Because a country in the UK is surrounded by suburbia. And in this case, suburbia was very wealthy suburbia. Houses for 5 million pounds, stuff like that. Like footballers, and that kind of thing, living in the area, the high street which is like the main road of any town, like here the main road would be Claremont high street, um, that was very wealthy, wealthy shops, everything cost a lot of money, there's no cheap way out of there. But, farms surrounding it.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So sort of urban, but like farms in like an urban space?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. It's because, termed country and its 20 minutes outside of London. And, on the train, 20 minutes to drive to, so it's...it's hard to explain, the farms extend like you've got houses around the farms then the farms keep going, from like that point, from where Coburn was, it turns, like I think that's on the border. I think Coburn, most probably, the area or one of the first areas with farms, to go into farmland. And then suburbia and that side is farms and that side is farms, like kind of in between. So depending on which way you went in Coburn, was where you landed up.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so you found that one on gumtree, and you were specifically looking for, something that's not in the city.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And you went for an interview?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. I went for an interview, um, met everyone, saw the place, had an interview, had something in common with the woman who interviewed me, who is now like one of my

	best friends, um, she loves Cape Town and all we chatted about was Cape Town.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Is she from Cape Town?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, she'd just been here, and it's one of her most favourite places in the world. Um, staff were quite young so I was lucky because I was only 18 at the time, I was just about to turn 19, 2005. And they...I think that they thought I would suit it because we were all young. Everyone was about the same age, a year or two older than me. And still, a lot of those people I'm very good friends with, I still speak to them often. Another pro of living in the country – your friends are your real friends. They not there as like the whole London experience and move on and you're not gonna ever speak to them or hear from them again but these people are friends that I know will be at my wedding and like that kind of thing, so like life-long.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And what were you doing in the pub, in both of them?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, bartending, as well as waitressing in the second one. In the second one I was literally, I became like restaurant manageress at one point.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how did that happen?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Just the only responsible person working there that could handle it, I suppose [laughter]. But I, you just, when it's like a family, when you working like a family, 'cause you living with the people, you spending your nights partying with the people, you spending your days with the people, you showering after each other, you doing laundry after each other, you like, you living on top of each other, it becomes a family. And you automatically are working as a team. You not working for your own good, or for the business or, you're working to help everyone out, to make everyone else's job easier. So you just naturally take on what you can. So, when I was in control of the restaurant, it was never like "Abi, you are now restaurant manageress", but when I asked for a reference from the head chef, he put about how I was restaurant manageress, how he considered me as manageress and how he'd talk to me before he spoke to anyone else, that kind of thing. You just take on what you can for the benefit of the group.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, and the other people, who worked with you in both pubs, were they sort of locals or...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	A few of them were locals, like I said Coburn is a very wealthy area, and English people are ridiculously lazy, because, um, mommy and daddy can pay for everything, 'cause the economy is right over there, it's not expensive to have kids – well it is but when you're living in wealthy areas like where I worked, 'cause Wimbledon Village is one of the wealthiest areas in the country, as well as Coburn, so I just lived, I lived amongst people who are ridiculously wealthy. One of the guys that I knew for a while, his father owns Harrods – Mohammed Al-Fahd, his son, Omar.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And you worked with him?
<b>Interviewee</b>	No, I didn't work with him, he used to come into the pub. So, but those were the kids that were around, around the area. 'Cause the international school was down the road, had a few kids from there work there. Um, people are just mega wealthy, a lot of my friends were 17, at the time, and drove Mercedes and, and, like really ridiculously nice cars for a 17 year old, so ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And did anyone, while you were working at the pub, did anyone sort of come, while you were in London, did anyone come from outside of London, to work there? Like maybe from Coburn or ...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, no...unless they were international people, ja maybe.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So it's kind of very...
<b>Interviewee</b>	It's very local. If you live down the road, it's your local, you've grown up popping in there to go and get your dad or to go and give your dad something and you know the owner and eventually, you become of age 18 and you've got a job. Because that owner or the

	manager of the pub has known you since you were little. So, but otherwise it's all international people.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so where do the internationals come from?
<b>Interviewee</b>	A lot, a lot of Polish, as soon as they, I think they joined the EU, so they were automatically allowed in, to England – something like that, I can't remember why but, they were allowed into the UK without passports and stuff like that. I think. I don't know exactly. Um, Australians, New Zealanders, South African – plenty of South African. Mm. At the last pub I worked at, in Wimbledon village, this is the second one in Wimbledon Village, now when I went back for that 6 month internship, I lived and worked in a pub to make things cheaper – that was literally down the road from the first pub I worked at, within 3 minutes walking distance – and there were 5 South Africans when I moved there, 5 out of 7 were South African.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And where were they from in South Africa.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Er, Durban. 2 Durbanites, one from Cape Town and one from Jo'burg.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how did they hear about, how did they get the jobs?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Internet. I know most of them were internet. And one through a friend who already worked there.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Like gumtree?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. Gumtree, that kind of thing, Young's, also Young's website. The Young's website advertise positions.
<b>Interviewer</b>	What's the Young's?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Young's is a brewery who has Young's pubs. Like they called like the Rose and Crown, and it's a Young's pub. Just a company that owns all the breweries, owns all the pubs.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Do they, if they have vacancies they post it on their website?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. And internally if, one of my sisters friends is a manager of a pub and put it on the internal, on the internal email kind of thing to all the managers of the pubs in the area, saying "I've got this person, she's been in the industry this long, I trust her, she's worked in a Young's pub before so she understands it". So, I got the second job, the second Young's pub through her basically. Through my sister, through her, ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So she kind of pushed a reference through the internal email...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, on the internal system. 'Cause they do it in like, Young's has an area manager who manages South West London, or whatever, which consists, in this case, all the Elm Bridge, Burra or whatever, and it consists of like 20 pubs, maybe. So they manage 20, they control 20 pubs, say. And she put the information out on that.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And they did they call you up or?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, I actually went for an interview at one pub, which would've been perfect but I would've had to find accommodation as they didn't have accommodation for me, then I found this one which was actually a hotel too, a pub and hotel, and I went for an interview and she said that I could stay there. As well as, and just work and they would charge me the rent that they charge the normal staff, like £38 or something a week. So whatever I worked, I made the rent and whatever extra, I would keep, depending on how many hours I worked.
<b>Interviewer</b>	But that was while you were doing an internship, you couldn't work there all the time...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, I couldn't work full time, I was already basically working full time at the internship, I was working 4 full days a week and then Friday to Sunday in the pub to be able to survive because the internship was an internship and they weren't paying me. But it was for experience.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so, oh. So then you came back. After, okay so the first pub, was in Wimbledon Village then the second pub was in Coburn which you found on gumtree. And then you came back to South Africa and you started working for the Wild Fig. So can you take me

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through the process of how you got that job, I know you said it was through friend but...

**Interviewee** Ja. At first a friend from school, who had been in the UK, um, Emily and she said she was working at the Wild Fig and they were actually, and I said, "ah, I'm actually looking for a job", she said well they were actually looking for staff, and I headed that way. I went for an interview, I phoned them up, I said "hi, I'm a friend of Emily's, um she said to give you a call regarding vacancies at the restaurant, could I organise to come and meet with you maybe, like are you still looking" that type of thing. Went and had an interview, took my CV along, same process, looked at my CV asked me questions, asked what experience I had, what I was doing, a common thing that I find weird is that, in all these interviews, is that they asked what I was doing at the time and they paid a lot of interest to if I was studying, or I just finished school, and they would say things like, "what do you want to do as a career?" or that kind of thing, but ja.

**Interviewer** Why do you find it odd?

**Interviewee** Because it's got nothing to do with the job. They ask my experience, and that's what I'd thought they'd want to know, my experience and if I was capable and ...

**Interviewer** Not how your career would go off...

**Interviewee** Ja, not, like I assume that waitressing is not everyone's career goal, which some people, maybe. But they as owners of the restaurant or managers of the restaurant know that people are not going to stay there for the rest of their lives. They know the nature of the industry. So I found it odd that they cared...sorry [laughter] put it all there [laughter]...it's like they were looking for friends.

**Interviewer** Okay, so who interviewed you at the Wild Fig?

**Interviewee** Er, the manager Quinton.

**Interviewer** Um, is he one of the owners?

**Interviewee** No, he was the manager at the time. A very good manager.

**Interviewer** But it changed?

**Interviewee** Ja, the industry, managers are not there for long either. They constantly looking to move on – the more you've got behind you – people probably work at a place maybe a year, two years, and then move on. It gets monotonous, if you going to be a restaurant manager, you want change, same day in day out.

**Interviewer** Okay, and the Wild Fig is in Observatory.

**Interviewee** Yeah.

**Interviewer** And you, well you were still living in Rondebosch?

**Interviewee** Ja.

**Interviewer** So how did you get to work then?

**Interviewee** I drove. I got my driver's license in the UK...if that matters, 'cause I can.

**Interviewer** So you had a private, private car.

**Interviewee** Ja...this is long hey, just saying, gonna put that out there.

**Interviewer** And the other waiters ... that's good, are you getting tired?

**Interviewee** No [laughter].

**Interviewer** So the other, okay at this stage, the other waitresses and waiters, um, do you know how they sort of got their job?

**Interviewee** Um...a lot of it happens through friends of friends, hey. I know somebody who's looking for a job, or somebody's like "I need to start earning some money", I'll be like "well, why don't you try waitressing, have you waitresses before?", if they haven't I could probably assess whether they'll pick it up or not. You've gotta be the a type of person who won't like stress out, but then be like "well, I'll ask at work if they need somebody, and tell them I've got a friend". If you're reliable as a waitress they'll take your recommendation, or they say "bring your friend in, we'll interview her but not promising anything", or that kind of thing. Or people will interview to start there, train, and then wait for spaces to

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become available kind of thing ... depending on whether they, it's very up and down, people start writing exams, so 'cause it's all students, people write exams and then somebody new can come in. And then like, there's always one or two waiters that can't work for like a month, at a time, but then other people will pick up their shifts. And if it's somebody new who's just trained, if there's not enough room for permanent shifts for them, they'll pick up where they can, to start off with until somebody leaves or till somebody drops a shift.

**Interviewer** So it's kind of like a waiting, waiting list kind of thing?

**Interviewee** Ja, at the Wild Fig, sometimes, occasionally. Depends on what the season is. If it's school holidays, if it's like December, everyone wants to waitress. June, will come up now, and everyone would want to waiter. Because there's so many tourists in this country and they'll be tipping big. You want to waiter. Ja.

**Interviewer** Um, okay and then you went back. So this is the first Wild Fig one...

**Interviewee** Then I went back to the UK.

**Interviewer** Then you went back to go and do your internship. And then you worked at...

**Interviewee** The Rose and Crown in Wimbledon Village again. But I first worked at the place in Coburn for 6 weeks.

**Interviewer** So you went back to the same place?

**Interviewee** Yes. I went back to Coburn for 6 weeks...while I found accommodation and stuff. Actually...do you know what, I went for an interview. I went to the UK for 6 weeks, at first, in the middle of my study. They, Octagon said to me, "6 months is a long period of time, can you come for an interview?" like "will you be in London anytime soon?" [laughter] like it's next door [laughter]. Then I said, I worked out the pros and cons and I knew, I still have a very good relationship with the people in Coburn, and I still speak to them all the time, still phone them. So I phoned and I was like "literally, I'm coming to the UK for 6 weeks, can I have a job?" and they are more than willing to help me out, as having me there will help them out, as English people are lazy. And they know I'm a good worker, so they took me on, and they took me up for 6 weeks. And at the end were literally begging me to stay a week more – like "come stay another week, please", I was like, "I'm missing 3 weeks of college here, I can't".

**Interviewer** So you were there for 6 weeks...

**Interviewee** And then I came back to South Africa.

**Interviewer** And then you worked at the Wild Fig?

**Interviewee** And then I worked at the Wild Fig for three months. 'Cause then I had to go and start the internship...after 3 months. Do you need to know the time periods of all this?

**Interviewer** Well, it's not essential, but it's helpful just to get everything in order.

**Interviewee** Ja, I can tell you times, years and stuff.

**Interviewer** Ag, no that's fine. Okay and then you went back to go and have your internship.

**Interviewee** Ja, for 6 months.

**Interviewer** And then you, before you had your internship, you went back to Coburn.

**Interviewee** Worked there for about 6 weeks, again, saved money – 'cause I wasn't getting paid at the internship, which I knew. And you can't survive in London without money. Doesn't work like that.

**Interviewer** And you stayed there as well, hey, while you were working there?

**Interviewee** I, that's why I moved to London to make travel cheaper, because travel everyday would have cost me like 10, 12 pounds from Coburn. But if I lived in Wimbledon, it was £2 on the bus there and back. A pound there and a pound back. But it's £8 a week, which is nothing – it's an hour's work basically almost, about 2 hour's work for travel for the week.

**Interviewer** Okay, then Coburn for 6 weeks, you started with your internship and then you...

<b>Interviewee</b>	And then I moved to London.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Moved to...
<b>Interviewee</b>	The Rose and Crown, Young's pub.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And you got that one because of your sister's friend, who's the area manager.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja, ja. They had space and they got me in. She said I could, I might have to share a room, which I never landed up doing anyway.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, so when you were looking for a place to stay and to work with the internship, were you looking at a specific area?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Very specific area, I needed the travel to work, to work. And I needed it to be cheap and I needed it to be quick. So it's like 20 minutes on the bus depending on the day, depending on, on a school day if the bus has got, if the bus has due to traffic started running late, they would just stop and say "I'm terminating here, everyone off" and they give you a ticket and you have to jump on the next bus that will keep going the whole route. And some days I'd have to take 3 buses, when I would normally take 1. Depending on what time I left, depending on everything ...[noise]... sorry we're in a rough area.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, okay, then when you came back home, you started working at the Wild Fig again.
<b>Interviewee</b>	It was easy, just because I knew it, it was close, 'cause it's in my comfort zone.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And did they have like a vacancy available, or did they, was it just like "okay, you're back so come work for us"?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, I wasn't going to work at the Wild Fig, I wasn't going to waitress, I was going to kind of be, get like a day job, like a full time job. Um, 'cause I did not want to waitress, I had had enough, I'd been doing it for like 7 years, I'd had enough and I tried and tried and tried and then I needed money. And I said to them "if you need me, then let me know, I can do the odd shift if you want me to, 'cause I hadn't started working for my lecturer that I'm working for. So, if you need, me let me know". And that's how it started. And then I start covering people's shifts when I could, and I still am. People call and say, "can you work this shift for me?", I'll be like "ja, sure" or "no, sorry I can't I've got an exam" or, it's just on that kind of basis – if I can, I can, if I can't, I can't. But I don't have any permanent shifts at the moment, I'm not on their register as Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays or whatever.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay, so is that a permanent, can you explain the permanent shifts? How that works.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, um...
<b>Interviewer</b>	All of the other waiters have that?
<b>Interviewee</b>	All the waiters pick some shifts, you have to work at least one weekend shift. Which consist of Friday night, Saturday night, Sunday day or Sunday night. You've got to work one of those...and it's a minimum of three shifts per, including the weekend shifts, so you could work Monday, Wednesday night and Friday night, and that constitutes your week and your weekend. Some people work 5 times, some people work 3 times.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So the minimum of 4?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, minimum of 3.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Three. Um, and how long is a shift?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, day shift is from 10.30 till latest 5, 5.30, latest 5.30. Er, so it's 8 hours. Um, evening shift is 5.30 and you probably get out of there at about 1, 12, 12, 12, 1. Depending on the night, depending on how, if customers sit – sometimes whether they sit in the bar, sometimes there's a lot of laundry to do, sometimes you've got to polish lots of cutlery, if there's a function. If it's a 21 <sup>st</sup> , can go on till 3. But it all depends on what, 'cause you've got to re-set the restaurant back to how it is during the day.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, and the waiters now. How do you think most of them found, well firstly where do most of them live, do they live fairly close?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Around Obs, Pinelands...Rondebosch...Woodstock, Salt River area. So all around

	Observatory. So people, I think work where it's convenient, in this case.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And how do most of them get to work?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Cars, a lot of them have cars, their own cars. Um, otherwise public transport and walking.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So, what kind of public transport though?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, some people take a taxi, depending on where they're coming from because some people live in like Wynberg. Then they take a taxi to like, Mowbray, and then it's a short walk down from the taxi rank to the Wild Fig, like it's a 15 minute walk. So it depends, otherwise some people would take a cab, if they're rich being waiters and all, [laughter] ja it depends. Um, a lot of people get lifts off other waiters.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So like car pooling kind of?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Er, ja, ag no.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Is it a convenience thing?
<b>Interviewee</b>	It's just a convenience thing, they ask you at the end of shift, they don't even organise with you, they're like "do you mind giving me a lift home please?" you can't be like "no, walk" in the dark, in Obs, alone, along the river [laughter]. You can't really do that.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So they kind of like chancers, like they just come to you.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, ja, ja. [inaudible] I don't know if they know but I'm sick of driving you home. That's why they ask me before hand.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So they don't even ask you like at the start of your shift, or whatever like...
<b>Interviewee</b>	No they ask you at the end, when you about to go. "Do you mind if you give me a lift, it's just down the road." End up driving round half of Cape Town, "where do you live?" "oh no just round the next corner", in three blocks, and then just up the road and around the next corner.
<b>Interviewer</b>	You know South African, just up the road, is not just up the road... Okay but most of them live within like a 5 kilometre radius, would you say, if it's those sort of areas.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Um, ja, I'd say 5, 10 km radius. Because as the cloak flies it's close, but as the roads go it's not close. Do you know what I mean? Like to get to the Wild Fig, you have to go down a long road, like for me to go to the Wild Fig, I get to the N2 and I go past the Wild Fig, and then I come back on myself to get there in a car. If I'm walking from the N2, it would literally be 50 steps and I'd be there. But I drive 3kms round, you know what I mean.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So how many, what do you think, the percentage is of people who use public transport and then walk?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Mm, not many now. We've got, it changes with the waitrons, with the who's working who's not working, the people who come into the restaurant. At the moment a lot of people drive. Which is actually the first time that I've had so many people driving, work with me. But I would actually think, maybe 5 out of 20 now would walk or, during the day walk, but at night hitch a lift.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And if there's no-one to give them a lift at night then what do they do?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Depending on who they are, hey. Some of the boys walk to Pinelands...down the N2, then up the hill, right by the crazy, but otherwise people hitch a lift. Um, ja...or they get someone to come fetch them, like their brother or their cousin or their mother or whatever.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Okay. So these are all the front of house people, right?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	And do you know anything about the people who work in the kitchens?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Back of house.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. There's staff transport. Which I'm pretty sure they pay towards. Is Jan going to listen

to this? [laughter] Okay. I'm pretty sure they get paid pittance and then have to pay for a percentage of their travel home as well. Which I think is ridiculous, but anyway. That's only my opinion on that.

**Interviewer** Um, and how do they get to work?

**Interviewee** Transport staff, oh, actually if they're not the evening staff, I think that there's only transport at night, to give them a lift home and drop them all off at home. During the day they have to use public transport.

**Interviewer** Like what kind of public transport?

**Interviewee** Taxi.

**Interviewer** Taxi. And then they also have to walk. So do they go to Mowbray?

**Interviewee** Ja.

**Interviewer** Mowbray taxi and then they walk?

**Interviewee** And then they walk, down like Liesbeek Parkway and get to the bridge on Liesbeek Parway and you literally walk down the N2 heading towards Pinelands, for like a hundred meters and then you go through the grass, like there's grass, and it lands you at the Wild Fig. 'Cause you can walk from the Wild Fig onto the N2, literally where people park their cars.

**Interviewer** If you want to...

**Interviewee** If you want to...

**Interviewer** And do you know how they got their jobs?

**Interviewee** No, I would assume through people, 'cause when there's new people, I would say "how do you know everyone?", "ah, I live near her" or, but that's only occasionally, I don't always ask. I pretty sure, I'm pretty sure that they'll say like "I need somebody in the veg section, does anybody know anybody that needs a job, that can learn quickly?" or somebody in the salad section, or somebody who can cook or that kind of thing. I think that it's generally through friends.

**Interviewer** Um, so when they live near to each other, does that mean that they just friends or are they related or?

**Interviewee** No friends, I think. I don't know anybody that's related. But then again, I don't always ask. I'm very good friends with the kitchen staff, I get along very well with a lot of them, or all of them. Often like joke around and stuff, but I don't know who's related to who, I don't think anyone is related but they all know where each other live, and maybe that's just from dropping them off.

**Interviewer** So just like the same area maybe?

**Interviewee** Ja. I would think the same area.

**Interviewer** Where do you think they're from?

**Interviewee** Um, I know one person lives in Mannenberg, ja Mannenberg. Um, and then Khayelitsha, um, where are the NY's?

**Interviewer** Nyanga? I think, Nyanga.

**Interviewee** I don't really know, but I know some of them live in Khayelitsha.

**Interviewer** Okay, and the others come from the NY's?

**Interviewee** I think some of them do. I don't know where all of them live. But I know one lives in Mannenberg, because I tell her she lives in my area, so she must move in with me, she'll feel right at home.

**Interviewer** And all of them use public transport there isn't someone who has a private car or anything?

**Interviewee** Uh, uh. They all use public transport or the driver comes and fetches them, which I think the Wild Fig pays half for.

**Interviewer** Okay, every night and then they pay for the other half.

**Interviewee** Ja then they pay for the rest, amongst themselves – like R10 to get home or whatever.

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<b>Interviewer</b>	And, so there's also a bar attached to, to the restaurant. So is there a different sort of way for looking for bar staff, do you think or is that also kind of waiter...?
<b>Interviewee</b>	That's also like, um, waitering. Um, also friends of friends. The current barman, Vele, drives his own car. Um, Maboeti, who works during the day during the week, um, takes public transport, I'm pretty sure. If he works nights, he goes with the kitchen staff – I think. But Vele drives his own car, Saturdays sometimes a guy called Rob, who's a waiter, does bar, um, so he has his own car. Ryan, who is sometimes a KP, a kitchen porter, er, does the dishes is in the scullery section, also does bar – I think he's very capable of doing bar, but what he, like where they've got space for him is where he fits in. Like he's often painting a door, or, he like fits in more than, if there's nobody in scullery for that day then he'll work scullery. If they need somebody extra in the bar, then he'll go down and help, obviously change clothes, but he'll go down and help. That kind of thing.
<b>Interviewer</b>	So kind of like a ghost person who does whatever need to be done?
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Except waitering.
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja. He doesn't waiter. Barmen don't waiter, the most they'd do is take a drink to the table for you.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Except for the Rob guy...
<b>Interviewee</b>	Ja, who waiters. Um, I think they just use people who're capable to fill roles. Like instead of hiring a hostess, like somebody who you'd have to train on the restaurant floor and how the Wild Fig works, you could just put a waitress in there, who's friendly, who's good with people. Who can dress up and understand the Wild Fig, and you wouldn't have to worry about them. Just give them control and they'll sort it out for you.
<b>Interviewer</b>	Um, let's see what else. I think we've kind of covered everything...thanks so much, man.

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## **Transcripts 2008 (Honours Project)**

## Pick n Pay Plumstead

Pick 'n Pay Family Store  
Pick 'n Pay Family Centre  
Gabriel Road, Plumstead  
021 762 1124  
021 762 1244  
June 2008

Interview by Denver Grigg, Anya van Wyk, Hayley Petersen and Kylie Steward

Pick n Pay sell food stuff predominantly. They have an on-site bakery where they produce bakery items, they have a butchery and a fish shop. The production is mainly done in the bakery and that earns about 3% of their business, so their main business is just the resale of groceries.

Pick 'n Pay Plumstead is a family franchise of Pick 'n Pay and has been in business for about twelve years. Paul Robbins is a co-owner of the Pick n Pay franchise, it was a Pick n Pay corporate store originally. It was the first Pick n Pay that Raymond Ackerman opened himself in 1967. He bought five existing stores and this was the first one he opened. However, over the years it became too small in the whole scheme of things – Constantia Pick n Pay opened up about a kilometre away and that's the flagship supermarket in the group and Pick n Pay Plumstead went into neglect. Then about twelve years ago Paul and a partner were both working for Pick n Pay, then they introduced franchise stores and that is when they chose to take over the Plumstead Pick n Pay, and it is now the busiest out of 200 Pick n Pay family stores in the country. It has the busiest turnover per m<sup>2</sup>.

There are various different kinds of Pick n Pays: there is the hypermarket of which there are two in Cape Town, one in Ottery and one in Brackenfell. Then you get a large supermarket – they call them superstores, for example Constantia Pick n Pay is one, Kenilworth Centre, Tygervalley and Tableview. Though, they do not use that terminology anymore, they are just large supermarkets. Then you get the standard supermarket, which is about 2000 m<sup>2</sup> in size and that's just the Pick n Pay supermarket. Next they have got little models which they call the pantry store which is at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront and Camps Bay, but they don't use that terminology anymore but that's what inspired them. And then up country there are little mini-markets, those are also franchises but there are none in the Cape.

Pick n Pay Plumstead is privately owned and South African owned. They recruit and pay the staff themselves. They buy the groceries from Pick n Pay and sell them at general Western Cape corporate Pick n Pay prices, excluding hypermarkets as well as the butchery and fruit and vegetable section, where they set their own prices. Otherwise they fix their prices at Pick n Pay corporate prices and aim to differentiate themselves from the rest of the Pick n Pays on the basis of the service they provide.

Paul says that Pick n Pay Plumstead's clientele is probably about LSM 3-8 across the spectrum – from Constantia through to Southfield, which is a broad demographic or profile of customer, with the racial composition being about 40% white and 60% coloured. He says they receive a whole cross section of customers, from elderly people – as there are quite a few old age homes around the area, quite a few flats and townhouse developments. Paul says that throughout the course of the trading day he can see the profile of customers change.

Pick n Pay Plumstead was an existing store when Paul and his partner took it over so they did not have much of a choice with regards to location. Nevertheless, Paul says that it is well positioned in terms of accessibility "we've got the M3 up there, and then half-way between the M3 and the M5 with Platteklouf Road in-between. [T]here's quite a few schools around... quite sort of densified area at the back here with townhouses and developments going on, so all in all its a nice little regional shopping centre, you know without, the shop entertainment attractions of having all sorts of other attractions...movie houses and that sort of thing. Its really just shopping here". Another reason that Paul feels the shopping centre thrives is

because all the businesses that are there are owned (privately) and are being run by their owners – none of them are being managed for somebody else, and he feels this is key to how well the business does, as they all are in it to make a profit and to do that they need to provide the best service possible.

When asked if he would ever want to relocate Paul says that would prefer larger premises, but is happy with the location of the store. What he might do instead is open up a second store in the vicinity because they would be enough overflow to warrant having a second shop. He says that he would not consider owning another store and selling the Plumstead store but would rather own a second store. This is partly to do with the fact that there are few sites available he says, and it would be difficult to find a place.

Plumstead Pick n Pay is about 2 300 m<sup>2</sup> in total of which about 1 250 m<sup>2</sup> is trading area. The rest is storage and office space.

In 1995 the store (Corporate Pick n Pay Plumstead) closed down for a couple of months and then they (Paul and partner) reopened it as Pick n Pay Family store. The other stores opened in about 1997, it was a two phase development. When Paul and his partner took the Pick n Pay over, it was the lowest turnover store in the Pick n Pay group in the Western Cape. And at that time there were about 25 stores. Now their turnover has increased 25-30 times – and he attributes this growth to the fact the business is owned and not managed, he says “It's like owning or renting a house, you tend to look after it if you own the place as opposed to if you're just a tenant there.” He says that their business is ‘hands on business, not brain surgery’ and that a large part of it is knowing how to deal with people and getting to know them and just having a presence is something people appreciate – the owner of the store being involved with the shop.

The store started out with two partners/owners, it now has three. They had to get another partner in because the load was too heavy for the just the two partners. In their first year they worked seven days a week until eight every evening and so they felt they needed to lighten their load as they have families as well. There is always one of them at the store at any given time of the trading day. Below the three partners there are departmental managers and supervisors – there are about eight of them covering the various areas of the store, “... you'd have a bakery manager, you'd have a delicatessen manager, you'd have butchery manager, you'd have a perishables manager, you'd have a groceries manager, you'd have a receiving manager and you'd have a frontline manager, you know...[muffled]..come and checkout managers?...[muffled]...at the cash office. Each area has its own, you know, sort of management structure, and they report in to us.” Fill in the gaps or delete the empty bits from the quote

The store operates on a turnover clause, and people with high turnover type affects them negatively, because it works against them almost so their rental is considerably more than they would pay at other supermarket space – they pay about a R100 per square metre and the going rate out there is about R45–50 per square metre because of their turnover, “So it's a problem because of our own making almost, you know.” The building is owned by Investec - it is privately owned but it is managed by Growth Point.

Paul says they prefer to hire most of the staff from the immediate and neighbouring areas, such as Plumstead, Retreat and Grassy Park. He says that what has happened over the years is that some of the staff have moved out to Mitchell's Plain and to Wynberg, but the majority come from Retreat, Plumstead and Grassy Park (about 80%). He says the rest – him, his partners and the managers are about five minutes away from the store.

He says that they try to hire people from nearby areas for a number of reasons. Firstly, they want to keep the money/business in the area and try to increase the local list of customers as well – he says this is good business. Secondly, if there ever is a staff shortage you want to be able to get somebody in quickly. Thirdly, they provide transport home in the evenings because we trade until 8 o'clock. Every staff member who works on a late shift at night, i.e. after 7pm, is given transport home. They have a fleet of taxis that they hire to take the staff home in the evenings and some of the other staff with their own transport take the staff home to earn some extra money. However, Paul says “you don't want them to be travelling far, you want them to get home as soon as possible, you know, they have families – you don't want them to get

home at 10 o'clock at night or whatever. I would say all of our staff are home by 9pm/9:15pm the latest, because we close at 8pm, the last customer leaves probably about 8:30, finished up by 8:40, ja and then they're gone by then."

The recruitment process is done internally, Paul is in charge of the administration side of the business and he interviews every frontline person to see if they are suitable for the position, he says "we wanna make sure they uphold the reputation for good customer service." He does not place advertisements in the paper, but uses word of mouth instead. In addition Paul says that some people just come and put their names and CVs down when they are in the area and are looking for a job. They employ about 300 people of which about 180 are permanent staff members and about 120 are part-time, usually students and weekend casuals. It is a very labour intensive business and very little is mechanised, "whether you've got cashiers and packers at the counters or floor or shop packers, they all, it's all manual work."

Pick n Pay Plumstead only provides transport home for its staff in the evenings. It is their responsibility to get to work in the morning. They travel by taxi or by train or by bus and some have their own cars. The majority come by taxi. "The average cost from the Grassy Park area is about R5 and from Mitchells Plain – if they go from Wynberg – its something like R8 and then R5 to here, so something around R12 or R13 – something like that for Mitchell's Plain people one way."

The workforce is about 90% coloured and about 5% white and 5% black. In terms of language it is probably about 60% English and 40% Afrikaans. Their clientele is largely English, to illustrate this Paul uses the example of YOU magazine "coz I know we get about a thousand YOU magazines every week and we get about 80 Huisgenoots,. Probably about 5 or 6% Afrikaans and about 94/95% English speaking." Paul says they have no preference in hiring English speaking or Afrikaans speaking individuals. He says they speak English to their employees but are able to speak Afrikaans as well, but English is the language of choice. What about the racial composition of staff?

In terms of skills, Paul breaks down the workforce by saying that 15% are medium skilled, 5% are high skilled and probably 80% unskilled. When they begin they are unskilled but they are trained in the areas they need to work in. So people who come who have no cashier experience, become cashiers within a month and know how to operate a till. When asked about the qualifications for his medium skilled staff Paul says that most of them have their Standard Eight Certificate. According to Paul, the medium skilled employees are the managers, the supervisors, the people in the receiving area and the administration (clerks?) people. He says that it is difficult to define what skills level people are because in their business, they can take someone with a Standard Eight Certificate and they can become a very good manager, so perhaps not from a qualifications point of view but as far as he is concerned anybody that is at a supervisory or managerial level would be medium skilled. He says most of those skills are trained – they would be on the job training and there are various courses involved that they conduct themselves at their head office. For Paul, hard work ethic, good customer care, good personal skills are the kind of things he looks for and he adds "...you might not, when you first you know, interview them pick up. So they come in as unskilled but they work hard." OK, but what jobs does he define as highly skilled? And what are cashiers classified as? We need to know how many unskilled manual workers there are (packers, loaders, cleaners), how many clerical workers (cashiers, accounts clerks), sales staff, managers, supervisors, bakers etc.

Unskilled: customer bag packers, shelf packers

Medium skilled: clerks, cashiers, supervisors, front-line managers, receiving area(what are these?)

High skilled: owner managers, accountants?

When asked if the supervisors and managers and administration staff all have their matriculation certificate, Paul says that certainly all the administration staff do but not necessarily the supervisors and managers "Our butchery manageress has got a standard eight, but I tell you she's a very capable manageress."

The service provided is mainly face to face, there is a small amount of telephonic interaction where people phone in and ask whether they have baked beans or what time the store will be trading until. Then there is

some email correspondence with people who have a home delivery service, so they email their orders to the store but the rest of the contact – 99% of it is face to face.

Paul says that Raymond Ackerman must have had his reasons in 1967 for opening up the store there, he says maybe because it was a growing area. The store opened up before Constantia Pick n Pay was opened “It was like 500m to the main road – in those days, you know, the main road was like the main sort of ‘feeder’ into...and near the station – the railway line played an important part in those days you know, Southern suburbs, people going...Um and Wynberg, Plumstead area – has always been a sort of fairly mixed area too, so there’s always been a lot of um, residential and there’s quite a lot of businesses in Wynberg and Plumstead area.”

Paul was happy with the location of the store, he felt that it had huge potential and the upside to it was the fact that they would be redeveloping the centre – and that was even more attractive. Other things he found attractive were the profile of the customer, being on the doorstep of Constantia. It was shortly after the ‘New South Africa’ so they knew that segregated areas would fall away, it would become more comfortable, more aspirational – people would tend to ‘move up’ as their personal welfare increased and that sort of happened over the years. Paul says that Plumstead is “quite a desirable area, it’s very centralised, all those sorts of amenities...so you know, you won’t get a house for under two million.”

Paul says there aren’t really any negatives with regards to their location. He says the business has just taken off and nothing would want to make him move. He adds that they have heard rumours about wanting to redevelop the roads around the area “...round the back and over Victoria bridge.” Although he does not see it happening very soon as it is a very expensive undertaking and he does not think it will affect their business. Again he says that he would not want to move: there is a lot of development taking place across the road – some people who were removed by the Group Areas Act in the early 60s are now moving back in. There was a big open field where the development is now taking place. Paul says that there are not many other options in terms of location; he mentions that he has heard that they are considering developing the old Three Arts Theatre. He says that they would be interested in a retail centre there and that it would make sense as it is a nice catchment area. Thus he would look to open a second store and keep the current store as well. There is also some development of apartments near the Three Arts called the (Citadel) – it’s a nine storey apartment block. There’s an old age home going up across the way from Pick n Pay Plumstead, and to the left of the main road there are a lot of developments taking place.

Pick n Pay Plumstead is well located in terms of access to roads and infrastructure, the railway station is down the road and it is close to the M3 and the M5. This is important particularly for taxis – a lot of people who want to shop make use of taxis – an informal taxi rank has developed across the way from the store too – it is something like a drop off point. Paul says that they are cheaper than Spaza shops and so people prefer to shop by them.

Being near the different transport services provides for a broad clientele because people with cars can access the store easily as well as those who rely on public transport such as trains and taxis. Paul says when you are near rail you are not restricted and that they have people coming from Simons Town to shop at their store – he says it broadens your catchment area, for supermarkets tend to trap about 4km radius of customer. He explains that when they do the demographic studies they normally look at the 4km radius as 80% of your clientele, and then they move it out. He mentions that to research retail a good source of information is AC Neelsing and a company called Douglas Parker – they do a lot of demographic studies for retailers who want to go into different areas and they look at the profile and the number of households and their disposable income. He says that they did not have any use for them as they were going into an existing site.

Pick n Pay’s suppliers transport the goods to the store. Paul says they do have a small warehouse facility but most of their goods come from direct store delivery, which he says has its own logistical problems as you can only do it at certain hours of the day due to time constraints. He would prefer to have a night off-load but that comes with a lot of security issues so they do not make use of that time. They try to schedule

the time of the delivery trucks to come in as they have a small receiving area that shares space with the parking lot for the shopping centre and thus can cause a lot of congestion. Traditionally retailers tend to keep their receiving area at the back of the site to where the parking is, but in this particular case they inherited the site. However being close to the M3 and M5 makes delivery a lot quicker, as they don't have to use the back roads to get to the store.

When asked which Pick n Pay he thought had the worst location Paul says from a logistical point of view the one in Strand Street in Cape Town. He says they have to get deliveries done at night. He says you cannot send a Coke truck in there during the day its chaos. Paul admits that from a customer point of view it is well located but from a logistical perspective it is not very convenient. The Waterfront has the same problem as Strand Street, but it too is a very successful store because it's got the (feat?). Camps Bay is the worst located store because they have no storage space and so they have to keep servicing the store. It does very well in summer. The previous Claremont store was also awkwardly located. The parking space was very difficult to negotiate – Paul says “ ...I mean that parking space...traffic space...if you're coming off the main road from the Cape Town side you'd have traffic backed up and it would cause congestion. If you were coming from the Wynberg side on the main road, you couldn't do a right turn in there, you'd have to go round the back and come round again” According to Paul the new Pick n Pay Claremont is opening up in September and it is going to be a “state of the art Pick n Pay”, in addition to the Pick n Pay there will be apartments and Virgin Active is opening up a new gym as well as their regional head office. There will be a few line shops and some offices opening up too, including some parking space on top of the building. Paul says that they are also redesigning and planning to close Claremont's main road and re-route it down the back next to the railway line. And the current Claremont main road will become a pedestrian mall. He says this will probably happen in about two or three years, “...and you can see already what they've done with the link how they've...with that Cavendish Connect now – quite cleverly made it a part of the same building. I think Old Mutual has done that – they've done a nice job...”

For most of Pick n Pay Plumstead's employees who have to travel a bit to work, “Wynberg is the hub, so most people come into Wynberg. Buses are cheaper, the bus from Mitchell's Plain is about R9 incoming and that will take them straight to Plumstead but it's not as reliable – they work at set times and if you miss one bus then you got to sort of wait another hour, whereas taxis are there all the time, so that's the problem with buses. Trains don't really go down that way and if you're in the Southern suburbs probably come in by train - train is still the cheapest.” In terms of time Paul thinks it takes them about 30 to 40 minutes and says that it is quieter in the evenings and it takes less time for them to get home. He says Sunday is a unreliable because buses trains and taxis are less frequent on Sundays and this makes things difficult as they trade seven days a week and therefore need their staff to be able to get to work.

#### Verbatim Transcript

DENVER: THAnk you so much that we could meet with you, to do this interview, um maybe we could give your more of a basic idea of what we're doing...or not really?

PAUL: Er I'm fine, thanx

DENVER: Ok, um we wanted the first question which is regarding economic activity, its a very basic one obviously your Pick n Pay...

PAUL: Ja...

DENVER: But you could also offer your idea of it. What commodities does your company produce and what services does it offer?

PAUL: Ok basically we're in the FMCG business...[muffled]...thats food stuff predominantly. In terms of what we produce we have an onsite bakery that we produce bakery items er and then we have a butchery and a fish shop... [bang of tray or door blots out some dialogue]... um but the production is mainly done in the bakery and that earns, really earns about 3% of our business, so, the main, the main business is just the resale of groceries.

DENVER: And, and just to confirm you're Pick n Pay Plumstead...?

PAUL: We're a family franchise of Pick n Pay, we've been here for about twelve years

DENVER: Ok

PAUL: I'm a co-owner, um it was all Pick n Pay corporate store originally, um from 1967, in fact it was the first Pick n Pay that Raymond Ackerman opened himself he bought five existing stores and the first one that he opened was this one, and then over the years, er it you know, it became too small in the whole scheme of things - um Constantia Pick n Pay opened up about a kilometre away, um and that's the flagship supermarket in the group and this one then sort of went into neglect. And then about twelve years ago um, myself and a couple of...and my partner who, um we were both working for Pick n Pay um (they introduced?) franchise stores. Franchising is ...[muffled]...and now it's the busiest out of, out of 200 Pick n Pay family stores in the country. [moving chairs- muffles dialogue]...it's the busiest...

DENVER: It's the busiest store...

PAUL: It has the busiest turnover per square metre in the whole group, it's a very busy little, little outlet ja

ANYA: in Plumstead..?

PAUL: Pick n Pay Plumstead, this one ja

DENVER: And also, coz you get, you get the family store and then you get what, you get other kinds of Pick n Pays, what, what is the difference between...

PAUL: Ok, you have the big model which is the hypermarket of which there are two in Cape Town, in Ottery and in Brackenfell. And then you get a, a large supermarket - they call them superstores, er for example Constantia is one, Kenilworth Centre is one, er...Tygervalley, Tableview um those are what they would call superstores, but they now - they don't use that terminology they're just large supermarkets. And then you get the standard supermarket, about 2000 square metres in size, um and that's just the Pick n Pay supermarket. Then they've got little models which they call the (pantry?) store which is at the waterfront and Camps Bay, but they, they don't really use that terminology anymore but...but that's it, but that's what inspired them. And then up country those little mini-markets those, those are also franchises but we don't have them in the Cape.

DENVER: And the supermarkets, um and the um, the big Pick n Pays are owned by Pick n Pay itself...(?)

PAUL: Corporate Pick n Pay - [muffled]

DENVER:...it's owned by Pick n Pay developer...[muffled]

PAUL: Er ja,

DENVER: ...just you and your partner...

PAUL: We're privately owned, which means that we, that we recruit and pay the staff ourselves. We buy the groceries from Pick n Pay and sell them, um generally it's Pick n Pay prices, er all our selling prices are exactly the same as every other Pick n Pay Corporate in the Western Cape. Hypermarkets is excluded and er and ja except our butchery and our fruit and veg which we set our own prices for, but otherwise we um, we, we we um we fix our prices at Pick n Pay prices - so our difference, is differentiating in terms of services really, that how we try, ja - to be different in that.

DENVER: Thank you. Who would you say is your clientele and where are they located, primarily?

PAUL: Ok our clientele is probably LSM 3-8 across the spectrum, ok, that's a broad spectrum from Constantia, the heart of Constantia through to Southfield, um so that's quite a sort of broad demographic sort of profile of, of customer, um if you wanna racially compose, probably about 40% white 60% coloured, if that's, but that's the gut-feel we don't actually take a (particular bunch). Uum, and, and we get a whole cross section from, from elderly people - there's quite a few old-age homes around here, through to young.. youngsters, er there's a lot of newly married people move into the area, quite a few flats around, um townhouse developments umm, and you can also see that sort of profile change through the day, through the course of the trading day

DENVER: Ok so like...

PAUL: - And then there's [muffled]...is that what you're sort of looking for?

DENVER: Yes, yes that's exactly...ja...good profile, ok... Then the next question says did this influence your locational choice but I suppose I could rephrase that, WHAT influenced your locational choice - like why this specific...

PAUL: Well it's a, it's a little [muffled] because we didn't choose the location - we were, we were offered the franchise, there was, it was a pre-existing location - which goes back to 1967, but but there must have been reasons at that time to have the store here. But it is, I mean in terms of, of accessibility its well positioned, we've got the M3 up there, and then half-way between the M3 and the M5 with (Platkloof) Road inbetween. Umm, high...there's quite a few schools around, quite a lot of, quite sort of densified area at the back here with townhouses and developments going on, um so all in all it's a nice little regional shopping centre<sup>1</sup>, you know without, the shop entertainment attractions of having all sorts of um er other attrac...movie houses and that sort of thing - its really just shopping here. And this centre, its also, its quite nice that's its that's all owned by franchisees or or or owned businesses there are no, there no managed businesses its all owned.

DENVER: Ok

So you've got, you've got a whole lot of entrepreneurs in the sense that they are all hungry for business, they all trying to maximise (the customers)

DENVER: Ok so like they all think alike and got the same...[muffled]

PAUL: Ja ja, we all got the same, we all, ja you know we're all in it for k, and not just to, to run it for some, some corporate thing

DENVER: More of personal question, I was wanting to know, well from my side - um Pick n Pay is very busy (I know as I shop here all the time), but does the size of your premises ever impact on the decision of where you would want to locate, like would you ever want to relocate...?

PAUL: If I could, ideally I would like to take the existing premises and double the whole...double the parking and double the shop size, um but you know, its just not possible, there's just no, nowhere to go. So you know, if something came up across the road - double the size, then I would definitely take it

DENVER: but otherwise -

PAUL: There's nothing here, there's no other reason. I wouldn't move just for the sake of moving, ja you know. In fact what I would do if something came up is is is get a second store, in the vicinity - because there would be enough overflow to warrant having a second shop.

HAYLEY: Er sorry,

PAUL: Ja?

HAYLEY: I would also like to know, would you um consider owning a different Pick n Pay?

PAUL: A second Pick n Pay (?), or or...-

HAYLEY: Ja. Weell, besides not having or not owning this one and choosing to own another one?

PAUL: Sell this one and own another one?

HAYLEY: Yes

PAUL: No not at this stage no, I would, I would have a second one

HAYLEY: Ja

PAUL: No, I would run two

HAYLEY: I'm just thinking of the location...

PAUL: Ja, it's because there's so few sites available here it would be difficult to find a place...

DENVER: I think you've partly answered this question already, but it just says, "how large are the premises and how is this related to the activity and their choice of location?"

PAUL: Alright, the premises are about 2300 square metres in total, of one, of which, about 1250 is trading area

DENVER: Ok

PAUL: It's all trading area

DENVER: And the rest is just obviously all storage area

PAUL: Storage and offices ja

DENVER: Ok umm. This Pick n Pay was always originally here, it never moved from another location?

PAUL: This has been the Pick n Pay from day one

HAYLEY: And when did the other stores start to develop around here, do you know? Like um the blockbusters...

PAUL: In 1995, the store closed - the Pick n Pay corporate store and reo- we closed down for a couple of months then reopened as a Pick n Pay. The other stores, started...they opened about 1997, it was a two phase development ja.

DENVER: Maybe you could, you've already given us a brief history, maybe you could give us a fuller history of like the start, when um, before like you guys took it over, like that history and then when you guys took it over

PAUL: When we came it was probably the lowest, in fact it was the lowest turnover store in the Pick n Pay group in the Western Cape. And in those days they had about 25 stores, umm and now the...umm we've increased the turnover 30 times, 25 times, in that time...[muffled]. But again, its because you've got people who own their own business

DENVER: It's like motivation...

PAUL: It's like owning or renting a house, you tend to look after it if you own the place as opposed to if you're just a tenant there.

ANYA: Ja, that's because it's privately owned

PAUL: Ja, I think that ja ja. Ja and I think that...and our business is hands on business its not, its not brain surgery you know, nothing that needs umm, a masters degree in anything you know...its dealing with people, and and getting to know them and just having a presence you know, people like that you know - the owner of the store being involved with the shop...

DENVER: That's the, that's the next question, so, there's two owners and you're the owner and you're the manager...?

PAUL: There's three of us now we started with two, we got a third guy, third partner involved

DENVER: And as the owner are you also a manager?

PAUL: Yes, ja both, owner/manager. There's always one of us here, you'll come at seven o'clock in the morning or half past eight at night - there's one of us here at any given time

DENVER: And how many managers, other than the owners do you have?

PAUL: Then we have like departmental managers and supervisors, probably about another eight...eight ja, probably eight, ja ja - covering various areas of the store. That would be you'd a bakery manager, you'd a delicatessen manager, you'd have butchery manager, you'd have a perishables manager, you'd have a groceries manager, you'd have a receiving manager and you'd have a frontline manager, you know...[muffled]..come and checkout...[muffled]...at the cash office. Each area has its own, you know, sort of management structure, and they report in to us.

DENVER: And then, and so the three owners coordinate all the managers

PAUL: Er ja

DENVER: Umm...[Muffled]...are you all South Africans?

PAUL: All ja, all South Africans

DENVER: Ok, South African owned

DENVER: Next question says, what is the cost of renting or owning per month per square metre, how does this compare to other locations?

PAUL: Well, we're on a turnover clause, and people with high turnover type, type turnover - it affects us, it works against us almost so our rental is considerably more than you'd pay at other supermarket space - we pay about a R100 per square metre and the growing rate out there is about 45 - 50 rand, because of our turnover. So it's a problem because of our own making almost, you know.

DENVER: Because you're so good they charge you more

[LAUGHTER]

PAUL: Ja and also if you look at retailers, your (acupendant or your lagnant/magnant) is also your food store and then, and then they make all the rental shops around it. But this isn't a huge premises they can't make [banging/muffled]...its not ideal, so you know, we also pay a bit because of that.

DENVER: Ok so you you, Pick n Pay doesnt own this you obviously pay rent

PAUL: No we rent it ja, we've got the lease, we dont own the building, the building is owned by Investec - I should tell you, that its privately owned but its managed by Growth Point.

DENVER: Including the owners, where would you say yourselves and your workers all live? like in gen..., generally

PAUL: Ja, we we, we tend to, we prefer to take most of our staff from the immediate area, so we go from Plumstead, Retreat, Grassy Park - most of those sort of areas. What's happened over the years is that some of our staff have moved out to Mitchell's Plain and that, so we've got, we've got staff from Mitchell's Plain to Wynberg - that sort of spread. But the majority of them come from Retreat, um Plumstead, Grassy Park, those are the sort of areas that you would...the major staff come from - probably 80% of them are from those areas and the rest are - including us, I mean we just live up the road here - we all sort of within five minutes...ag, the managers and the owners.

DENVER: And how would this affect um, how do you recruit if you wanted to keep the people that you employ from within a certain area - how does that affect your recruiting?

PAUL: Ja, we try when we are recruiting to take people from the nearby areas, for a couple of reasons. A, you wanna keep the - you know you're paying the money you wanna sort of keep the business in the area - you know you try to increase the local list of customers as well - it's good business. Um you also want them nearby, if there's ever a staff shortage or whatever you wanna get someone in quickly, you know. We provide transport home in the evenings because we trade until 8 o'clock. Um every staff member who works on a late shift, in other words after 7 o'clock at night is given transport home. So obviously you dont wanna...we have a fleet of taxis that we pay to do that. Some of the staff also do it for the other staff, to earn a bit of money. But you dont want them to be travelling far, you want them to get home as soon as possible, you know, they have families - you dont want them to get home at 10 o'clock at night or whatever. I would say all of our staff are home by 9pm/9:15pm the latest. Because we close at 8pm, the last customer leaves probably about half past 8, finished up closed up by twenty to 9, ja...and they're gone by then.

DENVER: Um, you wanted to...I think a lot of people that work here - I know quite a few people that work here and a lot of them are students...

PAUL: Ja

DENVER: or at least some of them are students, how would you, like if you had to recruit the staff, would you go through a recruiting agency?

PAUL: Ja, no - all done ourselves, we interview them all ourselves and we...I I'm for example on the admin side of business, so I will interview every single frontline person that comes through here and see if they fit the bill - we wanna make sure they uphold the reputation for good customer service

DENVER: Would you place ads in the newspaper...?

PAUL: No no

DENVER: ...or would you do it by word of mouth...?

PAUL: Word of mouth, word of mouth and people just putting their names and CVs down when they come in here because

they're in the area and they're looking for a job, ja. we employ about 300 people of which about 180 are permanent and

about 120 are part-time, students and weekend casuals and that, umm and its very labour intensive business, there is very

little that is mechanised in our business, whether you've got cashiers and packers to... [muffled]...at the counters, or

floor or shop packers, they all, its all manual work, you know

ANYA: The majority of it is manual work?

PAUL: All of its manual, there's very little that mechanised in our business

DENVER: So if...coz you said you offer them services, transport back after a certain time period...?

PAUL: Ja, you havet to ja

DENVER: So it's there responsibility obviously to get to here, to work

PAUL: They find their way to work, they come by taxi or by train or by bus...and some of them have their own cars

DENVER: But...

PAUL: But the majority probably come by taxi, er umm...one of the questions was what was the cost of getting here...?

DENVER: Ja what...

PAUL: Well I think the Grassy Park area is about R5, er from Mitchell's Plain I think it's about...er if they go to Wynberg

its something like R8 and then R5 to here, so something around R12 or R13 - something like that for the Mitchell's Plain people one way.

DENVER: And the racial, gender and language characteristics of your workforce, how would you describe that?

PAUL: Overall about 90% coloured and about 10% white or black - probably 5% white and 5% black, if you, you know... . Umm the language, probably...I dont know, I dont know what their home languages are,I'd say probably 60% English and 40%

Afrikaans..er ja

DENVER: And most of your clientelle is probably English

PAUL: Ja, our clientelle, is probably about, now, coz I know we get about a thousand YOU magazines every week and we get

about 80 Huisgenoots. [LAUGHTER] Probably about 5 or 6% Afrikaans and about 94/95% English speaking

ANYA: Um, so do you prefer to hire English speaking staff...considering that you...?

PAUL: No,no there's no preference there at all. We speak English to them, but we all taal a bit, we all speak a bit of

Afrikaans too, but um English is sort of the language of choice ja.

DENVER: How would you break down the...we've always talked about people with high skilled, medium skilled and low skilled employees, if you had to break down your employees, including management, how would you...where would you put their skills levels?

PAUL: Probably about, 15% medium skilled, 5% high skilled and probably 80% unskilled, well well when they come to us they are

unskilled but we train them in the areas they need to work in - coz people who come who have no cashier experience, become cashiers within a month, you know, they know how to operate a till

ANYA: Um, what is your minimum qualification for your unskilled? Do they have matric or less?

PAUL: Um, probably standard eight, grade ten ja.

DENVER: And who would make up your medium skilled employees

PAUL: It would be like the super...the manager type level people and supervisors and people on the receiving area and the admin people ja, that's what I would term as the medium skilled employees...I dont know is a high-skilled...?

DENVER: Maybe how would you define high skilled, medium skilled and low skilled that sort of thing?

PAUL: Ja..it's difficult to say coz you've got...in our business you can take someone with a grade ten and they can become a

very good manager, soo...maybe not from a qualifications point of view but I would say anybody that is at supervisory or

manager level or above, or or or is in charge of staff, so anyone who has a supervisory role would be about medium skilled...

and most of those skills are trained - they would be on the job training, and there are various courses involved - that our

head office offers and that we do ourselves...[muffled]

DENVER: This business, you can see someone, they might not be highly trained - they might only have grade ten but you can see

they have the ability and you can take them and train them into whatever you...

PAUL: Ja ja. Hard work ethic, good customer...good personal skills - those sort of things are all what you look for - which

you might not, when you first you know, interview them pick up. So they come in as unskilled but they work hard, ja they work hard.

HAYLEY: Um would you say that the supervisors and managers and admin - they all have matric?

PAUL: Ja, I would, ja ja.

HAYLEY: And then the unskilled?

PAUL: Um ja, certainly all the admin people would all have matric, but some of the supervisors not necessarily you know. Our

butchery manageress has got a standard eight, but I tell you she's a very capable manageress. One of the two butchery managers

from (around) here that is very good

DENVER: That's actually what I wanted to know, like coz if you're a baker you actually have to have some skill, if you're a

butcher you have to know - I mean you can't cut a piece of meat and not know what you're doing.

PAUL: No ja. They don't come in with any pre- or with having gone to any course or whatever, they'll sort of learn from scratch,

so you know you'll get a blockman who's been there for years and he'll show someone how to cut a lamb and they'll pick it up

quite easily

DENVER: That's very interesting. This seems like an obviously easy answer but, is the service provided face to face or by

telephone or email?

PAUL: Face to face, there's nothing...there's nothing...I mean there's a little bit of telephonic interaction where people

phone in and ask you whether you've got baked beans or what time are you trading 'til, and that sort of thing but that's

minimal. Um a little bit of email correspondence there are people who've got a little home delivery service...

DENVER: Oh yes, that's what I wanted to ask...

PAUL: Ja, it's smaller. So they'll email us their orders, but ja that's the sort of contact...but 99.9% of it is face to face

ja.

KYLIE: Um, I meant to ask this earlier you mentioned that you have a third partner...is there a special reason for that or?

PAUL: Ja just to take the pressure off...ja to take some of the load. Ja the first year we worked we started, we worked seven

days a week and we trade till eight o'clock at night, you know, we've got families and that too, so it was more quality of

life than anything else ja.

DENVER: Correct me if I'm wrong, so the location, there's not much that affected location um choice of location, because

you...Raymond Ackerman bought the store when it was going downhill...

PAUL: No no, he started it he built it from scratch, ok, there was nothing here, it was an open field - that was 1967...

DENVER: Ok, he just chose the location...?

PAUL: Ja, there must have been reasons at that time for choosing it, maybe because of the link to the growing area, growth

area and ja you know...this this store was here before Constantia was open, so I think Constantia does...[muffled]...

farmland so it hadn't been developed at all, um and there was more of a...(probably/right here) on the main road as well, you

know it was like 500m to the main road - in those days, you know, the main road was like the main sort of 'feeder' into...and

near the station - the railway line played a real important part in those days you know, Southern suburbs, people going...

[muffled]. Um and Wynberg, Plumstead area - has always been a sort of fairly mixed area too, so there's always been a lot of

um, residential and there's quite a lot of businesses in Wynberg and Plumstead area, so I think those...

DENVER: And you basically, when you took it over, you had the location already...

PAUL: We had an existing location, so we took it over in 1995, it was already here but it had gone downhill, it had been

neglected...[muffled]...was in (shambles)

DENVER: But you were happy with the location, you just realized the shop...?

PAUL: Ja, there was huge potential, there was a big upside you know, and when we heard that they were gonna redevelop the centre that was even more attractive as well.

DENVER: What were the other things that were attractive, like when you came in and you saw how it was?

PAUL: The profile of customer...on the doorstep of Constantia, um Plumstead, it was also after the new South Africa, so we

knew that segregated areas would fall away, it would become more (comfortable), it would become more aspirational - people

would sort of 'move up' as their personal welfare increased and that sort of happened over the years, you know, Plumstead

sort of become quite a desirable area - it's very centralised, all those sorts of amenities...[muffled]...so you know, you

wont get a house for under 2 million...

DENVER: Not anymore ja...

PAUL: (When we came here), with two hundred thousand you could get a house you know. Er, the people who wanna be in this area

Plumstead...its a nice area to be in

DENVER: When you, before you bought this store did you ever have the idea that you were wanting to move it somewhere else or

was it always...

PAUL: No no, always here, ja

DENVER: Anything that would keep you from moving it away or...what are the negative aspects of being here?

PAUL: No negatives you know, the business has just taken off, there's nothing that would make me wanna move. We've heard

rumours about them wanting to redevelop the roads around here you know,

connect...[muffled]...road...round the back and over

Victoria bridge, you know where I'm talking about? Just down there where the...[muffled]. But I mean, I don't think that'll

have any effect on our business - it's not gonna happen in the foreseeable future, it's a very expensive undertaking to do ja,

so I can't see that happening soon. Um there is no compelling reason to wanna move from here...

DENVER: Ok, so this is prime prime location...?

PAUL: Ja ja, there's also a whole lot of development going on across the road here, these are all...these houses initially I

think they were built for white returning (services) officers...[muffled]...war, and you can see they're quite sub-economic

places. There's also, there's a reclaim, a land reclaim thing, across the road in the middle, um some people who were chucked

out over the Group Areas Act in the early ('60s) are now moving back in. There was a big open field, if you go down there

across the road you'll see it, there's a large development going on there now. Um ja, there's actually not much places to go

you know, there's the old (Three/Tree Arts), they're talking about doing a development down there - you know where the (Three/

Tree) Arts is?

HAYLEY: Ja

PAUL: sort of a landmark in Cape Town

DENVER: But they've been talking about that ages

PAUL: Ja ja, I know, but ja we'd be interested in a retail centre there, it would make sense...a nice sort of catchment area...

DENVER: So would you be willing to leave this place?

PAUL: No no, wouldn't leave wouldn't leave, I would add a second, have a second store ja

ANYA: Um sorry, what are the developments happening around here, is it apartment blocks or...?

PAUL: Ja um, well there's that land claim area there...

ANYA: Ja..

PAUL: There's some, there's some development of apartments going on just down the road here near the (Three) Arts called the (Citadel) - its a nine storey apartment, um, there's an old age home going up just across the way somewhere down there I'm not sure what it's called...

DENVER: And just to the left of the main road, the low like to the right of the municipality over the bridge, theres lots of developments going on over there

PAUL: Oh, ja ja, there's quite a lot ja ja ja, ja

DENVER: Are there anything...other thoughts on locataion that you can think about?...I think I've asked all the questions I can think about...

PAUL: No...I mean we're well located in terms of access to road, infrustructure, rail down the road, um the M5...

HAYLEY: How important is it..?

PAUL: What?

HAYLEY: Being close to roads and railways...?

PAUL: It is important especially for taxi's you know, a lot of people wanna shop and taxis...like an informal taxi rank across

the way here, well dropping off point here - that is important because you know, people are now shopping and taking stuff home, um

and obviously we're cheaper than the spaza shops in the townships so people tend to shop here...

HAYLEY: Really? Is it cheaper?

PAUL: Spaza shop is expensive

KYLIE: I suppose if you're near railways it provides for a broad clientelle, because people with cars can access you as well as people who use mainly rail and taxis...

PAUL: Ja ja, I mean when you near a railway line then you're not restricted - people can come from Simonstown or or if

they're living in Simonstown they can actually take stuff home, it broadens your sort of catchment area. Supermarkets tend to

trap about a 4km radius of customer, they're normally work - when they do the demographic studies they normally look at

the 4km thing as 80% of your clientele, then they, they move it out. Um if you ever, quite a good source of information if

you're doing research on retail, is AC Neelsing and a company called Douglas Parker, they do all these demographic studies for

retailers who wanna go into areas - they look at the profile and the number of households, and the disposable income and they

might have websites that you can go and have a look at you know. And if you go see them I'm sure you know, they you know,

would be happy to give you information. You ask like 'when you advise a retailer, what are the factors that go into it?'

DENVER: Oh yes, about locational choice..

PAUL: Sorry...?

DENVER: about locational choice

PAUL: Ja ja ja, ja. Ja, we would never have used them because we were going into an existing site.

Although Pick n Pay, I

think, (also) does studies all the time.

HAYLEY: Um and in terms of...do you have to transport goods into your own store?

PAUL: No, our suppliers transport them

HAYLEY: Oh so...

PAUL: So we have...we dont have a central...we have small warehouse facility, most of our goods come from direct store delivery-

HAYLEY: Oh ok

PAUL: -from suppliers which has its own logistical problems you know - you can only do it at certain hours of the day because of the time constraints. Ideally it would be nice to get a night fill or night off-load, but there's security issues there so you know, we can't. But we've gotta try and schedule the trucks to come in 'coz we've got a recieving bay and the flow of traffic is not that great at the back there, coz we've got a recieving area that's shared with the car park - and traditionally retailers tend to keep their recieving area at the back of the site to where the parking is, but this is the...[muffled]...we inherited.

HAYLEY: And obviously its more convenient since your close to the M5 and the M3 and more deliveries can come through...

PAUL: Ja, its easier - quicker from that point of view - they dont have the back roads to negotiate...ja

DENVER (to the group): Are there any other questions you can think about that you wanted to ask?

KYLIE: You've covered most of them...

PAUL: Um, do you need my phone number as well? I mean you're welcome to phone me and I'll help you where I can...

ANYA: Which Pick n Pay would you say has the worst location?

PAUL: Um, the worst location from a logistical point of view is the one in Strand Street in Cape Town - those guys battle hey - they have to get deliveries at night...you can't send a Coke truck...do you know where it is?

HAYLEY: Ja

PAUL: ...[muffled]...you can't send a Coke truck in there during the day its chaos...so they have to recieve...so from that point of view - I mean it's well located from a customer point of view, but ja you know....Um...ja, I wouldn't say they're any really - I mean they wouldn't choose a badly located site...the historical sites...Waterfront has the same problem as Strand Street...round the back there, but again, its a very successful store because its got the (feat) you know...

DENVER: Camps Bay is oddly located

PAUL: Camps Bay ja, Camps Bay is probably the worst located store because they can't...they've got not store in there as well - they've just gotta keep servicing that thing...you know come down (Lever) drive...[muffled]...all that, so ja, probably from a location point of view, but its well postioned and does well in summmer...on the beach ja. Um, Claremont store - I don't know if you knew that one...?

EVERYONE: Ja

PAUL: That was also a mission - I mean that parking space...[muffled]...traffic space...if you're coming off the main road from the Cape Town side you'd have traffic backed up and it would cause congestion. If you were coming from the Wynberg side on the main road, you couldn't do a right turn in there, you'd have to go round the back and come round again...but they're redeveloping that whole...I don't know if you've seen it?

EVERYONE: Ja we have..

PAUL: Massive hey? Massive area - and that store is opening in September - state of the art Pick n Pay with all the latest...

ANYA: Is is just gonna be apartment blocks and then Pick n Pay?

PAUL: Virgin Active are going in there I think, with their head office - the regional head office and a gym, then Pick n Pay downstairs and there's a couple of line shops - you know the usual, and then quite a lot of apartments...office - couple of offices and then I think there's quite a lot of parking space on top. It's quite nicely positioned you know, Claremont. I know they're redesigning - Claremont's main road is closing, and they're gonna take it...re-route the main road down the back next to the railway line

DENVER: Are you serious?

PAUL: Ja, Claremont Main Road will become a pedestrian mall

DENVER: That's gonna be nice

PAUL: In about two or three years ja - and you can see already what they've done with the link, how they've...with that Cavendish Connect now-

EVERYONE: Ja,

PAUL: -Quite cleverly made it a part...coz you know the link was always a bit dead

EVERYONE: Ja

PAUL: Now it's all part of the same building. I think Old Mutual has done that - they've done a nice job, but ja, that whole Claremont main road - it will be interesting to see how they re-route the traffic...

ANYA: Is that gonna be done by 2010?

PAUL: I don't know..

HAYLEY: And traffic flow is gonna be so congested

PAUL: Ja I mean, are they gonna make like a...[muffled]...[laughter]

DENVER: And where's the taxi rank gonna go?

PAUL: Ooh that's (big)...I think that's maybe gonna go on the other side, you know by the railway line - I think some of the buses sometimes go there or the taxis go there...?

DENVER: And there's two fields there...

PAUL: Ja ja ja, I think so

DENVER: Thank you so much for letting us interview you

PAUL: Ja sure, is there anything else? if there's anything you wanna know - I'm giving it to you from a retail point of view you know, from my side...I'm not a town planning expert or anything [laughter]

ANYA: If we need to some time, could we speak to some of your workers just in case...?

PAUL: What do you wanna know? Just about how their transport and that...?

EVERYONE: Ja ja, and cost...and so on

PAUL: Ja, just let us know, you know

DENVER: It's more to do with transport routes, coz none of us know the transport routes...and we'd just wanna know

ANYA: Ja coz often they have to take two, three taxis just to get...

PAUL: Ja, that they do...coz Wynberg is like the hub, so most people come into Wynberg...um the buses, the buses are cheaper - the bus from Mitchells Plain is about R9 incoming and that will take them straight to Plumstead, but it's not as reliable - they work at set times and if you miss one bus then you got to sort of wait another hour, whereas taxis are there all the time, so that's the problem with buses. Trains don't really go down that way and if you're in the Southern suburbs probably come in by train - train is still the (cheapest)

HAYLEY: Do you know more or less how long - as in like time - how long they travel?

PAUL: I don't...ja...I think, I don't know - about 30 to 40 minutes? I don't know...In the evening it's quieter, takes less time to get home but in the morning it's more congested, sort of takes them longer you know.

DENVER: I have one more question-

PAUL: But - I'm sorry - Sunday is a nightmare, just so unreliable...buses and trains and taxis are also less frequent on

Sundays - remember we trade seven days a week so we need them

DENVER: You said you'd possibly be able to get us contacts for a Pick n Pay in town and a Pick n Pay in the Northern suburbs

PAUL: Ja the Pick n Pay in Strand Street - but you must look in the phonebook - is a guy called Tony Godfrey, that's a family

/franchise store as well ja

DENVER: Like that would be like family store owner and...

PAUL: Ja ja, he owns that one...umm...what um, you say one in the Northern suburbs?

DENVER: We just trying to do one in the Southern suburbs, one in town and one in the Northern suburbs

PAUL: Umm...I'm just trying to think, there's Brackenfell, there's Goodwood...there's one near Durbanville called (Gradendaal)

which is near...[muffled]...the little model airplane place there near the back road as you go out of Durbanville...

DENVER: I know there's a new mall in Durbanville where there's a new Pick n Pay - it's like a mini-mall, but I can't remember

where it is

PAUL: Ja, I know that the guy at Gradendaal is quite a helpful chap, a chap called Stuart Macsimon...if you can't, if his

number is not in the phonebook, phone Pick n Pay headoffice and they'll give you the number, its 021 658 1000, and ask them

for the Gradendaal number ja

HAYLEY: Um is (Velgedaat), Pick n Pay Vaalgedaat a family store?

PAUL: (Velgedaat)...(Velgedaat)...Velgemoed?

HAYLEY: (Velgedaat) - off Jip de Jaager-

PAUL: Ja..

HAYLEY: -coming from the N1, somewhere there - is that a family store? I don't think it's a corporate...

PAUL: It's not called (Glen Garry) is it?

HAYLEY: Oh, I don't know, it might be

PAUL: Ja, it's quite a new one...?

HAYLEY: I think so...

PAUL: I think that will be Glen Garry - I think that would be a corporate

HAYLEY: Oh is it a corporate?

PAUL: Ja ja. Um...ja, Willowbrige - that's another one worth trying...no leave it, those should be fine - if they don't, if

they say they can't see you then phone me and I'll give you another guy,ja

KYLIE: Thankyou very much

EVERYONE: Ja, thank you very much

PAUL: Pleasure, ja ja, I hope that it helped....[muffled]

HAYLEY: We definitely will [laughter]

**Date of Interview:** 16 June 2008

**Company Name:** Sharon Taljaard Consulting

**Interviewee:** Sharon Taljaard

**Interviewer:** Denver Grigg

**Participants:** Anya van Wyk and Hayley Petersen

**Transcriber:** Denver Grigg

**Business Address:** 89 Pluto Street, Plumstead, 7800

**Tel. number: 021 797 2154**

**Premises Description:** The business premises are located in Pluto Street in the suburb of Plumstead. Pluto Street is above the M5 highway, but below the railway line running from Simons Town to Cape Town via Wynberg. Pluto Street intersects with Dick Burton and Southfield Roads which are the two main thoroughfares in this section of Plumstead. Sharon Taljaard runs her business from her home. The business is located in her old garage, which was first converted into a study. She then converted this study into a flat and in the process of conversion added a kitchen and doorway onto the side of the old study. She subsequently hired this out to two sets of tenants for approximately 2 years. At which point in time she relocated her business from two bedrooms in her house into the flat. Approximately a month ago she took the kitchen cupboards out the kitchen, extended the kitchen further into her property and converted the previous kitchen into an office for 2 employees. Her business premises, therefore consists of two offices and a bathroom which is not used with access to the offices but is accessed via a separate entrance for clients and employees.

Sharon Taljaard who is an English speaking South African runs her business, *Sharon Taljaard Consulting* from her home which she owns in Plumstead. It has always been operated from these premises. It is registered as a closed corporation (CC). Her business involves two aspects which are financial accounting which she has done for many years. This involves accounting, books and financials for various companies. The second aspect involves sectional title management. Sharon was able to move into this avenue of business, because she had previously been an estate agent. It is a requirement for a sectional title manager to have a fidelity fund certificate. To receive this certificate Sharon had passed the estate agency's exam which allowed her to register with the estate agents board and receive her fidelity fund certificate. She only has many years of experience in accounting, but no formal qualifications.

Sectional title management involves managing flats and business parks. These are sectional title schemes which have been developed shortly after the developer has handed over the building/business park to the owners. The owners then nominate the trustees. It would seem she is accountable to the trustees. These schemes are situated all over Cape Town. Two are located in Bellville, ten in Milnerton, three in Muizenberg and one in Ottery, Wynberg and Plumstead respectively. Her older accounting background fits well with the sectional title managing which includes managing the financials of her sectional title schemes.

Her financial accounting clients are situated relatively locally to her. They include *The Bed Shop* (a mattress retailer), a steel manufacturer in Ottery, a packing wholesaler in Constantia (who supplies packaging to Pick 'n Pay, Macro and so forth), a restaurant in Diepriver and a hair dressing salon in Plumstead.

Sharon locates her business in her home in Plumstead for numerous reasons. She has adequate space for her business at home and because of this it is economically beneficial in terms of rent for her business to be located there. She seems to deeply dislike travelling and leaving her home. Her location at home greatly minimises this inconvenience. It allows her to work in a secure environment, because she often works early in the morning and late at night and she does not have to leave her house to do this.

In 2004 Sharon was the owner and sole employee, but over the last few years she has employed two additional full time staff and a third very occasional staff member. This indicates that her business has experienced growth since she started out. In light of this expansion and her specific preference for working from home and dislike of travelling, she has tentatively decided that her business has reached capacity in her sectional title

management section. She has decided to make this decision, because she does not want the added responsibility of extra body corporates and does not want to expand her premises any further to allow for additional office space for more staff members. Further growth in this section would mean opening an office in a business park/complex, which does not suit her. She however, still has the capacity to increase her accounting clientele.

*Sharon Taljaard Consulting* operates out of a converted flat and kitchen with a separate entrance. The flat is attached to the front of her house. The former kitchen has recently been expanded further to accommodate a third employee more easily. The converted flat was previously rented to two sets of tenants over a period of approximately two years. After the second tenant moved out within an agreed time frame Sharon moved her business from two spare bedrooms within her house into the flat. When her first tenants initially moved into the flat she operated from one bedroom, which later expanded into the second bedroom.

Sharon's current business has been operating since 2004, but she in fact started working from home since 1990. She operated out of the same office space as now, but in 1990 it was a converted garage with the garage doors still in place. Interestingly then her current offices (and at certain times in this period her house as well) have been utilised as a form of economic earnings since 1990 predominantly as a location for her business, but also as a flat for rent. Sharon pays rent to herself, but at a third or half of the market related price for an office of 38m<sup>2</sup> to 40m<sup>2</sup> which is the size of her flat. She imagines a market related price would be about R5000 per month.

The reason Sharon started *Sharon Taljaard Consulting* afresh and formerly in 2004 was because she temporarily relocated to the United Kingdom in 2003. It took one year before her business had grown enough for her to consider employing a first temporary staff member. This employee was a former boarder of hers and honours in accounting student at the University of Cape Town (UCT) working towards her first board exam. She would work twenty hours per week. In 2006, in addition to still employing the honours student she started employing a full time person. It was then that she started operating out of two bedrooms. She felt that this use of the extra bedroom was invading her personal space. She could however deal with this, because she knew that the tenant in her flat would be vacating it in November 2006. She then moved her business into the flat in December 2006.

Initially, when Sharon was hiring full time staff she was hoping to recruit a bookkeeper/personal assistant (PA) with Excel and Word experience. She struggled to find someone with these requirements and hired a lady<sup>1</sup> who was an experienced PA and a qualified estate agent. Sharon then decided to train her in a certain amount of financials which allowed her to be utilised as an all-rounder. Sharon hired her second employee<sup>2</sup> as a receptionist to be trained as a data capturer on Pastel and as a bookkeeper. The third very part-time person<sup>3</sup> deals with the business's correspondence and answers the telephone. She has previous experience as a PA. The coloured lady is predominantly English, because she attended an English school. She however, comes from an English and Afrikaans background. The two white ladies are English speakers. After in-house ☺ training Sharon classifies the skills<sup>4</sup> of her staff from medium to high-skilled. She believes that they would be competitive in the market place, because they are very efficient.

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<sup>1</sup> She is a 37 year old white female married with 2 children. She stays in the nearby suburb of Bergvliet. Sharon estimates it takes her 10 minutes to commute to work in her car. Her hours are relatively flexible. They are normally from 08:30-16:00 excluding a lunch break or from 08:30-17:00 with an hour lunch.

<sup>2</sup> She is a 30 year old coloured female with a son. She stays in the suburb of Retreat which borders Bergvliet. She travels to work by car. She works from 08:00 to 17:00 presumably with an hours lunch break. Her hours are also slightly flexible.

<sup>3</sup> She is a 67 year old white retired female. She stays in the nearby suburb of Constantia. Her hours are very flexible and they depend when she can come and help. She commutes to work by car.

<sup>4</sup> All three employees have grade 12. They do not have any formal tertiary qualifications.

Sharon has a somewhat unique employment requirement, which does not pertain to qualification levels. It is very important to her that a person she employees does not stay more than a specific mileage away from the premises of Sharon Taljaard Consulting. She stated this requirement as follows,

I didn't want to employ anybody who had to travel further than a half an hour away from where I am whether it is by train or 15 minutes by car, because I felt you have far happy staff when they can get to work quicker and get home quicker and you don't waist time.

She further says she "[...] was not prepared to take anybody that stayed a certain kilometre a way where from the office is." She recruited the first person she hired by advertising the position in the two local newspapers *Constantiaberg* and *the Tattler*. She specifically did not advertise in the *Cape Argus* or *Cape Times*, because they circulate throughout Cape Town while the two local newspapers were circulated only within the southern suburbs. She hoped this would generally bring in applicants from areas closely situated to her. It was also a requirement of hers that all applicants email her their details. Telephonic application was not an option. With regards to the remaining two full time employees<sup>5</sup> she has known them for many years and so did not need to recruit formally for these two positions.

With regards to the formal application process and choosing the successful applicant she states that, "I wasn't actually in a position to make logical decisions." She does not expand why this was the case, but says that her daughter and son-in-law helped her with the decision. At the time she needed a person immediately and so was much pressurised to hire a person that fit her requirements and came at a salary she could afford to pay. In addition to the requirements previously mentioned she also required someone who would not be using the position as a stepping stone to a better job. She required, "[...] somebody who really needed the job and was going to have staying power with me." She received numerous applications, but these specific requirements ruled out 80% of applicants. A number of the applicants were students<sup>6</sup> or people seeking salaries that were, "[...] absolutely astronomical." At the end of the process there were four suitable applicants. She concludes, "So at the end of day it all happened quite suddenly and to my advantage."

Sharon's female only workforce is not by design. In her formal recruiting process she did not have any male applicants. It is also her opinion that young males would not find the work and the environment challenging enough. In contrast, the ladies she employees are all mothers and they are more interested in coming to work and then going home to their families. In contrast she jokingly said, "[...] where as males need to go out hunting."

Continuing the extremely high value she places of been able to work from home and rarely having to leave home the two sections of her business compliment this desire. She estimates 90% to 95% of her sectional title management are done via telephone, email and fax. Generally, she only needs to leave her offices 5% of the time for annual general meetings (AGMs) or trustees meetings. She never has to leave home for her financial accounting side, because her clients bring her all of the needed documentation and if anything does need to be discussed they have meetings at her house.

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<sup>5</sup> That is, the coloured lady and the 67 year old female.

<sup>6</sup> That is, using her business as a stepping stone to a better job.

Verbatim Transcription:

## SECTION ONE: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY OF THE COMPANY:

### QUESTIONS COVERED:

- **What commodities does it produce or what services does it offer?**
- **Who are the clients? Where are they located? Did this influence their locational choice?**
- **How large are the premises and how is this related to their activity and their choice of location?**

**Denver:** The first question is about economic activity of your company. Does your company have a name or not?

**Sharon:** Yes, Sharon Taljaard Consulting and it's a CC company.

**Denver:** Maybe you can just describe to us what you do; what it does basically so we, they can know what you do.

**Sharon:** Okay, there are two aspects...um...I decided on a consulting...um...name within Sharon Taljaard as opposed to an agency or something like that, because there's two aspects to...um...my business or what we actually do...um...the one aspect is something that I've done for many many years and that's...ah...financial accounting. So I do, I do do accounting, books, financials and that sort for certain companies. The other aspect of the business is...um...what is called sectional title...um...management. Um...I am a...um, um...an estate agent as well. I did my board course in 1990, but only...um...functioned as an estate agent for a brief year and then decided not to do it. So to be able to...um...manage sectional title schemes like your flats and your business parks and things like that you have to have...um...done, completed your, your board course with the estate agents board and you have to register with the estate agents board and have a fidelity fund certificate with the estate agents board. So you're governed by the act that has been...ah...provided for you. So there is the two, two aspects: one is the managing side and the other one is the...um...financial accounting and obviously with the sectional title schemes...um...my previous knowledge of accounting stands me in good stead, because I am able to manage and do the financials of...um...the body corporates, because each body corporate functions very independently of the other. They have got their own little set of books, they are governed by their own trustees and...um...you basically are employed by the trustees and...um...although you work independently of them you, you, you are governed by what their needs and requirements are. So there is the two aspects of my business.

**Denver:** Okay. Thank you. And who, who...

**Hayley:** Sorry, can I just ask quickly: ...um...what does CC stand for?

**Sharon:** a closed corporation.

**Hayley:** Ok, thanks.

**Denver:** Who are your clients aunty Sharon?

**Sharon:** Um...I have on the accounting side or the financial side I've got...um, um...one is a retail. They retail mattresses, beds...you know the bed shop. One is a manufacturer, a steel manufacturer...um...

**Denver:** This is the book, this is where you do the accounting side?

**Sharon:**...actual just the accounting side, yes. Um...one is a supplier, so he's a middle man. He's a, he's a wholesaler...um... and he supplies...um...packaging to various...um...like Pick 'n Pay and Macro and that sort of thing. Um...and then one is a restaurant and...um...so I do their final books for the restaurant. The, another one is hairdressing salon. Um...and ja so it varies.

**Denver:** And, and where are they located those, those...?

**Sharon:** They are all very local to Plumstead. Um...restaurants in Diepriver. Hairdressing salon is Plumstead. Um...the packaging, he operates out of Constantia. The...um...steel industry, the steel...um...manufacturer is in...um...Ottery. So they are all pretty local.

**Denver:** Okay. And your sectional title, the, the other side of your business...where, who are those clients?

**Sharon:** Okay, those clients are...um...are schemes which have had to be formulated with in a short period after the developer has actually handed over the building. And trustees are nominated by all the members each, all the owners who own the sectional title schemes...um...nominate the trustees. And they are situated all over Cape Town. Um...I've, there is two in Bellville, there's...um...there's three out in Muizenberg, one in Ottery...um..., one in Diepriver, one in Plumstead, one in Wynberg and then about ten out at Milnerton.

**Denver:** Okay, so they are located in both Northern and Southern suburbs?

**Sharon:** Yes.

**Denver:** Okay, what influenced. I'm just going to rephrase the question: what influenced that you decided to do your business from home, because the question is: did this influence your locational choice, where your business is located? But what, what would you say influenced you from having your business at home a lot? From having premises somewhere else and...

**Sharon:** Okay, well where, from the sectional title side it doesn't, it doesn't matter where you have it, at all. It doesn't matter at all. Because of the cost of renting premises...um...it was far more feasible for me to actually operate from home, because I can...um..., because I have the space...um...I was able to, to work from home. And because I work long hours, early in the mornings and late at night it, from a security point of view it is far better that I actually operate from my home premises than, than actually go and rent, rent premises. So there is a number of aspects why I actually chose to continue operating from home.

Question: Does she know if it is legal to run a business from home? Did she need to get permission from the city council?

## SECTION TWO: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PREMISES:

### QUESTIONS COVERED:

- **Location**
- **Owned or rented**
- **Has the company always been located at these premises or did it move from other premises? Why?**
- **Has the company expanded onto these premises from another site?**
- **Why did the company choose this location?**

**Denver:** And do you see that continuing in the future or if you, if your business expands even bigger, cause it is expanding. Do you, do you think you will keep it over here or would you even expand it even bigger, would go elsewhere or would just keep your business the size it is?

**Sharon:** I'm, I have tentatively decided that...um...I will...um... keep the business [the size it is], we, we are at our capacity at the moment. Um...if I do get any bigger it would have to be taking on one very big body corporate. In which case I would have to employ another person, but...um...I could take on more just accounting clients the size that we are now I can take on a few more accounting clients and, but not body corporates. Um...I don't, because of my age...um, I don't see myself wanting to get too big, because then the responsibility is even greater. And at the moment it's...um...it's more than I can actually handle for the amount of time that I'm spending. So I'm hoping that I never have to...um... relocate. Should I have to relocate it would be looking at premises very close by or utilising a property that I buy within the area, close to home...um...that, that wouldn't take, that I wouldn't have to go travel, travel too much.

**Denver:** Okay, okay I just wanna confirm that you obviously own your premises.

**Sharon:** That's right.

**Denver:** Okay, the next question says: has the company always been located at these premises or did it move from somewhere else.

**Sharon:** No it was started off here at these premises in 2004, but not in this office as it is.

**Denver:** Maybe you can describe how you developed your house.

**Sharon:** Okay, initially this was a garage...um...that where the other office is, was the outside...um...courtyard or yard. The wall that you see there is the...um...the garage wall of my next door neighbour and I had to get

permission to utilise that...um..., but when I started off in 1990 working from home just on accounting not on sectional title...um...I, actually this became an office from about 1990. Um...It wasn't like it is now. Um...the old doors and everything, even the garage door was still up. So it was only much later that...um...we built up the way it is now and then changed it into a flat for two young male students who were desperate to come and live here with me.

**Denver:** Oh, we were desperate too. I tell you that.

**Sharon:** And it was lovely having them here. But so I then operated from...um...one of the bedrooms in my house, because it was just myself and it was very hard starting up again after I'd been away for so long, because I went overseas for about 8 months...um...and so I kicked off...um...again in the backroom and a year later I had...um...a UCT student come and help me...um...who also you used to live with me at one stage. Um...she was doing her post-grad. What was she doing?

**Denver:** She was doing her honours in accounting.

**Sharon:** She was doing her honours towards her first board exam and she then worked half days for me. Four days a week. She would work 5 hours, 20 hours a week she worked for me. And then in 2006 I then employed a full time person. Ja, I employed a full time person and...um...then we were operating out of two bedrooms, because...um...the flat was still let to somebody else. Um...so I was operating out of two bedrooms and just had my own space in my bedroom and the lounge so it became quite...um...quite hectic in the house and Kelly was then was also working still half days. Um...and the person, the student that was in here when he came in initially I told him that by the end of the year I would probably need the space so he left in the November and in December 2006 we moved into this section and...um...just the kitchen section which was the kitchen part of the flat it was divided in two. My daughter used to have that section as a picture framing...um...garage type thing. And...um...so I break down. Oh, so we just had the kitchen for more than a year, a year and a half and we used just that as an office and then...um...I employed somebody else in July last year and so we had somebody down there, somebody in this office here with me so it was quite tight. And...um... a month ago, a month and half go we actually broke through, we removed the partitioning and then we tiled and put the ceiling in on the other side and so now both ladies are down in what used to be the workshop and the kitchen.

**Denver:** Because this room was only up until just over here. It was much smaller and now it is much bigger.

**Sharon:** Yes, it was half and then there were kitchen cupboards in there and...um...I don't know how they lived. But...um...the kitchen was big enough for them to live in, but...um...but in this room it was...um..., well it was a boys room (laughing). I actually realised I used to always think that you would be cold in here, but its...um...its not cold in here at all. No.

### *SECTION THREE: OWNERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMPANY:*

#### **QUESTIONS COVERED:**

- **Is the owner the manager? Does the manager have any influence over the choice of location?**
- **Is the company a branch of a larger company or franchise?**
- **Is it locally owned or foreign owned? Is this relevant to locational choice?**
- **What is the cost of renting or owning per month (per sq.metre)? How does this compare to other locations?**

**Denver:** Um...I just want to confirm you are South African so the company is locally owned.

**Sharon:** Yes.

**Denver:** I think you have already answered this question; it just says...um...I think you have answered it. It just says: what is the cost of renting or owning per month per square meter? How does this compare to other locations?

**Sharon:** Um...I reimburse myself a rental for the use of this, to the company...um...and...um...it's, it's probably half of what or maybe a third of what it would cost...um...probably half of what it would cost somebody to rent

maybe. Um...it's just to make sure that I cover myself. But, ja out there, there's...um...approximately 40 square, about 38 square meters here...um... all in all, which is...um... about the size of a house, little house you know.

**Denver:** If you had to rent this say now you had to rent cause you know property prices if you had to rent this location in like a business park at 38 square metres how much would you and obviously with the convenience that you have and it's quite a nice office how much would you have to pay?

**Sharon:** Probably about R5000.

**Denver:** A month?

**Sharon:** I think, ja. You know business wise, ja.

#### SECTION FOUR: LABOUR ISSUES:

##### QUESTIONS COVERED:

- **What are the different occupational and skill levels (qualifications) of the workforce?**
- **Where does the workforce live?**
- **How do they commute to the premises? How much time does the commute take? What does it cost? Break this down by occupational and skill characteristics.**
- **What are the racial, gender and language characteristics of the workforce?**
- **Are the workers employed full time, part time, casually, temporarily, sub-contracted or permanent? Break this down by occupational and skill characteristics.**
- **How is labour recruited? Does the location of the premises have any bearing on recruitment?**

**Denver:** Now we are moving on to labour issues, but not labour. It's just called labour issues. Um...in our thing we are trying to understand, we are looking at service companies and manufacturing companies. You are obviously a service company. So we are wanting to assess the different skill levels of, like, what manufacturers employ and who service companies employ to see the difference. Um...so the next question is what are the different occupational and skill levels, that is qualifications of your work force?

**Sharon:** Um...what I required initially is not what I got, but I wanted a I wanted a book keeper and a PA with Excel and...um...Word experience. Um...and I've got the PA plus she...um...Bev was a, is a qualified estate agent, which is the reason why I took her, was because she had that background and...um...and she is a very good PA. So I had to weigh up the pros and cons as to how I was going to utilise her. I subsequently had trained her...um...into a certain amount of financials. So she's a very much an all rounder, but she was employed as PA to be trained as a bookkeeper. And you are obviously wanting to know...um...she stays in Bergvliet, she's white, and she's 37, she's married with two children and it takes her about...um...ten minutes to get to work in the morning and she comes...um...by car. She has got her own car. Um...her hours are 830 to, she has got...um...flexi hours. Um...she basically works seven hours a day. Some days from 830am till 4pm. Others from 830am with an hour lunch till 5pm. So she's flexible. Um...the other lady that I've got she's coloured, she...ah...stays in Retreat, takes her ten minutes to get to work. She was employed for me to train as a data capturer come bookkeeper. And I trained her...oh no initially she was employed initially as receptionist to be trained as a data capturer on Pastel and do bookkeeping.

**Denver:** Okay, she came as receptionist and then you offered to train her.

**Sharon:** I told her I was going to train her, yes. And her hours: she works forty hours a week. And her hours are from 8am till 5pm, also slightly flexible. She's single with one little boy. She comes to work by car. And, Anthea is 30.

**Denver:** And you also employ a third person part-time as well.

**Sharon:** We have got a third person. We have just started a third very part-time person. She is 67 years old, she is white, retired and she is purely as a...um, she's doing correspondence and answering the telephone as and when need be. So she only works...she stays...woops...quite local, Constantia. And she also has got her own car.

**Denver:** What was her qualification, education levels?

**Sharon:** She was a PA for Shell and ja, she has got her own car and her hours are very flexible as and when she can come and help.

**Denver:** Okay, thank you.

**Anya:** She doesn't work here; she works from home.

**Sharon:** No, she's prepared to work from home, but she does come in. As the correspondence becomes more she probably prefers to work from home, but I needed her more to help answer the phone especially now that Anthea's gone on leave for a couple of days. And she didn't want to go on leave I'll have you know: She..."What I am gonna do at home?" So, ja while she especially when Anthea is on leave now she is going to be answering the telephone.

**Denver:** What language are the people that you employ? You are obviously English.

**Sharon:** They all English. Although Anthea comes from, the only reason why Anthea speaks more English than Afrikaans is because she went to an English school. But she comes from a English and Afrikaans background. They speak both languages in the home, but she is predominantly English.

**Denver:** Okay, you did touch on this: you are an official estate agent, what other qualifications do you have?

**Sharon:** No, I've just by experience always been an accountant.

**Denver:** Okay. The people that you employ how did you recruit them? Okay, it says how is your labour recruited? Does the location of the premises have any bearing on their recruitment?

**Sharon:** Most definitely. I didn't want...um...to employ anybody who had to travel further than...um...a half an hour away from where I am whether it is by train or 15 minutes by car, because I just felt that you have far happy staff when they can get to work quicker and get home quicker and you don't waste time. I prefer it; I prefer to work closer to home. And yes that did weigh; it was a very...um...um...important aspect of my interviewing. I didn't want to; I advertised locally and I was not prepared to take anybody that stayed...ah...further than a certain kilometre a way from, from where the office is. Um...the one staff I advertised in the local paper, um...both the...um...the Constantiaberg and the, what is the one out in the southern suburbs?

**Anya:** the Tattler.

**Sharon:** Advertised in those two mediums. I didn't want to advertise in the Argus or Cape Times, because I didn't want anybody further a field. I required that they email me. So I didn't, I didn't make that they phone in. I said they were to email me with all their details before doing, making my choice. So that was the one. The other one was...um...somebody that I'd known the family for many years and...um...and I knew her before employing her; that was Anthea and Coral is...um...somebody whom I have known also for many years and asked her if she would like to come and help.

**Denver:** Um...any reason that you chose to employ...um...females, only females or not?

**Sharon:** Well I couldn't get you to come and work for me; that's why. No, absolutely no reason...um...um...no reason at all. I never ever had any males...um...want to, well apply for the job. And I didn't, I don't think...um...especially for a young male it's the ideal for him to be working in this environment. I think a young male needs to be out there working out; um...where as with females they tend to have children and...um...and their interests are more working and getting home, where as males need to go out hunting (laughing).

#### *SECTION FIVE: LOCATION ISSUES:*

#### **QUESTIONS COVERED:**

- Does the product/service influence the choice of the company's location?
- For example, what is the location of the clients that are provided with products or services? Is this important for their location? Is the question of highway, air or rail access important for the delivery of products to clients or of raw materials to the premises?
- Is the service provided face to face or by telephone or email? Does this have an impact on choice of location?

**Denver:** Um...okay let me just check; you might have answered all these questions. Let me just see now. Okay, no, I think this could be. I'm just going to read question 5, but I think you've answered it if you want add anything aunty Sharon you can. It says does the; okay you have definitely answered this. Does the product, service influence the choice of the company's location? You have answered that. And then it says for example: what is the location of the clients that are providing the product, the services? You have answered that. Is this important for the location? Is the question of highway, air, rail access important to the delivery of products to clients or of raw materials to the premises?

**Sharon:** Not at all. It's not important at all. No you have asked it. There was one there about the telephone; is the service provided face to face or by telephone or email. When it comes to...um...the body corporates or the sectional title management...um...90 percent or 95 percent is done telephonically, email and by fax. Um...Five percent is done trustee meetings and annual general meetings...um...where they make certain decisions. So that's the only time I really have to go out and...um...meet with them. Ah...when it comes to, that's on the sectional title side. When it comes to the financial side they come to me and bring me the documentation and when they need to know something they actually meet with me. They come in here. So, I do not have to go out very often.

**Denver:** It's a very well organised business; I can tell you that. I just want to go back track one question. When you sent out your advert in the newspapers how long did it take before you, was it a long process or did you get someone pretty quickly that like a person that fit your characteristics that stays close by...

**Sharon:** Um...it was, it was never a...um...when I employed the one person I was actually very pressurised into getting somebody as soon as possible. So you have got the pressure of making sure you that employ the correct person at the right salary.

**Denver:** Within a certain time frame.

**Sharon:** Within a...immediately. And...um...at the end of the day I...um...I had to weigh up the pros and cons, because I needed somebody so soon and I had quite a, quite a number of emails that came in for the position at the time, but a lot of folk were students who, who were studying for degrees that would have not suited me, because...um...because they were using...um...using my business to actually step to the next, the next level of what they wanted. So that was ruled out totally. I had to look at somebody who really needed the job and was going to have staying power with me. Um...so yes I had to make a decision and with the help of...um...family members at the time, because I wasn't actually in a position to...to...to make logical decisions. Ah...Cindy and Kilian [her daughter and son-in-law] helped me and ruled out the majority of and obviously the salary the...um, some of the salaries were absolutely astronomical. Um...so we were able to rule out...um...80 percent of the applicants quite quickly and just rear in on...um...I think there were four eventually. So it all happened, at the end of day it all happened quite...um...suddenly and to my, to my advantage. Ja.

**Denver:** Good, thank you so much. Do you ladies have any questions you would like to ask that I haven't asked?

**Any:** Ja...um, just how would you rate the workers: high skilled, low skilled...um?

**Sharon:** Um...for what, for what I'm doing they are all I would say medium to high skilled in what I require of them. They've, I've trained them and...um...they have become medium to high skilled.

**Denver:** Relative to market like, if they had to leave based on a medium to high skilled in the like normal, in the market place.

**Sharon:** In the market place, yes, because they are very efficient. I wouldn't be able to keep somebody who wasn't.

**Denver:** Okay.

**Hayley:** And...um...do they have any prior qualifications?

**Sharon:** Um...the one is a qualified estate agent and all the other... The only qualifications is that she has is that she is a PA. Um...so she has obviously done her various courses on...um, in the...um...IT. You know; she is done, she is quite...um... knowledgeable when it comes to IT. Um...not that she has got any varsity degrees or anything like that and the other one; they both have got their matrics. All three have got their matrics and...um...um...the other one is very, is very trainable, bright. So, ja.

**Denver:** Now that you know the questions; we have gone through all the questions, the last thing: do you have anything you can add to what we have said, anything you have thought about that we haven't talked about before that would be applicable.

**Sharon:** I think you have covered everything.

Company: Knead Bakery and Coffee Shop

Address: Wembly Square

McKenzie Street

Gardens

Cape Town

Tel: 021 462 4183

Interview transcription

**Location:** Wembly Square: Knead

**Interviewer:** Anya van Wyk; Hayley Petersen; Denver Grigg; Kylie Steward

**Transcriber:** Anya van Wyk

**Description of premises:** Wembly Square is situated in the middle of Gardens. While it is in Gardens, it is close to the CBD and a five-minute walk from Long Street. Wembly, itself consists of luxury apartments.

The question: The first bit is about economic activity. What commodities do you produce or what services do you offer?

Answer: Well, we are a retail store. Well, as far as commodities, I suppose we are an exclusive deli, bread and pastry store. In a way, I would like to see it as a commodity, but it is probably not a commodity. We are paying....???for the bread and pastry part. In what sense do you mean commodity?

The question: Or services. It does not have to be a commodity.

Answer: It's a café style, bakery which is actually moving towards a restaurant...bakery, restaurant. It's a combination of retail and service. We've got the fresh bake over there. We have the sit down at the front as well. It's a sit down in some ways but it is really a service, bakery, retail with the sit down in front

Question: And these are open at the same time?

Answer: Both open at the same time (affirmative). It was just recently opened and this section over here, this is our add on, which was just recently built.

Question: Who are your clients?

Answer: We have umm...in the near vicinity we have a lot of people above and the residential clients above. So, we are looking at about two hundred residential...so, we have the two hundred residents upstairs. We also have four stories worth of offices above. The second story is the new virgin active mega-store. There are only two in the country at the moment. The other one will be in Claremont. It's their new age....It's their new, again I would say, slightly exclusive type gym. That brings in alone brings in a fair amount of pick up. I'd say our general customers during the week are the office blocks and residential. And there are a lot of production houses around, within walking distance. And I'd say people coming here as a destination forms above 2% during the week and 98% of the people within walking distance and two minute drive like coming here because there is parking unlike the Garden Centre and the Waterfront where you might spend 15-20 minutes looking for parking. Weekends, we become very much destination driven and we find that.... 2% from the offices and walk in traffic and gym and 98% of people coming from Rondebosch, Newlands, Constantia.... people coming here for breakfast especially and for the breads and breakfasts especially.

Question: Did this influence your choice of location?

Answer: Ummm.... I must admit that choice of location, as we move to our third or fourth store will be something that will start becoming a lot more important to us. But for us we had the understanding that that

there was going to be a gym, that there were going to be offices, we had the understanding that there were going to be residents before we started. So, although it was going to be a high density or high foot traffic store it was always going to be a store that did okay to well just based on the number of people and as long as the product was good and the service wasn't too bad and the prices were right we were going to be busy. So, we feel this is a flagship store; a concept store and where we are allowed to make mistakes in quite a sheltered environment and that was really the sentiment at the beginning. It's not a Waterfront, it's not a Cavendish; it's not going to do the huge foot traffic but if we can get it right here we can do those type of sites. So, this was more of a sheltered environment where we are allowed to get the feel right, we are allowed to get the staff training right and we are allowed to get the product right in a relatively sheltered environment. Not a pile of people from day one expecting a certain type of product or certain level.

Question: How large are these premises and how does this relate to the activity of the business?

Answer: Well, I'd say that we are...I'd say my production area...ummm...it's....a little bit too big. We are re-sketching where we do certain aspects of production. The whole concept is open and you can see it happening and that's very much part of the experience. You're looking at about 400 squares with the new set of features. Umm...so, 400 squares.... I think over a certain threshold where you actually require numbers, there is not a calculation you can do, like a busy lunch or a busy two hours in the day. You need a consistent flow, which to a point we do get. If we had an okay day it's because we had a busy lunch trade. If we had a good day it's because our breakfast has picked up at 11 during the week and then sort of feeds into a lunch trade. If we had a great day we find that business it feeds into the night trade especially on weekends when we have our late lunches, guys in the restaurant till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We are also going into evening trade at the moment. With regards to the space that becomes a factor. Having such a large premises, we have three or four tables starting to introduce themselves for that evening trade. That starts to become a problem because if you're a customer and you walk in you will see Sinns, also a big space but they are kind of set up and they have been doing this for two years at night time, you know they are sort of geared towards night time.... that's their focus, which is  $\frac{3}{4}$  full or half full or the Sushi Bar  $\frac{1}{4}$  full and then you've got us who have three tables. What I find is that people generally migrate towards where there are people. And also when you pick up three or four tables especially in the evening I find that will be a busy night for us because people... *Can't hear this bit.... go back later*

Question: Okay, the next section is about the characteristics of the premises: The location?

Answer: Umm...I think the location, if you look at the whole premises, the whole development; I think the developer was taking a risk. If you look at Fair Cape and some of their other projects that's the way he works. He'll look at a place, at the point of taking over and seen by the general public as a place with low potential. If you look at the place in Woodstock, it's got more potential to do well. Whereas if he started building in the Waterfront it's gonna cost a lot more. So, he started over here, which was probably the weakest section in Gardens and he has started to branch out. He's got one just over there, one next door over there and I think he has one further down the road

Question: So, he has started gentrifying this whole area?

Answer: Ya, he started with the weakest, if you remember what this place used to be.... it was really.... I don't remember now but I've got photographs.... this was the worst of the worst in this area.

Question: So, if he is expanding this whole area, what does this mean for the business?

Answer: Well, for the business it's a good thing because you are looking at more foot traffic. You'll probably get one or two big retailers showing interest very soon, you'll probably find that Woolworth's will be here quite

soon. Ummm...I know they have 24hours Woolies in the country, so for them there is an opportunity for another one in the near future. What does it mean for us? I think it means good things, I don't think it means over-trading at all because...there are a lot of people and a few places to go. I mean you've got your Gardens Centre, but again there is nothing that jumps to mind when I think of the Gardens Centre except for a few coffee shops.... they've got their own unique selling points and where've got our own unique selling points.

Question: Has the company expanded to these premises from another site or...?

Answer: This is our flagship store where we develop the product, develop the mood. We are only a year and a half old, so we are still looking at the two-year mark and that process of defining the company.

Question: We will be pressing this question quite a bit....why did you chose this location?

Answer: To be honest I was offered the premises. We did some consulting work. My fathers company.... consulting for fresh foods, retail and training and product mix. He was working on that project and we developed a product to get an idea of what he wanted.... we baked him a loaf of bread and that's the bread he wanted. The relationship between the tenant and the developer is quite a substantial relationship. In order to make a mark and make a statement he put quite a bit in with regards to the foundation with the look and feel especially and the flooring, some of the fittings to make sure that we haven't cut costs in anyway.

Question: But obviously you wouldn't have agreed to a location unless there were a number of advantages?

Answer: Ya, like I said it was a good deal upfront from the developer. He really wanted to make a statement. If you open in the middle of Gardens in the middle of nowhere it needs to be special for people to come. The first thing you need to look at is your anker stores. Who is your big name brand? For us, I think it was the Virgin Active Mega store. It is the second one in the Western Cape, so from day one it is going to be.... we're looking at 40% of our customers being Virgin Active members. Our biggest weak link is our marketing. Not a lot of people know that this place is here. So, again there's potential. If there are 20% of those guys at the gym using our facilities then there is another 80%.... we've got a lot of people walking by and looking in and saying what's that.

Question: And then also, with the residential situation, the people who live there are the kind of people who eat out...that kind of thing?

Answer: With the residents, I find that there is a lot of younger people, aged 20-25 make up a substantial amount of the block, 50% and then 30% are your 25-35 and a relatively small percent are 35 and over. So, a lot of parents invest and use it as a place for their children to live while they are students or as an investment. There are but they are not the type of guys who are eating out every night of the week because they don't have a disposable income. But we are probably under-utilising that market there is more potential there if we get the marketing right and understand what the guys are looking for. I would say it has been positive to a point in that there are people around here or an environment like this there are generally more people.

Question: Umm.... you are the owner?

Answer: Yes

Question: Are you also the manager?

Answer: Presently, I have been the manager for four months while we get the new place up and running, hands on, day-to-day running of opening store and doing catch-up. Also it is a way of working with the younger

managers and consolidating all the performances. Like, I said we are very young and I have a certain idea of how things should be run and sometimes you need to communicate that to people who work for you, especially your managers. Let's just take a bit of an example, when we went through renovations, I was just setting up my new store in Muizenburg and you know you just see it, it's not because it's poor management but we've got young managers, they are developing and people training and upscaling.... *It's actually quite a large part of the service industry. It makes up a large part of what we are...????* It's a very hands on concept. I'm actually a chef by trade and that's what I'm passionate about so I don't mind doing the extra hours and the hands on. But for anyone managing the store we look for someone who is going to be, who can get stuck into the day to day.

Question: So, do you have some other managers here?

Answer: Ya, I have three managers in the store that will be ready to take over from me and my brother who is joining me, as my business partner *can't here*. Anyone who wants to come into the business is required to manage the store even before we make some kind of consideration, so that they have got that kind of drive because it does require quite a bit of.... there's a lot that can go wrong very quickly and

Question: And the store that you opened up in Muizenburg is that another branch of Knead?

Answer: Ya.

Question: And why did you choose Muizenburg as your location?

Answer: Well, again it is a Fair Cape development and the deal was second to none.

Question: And it is similar kind of location?

Answer: I would say definitely. That is how the developer works. He takes a big chance with the idea that there is a greater potential for a return. Ya, it was a huge risk. Muizenburg, in the middle of nowhere.... in the last couple of years it slumped to...I think that's what's important...reading the environment, catching it at the right time, just before it is about to regenerate or upgrade. And I think it has. They put in a huge amount. A huge amount.... there was a lot and again if they put a bakery or a retail store in there they need to make it big. If you go and look at that store, you'll see the marble floors and the chandeliers. That was part of the shell that we moved into. And again there were some other reasons for us...it is another concept store, I wouldn't say there is high traffic there. If you go there in December time it's viable. I wouldn't say it's our cash cow or our money maker but it is very much viable and it's beautiful...it's value that adds to Knead the brand.... you know if you are a potential investor or a potential buyer you take them around to show them places like that, right away you know what *can't hear*.... You know it is not a Waterfront; it is not a thousand people a day walking through but ya, it's doing great. It's open already. It opened the 5<sup>th</sup> of December last year.

Question: Is it locally owned or foreign owned?

Answer: Locally owned and I promote local wherever possible. I think it's important. Like, I said as far as skills development, that's one of our focuses going into the next four months.

Questions: Can you explain?

Answer: Upskilling people. We need to align them to the Knead vision and the Knead concept and the Knead experience. At the end of the day without that as hard as I try or the other owners and managers, you are never going to get it right. We are looking at around ninety staff at the moment. Ya, we have got a wholesale

branch. That's where our...Giovanni's supplies.... *Can't hear*. And again with people skills and again promoting sort of local, I'm not a French trained baker. Neither are any of the people that work for me. We obviously have a lot of respect for the way other countries produce and bake their bread...they are leaders...Europe and European... they are the leaders of the bread and bake culture.... that culture is second to none but we are trying to develop our own culture...being South African. What we are doing is nothing really...the quality is good and maybe different and unique to what you get in South Africa. You do get it in other places. If you look at the market leader or the benchmark in this country, I would point directly at Irbeinning in Nysna where you've got the idea of polangerie, where you cook the bread and you bake it on the side for hours...old fashioned where they are passionate about what they do. He's European...it's very much the approach and the experience you get when you go there. For us, we definitely pull from that...we pull from things that I might have seen or my father might have seen...my father is a master baker...we want to make...as far as possible we want to make our product, not an exclusive boutique product...

Question: Where is your wholesale branch situated?

Answer: It's more an industrial type bakery. We do a lot of our confectionary type work there, our pastry work in that controlled environment...it's actually not called Knead...it's called Knead Wholesale. It plays more of a supportive role to the retail stores...so a lot of the dirty work, and when I say dirty work I mean stacking of flour, preparing of ingredients, baking of all the cakes and that. We started off doing it all here but as we started growing quite rapidly, the wholesale, we decided to take on the retail side...so some days the people are late and then we will send our top staff over here. We actually rent the place from my fathers company. We have a special academy there. Well, not an academy...kitchen set-up...top kitchen...a bakery/kitchen...so at the moment we rent from them till the company has had a chance to settle. It's a nice set up for us at the moment.

Question: And where is it situated?

Answer: In Epping

Question: And the reason for that?

Answer: Again, the opportunity was there. To put in a full bakery like the one that we use would have cost...would have been a huge investment, which we just weren't ready for at the time going into Muizenburg and upgrading this store. So, we rent the equipment, we rent the warehouse...we have our own vehicles, we have our own staff but we are getting a good deal.

Question: And the cost of renting the warehouse is reasonable in Epping?

Answer: The way it works in retail is that you use the minimum percent of the turnover...or it's a fixed rate. We deal a lot with percentage of turnover. We kind of built it into our business model. So, if we make a lot, they make a lot... percentage wise and I would stay away from minimum turnovers...unless you are a hundred percent sure of that product, the quality and the experience...and the Waterfront if you're paying 40 grand a month and you don't know if you are going to make X amount...is what can straggle a young business. So, ya...we're contained within the business model at the moment

Question: If you don't mind telling us what is the price of renting this place/ per month at the moment?

Answer: Within turnover percentage...between thirty-forty.

Question: And that's fair?

Answer: It's fair with regards to what the developers have put in upfront. I would say that would be too much if it was the standard rate...like I said we follow our business model and we know that X amount is coming off every month and we can manage around that. I would say it would be too much if they were it was a stand-alone and they were charging that amount every month. It would not justify that kind of expenditure.

Question: And compared to other places how much would you have paid?

Answer: I'd say...it is very much in line with the Waterfront and Cavendish. And for me it is quite a large positive (speaks to waiter...).... Some places you would have six month rent free period and give you a cash back and help set the store up...there are lots of different ways to structure the deal...in time we will find out what will be the best one.

Question: Does the developer invest in the store, himself as well?

Answer: He doesn't have any ownership in my store but he will structure the deal in such a way that he will put in some of the fittings.

Question: So, he has done stuff in the store that will add value?

Answer: Adds value...so in the short term for a young entrepreneur who doesn't have the stuff he will need to start up a company...this is a huge opportunity and from that we get a head start...jump-start to the whole thing. Whereas in the long run it is never going to be a cash cow and that store that makes a huge amount every month. But you'll have your Good month and your average month. And you will be contained within that turnover. Ya, ideally I think you would want to...this is not a short-term venture...it's not a get-in, get-out type thing. There might be...after five years... where we say let's sell this to a bigger consortium...we've had enough of the long hours and the passion of baking bread after three or four stores. Ideally...where we would want to be and where we are looking at for our next store is umm...making an investment and buying the actual properties.... paying it off and that would then that would become an asset. And for the next two years that would probably be...buy the property.

Question: What location are you looking at for that?

Answer: We are looking at the Southern Suburbs. We are also looking at a number of satellite stores...that these stores feed...because we just opened up in the evening times and would like to extend that, the revenue coming in. Another idea on the cards is extending into smaller satellite stores, which don't require huge overheads and staff. So, we can feed different products that the larger stores will support. And we can just put our name out there. And people from there can have a cup of coffee and roll from Knead and it was really good...Oh, wow have you seen the bigger stores, you can get the bread straight from the oven? And you have a manager and a few staff.

Question: And the reason for wanting it to be in the Southern Suburbs?

Answer: You find in moving forward, I mean next week we have our presentation...we are going to look at our five year and two year strategy...we're going to get a professional to steer us in the right direction. At that point we will look at what type of brand we think we are. Are we a big mall brand where you have 30 in Cape Town and every corner you have Knead, Knead, Knead, Knead? Or are you going to be more of a village type concept where every community has their own Knead, which they associate to and which they become a part of? So, we go to the Knead in our village...not the one in Constantia. So, that is the kind of feel we are gonna go for...a

community based. And there's a branding story behind that...and there's a lot of added value to something like that. And if after two years you are confident about the product...after the two year mark people are expecting...they expect a certain level of service. You know if you go to both stores you'll feel...you'll find that there are inconsistencies. We're getting there. It is a slow process but we're definitely getting there. You know you will walk into both stores now and the pastries don't taste the same, the coffees don't taste the same...it's exciting for myself and for my brother and young people. Southern Suburbs...again there is just opportunity there. And we feel it is the right type of market...the type of people...there is just opportunity there.

Question: The next section deals with labour issues. What are the occupation and skills levels of your workers? If you can just break it down from low skill to medium skilled to high skilled.

Answer: It's a huge question when you think of the actual concept about how you put it together. A clever concept...somebody who has been in the industry and has opened a couple of brands and who has managed a couple of brands...will understand that a lot better. You shouldn't always work back from your end product and say you want to make a beautiful loaf of bread...sometimes you have to work from the back to the front...where you think okay I want to open in this area, for the environment and the people who are going to be visiting what are they going to be expecting...and build it up like that. We did it the other way around and there is nothing wrong with it...umm...because at some point in the plan you need to revisit and see what type of staff you have and what level of education they require, how much you are going to pay that person who has got that education...At the moment, we have such a large training facility, such a large amount of experience in training... I look for the right kind of personality. I like to start the guys at the lowest level and they can work their way up through the training. And that way if you look at the staff salaries versus training or knowledge...if you are willing to put that effort and energy in it pays out at the end...in the long term. If you have got a manager who is fulfilling a certain role...someone who does not have the full management role, he's not looking at making big money but manages the staff and takes a lot of the pressure off...there's quite a lot of value in that for the business. Again, the question that we are asking ourselves at the moment is to look at that model. Service is a very important part of our business. It is a very huge risk area. We are very aware of it and every day we have an ongoing relationship with the staff (can't hear). The problem now is that you won't get a bad croissant but some days it is too warm or too cold or not warm enough and whatever...and you've got...we're at the point where we throw in a lot of time and energy. There are three areas. The production area where I prefer to take guys...because I want it to be a commodity one day...where people can buy a loaf of Knead baked bread on a daily basis. I want to keep it the right size and I can't employ expensive resources. Not every baker can be a master baker. You need to take account of the process without taking away from the product...of baking the product and the value of making that product. You need to find that staff that can be upskilled relatively easily...you know that within two months that they will be in that position where they are going to produce that product at the right level and the right quality. Look at Vida. The original owners were very much brand...brand management and that was their strength...not really their coffee and the muffins...that was their passion but their knowledge was in brand management and launching a brand and training and managing a brand. They were rather looking at that product over there than the finished product. Their main objective is to roll them out and flood the market place. If you look at these guys it takes them two weeks to upskill them from not knowing anything to make products.

Question: Obviously your training is more involved?

Answer: Obviously our stuff is more involved. I would never want to train them in two weeks because if you look there has been a definite quality drop from the first two-four years to the last four to six years. To their credit the drop has been minimum, maybe twenty percent.

Question: And that's acceptable?

Answer: That's not acceptable, that's fantastic. They need to make sure they can get through the next two years for 2010. If they can make that mark...they have put in a lot of money...you don't open 28 stores a year and not put in a lot of money but their concept is neat and tidy and well packaged. Mine is a nightmare...but you get there. Each positive or negative step is a learning curve. I've got good people that work for me. I have the right kind of people.

Question: Where does your workforce live, just the ones at Wembley?

Answer: A lot of them live in the townships. That's the best description I can give. Whereas I really should be looking at the demographics and looking at who's closer, who has to travel to more dangerous area, who can be here at six in the morning without causing too much risk to their.... risk during the traveling stages.... In the beginning when Vida opened they set up houses so that guys could be there at five in the morning to make a muffin. I have a combination of guys living out in Guguletu, Khayelitsha and my foreigners...some of them live in Woodstock...i.e. Malawians

Question: The ones who live in the townships how do they commute here?

Answer: By taxi and train

Question: Do you know how much it costs them?

Answer: (gets up to ask workers) Between R20 and R40 depending on where they are living....

Question: Are most of them full time?

Answer: All my staff are full time. I promote full time work. We have one or two part times but the reality is with the type of concept we have it just doesn't work. If they make bread and it comes out of the oven fresh, you want them to sell that and live that and that's difficult if they come in once a week or twice a week. We get the right person; we give them three months to prove themselves.

Question: How many staff do you have?

Answer: About twenty-three.

Question: And how did you recruit your workers?

Answer: Again, we ask the right kind of questions and umm...but in one or two years that has not been on the top of our priorities. We've got HR, we've got accounting, we've got a bookkeeper and someone doing salaries every month.

Question from respondent: What was the original question?

Question: How do you recruit your workers?

Answer: Recruitment...umm...I tend to try and use in house. I would say that's a weakness in my business, my recruiting. There are a lot of people walking off the street...you assess the skill of the person, the right sort of look and good attitude. And it's about your management, training your management to be able to feel that. Whereas, I had a young manager and she started with me...we were opening a new concept store called eat. And you know the type of staff; if I look at them six months down the line...we've probably got (counts the staff) three of the original ten we took on. She said it has been a learning curve for her.

Question: So, you don't advertise in newspapers, it's just in house?

Answer: Umm...we have done newspaper adverts. For Muizenburg we did newspaper adverts...and I found that they've been the most...I'd say fifty-fifty. I've had a lot of good walk-ins and internal, you know this is my brother and sister...can you give this person a go. I find that's quite nice.... Cause then you got...I wouldn't say you've got a hold... but then you've got something to fall back on...if Nandi doesn't come to work then I phone her Mom because her Mom has been working for my fathers company for the last five years. And with the bakers the one brother works over here, in African culture they respect their elders and if I've got a problem at work...if he doesn't come to work or if he comes to work drunk the family will sort it out. So, it is nice. You get that family feel and we're trying to communicate that through the brand as much as possible. We are a family run business; my family has been in the industry for many years and a lot of my family are involved in food in many ways. So, that will show through in the later concept and we've tried to harness that.

Question: One last question, you said that you would want to bear in mind where people live when hiring them. So, would you want to hire people who live closer?

Answer: Umm.... no. I wouldn't want to...you know...look at Vida...the concept and the brand...I have a lot to learn from as a case study...and for other young entrepreneurs and I have a lot to learn. If you look at Vida and the type of people they hire.... African, male...it's very consistent, it's very consistent. Whereas if you look around here, I've got a mix of...different types of people. They know what they are in for. They know what they are dealing with (this is Vida). They understand the culture, they understand the risks... they understand the challenges of transport and what the person would require as a salary to maintain their lifestyle within their communities, what drives them to want to work more, you know. With me I have a, you know.... different people...different sets of rules. Ummm...which is not a huge set back but I could be a little more clever with regards to that. It doesn't make a big difference to me...I think the culture that you develop in the company is more important to me, the rules that you play by. If you've got that right you can get it right with anyone and everyone. But as you grow into a bigger company we'll look at that later.

Question: You know when you pay rent, this is a very up market development and it wasn't before, so does the developer charge you the up market rate or according to the surrounding area?

Answer: Like I said it is based on the minimum...a lot of places will charge the minimum and if you under-perform and then you still have to give a twenty grand every month....this is a partnership and he is a big developer and all he really wants to do is...his objective is or his focus...he has the whole residential side, money and all the office blocks that they rent. This is an anchor for the entire area not just as a single...he manages this thing as a business. He is not stupid with his money but this is also where he gets his capital. He does make money here...he has chartered accountancy background...but I don't think our rental is his...his not making his money from our rental. That's not his bread and butter. We're in a partnership together. You do well and he does well. So, it makes sense to put in the effort, which is fair.... Fair Cape is fair.

Peggy's Place and Plate Transcript

Interviewers: Kylie Steward; Hayley Petersen; Denver Grigg; Anya Van Wyk

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Kylie We are doing our honours dissertation...

Peggy Yes...

Kylie We're all sociology students, we're doing our honours dissertation on, um, spatial mismatch, um, and it's largely to do with business and where they're located and the labour market, briefly...

Peggy Yes...

Kylie You'll see by the nature of our questions where we're getting at. We're just trying to get a sense of where businesses are, geographically and why they are like that, the structure of the type of businesses.

Peggy Okay...

Kylie Um, that's largely what we are trying to gather at the moment.

Peggy Okay.

Kylie So, the first question is, if you could just tell us, what commodities do you produce or what services you offer.

Peggy Okay, primarily we are a hiring company and, um, we hire out, um, crockery, cutlery, glassware, linen, anything that goes on top of the table, okay. We don't stock hardware, but obviously if someone wants a party for 200 people we will bring in the chairs and we bring in the tables. And the thing about our industry, the person who keeps the gold chairs doesn't keep the tables we want, and the person who keeps the tables we want doesn't keep the silver chairs, you know. So we deal a lot with sub-hiring as well – we bring in stuff for clients. Um, and those people could be based in Obs, Woodstock, um, Maitland, um, Epping – in any one of those places. So what we do is, what we would do, we would, um, supply this but because it's a sub-hiring, um, service on the side, we would put a percentage on for ourselves and we would charge, um, a lower fee on the delivery, than if the company were delivering the chairs and décor themselves, ja, and then another, um, what we do offer is – a bride could walk in and then say 'I'm from Australia, I'm getting married and I need a wedding planner', so we would do the wedding from beginning to end. Where we would help you locate your venue, um, but we find that quite a personal thing so we prefer it if the client actually found their own venue and its normally somewhere where we have worked before, um, and for example if it's like, um, the [inaudible] Hotel, we would have to bring in the marquee, we would bring in all the crockery, the cutlery, the tables, the chairs, the lining, the flooring, the carpeting, the musicians, the cake, the , we have a painted dance-floors and we would organise, like, everything for that, um, client.

kylie Um, I know that you've touched on it lightly but, um, who are your clients?

Peggy Um, we looking at the top end of the market. Um, of course, um, there are companies in Town that keep run of the mill cutlery and crockery, so anyone who just wants anything at a cheap price would go there and anyone who would want anything good would come to us.

kylie So, um, did this influence your locational choice of being here?

Peggy Well, um, when we opened up, I started off in Kenilworth and obviously that's nice and central to the southern suburbs because that's a lot of where my clients are, um, obviously then my garage got too small so I had to move to Access Park to a unit. It was very nice to

begin with, but then the rent became very expensive and, um, we don't have shoppers – if you know what I mean – people come to us because they actually have something in mind. So, we were just finding that too many shoppers were blocking parking, and we needed to actually get out somewhere into a unit like we are now. Diep River suits us beautifully; it's not far from the highway – so it's straight into Town, out into, um, Paarl, Somerset West, ag um, Fransch Hoek, Somerset West and Stellenbosch. So this location suits us very well and it's where people manufacture, where people might store things so its not, shopping and it's not a shopping unit.

kylie And is the rent cheaper here?

Peggy Half the price.

kylie Wow, and, um, [inaudible] do you own these premises or are they rented?

Peggy No, sadly [laughter].

kylie [inaudible] and, um, you are the owner?

Peggy Yes. I'm one of the owners. My partner's called Anne.

kylie Um, do you have a manager or do you sort of own and manage?

Peggy We've got two manager's here...manageresses [laughter]

kylie And do they have any influence over the choice of location?

Peggy Neither of them were with us at the time. Well the choice of location, everybody was actually quite dead against it and I was the only one for it. And it actually has worked out to be the best move we've made.

kylie Why were the others opposed?

Peggy Because it was too far from home. Well Anne and I have always tried to be close to home because we had young children and both the ladies who worked for us before, um, also lived very very close to Access Park, you know like 5 minutes drive, also had young children and they worked for us part-time and, um, and in fact I don't know if we had a choice because of the rental, you know it was sort of [inaudible] and, um, but in the end that's what we had to do, we just had to do it. And in the end everyone actually liked it and, you know, they didn't really complain about the distance.

Anya Did the other two women leave because you moved?

Peggy No, not at all. They both only ever wanted part-time jobs. The one went through a divorce and, um, and of course the old story – husband wasn't paying maintenance – so she actually needed to get a full time job. And, um, but she'd already made that decision and found a job and when the other lady said she needed to have more time off to be with her children in the afternoon, they were getting to the rugby and cricket stages – fetch and carry. So, in actual fact, had the one lady actually just waited, it could've actually probably would have solved the whole thing but, at the end, you know, new brooms sweep clean and it's great. We've got two very special ladies.

Kylie Um, and is this your only branch?

Peggy Ja, that's right. Ja, Anne and I – a lot of the other people, with companies rather, are either run and owned by men which is their business and they are the sole breadwinners and like one or two others there are, owned by women but they are also, um, the sole breadwinners. But Anne and I, we actually, started this just to keep us busy but, um, we're not the sole breadwinners. Like I mean, like I say, we enjoy it and we've been in it for 12 years.

Hayley So you say it started out as more of a sort of hobby?

Peggy Ja, I started it off thinking, I've got a husband who's much older than me – 14 years older than me, and I know when men retire then all you can hear is 'I don't have the money' and of course I'm so tired of hearing that story, I'm not going to have that as well, but it still goes on you know. But, um, so that's why we started my business so I have something when he retires, and he's now retired.

Kylie Would you consider opening up another branch or ...

Peggy No, if I were 15 years younger, 20 years younger absolutely but not now, it's far too late. You know I must have been, er, 46 or something when I started and that's very late to start your own business. I haven't got the energy anymore [laughter].

Kylie Um, you don't have to answer if you don't want to, um, what is the cost of renting or owning per month compared to your other location?

Peggy Well, if we were in Access Park I would imagine for ... I must be honest I'm not quite sure. (Asking manageress) Do you know what the square metres are here, Jenny?

Jenny Not off hand, Peggy. I just know the per month, er, cost, er...

Peggy I don't know we can have a look just now, but here we're paying – we've been here two years so now we paying about 10-3 [R10 300] a month. Access Park now would be almost 20 [R20 000] for premises that weren't nearly as nice as this...

Peggy Ja...

Denver And size wise, were the premises in Access Park small?

Peggy Well, just because we had an upstairs and a downstairs, you know, if you walked in, then you had an area like this which housed you kitchen, more or less what we've got here. Then, just that it was I think longer rather than sort of wider and then upstairs repeated the same size, okay, of course we only have one floor here and then the back was much smaller it was very cramped and very small.

Kylie Um, what is the different occupational skills, level of your workforce or qualifications of your workforce?

Peggy Um, well, Faye has worked in this industry for about 15 years, Faye (asks Faye)?

Faye Ja.

Peggy 15 years. She worked for one of the biggest companies in Cape Town, um, for 15 years. Um, Jen, she's always done secretarial work.

Jenny Yes, that's correct.

Peggy Ja, and she has worked a bit in this industry, slightly different market, but she well that's where I actually got her name and that's how we found her. And, um, our driver, Elliot, he's been with us for, gosh, all our staff has been with us for a long time, the others have been with us like 12 and 8 years when they left. So, it's just really a necessity rather than wanting to leave. Um, Elliot, our driver, worked for a gentleman who had a knitting company and, um, he died there weren't any children so there was no one to take over the business so he was made redundant, um, he was working on the floor in the factory, what he was doing I can't quite remember, but, um, then he came and worked for me once a, while he was doing that, he worked for me once a week as a gardener. And then when he was with me, he decided he wanted to buy a motorcar, so he had to go through the driving thing – which he did, he was fantastic, he did it all by himself and then when he became redundant, I thought no, he's too special, I can't lose him, what am I going to do, so we just hung onto him and then, because he was paid UIF for about three months – I would imagine – and he was given a redundancy package – I would imagine – um, he could slowly, we couldn't afford it at the time to employ him full-time and I think it was like the middle of winter which is always a dicky time in our industry, we then took him at an ad hoc basis – we paid him hourly, you know, but obviously we sort of wanted, had him for three or four hours or half a day or a day to make it worth his while. And then slowly he just grew in, he had to do this drive for us before, and then he just grew into the job and well, there's Elliot [laughter]. Um, Priscilla, her mother is – um, worked for me she's my housekeeper but, um, Priscilla I don't think Priscilla actually had a job before and um, it's all such a long time ago, and she's been with us for 8, 9 years; and Stanley, Stanley's sister worked for us, she was, Francis was with us for about 7, for about 7 years and she then got TB and wasn't very well and what have you and then she had another baby and she **chose** to leave. And her, I think because of

her health, and then her brother came and helped us, Stanley, um, and he was jobless and, um, he's just fitted in and been fantastic.

Kylie So, a lot of them, ones that come to work for you are basically trained on the job?

Peggy Oh yes, none of them were trained in the industry when they began.

Kylie So, all in house training...

Peggy Ja...

Kylie And how do they, how do they all commute to this place?

Peggy Um, Jenny drives, um, Faye ...

Faye By bus.

Peggy Bus. And, I think everybody else is by train, comes by train to Wynberg ...

Kylie Roughly, how long does it take?

Peggy How long does it take you to get to work, Faye? One and a half hours?

Faye One and a half hours in the morning.

Kylie And that's from...

Faye From Mitchells' Plein.

Kylie From Mitchells Plein?

Faye Ja.

Peggy Ja, it's a long time. I mean Faye is up at 5.30 in the morning to get to work.

Kylie I travel from Sommerset West...

Peggy Do you?

Kylie Ja, it takes quite long...

Peggy By train?

Kylie No, by car.

Peggy Easier by car, darling [laughter].

Kylie Ja, ja.

Faye Do you also sleep on the train in the morning?

Kylie I sleep in the car, my mother drives [laughter].

Anya Is that the same for everybody?

Peggy No, I wouldn't know if it's the same for everybody – would you say it's the same time, Faye, for everyone else to get here?

Faye About, ja...

Hayley And in the afternoon, how long...

Faye [inaudible] cause I get a bus at, um, well 20 past, 10 past – it depends – four in the afternoons and I get to Mitchells Plein at about 10 past five. And then I have to take another taxi ... [inaudible] so it's plus minus the same amount of time...

Peggy Really, it's a long time. And if I am here, I try and take – Faye doesn't always come because she's got her bus, but if I'm here I always try and take the staff who work in the warehouse as far as Wynberg.

Kylie And where do they live?

Peggy Um, Khayelitcha, um, ja you know, Southfield...

Faye Gugulettu, Southfield...

Peggy Ja ja. Otherwise, it's a long walk from here to the main road, it's like two bridges so that's a good 20 minute walk, hey Faye?

Faye Yes...

Peggy Is that the reason you gave up smoking, darling [laughter]. Then lucky for her she found a bus closer so that she didn't have to walk and didn't have to give up smoking...

Faye It's very far to walk, you have to walk over two bridges over here ...

Peggy Ja...

Faye It's far...you climb the bridge, the first bridge and you're just about to collapse so you sit down on the, on the ground and catch a breath...

Peggy So that's why you must stop smoking ...

Faye So I take a bus in the morning now ...

Peggy It stops just down the road here ...

Faye I start early everyday and I take the bus now, whereas I would have to wait an hour to start later, so I start early everyday which suits me fine cause it's convenient getting the bus back and forth...

Peggy Now you see, instead of Faye getting here, what time do you arrive, Faye?

Faye I normally get here at 7.30.

7.30, so I mean sitting here for an hour – it's fine in the middle of summer when there's lots of work, oh lets get some tea here...[pours everyone tea]...everybody happy?

Denver Oh ja...

Peggy I should have brought some doughnuts or something ... I say everyday of my life please Lord let me get to 10 o'clock on my diet... [laughter].

Kylie And, um, is it fairly cheap to take the bus?

Peggy Um, Faye, did you hear that lovie?

Faye Sorry?

Kylie Um, to travel is the bus, what is the price of the bus per month?

Faye Well I use a clip-card so it's much cheaper...If I would, if I would travel, um, without a clip-card it would cost me R40 a day almost R40 a day...

Kylie Wow...

Faye That's a lot of money...

Peggy And, darling, on the clip-card?

Faye On the clip-card, per month it's 290, say 300 [rand] so it's much cheaper.

Peggy I think I'd just like to ask Elliot, get them in, to compare the prices ... Elliot (calls for Elliot) ...

Jenny Elliot's not here, Peggy, he's gone already only Priscilla's here ...

Peggy Oh...Priscilla (calls for Priscilla)...Priscilla these gorgeous people are all doing, um um, what's it now?

Denver Business location ...

Peggy Ooh, business location [laughter]...Priscilla are you still living in Khayelitsha?

Priscilla Ja ...

Peggy Are you still with mom?

Priscilla No...

Peggy But you still in Khayelitsha, hey?

Priscilla In Khayelitsha Ja...

Peggy How much does it cost you a month on your clip-card to come to work?

Priscilla I think, 480, 4, 4, 4 ... 280 (rand) clip-card...

Peggy Clip-card, two eight 0...okay...

Priscilla Without the catch from Wynberg to here, R50 a week...

Peggy From Wynberg to here...

Priscilla Wynberg to here, R10 a day, R5 and R5 so R10...

Peggy Ja...

Priscilla R50 a week.

Peggy So it's R50 a week plus your ticket...plus your 280...so it costs you R480 ...

Priscilla Per month.

Denver And how long does it take you to travel?

Priscilla Wu, one and a half from Khayelitsha to here – to Wynberg. Then from Wynberg to here about 30, 35 minutes ...

Denver So like two hours?

Priscilla Ja...

Denver [inaudible] ...

Priscilla Here to Wynberg, then from Wynberg to Khayelitcha...  
Denver [inaudible] ...train a month?  
Priscilla Train? From where I'm staying to the station too far ...  
[inaudible]

Peggy Priscilla, I got a nice cracked cup hey...all our stuff comes from Germany...ja, so when you replace anything it's not just a synch, you know...So, I mean that is one hell-of-a-lot of money, hey ... this survey makes you sit up and think...

Kylie So, um, what's the language and gender characteristics of your workforce?  
Peggy Um, English Xhosa, ja.  
Kylie And your workforce is largely female?  
Peggy Largely, all female...except for Elliot and Stanley...otherwise we're all girlies. You know that's why I don't do hardware. Because it's not like my husband or Anne's husband are involved here and, um, it's not like Elliot lives just around the corner. The problem is that once you start with tables and chairs, you actually have to lift them and I'm just not prepared to get guys off corner streets and that sort of thing, I just ...there you going into beautiful homes, you dealing ... its just a bit nerve wrecking especially in this day and age, especially being women... you know, we haven't got our husbands to be controlling all this so we stay away from it and rather get, in some cases ... (cellphone rings) excuse me this could be my doctor... um, ja, if we have 200 chairs, 200 tables then we offer ...

Kylie Are all your workers employed full-time?  
Peggy Em, well when I say full-time, I mean Jenny, Jenny how many hours do you work a week, Jen, 40?  
Jenny No, 33 we both work 33...  
Peggy Oh, okay both 33, sorry sorry 33 each, so Faye comes in at 7.30 but it's preferably, you know, like 8.30 for, so instead of, oh that's what I was starting to tell you, Faye coming in at 7.30, I mean you know, sitting here till 8.30 till the doors open cause no one really comes before 8.30, so instead of her wasting her time for an hour everyday and having to do the distance, we give her, she takes one day off a week. So she still works the same hours, but, um, she works one day less. And then Jen comes in on a Monday and a Tuesday 10.30 and goes at 4, 4.30 and then on Wednesday to Friday she's here from 8.30 till 2.30. So they cross each other...

Jenny Yes ...  
Peggy Okay, whereas with the other two we didn't quite ducktave as well as we do with them.  
Kylie Um,  
Peggy I think Anne and I just wanted more time off, you know [laughter].  
Kylie And how is your labour recruited? Is it, um, and do the premises have any bearing on who you employ?  
Peggy Um, no, no, no it has nothing to do, the premises has nothing to do with that.  
Kylie So as long as they can just get here it wouldn't be a problem?  
Peggy Ja...absolutely.  
Kylie And did you use in house, sort of word of mouth...  
Peggy We used one recruitment agent for the first, when the girls left, we then had a recruitment agency who found us somebody who was a disaster. And, after having a fall and a back op and another fall and a na na na na na na, um, she then left and then Jenny came and then Faye came, ja, ja.

Faye And she hasn't looked back ever since...  
Peggy And I haven't looked back [laughter].  
Denver How did you, like how did you recruit your staff?  
Peggy Oh, okay, um ... I went to the picnic company down the road, like if you go to Celine Deon and get a picnic basket, and don't get paid I think ... [laughter] I don't know [laughter]. Jenny

worked there and I just sort of, must have been quite and a bit bored so off I went to visit my pals, so I went to go visit her down there, I said 'by-the-way you haven't got anybody that you know is looking for work?' so she said 'jaha, there's a lady called Jenny here and she works for us part-time in the season and da da da', and I said 'well at least she knows something about the industry', cause it's not a very easy industry to learn about ... its sounds corney – teaspoons, cups and sources, but you've got to know who stocks what. You know, we're not a linen bank, for example, so who keeps what linen, who keeps what size, who keeps what design, so it's actually quite complicated, really and takes you quite a while to get the grip of it, and Jenny having worked there, would've known a bit of the jargon, so we phoned her and, in fact, we phoned Jenny and we interviewed her before we went to the agency, but ooh, or she came along and then we had already been to the agency, then she sent this lady and we needed someone with bookkeeping skills – well that was a disaster, and Jenny who didn't have bookkeeping skills had fitted in and learnt them and she's been great. So, you know, she's learnt the bookkeeping skills and to take jobs et cetera. Darling, Faye, I've known for ...

Faye As long as I've been in the business ...

Peggy Well, as long as I've been in cause you've been longer than me.

Faye Ja...

Peggy 12 or 13 years, and ...

Faye She was one of my customers

Peggy First customers, ja, first people I ever phoned in the industry

Faye Ja, one of my customers

Peggy She worked for a company called R&L, and then I went to go and see one of the linen banks, we keep linen, but enough for our clients but if we got a big functions and people want mauve, green, pink, orange ... we got o the linen banks. And, Faye walked in, I said 'I've been wondering where you are', because she'd left her company and then she sort of came back ad hoc to work for them, so I took her number down, I sat here one day and I said 'you know Annie, I think I'm gonna phone Faye'. I phoned Faye and she said 'Do you need someone to work for you?' I said, 'That's why I'm phoning', she said 'I'm on my way' [laughter] and that was it, so we've got them. So, we're very lucky.

Denver And your storeroom staff, how did you find them?

Priscilla, because her mother works for me, okay ...Priscilla, um, Francis was a friend and...

Hayley Of Priscilla's?

Peggy No, we believe very much in keeping it sort of, help feed the people closest to us. So, Priscilla is my housekeeper's daughter, and we have, um, uuum, then we have Annie's lady, Ruthie we employed her sister, but sadly she pinched and, um, sadly – I mean she was brilliant, she was wonderful and then she was naughty, you know. And we can't have that in this industry it's just too much lying around here, you know and she was just fantastic, she shouldn't have done such a silly thing, but anyhow. And, Stanley was the brother of Francis, Francis was Abigail's friend, Abi who was here, Francis was her friend, and then Stanley was Francis' brother and Elliot was my gardener. But, you know, he did it for extra money, but he actually worked for this, um, textile, er, knitting company.

Kylie So, um, has the company's choice of location, um, or your type of business influence the reason why you came to Prime Park?

Peggy Well, um, there're quite a few caterers out here that deal with us, you know, our business is, um, supported largely by caterers, um, and, yes, I mean it was either this or Maitland or, and here we're going against the traffic as well, okay, so despite the traffic, um, and also the premises – I thought, safer here, um, a lot of the other places we found we would've had to spend a lot of money fixing up a botched place, whereas here you've got security at the gate, that was quite – that was a very important aspect for us, very important.

Kylie Okay, and was it important for you to be near like a highway or rail...  
Peggy Yes, yes absolutely. The highway because – it takes 2 minutes to get onto the highway – and as I say it can take you to where ever you want to go and of course there's that highway into Town if you wish to go that way. So, we're right in the middle of the two highways.

Kylie And, um, when you dealing with clients, can they, can you do, do they have to come into your office?

Peggy No, I can, I can go to them which we offer. They often come in to see what we've got, then they want to see our portfolio, you know all the different photographs of all the weddings we've done and functions we've done and then they'll say 'but now I need you to come and tell me whether my lawn's flat enough or big enough and can I have 200 people at my function' or 'what do you suggest?', you know what I'm saying...then you go and you go and give them all the jargon.

Kylie So, in that case it doesn't really matter too much where you are?

Peggy No, and some clients never come in here, we would take a table, chairs, cloth and set up an entire table for them in their home.

Kylie Is there anything else you guys (to group) want to ask? No. Thank you very much.  
Denver Thank you so much.  
Peggy Is that it?  
Kylie That's it.  
Peggy That was so easy! Turn the thing off now...[laughter]  
Hayley Okay, I will.

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