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Strategies for Selecting and Individualizing Training for Employee Positioning

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MBA, Liberty University, 2011

MS, North Carolina State University, 2007

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Lack of effective selection and training of employees for positioning within a business can have extensive financial repercussions. Fostering mentoring relationships between leaders and employees increases competitive advantage and institutional financial growth. However, there is limited research that supports the role of mentoring leadership styles for improving organizational productivity. The purpose of this single case study was to explore strategies used by business managers to select and individually train employees for opportunities within the organization to achieve job-person fit. The sample included 5 business managers employed within a medium-sized organization in a consultation firm in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Strategic human resource management theory formed the conceptual framework for this study. Data collection used semistructured interviews and employee performance evaluations. Yin's 5 steps for qualitative data analysis provided the process for organizing the data and conducting the data analysis. Four themes emerged from the data analysis including job-person fit, organizational culture, employee relationships, and performance management. Potential contributions to positive social change include increasing employee retention rates, which could benefit local business economies due to the retained employees'sustained local buying power and contributions to their communities' charities.

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Dedication

With the most humble heart I dedicate this study to my children: Breyona, Mykal, Bryce, and Bralyn. I am beyond thankful to be your mother and this achievement is proof that you can do anything.

Acknowledgments

I acknowledge the strength and perseverance that my Savior bestowed upon me throughout this doctoral journal, and I am forever thankful for His greatness and power. Thanks to my husband and best friend, Byron, for always extending his love and support especially during the most challenging times. I thank all of my family for their continuous love and support for me because none of this would be imaginable without the level of support that you have given. I cannot express the amount of gratitude and admiration I have for my committee chair, confidant, and cheerleader, Dr. D'Marie Hanson, because without you this study would not be possible.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Management of human capital includes providing training for employees to support their attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities to accomplish assigned tasks. Resources must be available to them to achieve success in their job duties. This study is an exploration of decision-making processes where employees are selected for advancement or horizontal transfer to secure job-person fit through training specific to individually identified needs. Offering employee promotion opportunities encourages individuals to strive for success in the workplace and attain a greater level of investment in businesses (Clor-Proell, Kaplan, & Proell, 2015). Individual employees' success contributes to overall organizational successes. The intent of this study was to explore the selection processes by which employees receive tailored training based on their business managers' perceptions of valuable traits that need enhancement.

Background of the Problem

Optimal performance of employees is a critical reflection of human capital management within organizations. Human capital development is part of a comprehensive approach to ensure cost-effective business management practices and to improve the performance of organizations (Tariq Khan, 2014). Successful employee performance influences the overall productivity of a company. Effective human resource management protocols support the achievement of job performance outcomes, making it beneficial for businesses to align human resource practices with expected employee outcomes (Tabiu & Nura, 2013). Thus, identifying internal and external resources to strengthen workforce performance is a benefit to organizations, regardless of the nature

of the business. Mentoring relationships between employees and business managers is an internal support to promote the processes of securing optimal job-person compatibilities. Exploring strategies processes that business managers use to select employees and target training, such that individuals are in positions where their job duties best match their work skills, is the focus of this study.

Attaining job-person fit is a critical business function that ensures businesses capitalize on resources inherent in their employees. Business managers are in positions where they can influence the positioning of employees through promotions or horizontal transfers where employees' strengths are most suitable. Recognizing human resource needs in organizations is necessary to develop competent training programs for human capital management (Scheel, Rigotti, & Mohr, 2013). It is the duty of organizations to provide the training necessary for employees to achieve the performance expectations of specific positions. Supporting the training needs of employees first requires an assessment of needs. Developing proactive human resource programs to recruit and retain individuals with advanced education and experience levels contributes additional value to organizations (Bodla, Afza, & Danish, 2014) and enables business managers to take on a mentoring role with employees to monitor and respond to workforce needs. Thus, the costs of investment in human resource management vary based on employee demographics. Investigating the role of human resource management on employee performance standards is an area of potential value for business managers across disciplinary fields.

Problem Statement

When employees are in positions where there is a lack of job-person fit there is a negative financial impact on business (DeConinck, DeConinck, & Lockwood, 2015). Organizational costs for replacing employees resulting from turnover due to poor job-person fit can exceed $75,000 (DeConinck, 2015). The general business problem is that employees misplaced in their current position contribute to reduced employee and organizational performance. The specific business problem is that some business managers of medium-sized companies in central North Carolina lack effective managerial strategies to customize training to meet individual employee needs, which would enable repositioning to achieve job-person fit and optimal organizational benefit.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies business managers use to customize training to individual employee needs. Business managers from a medium-sized organization in central North Carolina were interviewed to gain insight into the decision making process to target individualized training of members of a workforce. The selected population was appropriate for this study because participating business managers have had successful implementation of strategies and processes for identifying and tailoring training to specific employee needs in support of job-person fit. While the decision making process of business managers is adapted to unique organization and workforce compositions, identifying current strategies for selecting and tailoring training to the needs of employees could yield positive social change. The implication of this study for positive social change is the potential for

improving organizational performance and contributing to an increase in the competitive workforce. Training and retention of employees creates social change by supporting positive work culture, which directly benefits employees, and indirectly influences the employees' families and communities.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative case study design was best suited for this research study. Qualitative inquiry through interviews and observations enables exploration of social experiences in the natural context of the individual (Khankey, Ranjbar, Khorasani-Zavareh, Zargham-Boroujeni, & Johansson, 2015). The qualitative method is appropriate for this study because the goal was to explore strategies from business managers' perspectives in their natural environments. Exploring the experiences of business managers in processes of selecting and training employees was best supported by the qualitative method as there were no hypotheses in this study nor were numerical data collected. Quantitative research and mixed methods research provide theory building by testing hypotheses, while qualitative research relies on skills-based accounts of knowledge (Symon, Cassell, & Johnson, 2018), and thus do not align with the purpose of this study.

The case study design includes spatial bounding where environmental and case-specific issues merge, and identification and controlling of these issues occurs within the design (Løkke & Sørensen, 2014). Case study designs provide for research of the phenomenon using data collection from multiple information sources (Yin, 2014). Investigating manager strategies for individualized selection and training of employees through a case study approach can lead to a greater understanding of business decisions

and planning regarding talent management. Other research designs, including phenomenological, narrative, and ethnography were less appropriate for the current study. Phenomenological designs capture the unique lived experiences of a phenomenon by gathering individual subjective views of the participant (Fazli, Imani, & Abedini, 2018). Narrative designs are story telling approaches to data gathering and have the element of subjectivity, where participants' experience is a story or way of thinking (Bruce, Beuthin, Sheilds, Molzahn, & Schick-Makaroff, 2016). Ethnographic studies, emerging in popularity in health research, proposes an understanding of the participants' environment and social contexts of their experiences (Rashid, Caine, & Goez, 2015). The in-depth contextual exploration supported by the case study is the most appropriate choice for this study. Thus, the qualitative method and case study design best aligned with the purpose of the study to explore managerial strategies in customizing training and repositioning employees to achieve job-person fit and optimal organizational benefit.

Research Question

The overarching research question for this study was: What strategies do business managers use in customizing training for employees?

Interview Questions

To gain a rich contextual understanding of the mentoring processes of managers, whereby perceived employee traits or characteristics, enhanced by customized training, enables employees to be positioned where job-person fit is optimal, I asked the following questions:

1. What is your experience of the decision making processes for selecting and tailoring training for employees?

2. How have you strategically customized training to employee needs?

3. How have your strategies influenced employee and organizational productivity?

4. How do you assess the individual training needs of employees?

5. What strategies does your organization use to ensure customized training of employees?

6. What additional information or thoughts could you share that are pertinent for the purpose of the study?

Conceptual Framework

A reciprocal relationship exists between individual and organizational learning and performance. Because the focus of this study was on exploring strategies and processes for determining how business managers identify and develop job training for individual employee needs that support promotion or horizontal transfer, the conceptual framework appropriate to this study was strategic human resource management theory (SHRM; Colbert, 2004). Strategic planning dates back to the 1960s when the long-term goals of an organization derived from the strategic and informed decisions of management (Fratričová & Rudy, 2015). Implementing business management decisions to ensure that employees possess the skills to accomplish a task competently and positioned to achieve job-person fit through promotion or horizontal transfer is an essential function of SHRM. The function of human resources management has evolved

over recent decades and is one integral component of managing talent within organizations.

SHRM has various levels of influence within an organization. It affects the financial performance of organizations through various practices to improve individual and organizational performance (Mitchell, Obeidat, & Bray, 2013). Optimizing organizational performance by addressing individual employee performance is an opportunity to influence a culture for continual improvement. Establishing strategies, processes, and criteria for advancing the organization through the training and retention of employees can contribute to the overall effect of strategic operations.

An early theorist in SHRM was Kanter (1983), who recognized organizational propensities to complicate business practices rather than focus on goals and principles that support business strategy. Kanter identified the frontiers for investigating SHRM, which included increasing organizational flexibility, recognizing the need for innovation, managing culture and strategy change, and reactive planning for the organization (1983). SHRM efficacy requires consideration not only of the norm of operations but for the simplicity of business operations for advancing the management of employees.

SHRM requires the involvement of various factors related to organizational culture and improvement. It involves understanding how to achieve employee satisfaction and consider social networks that are active among employees (Hollenbeck & Jamieson, 2015). Implementation of SHRM practices can have a positive effect on an organization that uses internal data to drive decision-making skills (Shepherd, Williams, & Patzelt, 2014). SHRM has evolved since the theory was first introduced and currently

encompasses progressive management practices to build workforce competence, and thus aligns with the purpose of this study.

Operational Definitions

Advancement (promotion): Process leading to internal and external mobility, and tenure, often as a result of achieving performance standards (Chong, 2013).

Employee training: Process that enhances employee learning skills and abilities related to assigned job tasks (Quartey, 2012).

Medium-sized organization: An organization with 50-249 employees (Flynn, McKevitt, & Davis, 2015).

Organizational culture: Basic assumptions a group derives that affects the behavior and characteristics of individuals (Karagoz & Akgun, 2015).

Strategic human resource management: An extension of earliest forms of human resource management including a focus on differentiation and competitive advantage (Fratričová & Rudy, 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are important to consider as findings from the research may be extrapolated to a broader field of study (Bendersky & McGinn, 2010). Assumptions are presumptions made without evidence about the phenomenon (Bendersky & McGinn, 2010). Verity in answering interview questions by all participants is an assumption of this study. I also assume that participants have no motive for participation in the study and that they will be honest and transparent during the interview process.

Limitations

Limitations of academic research are important as an indicator of the critical analysis of the researcher and identification of weaknesses in the study that may affect a study's validity (Brutus, Aguinis, & Wassmer, 2013). Participants in this study were business managers in an organization in central North Carolina. The lived experiences of business managers in this study reflected their memories, and thus were subject to participant bias. Interviewing research participants gathers potentially rich information for the study. Researcher bias is a potential limitation of the study, as the experiences of the researcher influence the interview process for research participants (Chenail, 2011). However, bracketing conducted during the interview process addressed limiting potential researcher bias.

Delimitations

While the researcher has no direct control over research limitations, the researcher has influence on delimitations, where the researcher potentially ushers bias into the study (Chenail, 2012). I explored the mentoring process experience of managers wherein a perceived employee trait or characteristic enhanced by customized training enabled positioning of the employee for optimal job-person fit. While the participants must have had experience in deploying customized processes for selecting and training employees, determining the resulting success of promotion was outside the scope of this study. Determining extended factors related to placement of the employee to achieve job-person fit was also beyond the bounds of the study. Participants in the study were business managers who were responsible for customizing training for employees who

demonstrated traits that were beneficial to the organization. The type of business is not the source of exploration in this study, rather the process experienced by business managers in selecting and tailoring training for employees within the business.

Significance of the Study

Identifying employee potential and the process of selecting and tailoring individual training for employees is a significant business problem that has financial consequences. Business leaders are responsible for ensuring that employees have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to complete assigned duties, and training is a method to ensure increased competence of the employee. Results of the study could contribute to the improvement of business practices by highlighting manager strategies and processes of proven success for business training programs. Enhancement of business performance is possible as a result by placing the employee in an area that most benefits from individuals' desirable work traits and where job-person fit is optimal.

The findings from this study could contribute to positive social change by identifying practices for positively influencing organizational performance and contributing to an increase in the competitive workforce, thus challenging similar businesses to develop business processes to train and retain employees. Effective and diverse human resource management systems can impact efficiency of the workforce and aid employees in accessing skill-appropriate employment opportunities (Lu, Chen, Huang, & Chien, 2015). Training employees is a foundational practice in developing leaders, which contributes to positive change in communities served by the businesses (Dennis, 2014). Fostering a culture of improvement through internal training and

promotion opportunities positions corporations to make positive social contributions to improving the communities in which the business operates by influencing job security and retaining valued employees.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative, single case study was to explore strategies business managers use to customize training to individual employee needs. Strategic human management theory supports the conceptual framework for this investigation. This literature review provides an exploration of the literature on training and employee development, performance and motivation, and sustainability. I searched multiple online databases and local libraries for the literature. In this review, I used multiple peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and books. Keywords for the searches of electronic sources were as follows: *employee training, individual learning, organizational learning, performance management, employee engagement,* and *training effectiveness*. The following databases were used: ABI/INFORM, Business Source Complete, Academic Search Complete, and Google Scholar.

There were 167 sources in the reference heading, 146 peer-reviewed sources, 24 source were older than 5 years. The percentage of peer-reviewed sources was 87% and the percentage of sources published within 5 years of expected CAO approval was 85%. There were 97 references within the literature review with 96% of the sources having been published within 5 years of the CAO approval and 91% of the sources retrieved from peer--reviewed journals.

Strategic Human Resource Management

Human resource management, HRM, is instrumental in guiding employee behavior and contributing to performance outcomes through workplace flexibility (Bal & De Lange, 2015). HRM operates through training and professional development programs through organizational leadership. Monitoring active HRM supports advancement of the organizational mission along with the changing needs of the employees (Tabiu & Nura, 2013). Responsive management is essential to organizational advances and ensuring that employees possess the tools and training to achieve and maintain positive performance. Organizational programs like HRM and employee performance is an area of importance in planning efforts by leadership.

Human capital management is integral in daily organizational activities. Human resource practices affect employee commitment through the provision of feedback and learning activities that promote inclusion (Basak Ok & Vandenberghe, 2016). Individuals who express a form of organizational commitment are more inclined to perform and impact positive organizational outcomes (Fu & Deshpande, 2014). Therefore, investment in the development of affective commitment and similar citizenship behaviors is beneficial to the organization. Additionally, where employees increase performance, there is a greater opportunity for advancement in the organization.

SHRM is an employable strategy that contributes to fundamental positioning of the business for competition. SHRM practices triggering changes in performance impact organizational citizenship behavior (Paillé, Chen, Boiral, & Jin, 2014). Employees can support organizational goals through demonstrating citizenship behaviors and through

achieving individual goals. The involvement of human resource management is a critical

function in settings where competition is a direct driving force for the business.

Innovative human resource management contributes to the increase in overall

organizational performance through elevating individual employee performance

(Camison & Villar-Lopez, 2014). Organizational performance is largely attributable to a

functional and interactive HR department (Platonova, Hernandez, & Moorehouse, 2013).

Achieving positive movement in performance is desirable by businesses as performance

translates to increases in efficiency and financial performance. Thus, designating

financial resources for strategic human resource programs is a potential source for

growing competitive businesses.

Strategic planning and implementation of organizational plans are necessary to

ensure that the business maintains progressive movements to achieve organizational

missions and goals. Performance management is a major component of human resource

management and supports organizational practices of productivity and change

(Molraudee, 2016). Development of performance management systems plays a vital role

in the delivery of effective execution of management. Some methods that support

performance management systems include supervisory performance ratings, peer

evaluations, etc.

Strategic planning involves proactive and reactive organizational processes.

Anticipating events that may command organizational change and consideration of

processes to engage in the event of change is a duty of leadership. Innovative business

practices motivate cooperation and communication within the business through

responsive management of organizational information (Sanchez-Famoso, Maseda, & Iturralde, 2014). Monitoring business needs and responding to change requires that leaders make decisions with data and information to support the decisions. Efficacious business practices of leaders can evolve through organizational learning processes.

The positioning of an organization to maintain a competitive advantage is essential for business vitality. SHRM is a system that aligns the organization through core competency development (Alagaraja, 2013). Alignment of the organizational needs with systems to support those needs through talent management and development contributes to business efficiency. Identifying and understanding organizational goals is critical to keep in perspective when enforcing SHRM systems.

Professional development is one of the many responsibilities of an engaged human resources program. Teamwork, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal and HR processes link HR to knowledge management and commitment outcomes (Obeidat, Masa'deh, & Abdallah, 2014). Gaining knowledge is only useful when organizations use the information to improve business practices and contribute to employee resources. Ongoing professional development is continually needed to ensure that organizations possess current information to influence growth.

Sustainability Strategies

Investing supports to individualize employees training is an opportunity to strengthen the workforce contributing to organizational sustainability efforts. Sustainability of business functions is a critical element of strategic planning for organizations. Sustainability is a feature of corporate social responsibility in that

sustainable business practices are efforts that contribute to responding to social demands for ethical organizational behaviors (Iarossi, Miller, O'Connor, & Keil, 2013). Sustainability practices in businesses contribute value by demonstrating the organizational goals extend beyond acceptable profit margins and invest in community efforts. Thus, positioning of employees in areas that capitalize on their strengths enables performance.

Management has a vital role in the implementation of change and promotion of sustainability plans for organizations. Examples of management activating plans of sustainability include promoting climate change initiatives, disaster risk management, and promotion of technologies to support progressive system performance of government (Shaw, Burch, Kristensen, Robinson & Dale, 2014). Implementation of human resources practices of recruitment, selection, training, and development supports business sustainability (Voegtlin & Greenwood, 2016). Thus, strategic positioning is important in organizational success, and important for consideration in the current study exploring strategies for selection and training of employees.

Sustainability of businesses is positively affected by customizing training for employees to achieve job-person fit, and is a goal common to many businesses. Business processes monitoring workforce performance ensures an organizational climate of sustainability (Pence & Milrany, 2013). Monitoring performance provides an indication to management of when individuals require training to optimize job-person fit. Organizational sustainability is contingent in part on employee productivity and is impacted by promotional decisions of leadership. Effects of leadership and training

decisions not only contribute a direct bearing on the employee but also to overall progress of the organization.

Securing employee job-fit impacts perceived organizational support, which is an influence of leadership (Lamm, Tosti-Kharis, & King, 2015). The significance of organizational commitment to sustainability is also a function of leadership in action. Sustainability is a process that promotes cultural and organizational change facilitated by actions of a human resources department operating as a change agent (Cosby, 2014). Identifying and responding to employee needs requires a responsive organizational leadership unit. Supporting a strategic vision involves interaction of human resource management and the responsive behavior of employees.

Factors of compatibility are not only necessary for consideration at the initial hire of an individual but are important throughout employment. Environmental performance takes into account social compatibilities of a person as an element contributing to the employee's performance (Ferris & Summers, 2013). Human resource management decisions to select individuals for advancement opportunities should take into consideration emotional performance at current positions and pair skill enhancing HR practices to support individual performance (Gabriel, Cheshin, Moran, & van Kleef, 2016). Ensuring that staff selection processes encourage informed decisions is essential to supporting evaluation systems for employee training.

The ability of leadership to positively influence employee behavior contributes to behavioral responses of the workforce and arouses positive emotions of employees (Yanfei, Yangliu, & Yu, 2018). Human resource management practices of

communication, compensation, and assessment of performance affect trust in the relationship between employees and leadership (Cho & Poister, 2013). There are various issues for consideration of HRM, and layering of the practices is unique to each businesses' individualized needs. HRM practices and responsive leadership at team and organizational levels promote performance and achievement of organizational goals (Chai, Hwang, & Joo, 2017).

Employee and Organizational Relationships

The relationship between employees and supervisors is one of great importance, regardless of the business size. Investing resources to support positive development of supervisor support is a marketable element used in securing talent for the organization. Coaching relationships fulfill executive development objectives and provide employees with skills to increase efficiency (Jones, Woods, & Guillaume, 2015). Ensuring that support is afforded to the workforce is an essential function of management. Fostering relationships promotes a trusting and friendly environment to guide productivity and is a result of informed management decisions.

Investment in the organizational mission and employee engagement towards the job tasks are essential features for affecting employee behavior. The organizational climate is integral in the development of employee work behaviors and encouraging performance and productivity (Kaya & Baskaya, 2017). Promotion of employees is an opportunity to position them for completion of tasks that most effectively use their skills to impact organizational performance. Selection and promotion of employees are an important function and responsibility of business leaders.

Assessing competencies of employees allows organizational decision makers to provide informed decisions to advance the business. Competition is the crux of strategic business planning, and provision of on the job training supports a corporation's goal of improving talent within the organization (Byrne, Hayes, Mort McPhail, Hakel, Cortina, & McHenry, 2014). Information comes in many forms within an organization and using information to make informed decisions is a hallmark of an informed and effective company. Ensuring that business decisions are not only informed but aligned with the organizational mission is yet another responsibility of management.

Formally assessing individuals for advancement is a part of some promotion systems. Assessments provide leadership with data to make decisions for advancing an employee and remove an element of bias in individualized training decisions. Counterproductive behaviors identified through integrity testing performed before and during employment encourage leadership to define programs to transform these behaviors (Fine, 2013). Accuracy in decisions for the selection of employees for training and promotion opportunities is critical when there is a direct impact on organizational performance. Individual employee performance contributes to the overall organizational performance, making it essential to maintain a business system based on promotion.

Managing the workforce requires that business managers have information on which to base decisions for the organization. Mentoring relationships extends a level of influence beyond individual employee performance and influences collective organizational engagement (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015). Making decisions on training or readdressing the positioning of employees must be done with

diligence and care to maintain productivity of the organization. Consistent business practices and internal supports for the workforce give employees a sense of common ground where they are aware of work expectations and are motivated to achieve them.

Organizational Behavior

Organizational climate and employee relationships with leadership are important factors in directing responses to change (Georgalis, Samaratunge, Kimberley, & Lu, 2014). Creating organizational behavior focused on increasing productivity through individualized training supports organizational behavior development responsive to employee management. Engaging and shared leadership supports flexibility in the workplace and promotes dynamic team behavior that is more adaptive to change demands (D'Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2016). The ability to maintain a competitive edge over other businesses is contingent on vital maneuvers of businesses, which is a more critical task to accomplish considering the business landscape. Informed strategic management supports accommodation of change in the business, and is a fundamental necessity of successful businesses.

Instituting strategies to select and train employees with the goal of optimizing job fit is a change promoting process. Change encourages employees to move against what is familiar to achieve improvement or respond to demands in external or internal business environments adapting to higher business processing levels (Skrinjar & Trkman, 2013). Leadership has a direct influence on firm performance, and employees' response to change is dependent upon the level of organizational strength imposed by (Boehm, Dwertmann, Bruch, & Sharmir, 2015). Supporting responsive behaviors of the employees

is addressed by involved leadership that takes on the approach of giving specific direction to the emerging organizational needs and demand for change.

Organizational change impacts organizations through solicitation of individual levels of change within the workforce. Demands for change result in responses by leaders and employees where organizational citizenship behavior is one item impacted as a result of change management (Carter, Armenakis, Feild, & Mossholder, 2013). Change is a necessary feature of the growth of the organization. Risk management provides proactive and reactive organizational responses to change demands and is needed to ensure a plan on how to respond to the varying needs of the workforce.

Orienting workforces to accommodate change is not a simple task. Increasing paths of communication to prepare employees and deliver vital information to prepare and support them through change responses is important. While change is not constant, it can disrupt business processes and create resistance from employees particularly where there are routine operations (Oreg, 2017). Change does not have to evoke negative responses despite it going against the grain of what employees are accustomed. Implementation of change is important and occurs successfully with a competent and consistent approach by leadership.

Alignment of organizational culture, leadership, and business needs is important to support functionality of interactive leadership. Strategic leadership strategies aid in the attainment of organizational performance objectives and fosters positive employee-leader relationships (Linder & Sperber, 2017). The role of strategy in any business is one that

contributes directly to competitive positioning of organizations. Aligning strategic business processes is necessary to support properly guided business movement.

Management of human capital is an organizational function that depends on competent leadership. Developing and implementing a strategy to support human capital management by facilitating a culture of quality improvement is a key sustainability factor (Ntshoe & Selesho, 2014). Having an understanding of and responding to employee expectations and needs enhances quality improvement. Functioning in a culture of improvement requires a focus on outcomes, but also on individuals who directly affect the outcomes.

Change does not implicate learning; however, change provides opportunity to facilitate learning processes. Knowledge and understanding are essential tenets of organizational learning processes and support competition where one organization outperforms the next through active learning (Crossan, Djurfeldt, Lane, & White 1995; Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Organizational learning is an essential basis for considering the process of selecting and promoting employees as it creates an improved structure for management to use for evaluating performance and supporting the promotion. Selecting individuals for promotion within an organization considers previous experiences of employee leadership, where learning has occurred according to a process for evaluation of employee behavior.

Use of organizational learning to influence processes for training of the workforce and addressing training needs for employees contributes to organizational competitive advantages. Learning is a challenging process facilitated by leadership that has an impact

on organizational stability and success (Ye, Wang, & Li, 2018). Relationships of power support the facilitation or resistance of learning depending on the level of influence (Indira & Russ, 2017). Change within organizations facilitated with responses from leadership supports compensatory maneuvers for faulty business practices or to maintain competitive positioning in the market. Using organizational experiences to influence future change is a premise of organizational learning.

The layers of systems and business processes that are common amongst large organizations complicate the decision-making process. Using the opportunity to support organizational learning through review of mechanisms within businesses can provide leadership with useful information to facilitate change (Cangelosi & Dill, 1965). Accomplishing change is not a sign of failure; rather it is an indicator of organizational response to a changing environment. Responsive organizational systems are necessary for the ability to thrive in a setting of significant competition.

Exposure to success and failure can facilitate active learning for individuals and organizations. Organizational learning influences performance through organizational, group, and individual mechanisms of knowledge creation and knowledge management (Brix, 2017). Organizational goals and individual work tasks expose individuals to different learning patterns. Capitalizing on learning experiences of individual employees influences the organization's overall learning capacity.

The contextual factors of organizational learning theory include culture, strategy, structure, and environments (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). The prevailing context of culture and strategy is of significant interest in the study of how organizational learning affects

employee training and HRM. Targeting training individualized to employee needs is an element of SHRM. The interplay of strategy, operations and management is a key issue affecting the productivity of SHRM and directly contributes to the competitive force of organizations (Devanna, Fombrun, & Tichy, 1981).

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a driving force in identifying employees for individualized training that influences employee and organizational performance. Development of an organizational culture with competitiveness requires specific strategy and the intent of leadership. Structure of the organizational design and elements that ensure satisfaction and performance in human resource management is a basic but critical responsibility (Yap & Webber, 2015). Consideration of culture as proposed by Hofstede in 1980 is essential to the delivery of job satisfaction for employees (Yap & Webber, 2015). Classification of organizations as individualistic or collectivistic cultures considers the intricate management relationships maintained within the organizations. The goal of most organizations is to support a collectivistic culture that promotes the organizational mission.

Organizational culture is a factor that influences the need for ongoing training. Aligning organizational climate and needs with the training program supports a stable organizational leadership structure (Nguyen & Kim, 2013). Training provides a response to the employee or organizational needs for growth. Challenging employee expectations is a task of leadership to promote ongoing workforce development.

Organizational culture dictates the structure for the function of human resources. An essential function of businesses is the intimate role maintained by human resource departments. Human resource departments must be dynamic and responsive to employee needs and the organizational mission. Leadership also influences activation of human resources to facilitate professional development for workforces. The relationship between leadership, the guiding organizational culture, and a fluid human resources department is integral and necessary for a high functioning organization (Cañibano, 2013). There are multiple interacting business features in most businesses, and they appear across components of organizational culture and human resources management.

Competence of the workforce is an important guiding principle for organizational effectiveness and productivity. Human resource management influences the organizational performance and serves the employees' interests to develop competences that impact individual performance (Meijernik, Bondarouk, & Lepak, 2016). Investing in workforces supports an effort to ensure a face of competition dictated by employee efforts. Proper positioning of employees is vital to sustain the works of competition and support effective and efficient business operations.

Relationships within organizations influence business productivity. The extent of psychological support provided by employee-supervisor relationships affects employee outcomes and organizational citizenship behavior (Kim & Kim, 2013). Efforts to maintain professional employment relationships are important because as supervisors are aware of employees needs for advancement, they can tailor positioning of individuals for advancement. Making informed decisions about training employees extends beyond the

basic demonstration of capabilities and involves a consideration of the individual's ability to uphold the organizational mission and goals in an ethically appropriate manner.

Establishing support systems for employees encourages transparency and contributes feedback to the organization. Networks constructed for the purpose of providing advice to employees are resources that promote understanding of job tasks and insight on how to accomplish tasks with performance improvement as a central factor (Sykes, Venkatesh, & Johnson, 2014). Job performance monitoring ensures progressive movement of the overall organization. Support within the organization to ensure networks is devised to encourage employee engagement and motivation.

Understanding human behavior is necessary to investigate how employees are motivated and perform within an organization. Rewarding employee behavior should target behavioral or performance-based objectives, both of which can contribute significantly to the organizational climate (Presslee, Vance, & Webb, 2013). Performance improves when employees receive recognition for their contributions, and when they are motivated to achieve aggressive work goals. Proper assessment of the employee's ability and skill is necessary to ensure that work goals are appropriately designated.

Organizational and employee performance influence competitive business functions. Employee performance is not only of interest to the business as a collective indicator of business success but contributes to employee satisfaction as well. Increased motivation appears in enhanced employee performance and an increase in efficient business operations (Alsughayir, 2014). High-performance human resource practices include job enrichment, professional development, and individual appraisal (Giauque,

Anderfuhren-Biget, & Varone, 2013). Thus, there is evidence for the need to develop human resources that will ensure better personal and organizational performance. While organizational performance is of significant interest for growing businesses, there are other influences, such as knowledge management, that need be addressed by leadership for the improvement of organizational flow, performance, and satisfaction.

Productivity of employees is an element of growth and leads to productivity for the organization as a whole. Monitoring productivity ensures that employees have a productive work environment (Van De Voorde, Veld, & Van Veldhoven, 2016). Providing a productive work environment extends beyond a positive employee and employer relationship, and has implication for resources that are available to employees within an organization. Completion of a task requires that employees have appropriate training and readily available resources. Employee preparedness through specific training and utilization of resources may be where the organization experiences an advantage.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Adoption of corporate social responsibility efforts requires that organizations develop a means of communicating the CSR system throughout to all employees. Ensuring that the CSR system aligns with the mission and vision of organizations ensures adoption of the system by the workforce (Schmeltz, 2014). CSR is an indicator of organizational commitment to exceeding beyond basic expectations and requirements and transcends merely providing a service. Businesses employing CSR systems take on the additional responsibility that contributes value to organizations by improving the social perception of businesses.

Standards governing corporate social responsibility provide a baseline by which organizations operate. Promoting standards for corporate social responsibility ensures that performance of similar organizations have a similar method of assessment (de Colle, Henriques, & Sarasvathy, 2014). There are positive and adverse effects associated with the adoption of CSR standards, and it is the responsibility of leadership to determine paths for organizations to take by weighing the benefits against the consequences. Circumstances dictating the adoption of CSR standards may vary by organizations and must be structured to accommodate the needs and goals of the organization.

Employing corporate social responsibility efforts within an organization communicates a standard of excellence to employees and other stakeholders. Disclosure of CSR performance results in favored views from investors and in the competitive landscape (Brown-Liburd & Zamora, 2015). While there is a required effort to identify and implement CSR functions, the benefits are appropriate to the investment. Encouraging organizational participation in CSR proves to benefit the growth of individual employees by holding them to a higher standard in comparison to CSR system absences.

Engaging corporate social responsibility processes provide support to organizations to consider the impact of business functions and community perception. A comprehensive corporate social responsibility program mitigates environmental and social risks (Casey & Grenier, 2015). CSR entitles organizations to information to secure growth and progressive movement to improve competition. Despite the benefits of CSR,

it is dependent upon the extent that organizations use the process to influence the business value.

Performance and Training

Monitoring performance and skills of employees gives business managers information to make decisions on individualizing training for employees. Performance appraisal and training are among many other tasks of human resource management programs. Synergetic efforts of leadership and employees support the attainment of organizational goals and promote employee performance (Aga, Noorderhaven, & Vallejo, 2016). Considering the significance of advantages to businesses employing functional and accessible HRM programs, investing in HRM programs is evident of leadership effort. Preparing employees with skills to complete their work tasks requires training and resources that HRM programs provide.

Enhancing individual performance is a goal that can directly impact overall organizational functioning. Support directed at employees triggers a response where there is either improved or lessened performance. Engaging supervisory support in the workplace aids in promoting employee productivity by extending socio-emotional supports to employees (Peerayuth, Murad, & Sandra, 2016). Maintaining diligence in addressing employee needs, providing training to prepare employees to complete work tasks, and evaluating results of employee efforts are indicators of supervisory support. Ensuring supervisory support employees assists with organizational performance.

Job satisfaction and performance management are two critical functions that lead to higher employee motivation and better organizational positioning to accomplish

competitive goals. Assessing job satisfaction is a function of human resource

management processes (Kampkotter, 2017). Not only do the attitudes of employees affect

their individual performance, but employee behaviors also contribute to overall

organizational productivity. Monitoring employee performance and commitment to the

organizational mission is an important task often delegated to direct business managers.

A manager's personal work goals greatly influence the protocol for scrutiny of the

workforce's perception and achievement of organizational work goals (Huhtala, Feldt,

Hyvönen, & Mauno, 2013). Performing assigned tasks within required timetables is one

element of performance and contributes information for assessment of performance

(Huhtala, Feldt, Hyvönen, & Mauno, 2013). When employees are operating ethically,

esteem rises, motivation and personal investment rise, and the organization benefits

overall (Lu & Lin, 2014). Assessing employee performance with an ethical lens can

potentially lead to more socially responsible awareness of corporate decisions and

accountability. An employee may have a greater investment if there is a greater context

for their outcomes.

Effective leaders regularly assess employee performance to determine goals and

organizational positioning. Assessment of employee performance provides management

with useful information to make decisions regarding how to position individuals for

optimal performance within the organization. Performance systems use metrics to

identify areas of deficit within businesses and support human resource management

effectiveness by targeting organizational needs (Ribenbark, Fasiello, & Adamo, 2016).

Gaining information through performance assessment enables leadership to make

insightful decisions supported by data. Possessing input gathered through evaluations of employee performance is critical to the functioning of the organization and is valuable to decision makers in the organization, as well as to the employees.

Assessment of workforce needs provides business managers with a wealth of information on which to base decisions. Approaching training and workforce development from a competency perspective enables leadership to identify individuals for advancement opportunities. Teaching organizations support an involved relationship between employees and leaders whereby decisions are made based on first-hand knowledge of employees' needs (Golom & Noumair, 2014). Responding to the needs of employees by providing necessary training to support deficits and address organizational goals is a function of leadership decisions. It is necessary to target improving talent within the organization through training and to ensure that through training, the talent is equipped to meet changing organizational and market demands.

Planning training with the purpose of increasing value and quality of work assigned to employees is an ongoing requirement for business managers. Training is important as it has a direct impact on business profitability by developing the skill level of employees (Ameeq-ul-Ameeq & Hanif, 2013). Through ongoing monitoring of employees, training is assigned according to performance-based measures for successful enterprises (Ameeq-ul-Ameeq & Hanif, 2013). Training is a process sometimes perceived as boring or daunting by employees. However, strategically designed training can be motivational and influential on the financial side of the business. Training programs providing resources for skill deficits in employees contributes to post hoc performance

facilitating the ability of the organization to maintain competitive market opportunities (Patel, Messersmith, & Lepak, 2013).

Knowing the reason for training is foundational to creating a training program. Training is an opportunity to contribute innovative technological practices that advance creativity in business and feed a competitive advantage (Neirotti & Paolucci, 2013). Assimilating change is not necessarily an easy task, especially where training supports positioning of the workforce to advance organizational goals. Training is multipurposed where it contributes to change activation and ongoing development of employees. Innovation and creativity are desirable elements in competitive organizations where, through efforts of training and employee development, innovation emerges.

Training can manipulate employee behavior through the organizational culture that is also subject to change according to training programs. Specifically, of influence to organizational culture is ethics training. Ethics training influences positive employee behavior that in turn supports progression towards organizational goals (Warren, Gaspar, & Laufer, 2014). Considering the interconnectedness of employee behaviors, organizational performance, and training, business managers must carefully plan for training to support the organizational culture. Training and development of employees are achieved not only through direct but also through indirect pathways.

Maintaining objectivity in processes of selecting individuals for training opportunities is vital to eliminate the possibility of discriminatory practices. Subjectivity in performance evaluation systems are important to the integrity of evaluation processes and can produce useful data upon which to activate leadership decision making (Singh,

Darwish, & Potocnik, 2016). Implementation of evaluation systems supports objectivity of leadership in the selection of individuals for promotion. Beyond consideration of individual employee performance, promotion should consider skills and needs presented by employees.

There are various business components affected by organizational performance and organizational culture. Organizational culture is an element of influence for employee engagement. Effective organizational leadership is a prominent driver guiding employee behavior, and aligning the organizational mission with employee behavior is an important function of leadership style (Alsughayir, 2014). Alignment of business strategy and human resources strategy must accommodate the organizational culture manifested by leadership (Loshali & Krishnan, 2013). Organizational leadership directly influences strategic planning for human resource programs, and the business as a whole. It is vital that competent business practices actively ensure proper processes for promoting competitive business power.

Performance assessed on the level of innovation does not necessarily align with the level of investment in human resource management and training, but investment directly in employees is attributable to innovative performance (Sung & Choi, 2014). However, efforts to ensure alignment of strategic planning efforts with organizational goals for innovation, talent management, and performance serve to contribute a positive business outcome.

Measuring performance and grooming or goal setting are important business aims. Involving financial or non-financial indicators can provide different information to

the business manager, but may also have an unknown impact on employee behavior and motivation. Understanding the workforce dynamics and composition is important to ensure appropriate leadership and application of specific performance management systems (Bartz, Thompson, & Rice, 2017). While various performance systems may support the needs of an organization, it is the responsibility of the business manager to determine the most appropriate means of assessing organizational performance within constraints of the enterprise.

Performing work tasks with competence and motivation requires an investment of the employees. The social exchange between leaders and employees influences organizational behavior and promotes employees' positive job security perceptions (Lam, Liang, Ashford, & Lee, 2015). Job insecurity has a negative effect on performance, and organizational change and uncertainty in the external environment influences secure job behaviors. Employees attuned to activities within and external to the business are a source of valuable input in determining predictors of work performance.

Managing job-related stressors is necessary to support positive production of employees. Promotion of an organizational climate that protects employees from undue stress is a responsibility of leadership. Reduction of stress related to employment is a mitigating role of leadership where organizational justice produces a positive counteracting response to stress (Zhang, Lepine, Buckman, & Feng, 2014). While stress can manifest as positive and negative in nature, it is an important element of the change process. Encouraging individuals and providing support through consistent supervisory relationships is critical to successful organizational management.

A multitude of factors affects successful employment and retention of employees. Training is one essential factor in ensuring that employees have necessary skills and resources for completion of assigned work tasks (Behaghel, Caroli, & Roger, 2014). It is notable that employee factors including age, experience, and disability influences the ability to process training and be successful in current technologically advanced landscapes (Behaghel et al., 2014). Training effectiveness is vital to ensuring that training is not only beneficial and translates to improved outcomes, but is appropriate to individual employee needs (Rahmati, Hosseinifard, & Alimadadi, 2014). The employability of individuals exceeds in importance at the recruitment and selection level of employment and is necessary for consideration in employee promotion.

Organizational learning is a process that supports information utilization that is gathered within and external from the organization to improve business processes. Market competence is a factor impacted by organizational learning and post hoc development of resources especially in respect of technological advancements (Hsin-Mei & Peng-Jung, 2013). Creation of value within a business is influenced by leadership ability in the organization to respond to demands originating within the business and competitive market. Supporting enlightened leadership responses to the need for internal business change through the use of information existing within organizations is a process of organizational learning.

The organizational learning process is dynamic and affects organizational behavior. Leadership style is influential in supporting the workforce to adapt to changing business needs and facilitating organizational learning (Waddell & Pio, 2015). Ensuring a

competitive advantage is supported by incorporation of organizational learning processes.

Use of information gained through organizational experiences is an important and vital

component fundamental to organizational learning.

Leadership and Performance

Leadership is a mitigant in the encouragement of employee performance.

Empowering leadership influences the long-term promotion of employee performance

and goal setting through elevated coordination, mental modeling, and skill building

education. (Lorinkova, Pearsall, & Sims, 2013). Mentoring characteristics are evident in

transformational leadership styles and can be successful in achieving positive outcomes

from groups facing significant challenges (Jyoti & Bhau, 2015). Thus, there is a

complimentary relationship between leadership and human resource management

programs that impact change and performance.

Functional leadership that is sensitive to the presence of socio-cultural factors is a

necessity in current businesses. Working in dynamic environments is stressful and

requires responsive leadership to prepare employees through education to promote

organizational flexibility and effectiveness (Fischer & Schultz, 2016). Structured and

informed leadership can facilitate responding to needs of organizations' human capital.

Ensuring progressive movement of leadership in business is a necessary responsibility for

the evolving business manager.

Influential leadership impacts the dynamic development of organizational culture.

Incorporation of a learning setting whereby experiences of the organization contribute to

improved business practices is a hallmark of learning organizations. External

environments are influential in the foundational elements of organizational culture where racial and cultural values, hierarchy, and market elements develop organizational typology (Gaile, 2013). Thus, consideration of a multitude of business components is important in the construction of organizational culture that is impacted by external and internal aspects.

Leadership influences the development of human resource management systems to facilitate workforce efficiency. Leadership style affects productive employee performance and influences creation of a progressive work environment (Tyssen, Spieth, & Wald, 2014). Vital roles facilitated by leadership in organizations investing in leadership resources support a way to increase the value of the business. Monitoring organizational functions by active and engaged leaders demonstrates awareness within the organization and commitment to organizational support. Workforce culture that includes strong, ethical leadership, resources for meeting employee needs and advancement, and which aims toward higher productivity and goal fulfillment will likely have greater employee satisfaction and motivation.

Mentoring and supervisor support encourage performance in the workplace. Configuration of leadership training is important in delivering systems where employees receive strategic placement and supervision that suits the organizational demands (Clarke & Higgs, 2016). Accessing available resources and promoting innovative thinking can lead to expanded opportunities for organizations to secure competitive positioning. Tapping into existing business resources is a cost-efficient process allowing employees to make valuable contributions to firm performance instilling pride and encouragement.

Securing and investing in resources is a costly but necessary business practice. Dynamic leadership functions in managing vital organizational resources. Socialization efforts between a mentor and protégé are proven efficacious in organizational productivity (Dow, 2014). Maintaining successful management of the workforce requires that leadership possesses an arsenal of useful information to assign employees to appropriate development tasks. Development of employees increases business resources and is an intangible element that contributes to critical competitive business forces.

Organizational support and perceived support from leadership are instrumental in promoting citizenship behaviors of employees. Maintaining a healthy environment to ensure support and adequate provision of resources afforded to staff are essential for proper management of employees (Oladapo & Banks, 2013). Organizational support to ensure that employees engage in a healthy work environment is a responsibility of leadership. Employee exposure to safe work conditions can positively influence job performance, resulting in improved organizational outcomes.

Leaders are in positions of considerable influence within an organization making decisions that impact marketability, competitiveness, and socially responsible positioning of the business. Organizational values upheld by influential leadership aids in communicating the social significance of the organization mission throughout the workforce (Pasha, Poister, Wright, & Thomas, 2017). Recognizing the significance of leadership positions and potential to produce a positive impact on employee performances contributes to the overall organizational performance is necessary to keep in perspective. Constructive leadership strategies include various training resources that

promote efficiency and inclusiveness of employees (Sax & Torp, 2015). Developing

systems to support employee training needs empowers employees and enhances

performance (Sax & Torp, 2015). Individual and organizational productivity is affected

by positioning of employees such that performance improves within each department.

Leadership and the choice of leadership style employed in an organization is an

indication of the internal and external functions of the business. Leadership style

influences organizational climate, organizational change, and organizational creativity

(Lutz Allen, Smith, & Da Silva, 2013). Aligning leadership style and organizational

needs supports successful performance outcomes through providing necessary employee

resources. Resources devoted to improving employee behavior and performance are

useful investments to growing and competitive businesses.

Participative and engaged leadership moderates the implementation of change.

Leadership is an instrument that influences employees' response and acceptance of

organizational change (Van der Voet, Kuipers, & Groeneveld, 2016). Empowering

employees by engagement in the decision-making process within organizations

contributes to improved accountability and ownership. Responses of organizations as a

whole to demands for change impacts the positioning of the business to accommodate

growth and performance.

Employees are responsible for delivering the mission of the organization on

behalf of the leadership and visionaries of the business. The orientation of employees to

organizational missions and to corporate social responsibility efforts is dictated by the

employees' ability to identify with the business (Korschun, Bhattacharya, & Swain,

2014). Programs designed to ensure employees receive ongoing support and engagement are thus beneficial to achieving the overall organizational goal. Promoting investment in the workforce is not made through individual efforts; rather through ongoing, consistent approaches and empowerment, employees can demonstrate citizenship and consequently, impact social efforts.

Knowledge management provides a work setting where management is integral to the ongoing development of employees. Knowledge management involves using organizational information to make informed decisions and is a critical asset to a competitive organization (Haak-Saheem & Darwish, 2014). Mismanagement of external and internal organization information leads to organizational implosion, a direct counteraction to securing a competitive market (Zavattaro, 2014). Knowledge is an important resource within organizations to secure competitive market positioning. Possessing the most current and desired knowledge respective to the products delivered by the business is a strong and viable asset. Attainment of knowledge promotes the learning process in a business and supports active use of the acquired information. Active learning through training can lead to employee satisfaction and feelings of inclusion in the overall organizational vision.

Development of social capital within an organization encourages a motivated workforce and aligns with business performance goals. Sustained and consistent performance is a factor that contributes to the selection of individuals for promotional opportunities. Fostering social networks to ensure knowledge-sharing throughout the organization contributes to organizational performance (Espedal, Gooderham, &

Stensaker, 2013). Employees who possess not only a specific knowledge base to accomplish job tasks but a general knowledge of overall functions of the organization are an invaluable resource. Successful communication by resourceful and ethical leaders includes sharing knowledge that will facilitate better performance and build a culture of collaboration to create a more cohesive culture.

Ethical organizational behavior is an element that impacts firm sustainability. Ethical employee behavior is a response to organizational leadership and human resource management functions and contributes to the long-term performance of the organization (Zheng, Luo, & Wang, 2014). Encouraging ethical behaviors within a business must be done by examples of leadership and through ongoing support and education. Communicating the position of the firm in regard to ethical organizational behavior is a primary responsibility of human resource management.

Summary and Transition

The purpose of this qualitative single case study is to explore strategies business managers use to customize training to individual employee needs. Business managers may use the findings of the study to increase their understanding of skills that indicate potential for success in the organization. Modification of organizations' strategic planning, particularly strategic human resource departments, can result from this research. Through the current research there is insight into the experiences of business managers making decisions to individualize training to meet the needs of employees and to promote employees. Identifying and activating business management processes to

tailor training for employees based on identified needs consequently enables cost-efficient operations.

In Section 1 of this study, the problem and purpose of the current research appear. The purpose of this qualitative single case study is to explore strategies business managers use to customize training to individual employee needs. The potential significance of the study is important in that results could inform business managers on strategies for individualizing training specific to the needs of each employee supporting employee and organizational performance. Assignment of training to employees is a process that not only ensures that employees are prepared to complete a job task but also contributes to employee motivation.

In Section 2, an in-depth approach to the research study includes an assessment of the researcher's role, participants for the study, and processes for data collection and assuring ethical research. Maintaining an ethical and competent approach to the research protects the researcher and the participants from harm and ensures fidelity in the research process. I also describe the elements of validity and reliability.

Section 3 of the study is the culmination of all parts of the research study and provide the findings, the implications of the findings, and the conclusions stemming from the study. Notably, implications for positive social change including reduced turnover, improved organizational cultures of inclusion, and positive financial impacts on local communities are of interest in this research study and are therefore included in Section 3. Finally, recommendations for further research and overall conclusions conclude the Section 3's contents.

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, I present the methodology of the study 2. The information from this case study could contribute to the strategies and processes for selecting and tailoring training to employee needs based on identifiable employee traits that are beneficial to the organization. Section 2 includes the following subsections: (a) restatement of the purpose of the study, (b) a discussion of the role of the researcher, (c) a description of participant processes for conducting the study, (d) additional information on the research method and design, (e) elaboration of the study population, (f) explanation of the ethical research process, and (g) information about data collection, data analysis, and processes for assuring the study's reliability, and validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies business managers use to customize training to individual employee needs. Targeted training for employees enhances the employee skills such that the individual can get a promotion or be shifted to another position that would benefit the organization. Business managers from a medium-sized organization in central North Carolina completed interviews to gain insight into the processes used to target individualized training for the workforce. The results of this study are expected to help close the gap in knowledge by identifying consistent business practices to drive employee performance outcomes in medium-sized organizations. Identifying standard business practices that improve professional development through training can contribute valuable insights to the field of business management.

Role of the Researcher

My role in this study was to select and recruit research participants, collect data according to the protocol, analyze the data, and present the findings. In the data collection process, I interviewed research participants to explore their decision making strategies and processes of tailoring training to meet employees' needs. Insight captured through interviews is the essence of the qualitative approach (Tomkins & Eatough, 2013), which aligns with the purpose of this study. I have experience in settings that require the development and implementation of a training plan delivered according to competencies. Thus, I possess some foundational knowledge on this problem in businesses.

Compliance with ethical standards required by Walden University and the United States Department of Health and Human Services code of federal regulations (as communicated in the Belmont Report (United States, 1978)) was assurwed by securing approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board and complying with standards to protect the human subjects in this research.

Since I did not have a prior relationship with any of the research participants, my approach to the research process was unbiased. Qualitative methodological procedures mitigate bias in research and thus ensure the objectivity of the researcher (De Ceunynck, Kusumastuti, Hannes, Janssens, & Wets, 2013). Interview protocols enable consistent administration of an interview (Platt & Skowron, 2013 and facilitated conducing this study. At the start of each interview, I developed professional rapport with each participant, and covered informed consent and the risks and benefits of the research.

Participants

Purposive sampling ensures the identification of participants relevant for the study. Criterion for the study requires that participants of this study are business managers with at least 5 years of successful experience individualizing training and repositioning employees to enhance job-person fit. According to Yin (2014), the researcher can use multiple study participants from a single unit. As a part of the initial screening process organizations with medium sized operations (employ at least 50 individuals) telephone screening determined if there is an internal manager responsible for assessing employees needs and individualizing training per employee. Participants for this investigation work in a firm that manages according to competencies. Participants included managers who have successful experience in selecting employees based on perceiving traits that have potential for enhancement based on tailored training.

A sample of business managers for participation in the study is individuals currently in a position where they use strategies to select and individually train employees. The selected business manager represented an individual who is a human resources manager or director, operational manager/supervisor, or had a different designation depending on the organization. The business manager participating in the interview is the individual responsible for the management of the employees to the extent that they have the responsibility of identifying employees for training opportunities. The business managers developed and implemented strategies and processes for identifying and providing individualized employee training within the past 6 months so that retrieval of historical information was as accurate as possible.

After developing the pool of potential research participants I obtained the organization's cooperation and permission to identify and contact potential participants. I contacted potential participants via telephone and (a) request their assistance in conducting the research study, (b) determine their role in developing and implementing strategies and processes for identifying and providing individualized training, and (c) determine if they were responsible for identifying training needs of the employee and tailored training for the benefit of organizational and employee performance. I provided a copy of the informed consent form to the business managers who meet the screening requirements. Establishing a working relationship with the research participants is important to support the interview process. I engaged the participants through the informed consent process and explain the purpose of the interview process with them. Explaining the role of interviews in research processes to participants should provide insights to understand the importance of information participants can provide to maintain a working relationship throughout the interview.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

Qualitative research methods enable understanding and interpretation of data through descriptions (Barnham, 2015). This qualitative research study serves to explore strategies of business managers in the decision-making process of selecting employees for individualized training opportunities to enhance employee skills. Qualitative research yields large amounts of data opening the possibility for exploration of insights not supported by other research techniques (Lawrence & Tar, 2013). While qualitative

research explores the *why* of behaviors and decisions, quantitative research gives facts and responses to *what,* typically in the form of numerical responses (Barnham, 2015).

Quantitative methods involve the designation of numerical values to behaviors and this is beyond the intent of the research to gather the experiences of the business managers in individualizing training for employees. Quantitative researchers do no seek to capture the unique lived experiences of the targeted research participants, and thus, the quantitative method was not appropriate for this study Mixed methods research incorporates qualitative and quantitative methods and is, in essence, two studies in one where exploration and examination of the research question is by both methods, and proceeds in a complementary manner (Almutairi, Gardner, & McCarthy, 2014). In such studies, there are two separate data sets and two different methods to analyze the data. The quantitative method can complement the qualitative method when the mixed method supports the research question.

Research Design

The research design for the study is case study, which is one of several qualitative method designs. Case study design is one that supports an understanding of a case that is multifaceted using multiple data collection methods (Almutairi, Gardner, & McCarthy, 2014). Interviewing processes are useful in understanding the social phenomenon of the participant's responses, which is one possible source of evidence for case studies (Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) suggested collecting data for a case study from at least two of six sources that may include documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts to obtain a holistic view of phenomena.

Gathering data through documentation of mentoring and training strategies is a second source of information for the study.

Other qualitative designs include ethnography, phenomenological, narrative, and grounded theory. Ethnographic research involves assessing the influence of culture and group sharing perspectives (Alcadipani, Westwood, & Rosa, 2015), and the specific consideration of culture and group perspectives are not needed to capture the experiences of business managers participating in this study. Individualized data that are unique to the experiences of the research participant emerges in qualitative phenomenological studies (Tomkins & Eatough, 2013), but does not support the research question of this study. In the current study there is an exploration of information gathered from business managers who share strategies in managing employees advancing within the organization. The result of the grounded theory approach is developing a theory that describes the views of the research participants (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015). The intent of this study is not to identify a theory, but to understand the experiences of selecting and tailoring training to employees. In narrative studies research participants tell stories of their lived experiences (McMullen & Braithwaite, 2013), but narrative design is not appropriate for this study. The purpose of phenomenological studies is to investigate of unique experiences seeking a more precise response from research participants in comparison to narrative designs.

Data saturation occurs when there is no new information that emanates from the research. Data saturation purports that the data set is complete when data redundancy occurs (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). In the case of this research study, when responses of the research subjects fail to provide new emerging information data

saturation has been achieved. Saturation is an indicator of sample size acceptability and considered a gold standard in rigorous academic research (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Lightfoot, 2014).

Population and Sampling

This qualitative case study is an exploration of the experiences of business managers in a medium sized company in central North Carolina. Interviews occur with the intended population of business managers with experience in developing and implementing strategies for selecting and tailoring training specific to the employee needs. Solicitation of participants for the study occurred through contact made via telephone or electronic mail requesting participation. Participants in the study represent a company within the geographical constraints of the study. Additionally, participants met the following selection criteria: be employed with the organization for at least 5 years, and have a minimum of 2 years' experience in the decision-making position. The interview setting was a neutral location at the participants office identified by the participant. Meeting rooms at a local library were also available if participants chose not to conduct the interview at their office location.

Qualitative research interviews require achievement of data saturation (Rowlands, Waddell, & McKenna, 2015). Data saturation occurs when there is no new information that emanates from the research. Data saturation purports that the data set is complete when data redundancy occurs (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). In the case of this research study, when responses of the research subjects fail to provide new emerging information data saturation occurs. Additional interviews commenced until I

achieved data saturation. Each potential participant received an informed consent form and consented to voluntary participation in the study before engaging in interviews.

A targeted sample size of four business managers, or more until data saturation, allowed in-depth interviews to capture the experiences of the individuals. The sampling process is purposeful and identifies participants who meet the selection criteria for the study. Random sampling was not appropriate to ensure that the research participants meet the specific selection criteria for the study, and may not yield business managers who have experience in developing strategies for individualizing training to address specific employee needs or deficits. The sampling method for a study must support the purpose of the research. The purposive sampling method enables targeting of known networks that demonstrate relevance to the study research (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2015).

Establishing the proper sample size and means for attaining the sample for research purposes is an essential strategy in qualitative research (Suri, 2011). The purposive sampling method supports identification of individuals for participation in the research study. Purposive or selective sampling in this study is assumed to be effective to facilitate the methodology of this study. Additionally, asking informed questions based on the expertise of the researcher supports a carefully planned interview process (Qu & Dumay, 2011), which is a strategy to minimize the potential bias in the study. A sample size of four research participants and member checking supported the achievement of data saturation and ensured the richness of the data. Participants for this study are managers who use strategies for selecting individuals for training and advancement

within the organization. Each participant had experience in the use of strategies to engage the individual in tailored training for promotional opportunities.

Identification of the target research population of business managers with demonstrated use of strategies in selecting employees and tailoring training specific to their individual traits through the purposeful sampling method. Purposive sampling is common in qualitative research as it supports the selection of participants who have the capacity to provide input that illuminates the phenomenon (Kisely & Kendall, 2011). Use of purposive sampling aids in selecting a target population according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. Using purposeful sampling in qualitative research allows identification and selection of cases most related to the area of interest (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2013).

Ethical Research

Ethical research procedures are a hallmark of researcher integrity and contribute significant value to the research study. Consideration of ethical research with human subjects has persisted for decades dating back to the 1920s (Stacey & Stacey, 2012). Contemporary research has safeguards to protect the participants through informed consent, avoidance of conflicts of interest, maintaining confidentiality, avoiding harm and doing good, (Stacey & Stacey, 2012). Business managers participated in the interview process only through voluntary participation. Each potential research participant understood the purpose and objective of the study through the informed consent process, and was made aware of their freedom to withdraw from the study with no repercussion. Participants could verbally request to withdraw from the study at any

time. To avoid any influence on participant responses, participants did not receive any financial rewards

As the researcher, my role was to ensure informed consent demonstrated by the informed consent form, which also delineates the procedures for withdrawing from the study. Also, confidentiality was done by removing any identifying information from each participant and assigning a coded designator. Data will be safeguarded for 5 years to protect rights of participants by storing information collected in the study in a fireproof safe inaccessible to any person other than the researcher. Before iinterviewing the participants, I followed the ethical research protocols of Walden University and obtained IRB approval (Approval No. 05-17-17-0482534). Before conducting the interviews, each participant received the informed consent form and indicated their agreement by signing the form.

Data Collection

Instruments

The case study design in this study was an exploration of the strategies of business managers in selecting and individualizing training from employees. The interview protocol was the data collection instrument. The researcher is the primary analytical tool in qualitative research where deep contextual information emerges through interviews (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Conducting interviews under similar conditions and free from distractions is important to ensure the accuracy of the data. Interviewing is a dynamic process that engages skills of rapport building and clear communication (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Participants provide interview responses to in-depth interviews to

capture business managers individual experiences. Within the interview format there is flexibility in the interview process (Qu & Dumay, 2011). I used an interview protocol to ensure that each participant answers the same questions supports consistency in the study (see Appendix A). Participants respond to the data they provide in the initial interview through a member checking interview protocol (Harvey, 2015). Using member checking is a tool for enhancing reliability and validity and contributes richness to the data by eliciting review and additional feedback from the participants.

The interview protocol as a qualitative tool continues to be a widely accepted format in the research community for capturing data that are unique to the research participant (Parker, 2014). Unique perspectives of the business manager's experience come about through interviews. Use of the interview supports capturing a deep understanding of the phenomenon experienced by research participants (Mojtahed, Nunes, Martins, & Peng, 2014). Treatment of research participants is with respect in the study. Participants in the research study are in positions to use strategies for identification of employees with traits that benefit the organization and develop individualized training. Adverse effects beyond recounting the lived experiences should not occur, and informed consent will address this issue for all participants. Information from this study will remain in a secure location for 5 years to protect the rights of the research participants.

Data Collection Technique

The qualitative case study design supports data collection and analysis for addressing the research question. Interviews are a rich source of information for the qualitative method (Qu & Dumay, 2011). As a part of the initial screening process the

researcher contacted organizations with medium sized operations (employ at least 50

individuals) via telephone to determine if there is an internal manager responsible

assessing employee needs for individualized training per employee. Initial contact with

potential research participants was through email with an invitation to participate. I

provided an informed consent form to research participants to ensure their knowledge of

risks and benefits of the study. Upon agreement to participate in the study, I scheduled

the interview date and time. Screening of research participants ensures that they are

appropriate to address the research question. Additionally, screening of the research

participants ensures that each meets the selection criteria for the purposeful sampling

method. It is important that each participant not only is in a decision-making capacity in

the organization but also has specifically influenced the process of individualizing

training for employees. Each participant in the study received the interview protocol for

consistency in the retrieval of data (see Appendix A).

　　　　Data collection consisted of face to face interviews, note taking, and audio

support with a digital recorder for back up and accuracy. Audio recording cannot capture

the full context in which the participant provides responses to the interview questions, so

I used notetaking to document details that may not emerge on the audio. Notetaking and

audio tools used by the researcher are to ensure accuracy in documenting input from

research participants.

　　　　Upon completion of the interview, I conducted walk-through member checking to

ensure the accuracy of the data gathered. The advantages of employing member checking

the are that the unique experiences of the individual participants unfold through the

recorded initial interview and the recorded walk-through member checking process, and the information is descriptive providing a level of richness to the study. A disadvantage of the interview protocol technique is that despite the element of confidentiality, individual participants may be reluctant to be fully transparent with vital information for fear of misrepresentation of the organization or themselves. Member checking requires that the research participant review the transcribed interview and provide confirmational editing responses for clarification (Morse, 2015). Member checking ensures accuracy of gathered information, for eliminating researcher bias and promotes research credibility (Morse, 2015). Member checking can contribute the amount and depth of data for the study. Member checking involves meeting with the participant a second time to confirm the analysis of the transcribed interview allowing participants to add or adjust the meaning of their experience (Harvey, 2015). Member checking and other strategies that support trustworthiness of the research, including triangulation and saturation, are hallmarks of comprehensive and ethical qualitative research (Kisely & Kendall, 2011).

Data Organization Technique

Coding of the themes that emerge in the responses from the research participants requires the organization of data. Visually organizing data into columns or by themes allows the researcher to identify patterns in the data (Romand, Donovan, Hsinchun, & Nunamaker, 2003). Critical reflection obtained by research participants gathered through qualitative techniques contribute insight into the phenomenon of research interest (Berger, 2015). Initially, each participant is assigned a unique identifier such that the transcribed interviews correctly associated with the identifier. Microsoft Excel software

and Nvivo are the software applications used to organize the collected data. Organizing

data into categories according to similarities of meaning or relation are an important

precursor to the analysis of the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Organization of the

research data is a major step in the process of conducting analysis and supporting the

researcher to identify emerging themes in the unique experiences of the participants.

Finally, all results of the research, including interviews and data analysis, will be securely

stored in a fireproof safe for 5 years.

Data Analysis

Identifying common themes for understanding the unique phenomenon is

facilitated by proper analysis of research data (Smith et al., 2011). Securing information

from multiple data sources in the single case study increases data validity (Gorissen, van

Bruggen, & Jochems, 2013). Methodological triangulation is important to confirm

research participant responses (Gorrisen et al, 2013). Confirming research responses and

enhanced understanding of the research are benefits of methodological triangulation

(Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). Identifying themes in the data is an important part of the

data analysis procedures. Member checking conducted with the research participants

provides support for the accuracy of the interviews (Harper & Cole, 2012). I used

Microsoft Excel to analyze data, and develop themes will emerge from the data.

Additionally, Nvivo 10 is a qualitative data analysis software that provides for rigor in

data analysis and in the identification of themes in the data. The Nvivo software supports

qualitative data analysis through a computer-assisted protocol (Leech & Onwuegbuzie,

2011). In addition to manual transcribing and coding of data, Nvivo 10 supported

computer-assisted analysis as a means to verify data coding accuracy. Careful

organization and analysis of the data aided in identifying the emerging themes of

business managers experiences with developing and implementing strategies for

individualizing training.

Interviewing each research participant involved providing the individuals with

open-ended research questions that serve to retrieve information to answer the central

research question. Recording of the interview responses by a digital voice recorder

captured and accurately reflect participant responses. Validation of interview responses

by reviewing the data from the interviews with the research participants supported

accuracy and preserve the research ethics (Mero-Jaffe, 2011). Organized interview

responses entered into Nvivo 10 provided an understanding of the strategies and

processes that business managers use for making decisions in tailoring training for

employees. Emerging themes from the research of business managers experience were

grouped according to topics in the literature and the conceptual framework of SHRM.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability is the aspect of research that pertains to the ability to obtain repeatedly

similar responses in research (Albin, 2012). I assured the dependability of the research

process through member checking whereby each e participant responds to the data

provided in the initial interview (Harvey, 2015). Enabling other researchers to achieve

confidence in the findings of the research demonstrates the reliability of my study.

Reliability, characterized as research rigor, occurs through demonstrating credibility,

dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). There is lack of value for qualitative research that lacks the element of reliability. Assuring the reliability for my study occurred through the provision of in-depth interview questions and member checking.

Dependability

Dependability is an indicator of research reliability and is an indicator of research quality (Funder, Levine, Mackie, Morf, Sansone, Vazire, & West, 2014). To ensure research dependability, I used a consistent interview protocol for all research participants (Appendix A). Eliminating known areas of bias is important to ensure fidelity of the research. Member checking is a process whereby the researcher confirms the responses of the research participants and affords the opportunity for validation or amendment of the responses. Member checking is an aspect of qualitative research that is a critical quality control procedure (Harper & Cole, 2012). The role of member checking in the qualitative inquiry process is to provide a complete rendering of the experience (Harper & Cole, 2012), whereby business managers accurately recount their experience of using strategies to select and individualize training for employees.

Validity

Documenting transparent procedures for the qualitative research process serves to control for researcher bias. Regarding evaluating validity in qualitative research, the researcher is responsible for reporting on the aspects of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These four factors are a part of the qualitative inquiry that promotes validity in quantitative research. A transparent account of the qualitative

research process affords an increase in trustworthiness, an important component of research validity (Connelly, 2016).

The use of software to support data analysis is another element of the qualitative process to ensure transparency and thus validity. I used NVivo to evaluate results of the interviews gathered for the research study.

Credibility. The credibility of a research study is a measurement of the quality of evidence in supporting the conclusions that are drawn based on that evidence (Elliott, 2013). The credibility of the interview process improved by using purposeful sampling and ensuring that the research participants have experience with the phenomenon investigated. Member checking is a process that contributes to the accuracy and richness of the data for the study and is a tool to confirm the interpretation of research participant responses.

Transferability. Statistical generalization is not the intent of qualitative inquiry; rather using thick descriptions allows the transfer of original findings to another context (Morse, 2015). The element of external validity that appears in quantitative research is synonymous with this aspect of investigator ability to generalize results of this study to other but similar business processes. By providing detailed information about the process of this qualitative inquiry, other investigators and business managers gained necessary insights to determine generalizability of this study.

Confirmability. The element of confirmability pertains to the development of a trail documenting the researcher's influences and actions (Morse, 2015). Documenting a trail ensures that others can confirm the results by repeating the research. It is the

responsibility of the researcher to ensure that transparent documentation processes are active to support confirmability of the research. I maintained consistency in the process of interviewing participants through the use of an interview protocol (Appendix A) to check the potential for bias in the study. Recording, transcribing, and using field notes assisted in developing an audit trail of the process of reporting results that are accurate representations of the responses and conclusions from interviewing the business managers.

Summary and Transition

In Section 2 of this study, the conceptual framework consisted of support strategies used by business managers individualizing training for employee needs. Justification for the population and sample size support this qualitative study. Data saturation occurred through using purposive sampling member checking until no new information results from the interviews. Interviews provide the input for the research study where research participants receive the same set of questions and subject to similar protocols for informed consent and member checking for analysis. Coding of themes for the data was through Microsoft Excel and NVivo 10 software. The interview questions were structured to support a response to the research question and to gain an understanding of the unique experiences of business managers in the process of selecting and tailoring training to individual employees and selecting individuals for promotion. Assuring reliability and validity of findings from the research study is vital and expected to be achieved through the layered approach to ensuring credibility, transferability, confirmability, and member checking.

In Section 3, I document findings, identify themes, discuss the implications of the findings, and make recommendations for further research, and present my conclusions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies business managers use to customize training to individual employee needs. The data came from manager interviews at a medium-sized business in central North Carolina and company documentation. The findings showed strategies that managers used to customize training for employees. The themes that emerged from the data, combined with data triangulation, formed the recommendations for further study. My reflections, summary, and study conclusions complete Section 3.

Presentation of the Findings

The research question for the study was: What strategies do business managers use in customizing training for employees? I conducted face-to-face interviews with five business managers. I scheduled and conducted interviews according to the availability of each business manager at an off-site location to assure confidentiality. I used a purposeful sampling method and open-ended questions as processes for completing the semistructured interview process. Four themes emerged from analyzing the data:

1. Job-person fit: a feature of employment that can contribute to employees' level of satisfaction; it affects the organizations' ability to retain a pool of quality applicants.

2. Organizational culture: culture has a vital role in all businesses and it is the level of leaders' commitment to uphold a positive organizational culture that

emerged in the research as an important area for consideration in individualizing support for employees.

3. Employee relationships: synergistic relationships with management are contingent upon the approaches of leadership and the overall organizational mission.

4. Performance management: the organizations' approach to performance management and using the information gained through performance evaluations was critical in the overall approach to individualizing training and mentoring for employees.

The conceptual framework for this study was SHRM. I compared the SHRM framework with the findings of this research study and determined that the SHRM framework aligned with strategies the company used to select employees for individualized training. The interviews, performance evaluations, and employee self-assessments supported the tenets of SHRM theory. For example the business managers' consistently employed organizational strategies for driving management behaviors for achieving optimal job-person fit and individualized employee training.

Emergent Theme 1: Job-Person Fit

The first emergent theme from the study is job-person fit. The objective of achieving optimal placement of the individual in a position that matches employee skills was evident amongst all managers interviewed. Important to the process of supporting job-person fit within the business is the mentoring relationship maintained with employees as evidenced by direct reports from Manager 1 and Manager 3. The intent of

selecting employees for training customization is to achieve outcomes of placing employees in positions that match employee strengths per report of Managers 2, 3, and 4. The role of business managers was to ensure support for the promotion of individuals that displayed growth.

According to Manager 4 the relevance of fostering a mentoring relationship with employees is an informed approach to training development, and:

> The process for selecting and tailoring training for employees starts with knowing the employee and so I not only evaluate their needs but due to the level of connection within our mentoring structure, I have an added level of knowledge of the employee's strengths and weaknesses.

The style of mentoring within the business reflected the organization's competitive strategy. It was evident during the interviews that each business manager embraced the overall business strategy. All managers reported on how their approach to selecting and training employees depends upon the business' competitive strategy for professional development and retention of employees. Consideration of the appropriateness of an individual for a particular position requires employee and organizational evaluation and is a valuable process that promotes performance and efficiency (van Loon, Leisink, & Vandenabeele, 2017). Manager 1 reported that the individualized attention provided to employees aids in the evaluation process and generates valuable information to support changes to ensure performance efficiency.

Accommodating internal growth through individualized training opportunities and ensuring placement of employees in appropriate positions was apparent within the

business managers' practices. Manager 2 reported that individualized employee training facilitates internal growth. Manager 3 reported:

> Using individualized training exercises allows the relationship between the employee and manager to grow. We support the professional development of our workforce and position employees where their strengths are also exposed. It is this style of management that allows us to achieve internal growth and not have to look for outside candidates to meet our needs because instead, we are building up our internal resources, the employees.

Assessing interests of employees appeared as an important determinant in business managers' decisions to proceed with the selection process for advancing employees through the training procedures. Business managers maintained a consistent process for evaluating employees to make decisions regarding selection for individual training processes. Manager 1 reported:

> The business has a continual process of evaluating employees. There are formal evaluations and informal evaluations, and I find that the informal evaluations are most beneficial. Using the mentoring style relationship, I am always observing individuals I supervise and looking for their potential to advance. As I become more confident in recommending the employee for advancement, I start providing training to help them acquire the specific skills needed for the next position.

Similarly, Manager 4 reported:

> Conducting evaluations is a big part of our role as managers. I use the evaluation process to provide support to make the employee better with their current

assignment and fulfilling the job tasks, but also to ensure that they are prepared

with the knowledge and skills to advance into the next position. We are always

thinking forward about how to help the employee, and I think that is how we

retain our employees.

Based on the responses from Managers 1 and 4 there is value from information

gained through assessing employees' needs to determine appropriate positioning within

the organization. As found in my literature review, standardization of processes for

employee evaluation is a method of supporting equity and fair advancement of employees

that is merit-based (Huhtala, Feldt, Hyvönen, & Mauno, 2013). Alignment of employees

with the organizational mission to achieve job-person fit also emerged in the interview

responses from Managers, 2, 4, and 5. The level of commitment for an employee has

been found to be significant when the organizational mission aligns with the employee's

perception of their job tasks (Wilkins, Butt, & Annabi, 2017). Manager 4 reported:

Achieving job-person fit is a matching process facilitated by the leaders'

relationship with employees. Fostering an open line of communication with

employees is important to everyone within the company. Open communication

and assessments where we provide the feedback back to the employees help in

making sure that employees are in positions where they will thrive.

Manager 2 reported:

I have found that when I train an employee and support them in their assigned

positions that they not only do a good job, but they feel valued more. You can see

this come through our ongoing assessments of employees. Asking a person do

they feel competent in their ability to complete job tasks gives us information

about their fit but asking them about if they feel a sense of value in their position

and that their voice matters gives us additional input on how the employee fits in

with their job and with the organization as a whole.

Additionally, Manager 5 reported:

We are all reminded of the organizational mission because it is on each page of

our evaluation forms. The mission of the organization guides how we manage and

how we support employees. We as managers are trained to assess strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for each employee. SWOT analyses for

employees work very well to support decisions made to select individuals for

training and advancement opportunities.

Gathering information to facilitate better decisions regarding employee placement

was important and identified by Managers 2 and 5 as contributing value to employees and

for benefiting the organization. Wong and Tetrick (2017) reported that progressive

training is of increasing value in the workforce as job demands evolve with technology

and competition. Business efforts to address the need for individualized training for

employees to contribute value to the organization is vital. Ensuring the competence of

business managers to implement business strategy is important in protecting the

investment of human resources. Compatability of the employee and organization as well

as the employee and the manager are relationships that are critical to the success of the

growing business structure (Wong & Tetrick, 2017).

Emergent Theme 2: Organizational Culture

As indicated in my literature review, the organizational culture promotes

rewarding employee behavior and targeting of behavioral or performance-based

objectives, both of which can contribute significantly to the organizational climate

(Presslee, Vance, & Webb, 2013). Additionally, the SHRM conceptual framework has

elements of organizational culture and performance (Mitchell, Obeidat, & Bray, 2013).

Managers reported the importance of organizational culture influences in the workplace

such that it guides practices of managing employees. Promoting professional

development amongst employees throughout the organization is attributable to

organizational culture according to Managers 4 and 1. Manager 4 reported the

establishment of the mentoring relationship proved to be a selling point for the

organization in the recruitment of new employees to the team. Manager 1 reported:

> Professional development is a gold standard throughout the business. As a
>
> manager, I am responsible for not only identifying opportunities that enhance
>
> professional development for supervisees, but I have to assess when a person is
>
> most appropriate for the recommendation. I use information gained through
>
> formal and informal evaluations of supervisees and use that knowledge to make
>
> decisions regarding their training. It is the culture of the business we run, and that
>
> is to make sure that we are continually assessing and training, so we stay ahead of
>
> the competition.

Identifying practices to encourage the progressive deployment of the

organizational culture and ensuring that the employees embody the spirit of the culture is

a dynamic task. Organizational learning cultures contribute to business sustainability

through maximizing the capacity of the organization (Wahda, 2017). During the interview with Manager 2 it was clear the extent to which the organizational culture directly influenced business operations and the process of developing training programs for employees ongoing learning. Manager 2 reported that the role of the manager is two-fold including exploiting the positives of the employees to operate strengths based approaches to mentoring and training, which the manager attributed as a direct influence of the culture of the company. Additionally, the most important driving force in organizational culture is the employee as reported by Manager 3 who identified organizational use of individual training plans as the reason for their success in retaining employees.

Manager 1 discussed how acceptance of the organizational culture was integral to the manager's ability to influence a productive workforce and recalled the following:

Building capacity from within is a critical function of the business manager. The management team meets regularly to review how the organizational culture influences our daily interactions with other employees, and it works. I have not been in another work setting quite like this, but there is evidence of the power of asking something so simple as how do you see the culture of the organization influence your work.

Accessing data from various employment levels provides data to make informed decisions regarding the management of the business and generates an impact on work engagement (Barbars, 2016). Managers 2 and 4 identified various forms of soliciting data from employees that went beyond tools of questionnaires and took the form of

individualized supervision. Manager 4 recalled that the use of individual time with the

employees is supportive and encourages feelings of value. Manager 2 reported:

> Using information obtained from individual supervision sessions assists in
>
> determining opportunities that accommodate employee strengths. As
>
> opportunities for advancement become present for an employee, the vital nature
>
> of my supervisory relationship becomes active in deploying individual support for
>
> employees. The most important part of the process to me is that there is no cookie
>
> cutter process. We take time with each individual and support them in success,
>
> and this support exists throughout the business and is the selling point for a lot of
>
> new employees.

The interviews from Managers 1, 2, and 4 provided evidence of roles endorsed by

employees and managers to sustain an organizational culture of inclusion where input is

recognized, valued, and utilized to benefit employees and their organization. The

literature includes the claim that organizational flexibility and adapting to change is an

element of organizational culture (Bal & De Lange, 2015). Manager 2 explained that

through individual and group assignments there is a constant flow of data illustrating

where the business processes perform according to business standards and where

improvements are needed. There is continuous evaluation of the business and a layered

approach to identifying job-related stressors or practices that impede the culture of the

business. Manager 1 reported:

> We have to make decisions based on the strategy of the business. We can make
>
> these decisions because we receive so much information from our department's

evaluations and knowledge shared amongst managers on what training deficits

exist and where change needs to occur. It is an important value of the company to

encourage informed decision making supported by data. All of these elements

drive our business culture and commitment to valuing the human resource.

Encouraging managers to make decisions with information gathered through actual

business processes is a part of business culture dynamics. Caruso (2017) reported that

engagement in workplace learning is an effect of organizational culture, and sharing of

knowledge throughout the organization activates employee investment in the

organizational culture.

Emergent Theme 3: Employee Relationships

Encouraging dyadic relationships contributes to a positive influence on employee

job satisfaction and turnover (Jutras, 2016). The role of managers is to ensure that

communication is maintained with employees so that feedback is used to make

improvements in the workplace reported Manager 1. Business managers encourage

relationship development and communication through ongoing supervision, which

Manager 3 indicated often takes the form of individual and group supervision with direct

managers. "Supervision provides opportunities for employees to voice concerns with

their work tasks and discussion of feedback. Supervision sessions are what allows our

business processes to improve because it is a structure of professional development for

employees and managers," reported Manager 3.

Bui (2016) reported that the function of managers is to understand and respond to

employee behaviors ensuring balance in work assignments and promoting work

engagement. A healthy work relationship ensures that employees are empowered through support and education to accomplish their assigned tasks. Manager 3 reported:

> Managers are responsible for employee success. We are responsible for monitoring work tasks, and that there is a quality work performed. The first step is to have an understanding that I am here to make things better and to activate their voices.

Communication is supported through the mentoring style relationship promoted within the business, but also through the standardized evaluation process. The business structure empowers management to use creativity in the use of information gathered through employee evaluations to improve training for individual employee needs.

Manager 2 reported:

> We exploit the positives so that employees can be motivated, gain confidence. Then we identify ways that we can enhance their skills so they can do better in their position. I do not ignore the negative parts, but I address those on an individual basis so the person does not feel called out.

Understanding basics of human behavior and using this knowledge to guide employee and leader relationships is a characteristic of effective business managers. "It is through monitoring and learning cooperative groups that we foster relationships with employees," cites Manager 4. Ensuring that there are multiple methods of support for employees encourages a dynamic relationship between the manager and employee.

Engaging relationships between employees and managers encourage growth of organizational culture. The competitive advantage of the business increases where there

is agreement not only in employee and leader relationships but also where employees

agree with organizational mission and culture. It can be costly to steer changes in

business culture, so ensuring alignment with organization and employee values is

important. Manager 5 captured the importance of motivating change as a manager and

reported:

> The relationship that I maintain with employees is vital. We have open
>
> communication and ongoing evaluation of the employee's ability to achieve
>
> assigned job tasks. I encourage employees to give feedback and to challenge not
>
> only themselves but for me as a manager as well. The system fails if a manager
>
> feels that they cannot themselves improve, and I use the employee evaluations to
>
> support training for the employees and an opportunity for me to learn as well.

Emergent Theme 4: Performance Management

Ongoing assessment and evaluation was a standard in the management process

identified by all business managers interviewed. Performance evaluation provides

information on which managers cultivate business relationship with employees and aids

with the instillation of reward systems (Hendijani, Bischak, Arvai, & Dugar, 2016).

Current evaluation of performance is important to ensure that the business is making

changes based on individual employee needs and these needs manifest in ongoing

performance assessments. Manager 3 reported:

> I am responsible evaluating a group of employees, and I have to use evaluation
>
> data to improve their performance through designing targeted training. The
>
> greatest tool that the organization uses to enforce performance management is the

managers. We train, assess, make changes to fit the employee and facilitate this

cycle.

"There are a unique set of skills required of business managers to ensure that we are in

tune with employee needs and also actively develop employee skills especially when

employees are skeptical of their ability reported," Manager 2.

Gathering and using data to facilitate making changes to improve business

process is a key function of performance management. The SHRM framework supports

performance management. Managers reported the ability to use individualized

approaches to training and management of employees enabled creativity and

empowerment to influence change. Manager 4 reported that use of work plans to ensure

achievement of performance expectations and communication of work standards

encouraged the ongoing evaluation of performance.

Evaluation of performance supports employee professional development.

Manager 2 reported:

The use of performance evaluation systems allows us to implement strategies to

improve individual and organizational performance. We assess what is not

working well and create training systems for improvement based on information

gathered from these evaluations.

Performance evaluation is a major tool in SHRM as it provides data to inform

decisions for management. The managers reported that use of evaluations is an ongoing

process within the business. Managers 3 and 4 reported that there are forms of self-

assessment used where employees monitor their progress according to job description

duties, and there are assessments that require managers to provide feedback on the quality

of work performed by employees. "The important thing is to make sure to use

information from the assessments otherwise it is a moot point and individuals may find it

useless to provide valuable input if it is evident that the information is not used," reported

Manager 1. Activating performance evaluations within businesses is useful to ensure

communication of employees concerns, but it is critical that the information is used and

recognized by management to make improvements throughout the business.

Performance management is a business practice that each business manager

reported on throughout the interview process. The managers recognized that performance

evaluations provide information to guide decision-making processes in selecting

individuals for individualized training supports. "Requiring continuous communication

with employees through performance management evaluations keeps us connected to the

employees and facilitates our system where we have endless data to make business

improvements directly through our talent management," reported Manager 5.

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of this case study provide evidence of strategies that are employable

in business. Mentoring relationships in business afford opportutnities for value

convergence and enhances the organizational culture (Fogarty, Reinstein, Heath, &

Sinason, 2017). While there is no single format for human resource management proven

as most effective, it is vital that the performance evaluation process align with

organizational strategies and foster an environment where training is accessible for each

employee's needs.

Business managers can implement training strategies for employees to encourage skill development and improve the human capital resource. Using strategies explored in this study, business managers can develop and implement successful training programs within the organization. Improvement in employees' ability to accomplish assigned tasks can foster a competitive organizational culture.

Implications for Social Change

The implication for positive social change is increased effectiveness in employee management to help contribute to organizational climates of inclusiveness. An additional implication for positive social change is reduced turn over. Effecting change through employee retention can have a direct impact on the local economy contributing to lowering or managing the unemployment rate. Social change impacted by retention of employees also contributes value to the local communities where employees' use local buying when they have stable income. The results of this study provide business leaders with evidence of the benefit of individualized training and fostering mentoring relationships with employees. It is possible for business leaders to experience increased value and motivation from employees contributing to enhanced organizational cultures (Yanfei, Yangliu, & Yu, 2018). Communities value relationships with organizations invested in supporting the asset of employment opportunities to individuals within the community (Bumble, Carter, Manikas, & McMillan, 2017).

The findings from this study could influence business managers by providing strategies to increase individualized training and assessment of employees. The information provided in this study could contribute to social change by supporting

business managers' use of management processes that can increase investment of employees, promote professional growth and development, and decrease turn over contributing to positive social and economic benefits for communities.

Recommendations for Action

The information in this study adds to the current literature on strategies for training employees. Business managers with the responsibility of ensuring that employees successfully achieve their job tasks could benefit from the results of this study. The results of this case study can help business managers in changing the strategies in the management of employees. Results of this case study will be submitted to professional journals and conferences, and could be useful in catalyzing managerial training to deliver the importance of investing resources in individualizing employees' training.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendations for further research are to extend future studies' focus on service industry businesses where dynamics of employee management is challenging, but a necessity for organizational performance. Further research should also include retrieval of data from various employee levels to enable employees to contribute information on their perceptions of individualized training methods. Extending the sample population to include other employees who contribute to the development of training and employee selection and recruitment could enable development of additional information that is useful to business managers.

Reflections

There were challenges manifested during this research process, and there was enlightenment that I experienced regarding understanding the rigor of academic investigations. Completion of the study aided in my understanding of the vitality of positive relationships with management and the utility of individualizing training beyond basic organizational training modules. I learned that investigating individual employees' needs and implementing organizational responses to those needs is critical for employees having the skills and motivation to accomplish their job tasks.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The findings of this study provide convincing strategies to support business managers in developing systems of training to encourage employee development. Implementing training strategies to serve individual employee needs is beneficial to employees who possess the skills necessary to meet job demands and impact higher organizational functions. Individualizing training also benefits the organization where employees are supported in retention and are promoted to support the business. Ensuring that individuals are in positions where job-person fit is optimized influences multiple layers of business functions including employee and organizational behavior.

Creating effective strategies to individualize training for employees is an important function of business managers. The impact of the strategies used by the business managers in selecting and individualizing training for employees revealed benefits for improving job-person fit, which contributes to the organization's ability to retain qualified staff.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Researcher task	Script
Interview introduction	Thank you for taking time to participate in this research study. The feedback that you provide in response to the interview will be maintained in a confidential manner such that your responses will not track back to you. However, the input your provide will be of great value to address the process on how employees are identified for training opportunities and how the training is individualized per their need. The interview will take approximately 120 minutes. You can withdraw from the interview at any time.
- Watch for non-verbal queues - Paraphrase as needed - Ask follow-up probing questions to get more in-depth responses	1. Take a moment to recall a recent experience when you observed and selected an employee that you felt had potential for advancement if given training, and tell me about it.
	2. Continue with your experience and tell me how you determined the specific training needed for successful advancement, and how it was tailored to the individual's needs.
Wrap up interview thanking participant	I really appreciate your time and openness during this interview. I have no more questions at this time.
Schedule follow-up member checking interview	I would like to schedule a follow up interview called a member checking interview. This interview will give you an opportunity to contribute additional information that you feel will be useful and to confirm that I have accurately documented your responses. When are

| | you available for this follow up that should last about an hour? |

Follow-up member checking interview

1. Researcher will review and interpret the interview transcripts
2. Researcher will document each interview question followed by a synthesis of the interview response
3. A printed copy of the synthesis is provided to the participant at the follow-up interview and they will be allowed time to review
4. Researcher will ask if the synthesis is accurate based on their interview and if there is additional information
5. Researcher will follow up with each interview question during the member checking process until no new data is available to collect