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**POWER SHIFTS DURING AN  
ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

A Dissertation in

Adult Education

by

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study explored the shifts in power that might occur during an organizational transformation from the perspectives of both the senior management and the staff or workers. Specific activities such as the inclusion of multiple viewpoints in decision making, critical reflection on current processes, and a shift in values, assumptions and beliefs were examined as part of this power shift. Numerous perceptions were seen as essential in furthering the understanding of observations and analysis of power in organizations during transformations.

The study used critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens as its framework to view power, allowing for a holistic examination of power and acknowledging that power in an organization comes in multiple types and stems from multiple sources. Power types and sources play a significant role in both the culture of the organization and the potential limitations on learning accessible to workers and ultimate transformation of the organization. This being said, in order to enhance the potential for organizational transformation cultural characteristics such as: increased self-sufficiency, wide communication, freedom of choice, creating a learning environment, and a more democratic distribution of power were considered.

The study utilized a case study methodology to gather data. The intention with this design was to explore one organization through numerous data sources and perspectives. It is the interrelationship and dynamic impact that these data sources have on one another that this study examined. A spiral of analysis was done on the data encouraging a deeper and deeper understanding of the findings at each stage of the study's progression. Findings yielded a power distribution unlike any mentioned in the literature.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of a qualitative case study in which I sought to understand the role of power and shifts in power that might occur in an organization during an organizational transformation from the perspective of both the senior management and the workers or staff. It sought to find evidence of, and understand the notion of power re-distribution as it was transferred from the senior levels of management to the staff or workers during an organizational transformation, a very specific type of organizational change in which the core of the organization is changed (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Levy, 1986). While power shifting was the focus of the study, the context was an organization during transformation. In this case, the type of organization selected for this study happened to be a not-for-profit one.

This chapter includes a background to the problem, a purpose statement, the theoretical framework that guides the study, an overview of the research methodology and research questions, a discussion of the significance of the study, and a list of assumptions and limitations associated with this study.

#### Background of the Problem

Organizations enter our lives in different ways: we work for them, we consume their products, we see buildings which house their offices, and we read about them in newspapers and absorb their advertisements. When we look at organizations, especially the larger, older, famous ones, they seem solid, they seem permanent, and they seem orderly. This is, after all, why we call them organizations...but in our view...this is only half the story....The other half, the life and activity that buzzes behind the apparent order, some times this bursts into view, revealing chaos... (Gabriel, Fineman, & Sims, 2000).

Power is an element found in organizations. It can be seen as the possession of control, authority, or influence over others; it can have relational aspects as well as individual aspects, and

it can be expressed as a means of organizational energy (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Hatch, 1997). For this reason, power sometimes appears to contribute to the status quo and stability and at other times can be leveraged to create change, at times appearing unorderly. Power is a complicated and illusive concept. Irregardless, most agree that “power is [both] necessary and problematic in organizations” (Vredenburg & Brender, 1998, p. 1337). One reason for this is that power tends to lack clear-cut boundaries though it is generally assumed to be used to attain desired results or outcomes in organizations (Gabriel, Fineman, & Sims, 2000). As many social theorists have discussed (Carter, McKinlay, & Rawlins, 2002; Gordon & Grant, 2004; Raven 1999) there are many types of power and power comes from several sources. Some of these sources come from the organizational structure while others derive from other sources. Some of these other sources are reflected in society at large—such as those marginalized in society by gender, race, etc. Metaphorically, to a large extent those who are invited to “sit at the table” to discuss issues and participate in decision making are determined based on their perceived power base (Cervero & Wilson, 2006, p. 6). Other sources are made evident by reviewing the organizational chart and still others are more hidden and have power based on individual knowledge, personal attributes or other less identifiable factors, all contributing to the elusiveness of the concept of power.

Some of these overlapping sources include organizational structure, social structure and politics (Cervero & Wilson, 2006; Hatch, 1997; Raven 1999). Furthermore, since power and knowledge are closely connected (Cervero & Wilson, 2006; Foucault, 1990) no power source is seen as neutral, instead power relationships are viewed as unequal entities.

One model for viewing sources of power comes from Hatch (1997) and is located in Chapter Two. She provides a useful model of understanding how power might work in

organizations. She discusses how organizational structure, social structure, and politics interact to analyze how power affects what happens in organizations. Within the organizational structure, increased authoritative power is recognized as one moves up the hierarchal organizational chart towards the pinnacle. However, also consistent with this view is the notion that power is located throughout the organizational chart and organization (Feldman, 1997; Gordon & Grant, 2004). Furthermore, agency of those workers located lower in the hierarchy is also recognized.

The second source of power Hatch (1997) refers to centers on an organization's social structure. From this point of view, the concept of power is viewed more in terms of the relationship between individuals. It is described as necessary to form relationships around tasks that are too large for individuals to perform on their own. In this way, the bonding of workers from any level of the organization may occur to form social networks. While their primary focus may initially be around task completion, a relationship between the individuals or workers forms and a social structure is established. It is this social structure that becomes the focus of this type of power source.

The final view of power Hatch (1997) discusses is centered on the politics of the organization. This power source is most often leveraged when relationships are formed at various levels of the organization and used to accomplish mutually beneficial tasks. However, organizational politics can also refer to the behaviors of individuals or groups which are primarily carried out as a method to gain or enhance a given power base and have as a distant second agenda any sense of accomplishing organizational goals.

A different but in some ways related way to view power in an organizational setting is based on the initial work of French and Raven's (1959) and revisited more recently by numerous social theorists (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Atwater, 1995; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O'Connor, &

Aguinis, 2001; Drea, Bruner II, & Hensel, 1993; Erchul, Raven, & Wilson, 2004; Koslowsky & Stashevsky, 2005; Raven, 1999). They describe at least seven distinct but often overlapping bases of power: position, legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, referent, and personal power. Power is seen from this perspective as a combination of structure and relationship, depending on the power bases exercised. Additionally, it is seen to pertain to both individuals and collections of individuals or groups. This view of power allows for those throughout the organization to be seen as having some degree of agency regardless of their authoritative power. Of course, when power is shared by senior levels and middle management and true empowerment takes place, then the power base can be expanded (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999).

In the 1960s and 1970s power theories dealt with power and influence theories (Birnbaum, 1992). It was not until nearly the 1980s that leadership theories began to challenge the hierarchical, powerful and patriarchal, autocratic styles of leadership and explore power from more of a relationship aspect (Kemelgor, 1976). From here the ideas of democracy of power and participation began to take form and with this new understanding came increased ambiguity and uncertainty (Laurent, 1978).

As noted above, power can also be tied to the organization's structure. At one end of a continuum of organizational structures is a highly autocratic structure which coincides with the hierarchy and pyramid drawing of the senior management holding the majority of the power. Most organizations today continue to be organized using a hierarchy. In a survey conducted in 1999 over two thirds of all organizations were found to be structured in a hierarchal way with power residing at the top of the organization (Mercer, 1999). Often these organizations are structured around divisional or departmental functions in an effort to increase economies of scale and responsiveness without undue economic risks. They are frequently found in the not-for-profit sector, commonly



incorporating other organizations such as unions or regulators to assist them in keeping closer tabs on their worker staff and functions, and include other structural tensions (Deal, 1991). On the other end of the continuum is a less structured organization. These types of organizations are most often found in creative fields such as advertising and research and development. Their structure is loose, flexible, and self-renewing. Ad-hoc decision making is prevalent.

Organizations experiencing rapid change may also incorporate ad hoc structures, ambiguous authority structures, and few rules. They may replace a hierarchal structure with a more flexible structure where the power is relaxed, creativity is encouraged, critical reflection is a way of life and transformation is possible (Ouchi, 1978). These organizations may leverage these more flexible structures temporarily or more permanently depending on their needs.

Power distribution in an organization then, comes from a variety of power sources, both formal (through organizational structure and other sanctioned structures) and informal (agency, information knowledge, and less formally endorsed) power sources (Atwater, 1995; Drea, Bruner II, & Hensel, 1993; Erchul, Raven, & Wilson, 2004; Hatch, 1997; Koslowsky & Stashevsky, 2005; Raven, 1999). The notion of power within an organization can also be viewed as temporary and tentative depending on numerous other organizational factors, such as organizational transformation. Power theories such as resource dependence theories see power used to influence decisions under the conditions of scarcity, criticality and uncertainty (Pfeiffer & Salancik, 1978). It makes sense then that all views of power have a place in explaining the phenomenon, from the most individual and independent to the most holistic, inclusive and/or relationship based.

For these reasons, a holistic understanding of power in the workplace is called for since no singular perspective explains this complex construct (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999; Alvesson & Wilmott, 2002; Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Hardy & Sullivan, 1998; Kemelgor,

1976). Debate may continue on choosing one theory or explanation over another. Regardless of the outcome, it is inarguable that power plays a significant role in organizational transformation. To begin to understand the impact of the shift of power during an organizational transformation we must consider all types of power and bases of power whether they come from an individual, networked or relationship source (Hendry, 1999). Because according to Mintzberg (1984) “shifts in power seem to lie at the root of transitions in organizations” (208). I begin with an examination of the shift from hierarchal power to a more democratic distribution of power. This means that the study focused on the shift of power distribution from senior levels of management to the staff or workers.

### Organizational Transformation

While my research study is focused on a shift in power, the context for this shift is during an organizational transformation, a specific form of organizational change. Furthermore, the choice of the words *organizational transformation* in association with this study is quite deliberate since this type of change is most consistently found in the literature to refer to a large scale, holistic change that alters the organizations center core or worldview, especially when it comes to values, beliefs, and attitudes (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Greiner & Cummings, 2004; Levy, 1986; Marshak, 1990; Mink, 1992; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996). In order to understand the subtleties of this choice a further explanation of this type of organizational change is essential.

In the literature, change is talked about using various terms. Some of the most prevalent of these terms are: organizational change, organizational development, and organizational transformation (Argyris, 1997; Goodstein & Burke, 1990; Marshak, 1990; Pettigrew, Woodman, & Cameron, 2001; Robertson, Roberts, & Porras, 1993). These terms are often used in general

conversation and even in the literature almost interchangeably. However, examples exist where there are subtle, but important differences in the discourse. In order to gain an appreciation for the selection and use of this term I turn to the literature.

Organizational change has been in the literature since the inception of an organization and often described as coming “in many shapes and sizes” (Burnes, 2004, p. 886). This term is often seen as an umbrella term for all types of change. At times, organizational change can be categorized in relation to two of its major approaches: organization development and organization transformation (Bartunek & Louis, 1988). Therefore, when the term “change” is used, it conjures up the notion that something has been altered from one form into another (Cummings & Worley, 2008; Marshak & Grant, 2008; Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Rothwell & Sullivan, 2005). However, often it fails to pinpoint the nature of the change and instead describes change in a rather general way. For this reason, more specific terms used to describe specific types of organizational change are called for.

Two of these terms are organizational transformation (OT) and organizational development (OD). However, though these terms originally were intended to describe specific and different types of change, they are often confused, particularly in general conversation, in more recent literature, and in practice (Cummings & Worley, 2008; Gallos, 2006; McLean & Egan, 2008; Rothwell & Sullivan, 2005). Nevertheless, in the early literature organizational development is a particular term with a detailed description which emerged during the 1960s as organizational development consultants became popular. They claimed to be able to “fix” or solve organizational problems, mostly through changes in mission statements, organizational structures, and by using other organizational processes or methods sometimes called transactions (Chapman, 2002; Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Fletcher, 1990; Greiner & Cummings, 2004; Williams, 2005).

Organizational development efforts often aim to assist the organization to be more productive or effective, and frequently the strategies employed fall under the definition of first order change and include small or incremental adjustments in work processes or methods (Fletcher, 1990; Chapman, 2002; Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Gabriel, Fineman, & Sims, 2000; Kroth, 2002). Another distinction in the early OD change language is the focus on process and method improvement often at the expense of focus on people or organizational culture (Trahant, Burke, & Koonce, 1997). Though OD has become more encompassing in the most recent literature and practice, there remains a body of literature which views OD as more dependant on planned interventions and strategies to create change than organizational transformation.

Conversely, the term organizational transformation (OT) is found in some of the early organizational change literature referring most often to the vastness of a change such as mega change, or changing the center or core of an organization. The literature frequently uses words such as frame bending, radical, second order, Model II, and others to describe changes to an organization which impact its foundational structure and culture in a profound way (Levy, 1986, Nutt & Backoff, 1997; Schein, 1985). Organizational transformation tends to require a shift in attitudes, beliefs, and cultural values (Bartunek, 1988; Chapman, 2002; Golembiewski, 1979).

According to Kegan (1994), organizational transformation (OT) is qualitatively different from other forms of change, and particularly the concept of organizational development (OD), as it requires fundamental reconceptualization or reorientation of the entire organization. It is defined as “a holistic, ecological, humanistic approach to radical, revolutionary change in the entire context of an organization’s system” (Fletcher, 1990 p. xv), meaning that the organization becomes a different entity in some way, with a new worldview. Fletcher (1990) uses descriptors such as “metamorphosis and a likeness to “the butterfly and chrysalis” (p. 78).

So in essence, organizational change is used as an umbrella term to describe all types of organizational change regardless of the approach (Bartunek & Louis, 1988). It is meant to describe the notion that something has been altered from one form into another (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). Within the term of organizational change are found two major approaches: organizational development and organizational transformation (Bartunek & Louis, 1988). Especially found in the early literature, organizational development tends to focus on processes and method improvement, sometimes known as transactional activities (Fletcher, 1990; Chapman, 2002; Gabriel, Fineman, & Sims, 2000; Kroth, 2002). More consistently in the literature, organizational transformation tends to focus on people or organizational culture (Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Chapman, 2002; Simmons, 2000; Thorne, 2000; Trahan, Burke, & Koonce, 1997; Williams, 2005). It also incorporates changes which increase critical reflection, modify the organizational identity, or alter the organization's worldview by altering the values, assumptions, and beliefs of the organization's workers and staff (Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Marshak, 1990; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996; Trahan, Burke, & Koonce, 1997).

Understanding that for some, a somewhat artificial or unnecessary distinction is being drawn concerning the types of change, for the purposes of this study, the type of change being examined is being labeled as transformational in nature. While there may be some strategies employed which could be classified as organizational development strategies, the overall intent is to use organizational transformation to change the worldview of the organization through critical reflection of the workers and involvement in the decision making process. While an organizational transformation may be introduced by those in power, typically at the pinnacle of a hierarchally organized organization, it may also come from a more grass rooted initiative within the

organization, a transformation ultimately creates its own final allocation of power, which may or may not mirror the original organizational structure (Mintzberg & Huy, 2003).

### Gaps in the Literature

When reviewing the literature for gaps in research studies on this topic, I first looked at organizational change, then a more specific form of change—organizational transformation and finally, power shifts within organizational transformation. My findings illustrate that while much research has been done in the organizational change field, little has been conducted in the more specific field of organizational transformation, and no research has been carried out looking at power shifts during an organizational transformation.

In the arena of organizational change there are numerous studies found in the research literature, particularly in the areas of general change and organizational development. Both have witnessed a strong research focus and generated significant conceptual literature. For example, according to Pettigrew, Woodman, and Cameron (2001), “The study of change and development is one of the great themes in social sciences” (p. 697). As such, interest has risen out of our fascination for both better understanding the change process and the many factors surrounding it. In fact, according to McLagan (2003), “The number of books and articles on change management has increased more than 100 times since the 1960s” (p.50). At the same time, however, few studies have been conducted on organizational transformations---those types of changes which focus on both organizational structure and people with the intent to change the organization’s worldview, identity, or central core (Pettigrew, Woodman & Cameron, 2001).

Most of the business-related research to date has also come out of the positivist paradigm and as such is frequently quantitative in design (Sobh & Perry, 2005). The quantitative research paradigm is typically in search of “hard criteria or data,” mostly concerned with the process, and

focused on whether or not a specific change has occurred; the steps or stages in the change process; the methods or strategies used; and its impact on organizational productivity and frequently labeled as organizational development research (Flamholz & Randle, 1998; Pettigrew, Woodman, & Cameron, 2001; Porras & Berg, 1978; Woodman & Wayne, 1985; Terpstra, 1981). Unfortunately, qualitative research while accepted as a legitimate form of research has been seen as subordinate in most management disciplines to quantitative research (Boje, 2001; Goulding, 2002; Johnson, Buehring, Cassell, & Symon, 2007; Van Maanen, 1998). However, the understanding of a phenomenon, such as power shifting within organizational change, is difficult to explore using a quantitative methodology. Since the absence of employing a qualitative research methodology has existed, there is clearly room for this type of exploration and addition to the literature base.

In addition, of the little research that has been conducted in the specific area of organizational transformation, most has emphasized the leadership characteristics which favorably lead to organizational transformation. For example, it has been hypothesized that there are five characteristics of organizations which are required for learning (and transformation): “continuous learning, valid information, transparency, issue orientation, and accountability” (Popper & Lipshitz, 1998, p. 172). Freedom of choice, collaborative work and learning environments, autonomy, and a more democratic work culture are other factors which appear to enhance the chances of organizational transformation occurring (McLagan, 2003; Watkins, 1996). In addition, learning and the types of learning are seen as very connected to the potential of transformation (Mink, 1992).

However, the power dimension or other related factors have been overlooked. In fact, “studies relating power to organizational variables are noticeably absent” (Atwater, 1995). One

reason for this is the complexity of the concept of power. Contributing to this complexity is the fact that power has both individual and relationship dimensions. As a result, theory development has occurred largely based on one view or the other. Likewise, the literature has also remained separate and disconnected (House, 1991).

In only one organizational transformation study did I find the word “power.” However, even in this study it was listed among other factors potentially leading to an organizational transformation. The other factors were: the role of culture, history, structure, and politics (Pettigrew et al., p. 699). No studies looked specifically at the role of power or the shift in power structures during an organizational transformation (Kark, 2004; Mitchell, 2005). As a result, a qualitative research study needed to be conducted focused on power shifting during a transformation.

#### Problem Statement

Many theories, both from within the field of adult education and outside, assist in explaining power distribution in the workplace (Harari, 1994; Hatch, 1997; McConnell, 1998; Wilson & Tozzi, 2002). Some of these theories are from a more critical perspective and appear to be a reflection of the power distribution in society, for example, those that are associated with power and powerlessness, oppression and emancipation, power from a structure or rule standpoint, and leaders who exercised power as “power over” those who were lower in the organizational structure (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O’Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Vaara, Tienari, Piekkari, & Santti, 2005). Reinforcing this perspective on the one extreme of a continuum is a highly autocratic structure which coincides with the typical organization hierarchy (Mercer, 1999) and on the other extreme is a totally democratic organizational structure of power. Somewhere closer to the middle of the continuum is a hierarchal structure where the power is



relaxed, creativity is encouraged, critical reflection is a way of life and transformation becomes possible (Ouchi, 1978).

Some theories explaining power focus on the ability to act or produce a desired effect from either an individual perspective or a relationship perspective (Atwater, 1995; Drea, Bruner II, & Hensel, 1993; Erchul, Raven, & Wilson, 2004; Koslowsky & Stashevsky, 2005). Some anchor their relationship thought processes to the organizational structure which can yield political relationships (Hammond & Houston, 2001; Hardy & O'Sullivan, 1998; Hatch, 1997; Vredenburg & Brender, 1998). Others build their relationship perspectives more on the social interactions of people based on factors other than the organizational structure such as scarcity of resources, common goals and other related issues (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999; Harari, 1994; Hatch, 1997; McDonald, 2005; Mintzberg, 1984). Still others argue that the leverage of power is what creates the energy and ability for organizations to change and transform (Carroll, 1972; Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Gordon & Grant, 2004; Scontrino, 2003).

The importance of the inclusion of the staff or workers, their power base, any shifts in this power base during and organizational transformation has been overlooked in the research. For example, power has been mentioned (French, 2005; Hardy & O'Sullivan, 1998; Kark, 2004; Kemelgor, 1976; Koslowsky & Stashevsky, 2005; Mintzberg, 1984; Pawar & Eastman, 1997) as one of these factors impacting the success of organizational transformation but research has failed to look at its role in the shift in the decision-making process, especially in the case of the total worker population (management and worker staff). From this background information, it becomes evident that further investigation of power and its shifts in regards to the average worker during an organizational transformation is necessary to furthering the understanding of this phenomenon.

### Purpose of the Study

The focus of my research is a qualitative study which seeks an understanding of the role of power, and shifts in power that occur in an organization during an organizational transformation from the perspective of both the senior management and the worker staff. It seeks to find evidence of, and understand the notion of power re-distribution as it is transferred from the senior levels of management to the staff or workers during an organizational transformation.

### Research Questions

This study explores the following questions:

- How is the transformation process intertwined with shifts in power?
  - a. What does this look like?
  - b. How is power used to meet organizational and personal goals?
- When an organizational transformation is occurring, what happens with regards to power?
  - a. What is the role of formal power and structures?
  - b. How do less formal sources of power or agency impact the organization?

### Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is critical organizational theory using a postmodern lens. The combination of critical organizational theory (Carr, 2005; Ogbor, 2001; Grimes, 1992; Grubbs, 2000; Sementelli, 2005; Wheatley, 2001) and postmodern organizational theory (Abel, 2005; Casey, 2004; Feldman, 1997; Fleetwood, 2005; Goodall, 1993; Hatch, 1997; Kaufmann, 2000) creates a theory which shares an interest in power and at the same time replaces rational reason and singular understanding with multiple truths. It is built on mainstream organization theory. Mainstream or classical organizational theory has an orientation to scientific reality, effectiveness, predictability, and recreation of sameness (Abel, 2005, Feldman, 1997; Mumby,

2005). The view of power in mainstream organizational theory includes dominance and control of workers, planned organizational change by the most senior levels of management, and reinforcement of systems and corporate culture which maintain current conditions.

However, since the context of this study is within an organization experiencing transformation, a theoretical framework which incorporates change of the center core and worldview is necessary. Adding critical and postmodern organizational theory to this framework achieves this goal by challenging mainstream organizational theory. For the most part both of these theoretical derivatives echo the adult education literature and definitions. Most notable, however, is the difference that regardless of the variations to the theory—critical or postmodern—the interpretation in the business or management literature rest *inside* of an organization. This means that while critical organizational theory is built on many of the tenets of critical theory, it differs when applied to organizations in that concepts such as emancipation or equity take on meaning solely inside the boundaries of the organization (as opposed to societal social justice or equity as the theory would normally pertain). In addition, because the theory is applied to organizations that operate in a capitalistic environment, all references to criticism of capitalism are omitted from this theory. Furthermore, it seems there are no criticisms of capitalism by the organizational theorists because capitalism is extolled by them. They not only operate within a capitalistic system, they utilize it for their benefit. In this way, all versions of organizational theory focus on power issues within organizations but fall short of social criticism or challenges to capitalism (Abel, 2005; Feldman, 1997; Grimes, 1992; Grubbs, 2000; Ogbor, 2001; Sementelli, 2005). Shared decision making and other methods of inclusion for all staff ideas being seen as equal might be encouraged by an organization. However, the intention of this effort would be to improve the organization by some means.

Critical organizational theory does includes the process of critical reflection, questioning hegemony, democracy of power, organizational change as opposed to status quo, and inclusion in decision making, all within the boundaries of the organization. Furthermore, it is believed that increased critical reflection on self and organization sets up the openness for transformation (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992).

The postmodern lens adds multiple views, perspectives, fragmentation, non-rational and tentative understanding of a problem to the theoretical framework (Abel, 2005; Casey, 2004; Feldman, 1997; Fleetwood, 2005; Goodall, 1993; Hatch, 1997; Kaufmann, 2000). In this way, no preferred ways of thinking or approaching the subject are endorsed. Instead, postmodernism enhances the understanding of power, in particular, as it searches for multiple views and perspectives of the phenomenon simultaneously. Power from the point of view of the postmodernist is not held solely by individuals or groups but also by the relationships between them (Koslowsky & Stashevsky, 2005; Mintzberg, 1984). This allows for exploration of the power shifting during organizational transformation in two important ways. First, multiple perspectives can be explored since consensus of view or understanding is not a goal, many different interpretations simultaneously are encouraged. Second, these interpretations are based on context and are thus tentative and fluid. In this way, power can be deconstructed and viewed as coming from multiple sources at the same time and provisional based on context.

#### Benefits of a Combined Theory

Each framework on which the combined theory is based (critical theory and postmodernism) has a different philosophical underpinning upon which it rests though there is some overlap in the two perspectives. This overlap comes in the importance of power. Since my

study is fundamentally about a power shift, I have chosen to use a combined critical and postmodern lens.

The incorporation of critical theory to this framework allows for the examination of the dominant group and the marginalized group. In every organization and organizational structure, there exist those who have more power, control and voice than others (Cervero & Wilson, 2006; Mojab & Gorman, 2003). Many times this takes the form of leaders of organizations having more of a voice in policy setting and productivity enhancements than that of the every day worker. These non-dominant groups are sometimes women and minority ethnic group members, but include others as well, such as those with less experience, less information, or a position further down on the organizational chart. Critical organizational theory argues that left unchecked organizational structures tend to recreate the power relations of society at large and create hierarchical systems in which managerial elites possess the greatest share of organizational power (McConnell, 1998; Ouchi, 1978; Vredenburg & Brender, 1998). While critical organizational theory is helpful in explaining many of the issues related to organizational transformation, it falls short since it: seeks one truth, understanding, or explanation; views change as only a rational process; and sees power as only a negative force held by the powerful few. For these reasons, I sought an additional perspective.

Postmodern organizational theory adds to the rejection of rational, one dimensional organizational cultures and singular truths by encouraging multiple voices and multiple responses. Thus, it almost incorporates many of the ideas of critical organizational theory. For example, it does not rule out the views of critical organizational theory it sees them as one possibility among many others. It offers organizations the possibility of developing multiple identities and the opportunity to flourish in various ways at the same time. However, postmodern organizational

theory on its own falls short of explaining the issues related to organizational transformation particularly the power and oppression issues identified by critical organizational theory. For this reason, a combined theoretical approach offers a more inclusive look at this problem.

Some of the numerous benefits associated with a combined theoretical approach to examine and better understand the shifts in worker power during an organizational transformation, are: a) the concept that power is everywhere and no one person or group is in control (Feldman, 1997; Foucault, 1990; Gordon & Grant, 2004); b) the interest in power and knowledge is influenced by a more radical version of organization theory (Marsden & Townley, 1995) which fits well with the critical theory framework because of its dual interest in systems and individuals; c) the framework democratizes power by questioning authority and promotes the notion that power can include everyone (Sementelli, 2005); and d) it seeks freedom for the individual of oppressive systems of beliefs (Feldman, 1997). In this view, organizations can evolve through discourse, negotiations, and discussions rather than become imprisoned to domination, culture and the hegemony or power plays of that culture (Feldman, 1997; Wilmott, 1994).

Critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens then becomes a way to look at an organization during a transformation and evaluate the shifts in power occurring in the workforce during this process. This theoretical framework is a good fit with my study since it allows for the shifts in power and yet at the same time encourages multiple views and understanding of the underlying understanding of meanings of these shifts. Additional details concerning this theoretical framework and my study are discussed in Chapter Two.

#### Significance of the Study

This study focused on the evidence of power shifts in organizations consciously implemented by the senior management during a transformation and was important for numerous

reasons. First, for Human Resource Development (HRD) a subdivision of adult education, the study's findings add to the base of knowledge on an element (power) that has not received enough attention in the literature. Thus far, while power has been included in a list of items associated with organizational transformations, it has not been studied exclusively and particularly. Furthermore, the meanings associated with the concept of shifting power during an organizational transformation have been overlooked. As a result the findings of this study have the potential to add to the working theories of organizational power. If power distribution and its shift during organizational transformation were better understood and found to be key sources of energy to assist the organization to transform, then perhaps conditions to replicate a successful shift could become possibilities for future research.

Secondly, this study may help to close the gap between research and practice. Human Resource Development has a long history of dismissing research as either too esoteric or too impractical. In addition, the field of HRD has been criticized for being only interested in what works and not why, meaning that practitioners have been criticized for focusing solely on practice and ignoring research's potential contribution. Practitioners have not appeared interested in initiating research studies about organizational transformation. One reason for this is that, "Whether we are researchers or practitioners, we all have different philosophical orientations toward practice. Some are more concerned with efficiency and production and others are more concerned with fairness and social issues" (Githens, 2007, p.7). As an adult education student with significant experience in Human Resource Development I was able to conduct a research project that helped to bridge this gap. I hoped to further the understanding of power shifts during organizational transformation in a way that captures the interest of practitioners who want to create the same results while meeting the objectives of adult education researchers.

In addition, the content of this study was of personal significance to me since I was once an organizational development practitioner and am now further enlightened by the addition of the course work and reading from the field of adult education, particularly that on power and transformation. For many years I worked as an organizational consultant who focused on the concept of “fixing” organizational problems solely through the use of structural changes. Based on my experience and education, I have changed my view on the possibility of sustainable organizational change. First, in order to create sustainable organizational change, I wondered if this change needed to alter the power structure of the organization. I further wondered if this change needed to include activities such as: critical reflection, deconstruction, inclusion of multiple perspectives, and other organizational behaviors that result in a shift of power. In order for this to occur, I now believe that both the organizational change must include both structure and culture or people. Hierarchical organizational structures which direct and control all the decision making processes and policies may not allow for the reflection and questioning necessary to change a worldview. Also, there may be alternative structures that encourage transformation—increased inclusion, deconstruction, multiple perspectives, critical reflection, and so on yet still consider the boundaries of the organization.

#### Overview of the Study

A qualitative research paradigm was selected for this study because it best matched the intention of my study. I sought to understand the role of power, and shifts in power that might occur during an organizational transformation from both the perspective of senior management and the workers. This process is likened to the one described by Shank (2002) and the metaphor of the lantern. By using this paradigm a lantern could be used to shine a light on the dark or obscure areas or those that are not understood in the hopes of finding more clarity. In addition, “investigative



depth” was expected (Shank & Villella, 2004), meaning that there was an expectation for the researcher to go beyond the surface information and dig into the depth of perspectives and preconceptions and provide better understanding of the phenomenon.

In particular, the case study methodology was selected for this study because of the holistic intention of the study (Creswell, 1998). In order to collect a variety of perspectives, voices from different angles, and weigh text simultaneously, the case study was selected (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The study took place in a human services non-profit organization providing support for those with profound disabilities. The non-profit organization is a mid-sized company which serves 225 residents ages 12 and up, including clients with autism. The main campus includes 10 large family-centered homes, 42 other community homes, and four adult training facilities. The campus location alone serves more than 100 residents with severe disabilities. The selection of this site is nearly ideal for this study for the following reasons: 1) a change in funding started in 2006 in the state of Pennsylvania in this industry; 2) the senior management implemented processes and procedures to distribute power from the senior management team to the workers as one of their main strategies; 3) the organization was looking for feedback on their effectiveness in reaching and changing the power relationship with the workers. The case study methodology allowed me to look at this organization as a whole and at the same time examine its parts. In addition, the theoretical framework supported examining this organization and its parts looking for not one answer but a family of understanding.

Data were collected using three predominant sources: semi-structured interviews, focus group, and evaluation of documents, artifacts, and company records. Data analysis began by sorting and coding the data. Fitting with the case study methodology, each data source was treated as an entity and also analyzed as it impacted and overlapped with other sources. In this way, cases

could have a synergic effect on one another – where the sum of the parts is less than the whole. Also, since a case can be a single individual or artifact or a group of workers and artifacts each case was expected to inform one another. Similar to other integrated and interrelated complex systems, case study methodology can have a spiraling effect of a deeper and deeper understanding of a phenomenon. My goal was to have conducted a qualitative study which furthered the understanding of the power shifts that might occur during an organizational transformation. At the onset, I fully understood that this study will end with answers to some questions and the formation of others. It will hopefully lead others to further inquiry and research. Thus, contribution to the body of power shifts during an organizational transformation can grow and expand.

#### Assumptions of the Study

The following are assumptions of my study. I have divided them into categories since many of them are closely related in content. The first eight assumptions are related to the issue of power and the remaining are associated with the transformation occurring in the organization.

1. The organization is comprised of a hierarchy structure where most of the power is held at the top or the pinnacle of the organizational structure.
2. Senior management through position power holds most of the organizational power in a hierarchal structure of the organization.
3. Senior management must be open to the idea of revisions of policies and procedures that limit inclusion and power shifts.
4. Power that comes from society is mimicked by organizations. For example, most often white males hold the positions of power in organizations.
5. Power shifts create a more democratized organizational power distribution and this is a preferred distribution.

6. Power is held in an organization in multiple ways and by multiple people and there is a constantly shifting existence of power based on context. For this reason, a more holistic view of power is preferred.
7. Workers at all levels of the organization possess some power or agency.
8. Power is central to an organizational transformation as it encourages transformation by creating energy necessary to make the transformation occur.
9. Power is not positive or negative and is available to be leveraged to create change.
10. Organizations do transform (Marsick & Neaman, 1996).
11. Some aspects of individual transformation apply such as: transformation occurs within no time table, exists within no change agent's control, learning in the way of critical reflection on taken for granted habits of the mind or worldviews (Fletcher, 1990; Marsick & Watkins, 1994; Senge, 1990).
12. Organizational transformation is the preferred type of change to create a more democratized work environment.
13. The organization, in which this study was conducted, desires transformation and furthermore sees transformation of its assumptions, values, and beliefs as a path to its survival.
14. Critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens selects only pieces from critical theory and postmodernism and applies them to organizations.

#### Limitations and Strengths of the Study

There are limitations and strengths to any study, and this one is no exception. Some limitations of my study are:

1. The topic of power shifting during organizational transformation tends to be highly contextual in nature so the participants, the location, and the timing of the study all contribute to the

findings and is a picture of a point in time. As in all qualitative studies this makes the data relevant to this time and place only and not generalizable or transferable.

2. My previous consulting relationship with the client chosen for this study may enhance my understanding of the industry and language specific to the industry, but this prior relationship may also make participants be more guarded with their responses, especially the management staff.
3. Purposeful withholding of documents, artifacts, or other information could limit my findings because these articles would be unknown and unavailable for me to review.
4. Karin's (the CEO/Executive Director of the organization under study) understanding of the tacit and taken for granted state of beliefs, values, and assumptions of the worker staff (prior to the onset of the transformation) is not accurate.

#### Definition of Terms

1. Critical Organizational Theory: is built on many of the underpinnings of critical theory. There are some differences in critical theory in its application to organizations, such as emancipation resting within the boundaries of the organization as opposed to applying to social justice and equity in society at large. Critical organizational theory tends to refer to challenges to the organizational policies, procedures, culture and hegemony created by unexpressed values and assumptions. Dialectical thought remains central to the theory as well as dominance and power of a few over the oppression of many and the idea that some voices count more than others.
2. Organizational Change: is seen as an umbrella term for all types of changes within an organization including organizational development and organizational transformation (Bartunek and Louis, 1988). The term tends to be used in the literature in a general way to describe an altering of an organization from one state to another.

3. Organizational Development (OD): is a more specific change term coined in the 1980's by organizational consultants who claimed to fix or solve organizational issues (Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990). Most strategies include a "long-range effort to improve an organization's problem solving and renewal processes...with the assistance of a change agent, or catalyst" (French and Bell, 1973, p. 15). Especially, found in the early literature, it tends to focus on structure, process and method, not people (Fletcher, 1990; Chapman, 2002; Gabriel, Fineman, & Sims, 2000; Kroth, 2002).
4. Organizational Theory: a condition in which all acting influences are cancelled out by others, resulting in a stable, balanced, and unchanging system (Meyer, Gaba, & Colwell, 2005). Equilibrium or status quo is maintained.
5. Organizational Transformation (OT): includes frame bending, radical, and second order change which impacts the foundational structure and culture in a profound way (Levy, 1986; Nutt & Backoff, 1997; Schein, 1985). Organizational transformation tends to deal with the structure and the people in the organization as it changes the organizations attitudes, values, and beliefs and central core (Bartunek, 1988, Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Golembiewski, 1979; Kegan, 1994). Organizational transformation often creates a new worldview for the organization.
6. Management: in this study, I am referring to management as the most senior level managers who are usually comprised of a small group of individuals holding the largest base of power within the organization. This term is not used to reference middle or lower members of management (often known as staff managers) or other staff members.

7. Postmodern Organizational Theory: rejects rationality, one dimensional cultures and singular truths encouraging multiple voices and multiple solutions, perspectives and outcomes. Context is crucial and issues exist within this fluid context (Garrick & Rhodes, 1998).
8. Power: is viewed in an all inclusive holistic manner and can be seen as negative or positive depending on the use and comes from multiple sources (Feldman, 1997; Foucault, 1980; Gordon & Grant, 2004; Townley, 1993). It is examined from both an individual and relational viewpoint (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Fiol, O'Connor & Aquinis, 2001).
9. Democracy of Power: is an attempt by organizational members who hold the most power (regardless of reason) to spread this power throughout the organization instead of withholding it or controlling others by exercising it. "This means redistributing power from the few to the many" (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999, p. 235). It can also
10. Staff: is intended to describe both the majority of workers in the organization as well as staff managers. The use of this term is used only to differentiate those who hold the power in the organization from those who do not—especially in reference to hierarchal or position power. Meanwhile, the definition assumes that the staff has some agency to assist in leveraging transformation. The use of the term staff is used to mean the workers most likely to be left out of the decision making process or at least those whose voices count less than others.

### Summary

This Chapter began with the background of this qualitative case study and an overview of the notion of organizational power. Next, it explained organizational transformation a very specific form of change as the context of this study. Some gaps in the literature were used to position the problem and purpose of the study. Research questions were stated and the theoretical framework of critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens was described. The

significance of the study was made explicit and the methods of the study, assumptions, limitations, and definitions of words used in the body of this dissertation defined. Chapter Two which follows includes an analysis of the research literature pertinent to this study and Chapter Three discusses the rationale and methodology of the study. Chapter Four includes the findings of the study and their analysis. Finally, Chapter Five discusses the findings in relationship to the literature and offers recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The focus of this qualitative case study was to explore the role of and shift in power as an organizational transformation unfolded from both the perspectives of senior management and the workers or staff. Since the essence of my interest was in the intersections of organizational transformation and power, I was most interested in workers in organizations, specifically business organizations. I wished to better understand how power issues, such as those related to decision making ability, were changed, created, and shifted during an organizational transformation.

This chapter provides the theoretical framework for my study and the literature which is foundational to the study. The theoretical framework is a combination of both critical and postmodern theory, and is a variation of organizational theory. In addition to discussing the theoretical framework, this literature review includes the two major foundational areas that inform this study: power and its distribution within an organization and organizational transformation as a form of change. Finally, in the last section is a discussion of the major research studies that are relevant to this study as well as consideration of the gaps in the literature.

#### Theoretical Framework

The framework used for this study is a combination of critical organizational theory and postmodern organizational theory. To better assist the reader in understanding the vast benefits of this combined theoretical approach, I look at the major tenets of both critical theory and postmodernism as they apply to organizational theory. I first briefly discuss the major tenets of critical theory. Then I discuss those tenets as they apply to critical organizational theory since



this theory tends to incorporate some tenets while omitting others. Next, I discuss the major tenets of postmodernism and then those tenets of postmodernism as applied to organizational theory. Finally, I mesh the two illustrating the benefits of combining the two overlapping but distinct theoretical perspectives.

Since this combined theoretical approach is a derivative of organizational theory and since the reader is possibly unfamiliar with the tenets of this theory, I first give a brief overview of this foundational theory. In addition, the evolution of the field occurred in much the same sequence as this discussion. It started with the development of organizational theory and the focus on homeostasis and management control. Later critical theory was applied first to organizations in the form of critical management studies using critical organizational theory. While other disciplines had found ways to incorporate pieces of critical theory into their perspective, the business literature lagged behind noticeably. When critical organizational theory offered only a partial explanation of organizational behavior, some theorists looked to postmodernism for further understanding of these organizational phenomena.

### *Organizational Theory*

Organizational theory, sometimes known as mainstream or classical organization theory seeks homeostasis and the recreation of sameness. A definition offered by Meyer, Gaba and Colwell (2005) further explains that organizational theory is “a condition in which all acting influences are canceled by others, resulting in a stable, balanced, or unchanging system” (p. 458). This theory has an orientation to scientific reality, effectiveness and efficiency, and productivity (Abel, 2005; Donaldson, 1996). Its history has focused mostly on how to “control workers and harmonize their interests with management” (Ogbor, 2001, p. 593). In the early

1980s management and organizational consultants discovered corporate culture as an additional way to maintain status quo (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Ouchi, 1980).

Using this conception, senior management looks for ways and methods to ensure stability and predictability, minimizing or eliminating unplanned change. Furthermore, organizations tend to create self-sustaining and self-replicating policies, procedures, and systems such as hierarchical authority, highly specialized jobs, direction (communication) from the top down, accountability for productivity from the bottom up, and a narrow span of control as additional ways to ensure stability and constancy (Abel, 2005). In addition, some believe that in this way organizations “get others to do what they otherwise wouldn’t” (Dahl, 1957, p. 202). Stories, myths, mission statements, and corporate policies create meaning for the workers through strong corporate cultures (Weick, 1995). The result is that status quo is maintained and systems continue to recreate themselves. So within organizational theory various approaches such as those produced by the work of Lewin, McGregor, and Maslow focused on control of organizational change factors.

Organizational theory offered a view of power which included dominance and control, especially from a hierarchical organizational structure, strong organizational culture, and planned change perspectives. However, it failed to address alternate power structures or agency of workers, political forces in the workplace, and some forms of change, especially unplanned change. As a result, organizational transformation and the importance of power relations which are unsanctioned or uncontrolled by management were mostly ignored. It was due to the need for a more critical view and challenge of the assumptions of organizational theory that critical organizational theory was born. Similarly, a theory which made room for change of all types in

an organization was essential to begin explaining the change phenomenon. This is how critical organizational theory developed.

### *Critical Organizational Theory*

In this section I begin with a historical background on critical organizational theory, then a consideration of critical theory in critical organizational theory, and finally a discussion of the benefits of critical organizational theory.

#### *Critical Theory Historical Background*

The critical perspective on organizational theory is built on critical theory and refers to a particular tradition of the Frankfurt School of neo-Marxist German philosophy which was prominent from about 1930-1980 (English, 2005). Some of the major thinkers known as the first generation were Theodore Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse, and Jurgen Habermas (for example, English, 2005; Ewert, 1991). Drawing on the insights of Marx and his followers, critical theorists examined the relations that “are hidden beneath what we take as common sense or surface reality” (Mojab & Gorman, 2003, p. 231). To get a better understanding of these relationships, Marx believed that social relations could only be accessed in relationship to the context of labor and capitalism. The next generation of Frankfurt school intellectuals, often known as the second generation, encompassed people such as Marcuse and Fromm in the United States and the German philosopher Habermas who wrote about the New Europe after Hitler in a more optimistic manner. Following the war, some of the members of the Institute returned to Germany. Jurgen Habermas became the professor of philosophy at Frankfurt University. More recently, according to Brookfield (2005), there are five distinct characteristics of critical theory which include: 1) the primary unit of analysis is the conflicting relationship between social classes within an economy based on commodity

exchange remains unchanged until it has been radically transformed; 2) concern to provide people with knowledge and understanding that help them free themselves from oppression; 3) it “breaks down the separation of subject and object”, meaning the theory’s utility depends in part on the participants understanding their oppression and the need for social action; 4) its intent is to provide a more democratic world where opportunities do not exist for only the privileged few; and 5) the notion that we do not know if critical theory is true or false until we create a world that is free of oppression (p. 26).

Recently, adult educators such as Mezirow and Brookfield have embraced the underlying philosophies of critical theory and applied them to adult education pedagogy. During the late 1980s and 1990s critical pedagogy became known as “critical adult education” (English, 2005, p. 167). Thus, learning and teaching take on power relations in a “political-economic context” (Mojab & Gorman, 2003, p. 231).

Understandably then, when adult educators think of critical theory it is this history and foundational knowledge that they bring to shape their conception of the theory. While most of the major tenets of critical theory are applied to organizations using critical organizational theory, their meaning is often altered and even distorted. A discussion of critical organizational theory follows. In this section, I first look at critical theory tenets and then turn to their application to organizations.

### *Critical Theory Application and Critique*

Critical organizational theory builds on many of the tenets of critical theory though there are some differences in its application, most noticeably in its interpretation of emancipation and its omission of a critique of capitalism, which admittedly, appears as a huge oversight for adult educators. “Critical theory starts with the assumption that each historical situation is a distortion

of the utopian vision” (Ewert, 1991) and in this way opens the door to transformation or organizational change and critical reflection (p. 345). Critical organizational theory is built on many of the underpinnings of critical theory starting with the collective philosophy of the members of the Frankfurt School—namely Horkeimer and Adorno, Marcuse, and Habermas as cited in Ogbor (2001), and incorporates dialectical thought, meaning opposing arguments; discourse of these arguments; and a pursuit of more equity in power distribution. In these ways, critical theory adds to mainstream organizational theory the following: critical reflection and questioning hegemony, organizational change as opposed to status quo, and democracy of power all within the boundaries of the organization.

For those who understand critical theory and come from a discipline other than HRD, critical organizational theory may fall short of expectations in many ways. Most notably, critical organizational theory omits a critique of capitalism. Instead, critical organizational theory operates in an organization---which epitomizes capitalism—the premise which Marx and his followers denounced in favor of a more equitable society. Also, the term emancipation is only applied to workers in the context of “within organizational boundaries.” The sheer idea of emancipation within boundaries creates an oxymoron for critical theorists. One of the primary tenets of critical theory is the social reform intent and with that the emancipation of all groups to move to a more democratic environment, one in which equality reigns and discrimination and marginalization are eliminated.

While critical organizational theory incorporates dominance and control of workers it is focused on diversity in a broad definition and has much less focus on class and its economic distinctions and more emphasis on race, gender, and other organizational differentiators such as members of management, length in position, and so on, diverging from the original intent of

critical theory. Likewise the concepts of dialectical thought, critical reflection, questioning of hegemony and pursuit of increased inclusion in decision making are altered to fit within an organization. For example, dialectical thought and critical reflection are intended to assist all members of an organization to question policies and procedures and to search for better ways and creative solutions to organizational problems. Questioning hegemony is meant to examine and question corporate culture and policy within the organizational confines. Common to both of these conceptualizations is the questioning process within the boundaries of the organization, meaning policies, procedures, organizational structure, and inclusion in decision making all become targets for revision or modification. At the same time, social reform or challenge to capitalism are not included in the focus of organizational questioning or change. The alteration of these concepts becomes so distorted from the original intentions of critical theory that many critical theorists might ask if critical organizational theory did not just pick pieces from critical theory, which the business theorists liked and incorporate them and discard those concepts that seemed contradictory or did not fit.

The simple response to this question is yes. Critical organizational theory does incorporate only the parts of critical theory which apply to an organization. As a matter of fact, the critical perspective was not initially embraced by organizations because the belief was that there was little benefit to applying a critical perspective to organizational practices. However, with the 1980's and 1990's and the failure of American business to perform in the face of flattened organizational structures, Japanese management practices, the birth of teams and leadership changes, critical theory began to look more desirable. What evolved was critical organizational theory which incorporated some critical theory tenets and left out others. What

follows below is a discussion of many of the tenets of critical theory and their application within critical organizational theory.

*Elements of Critical Theory in Critical Organizational Theory*

Given that some elements of critical theory are in fact incorporated in critical organizational theory, while the critique of capitalism is generally left out, it is important to be clear about just what tenets of critical theory and their application are parts of critical organizational theory. These are highlighted below.

*Emancipation.* In the case of critical theory being applied to other fields, particularly when applied to practice areas such as Human Resource Development (HRD) and organizations, emancipation takes on a slightly different meaning. It tends to refer to challenges to the organizational policies, procedures, culture and hegemony created by unexpressed values and assumptions. However, it falls short of social reform in society and instead focuses within the boundaries of the organization. Alvesson and Wilmott (1992) coined a phrase describing this type of emancipation—“micro-emancipation.”

For example, in the case of organizations, this is interpreted as seeing the worker as part of the system and the only hope for change is not through integration, but through transformation of this system (Bartunek, 1988; Bartunek & Louis, 1988; Chapman, 2002). However, this change or transformation to a more democratic environment takes place *within* the organization as opposed to focused on a change or emancipation from a capitalist economy to a more democratic society (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992).

*Dialectical thought /critical reflection.* Dialectical thought and critical reflection are both fundamental parts of critical organizational theory. For example, critical theory starts with a critique of ideology, to help people become conscious of distortions of knowledge. In the same

way, critical organizational theory encourages workers to question policies and procedures and look for innovation and inclusion.

Dialectical thought, questioning, and critical reflection remain central to the emancipation process. From a critical perspective, especially influenced by Hegel (as cited in Carr, 2005, p. 474), opposites exist in unity where if there is black there is white; if there is a North Pole there is a South Pole, etc. The coexistence of these opposites is a starting point for discourse, dialogue and eventually a new viewpoint. Many have suggested that examination of dialectical relationships is an important method to analyze organizational practices since the belief is that concepts cannot be understood in isolation but rather in relationship to opposites or oppositional forces (Adorno, 1984; Carr, 2000; Kersten, 2000; Weick, 1979). For example, this thought process allows for the discourse of individual versus organizational identity; empowerment and disempowerment; uniformity and diversity; power issues of dominance and oppression, especially that of marginalized groups of workers; and so on. From here it is believed that dialectical thought and critical reflection offer the organization's workers a method to evaluate and question policies and procedures and encourage increased inclusion in decision making and innovation.

Many critical theorists claim that this thought process is built on reason and truth. A similar tenet is that a critique can be conducted through objective judgment. Thus, critical theories have a cognitive dimension. This awareness is called enlightenment, a necessary condition for individual freedom, self-determination, and emancipation (Ewert, 1991). Likewise, critical organizational theory has a rational aspect. Critical theory and critical organizational theory are then both socially constructed and are founded on the assumption that conditions and oppressive structures can be changed through emancipation (Ewert, 1991; Grimes, 1992).



*Hegemony.* In this section, since the term hegemony takes on a slightly different meaning when applied to organizations, I first define hegemony as it is used in discussions of critical theory as well as other tenets of critical theory related to hegemony. Then I discuss hegemony as it relates to organizations.

In critical theory, hegemony is defined as the process where we learn to embrace a system of beliefs and assumptions that work to support the interests of those who have power over us (Brookfield, 2005). Furthermore, according to critical theorists learning is viewed as a “process of reflecting on hegemony and replacing it in our consciousness with emancipatory knowledge” (Kilgore, 2001, p. 58). Bourdieu (1990) and others have said that people are so absorbed in the values, beliefs, and culture in which they live and have been socialized into, that any type of critical review of these beliefs is very difficult. What is potentially damaging about hegemony is that those in power do not need to use force to maintain the status quo. Instead, habitus, or an internalization of rules of society occurs. As this happens, both the explicit and tacit rules of “the game” become known and followed. People become comfortable with the way things are and see them as normal. Little intervention needs to occur to make people complicit with the rules. Instead, the rules become internalized and few participants try to challenge them.

These concepts have been incorporated into critical organizational theory but are (again) interpreted within the confines of the organization. Hegemony is used as a term to describe following a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions tied to a corporate organizational culture. Following the Frankfurt’s School’s critique of authority, critical organization theory allows us to look at and draw parallels between imperialism in the greater society and the culture of the organization (Grubbs, 2000). In this way, critical organizational theory can assist researchers and practitioners to resist false assumptions and unquestioned practices (Carr, 2000; Alvesson &

Deetz, 1999; Rusaw, 2000); question the role of organizations and their accountability to society (Kersten, 2000); and provide insights into ways in which power and authority become legitimized and institutionalized in organizational practices (Ogbor, 2000).

In alignment with the hegemony of society, critical theorists such as Marcuse (1964) have shown that social discourses such as corporate culture are capable of producing a one-dimensional culture where thoughts and creative ideas are minimized in favor of the existing norms (Rosen, 1984). An example of this one dimensional culture is the organizational concept of “politically correct” behaviors, where certain behaviors are endorsed and become part of the norm and others are perceived as outside the norm and thus, not approved. Corporate culture assists to commit workers to the organization, and to do things for the organization that are in its best interest. Mission statements, policies, procedures which state company philosophy and values serve as guidelines to employees for what is acceptable behavior. The individual’s identity is the means in which the individual can be enslaved to the organization by creating hegemony of corporate culture unless awareness is raised and critical reflection is present (Feldman, 1997; Ogbor, 2001).

Critical organizational theorists warn that hegemony creates a kind of common-sense lens in which many of the participants are unaware of its presence and in this way “psychic prisons” can be constructed by workers if the organizational culture is not open to critique (Carr, 2000, p. 296). Again, similar to critical theory, if corporate cultures are not critically examined, they create hegemony in which the ideology is socially constructed to “reflect and legitimize the power relations of managerial elites within the organization and society at large” (Alvesson, 1991; Kersten, 2000; Kilgore, 2001; Willmott, 1993). Kilgore describes the field as analogous to a game in which some of the rules are explicit and others are tacit. Again, these words are right

out of critical theory. Habitus then becomes the internalization of these rules and governs the behavior of individuals and groups in society, or in this case, in organizations. From here, most agree that discourse, challenge, and conscious rising can result in different organizational processes and politics. The degree that questioning and critical reflection are encouraged is by some extent determined by the desire of an organization to examine what it wrong, provide norms for criticism and engage in practical goals for the future (Carr, 2005). In addition, by the very nature of critical organizational theory existing within the boundaries of the organization, the level of counter-hegemonic participation may be limited (Kaufmann, 2000).

#### *Critical Organizational Theory's View of Power*

Critical theory draws largely from Marxism and those who draw on his insights, and has at its center a focus on class-based dominance and oppression with an unequal distribution of power, resulting in some having power and influence over others (English, 2005). When applied to organizations the notion of power and powerlessness holds true however, the class-based portion of the theory is of secondary concern. While there is evidence in business that social class is related to types of employment and the hierarchy of positions, little attention is paid to this issue. Instead, a basic premise of critical organizational theory is the promotion of idea that organizational practices and management mirror Western traditions, meaning domination or power over others when considering minority and diversity factors (Grubbs, 2000; Ogbor, 2001). These non-dominant groups are often comprised of women and minority ethnic groups, but include others as well. In critical organizational theory, while racial, gender-based, and ethnic groups are present, the focus is on diversity in a broader sense. Furthermore, diversity discussion includes those factors less frequently thought of as distinguishing characteristics such as time in position, alliances of ideology, politics, age, and other unique personal or social aspects of

individuals or groups. However, regardless of the distinguishing trait, one of the effects of this domination is to silence the voices of some employees or at the very least to disproportionately give voice to some versus others similar to the charges of inequity of capitalism and in society at large (Bryant, 2006).

Many times this takes the form of the senior management of organizations having the sole voice in policy setting and productivity enhancements. Critical organizational theory then argues that left unchecked not only are the organizational structures recreated so that the power relations of society at large are mirrored, hierarchical systems in which managerial elites (normally white males) possess the greatest share of organizational power maintained, but the benefits of inclusion of all workers and points of view are lost. Critical organizational theory is an attempt to understand how injustice among all workers is sustained and reinforced by those who are interested in maintaining power over others, and how emancipatory ideals are thus prevented (Welton, 1995, as cited in Kilgore, 2001, p. 54).

Knowledge is related to power and tends to flow from the top down, meaning from the heads of corporations in a hierarchal organizational structure down to the workers. Knowledge is seen to serve the interests of certain individuals or groups above others, undermining democracy (Gordon & Grant, 2004). Critical organizational theory seeks a more democratic distribution of power especially through shared decision making as a possible solution to this condition. Theorists also see critical reflection as a method to achieve increased participation and inclusion.

“True to the Frankfurt tradition, Habermas [and others] originally depicted power as a negative force serving a dominant ideology by demarcating the range of personal choice” (Abel, 2005, p. 498). Power from this view is seen as a repressive force that reproduces itself through the

route of hegemony. Likewise from a critical organizational theory perspective, power is seen as predominately a negative entity.

### *Benefits of Critical Organizational Theory*

So, why apply critical organizational theory to explore organizational transformation?

First, critical organizational theory can be used to assist organizations to move closer to emancipation and freedom from domination by reviewing organizational practices and situations which create repression, especially those used for managerial and administrative control (Ogbor, 2001). Second, the application of the theory can assist organizations to question practices and belief structures such as those that create and maintain corporate culture. Learning then takes place as the worldview is challenged, reflected on, and questioned. Third, diversity, in the large sense of the word can make room for the voices of all workers to be encouraged as opposed to some voices being heard at the expense of others.

As stated by Alvesson and Deetz (1999):

The central goal of critical theory in organizational studies has been to create societies and workplaces which are free from domination, where all members have equal opportunity to contribute to the production of systems which meet human needs and leads to the progressive development of all. (p. 192)

A critical look at organizations encourages an analysis of these otherwise taken for granted thoughts and behaviors, and again looks at the connection between individuals and the social context. Thus, the application of critical organizational theory calls into question taken for granted systems and beliefs, focusing on those which assist in creating a hegemonic culture that stifles individual contribution and inclusion, expression and decision making input, and pursuit of knowledge, and calls for emancipation and change within the boundaries of the organization.

### *Postmodern Organizational Theory*

In this section I begin by providing a historical background on postmodern organizational theory, discuss postmodern theory in relationship to postmodern organizational theory, and finally demonstrate the benefits of the use of postmodern organizational theory.

#### *Postmodern Theory Background*

The term postmodernism was coined in the 1940s and 1950s as part of an art and architectural movement (Elias & Merriam, 2005; English, 2005). At the time it was a high culture term that dismissed traditional forms of art, literature and architecture and promoted various and even contrasting styles. Evolutionally, postmodernism refers to a theoretical perspective developed during the 1970s. According to English (2005) by the mid 1980s postmodernism attracted groups that had been historically marginalized. Together they rejected the Enlightenment's view of rationality.

Many of the early intellectuals who contested the dominant beliefs of modernity were French (English, 2005). Some of the key philosophers were Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Helene Cixous, and Jacques Lacan. Some scholars trace the terms to the riots in Paris in 1964 when French scholars used the term to describe their cynicism after the failures of the Marxism and feminism movements to bring about radical social change. Other analysts used the term to describe the transition from modernism which occurred in many large cities such as Tokyo, Berlin, Prague and Chicago and appeared to represent the hegemony of high culture and the marriage of liberal capitalism and imperialism. Still others described postmodernism as a rejection to modern development in science and technology that lead to World War I, Soviet concentration camps, the Holocaust, World War II, Hiroshima, and other current and political events. By the mid-1980s a loose group of discourses had formed (Elias & Merriam, 2005).

Postmodernism is an extremely complicated discourse that focuses on power, positionality, and a constantly shifting identity (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The term is somewhat difficult to define because of the newness or early stages of its development and the lack of consensus of its meaning. Part of its appeal is that it is elusive, open-ended and lacks specificity (Elias & Merriam, 2005). Postmodernists tend to “see knowledge as tentative, fragmented, multifaceted and not necessarily rational” (Kilgore, 2001, p. 54). Likewise, postmodern ideas question absolute principles of reasoning (Garrick & Rhodes, 1998). Some postmodernists argue that there is no single truth or grand narrative while others further clarify the view by explaining that truth depends on the historical, cultural context and the discursive nature of the concept (Flax, 1992, as cited in Kaufmann, 2000, p. 431). Since postmodernists believe that knowledge is contextual, tentative and multifaceted, knowledge can change or shift from one context to another.

There are several forms of postmodernism and many classification attempts. Some categorize the perspective attempting to classify postmodernists based on their pessimistic (skeptical postmodernists) or optimistic (affirmative) views (such as Boje & Dennehy, 1994; Hatch, 1997). Critical postmodernists, sometimes known as resistance postmodernists focus on the limitations of dichotomous categories but also see the possibility of social change products, particularly for the purposes of identity and equality (Alvesson & Deetz, 1999; Boje & Dennehy, 1994; Carr, 2000; Kilgore, 2001; Ogbor, 2001).

#### *Postmodernism as Applied to Organizational Theory*

Postmodern organizational theory builds on many of the tenets of postmodernism in its incorporation of multiple views and perspectives, particularly in the arena of power; and the importance of context and its tentative, fragmented, elusive, open-ended, non-rational nature (Hatch, 1997; Kaufmann, 2000). In this way, there are no universal truths or preferred way of

thinking or approaching a problem (Casey, 2004; Goodall, 1993). Rational choices are seen as but one of the choices to organizations as opposed to the sole possible choice. For example, a change in mission statement would not only consider the rewriting of the statement and the role out of this statement to the workers, but the emotional reaction of the workers and multiple ways of acting and behaving as a result of the new mission statement. The workers' reaction would be seen as tentative and open-ended---subject to change in the face of specific context or conditions.

Solutions to problem solving would be viewed in the same way as temporary and conditional depending on context and factors of the specific situation. Likewise, power and its distribution would be expected to vary based on the context. It would be constantly shifting based on many factors of the situation such as knowledge, politics, position and positionality of the individual, relationships, and context (Goodall, 1993; Hatch, 1997; Kaufmann, 2000).

*Fluidity and multiple truths.* Both postmodernism and a postmodern organizational view reject the notion of rational, one dimensional organizational cultures. Likewise they denounce singular truths and instead encourage multiple voices and multiple solutions. For this reason, either a flattened hierarchy or other method of inclusion of diverse perspectives from numerous positions in the organization is sought. All worker voices from this perspective allow for a more balanced and improved work environment.

Some postmodernists further clarify the view by explaining that truth depends on the historical, cultural context and the discursive nature of the concept (Flax, 1992, as cited in Kaufmann, 2000; Kilgore, 2001). For example, different people may hold different perspectives on the same issue for many reasons simultaneously (Hatch, 1997). Additionally, the same person can have contradictory views on the same subject in different contexts (Kilgore, 2001). For example, one might be generally against applying for and using credit cards due to high interest



rates. However, this same person might feel very differently about owning and using a particular service or store credit card. In addition, they may even use these credit cards for their own purchases regardless of the interest rate. So, context and the specific situation may make the difference in one's belief or position on the same issue at a different time or even simultaneously.

Learning is seen as incorporating “pluralistic participation through multi-voiced dialogue” (Boje, 1994, p. 449). It offers organizations the possibility of developing multiple identities and the opportunity to flourish. In the context of postmodernism, organizational practices, culture, and boundaries are embedded with the value-messages of everyday organizational life (Garrick & Rhodes, 1998; Tisdell, 1995). Arguably these messages which are often labeled as “organizational learning” reflect the dominant forces of the organization and its management. Using postmodern organizational theory, the belief is that all of these issues represent an opportunity for the organization to debate and problem solve. Remembering that a postmodern organizational theory anticipates that answers come in multiples and outcomes are fluid, but solutions do prevail even if they are temporary.

*Deconstruction.* A postmodern tool for questioning the representations used for learning and teaching is deconstruction (Boje & Dennehy, 1994; Garrick & Rhodes, 1998; Sementelli, 2005). Deconstruction emphasizes how words, texts and stories have multiple meanings (Boje, 1995) as an educational strategy it calls for questioning the “blind spots and the [things that] are unsaid” (Lather, 1991, as cited in Kaufmann, 2000, p. 432). However, as an exclusive tool, deconstruction “as a goal [in organizations] it can be problematic, since it fails to address the questions of what to do after the deconstruction” (Sementelli, 2005, p. 561). For this reason, while deconstruction is used in postmodern organizational theory as a methodology to gain insight and inclusion of marginalized groups, simply deconstructing—or pulling apart an issue or policy to

better understand it, is not enough in postmodern organizational theory. Instead, finding a solution is equally important, even if this solution is tentative and contextual. For example, if relocating an employee parking area causes unrest to the employees, deconstruction may be used to better understand the issue. Some of the questions considered might be: Why was the parking area relocated? Was there a message that was intended to be sent by the relocation? What improvements or benefits are expected based on the relocation and for whom? Why do we need a parking lot? What purpose does a parking lot serve? What makes a “parking lot” a “parking lot?” Once questions such as these have been thoroughly examined, a solution (even tentative one) is pursued. So in this way, deconstruction is applied to organizations in a similar way to postmodernism at large, but somewhat uniquely as an eventual solution is sought.

*Postmodern organizational theory's view of power.* Power from the point of view of the postmodernist is not held only by individuals or groups but by the relationships between them. In postmodern organizational theory power is discussed using two main frameworks. It is addressed as part of marginalization, similar to the notion of power within critical organizational theory. Power is also viewed as existing in multiple ways and in multiple places within an organization as opposed to coming from any singular source.

Often postmodern organizational theory addresses marginalization and inequity issues in the hierarchal organizational structure of most organizations (Hatch, 1997). From here multiple voices can be explored and the process of deconstruction can occur, eventually offering a more democratic distribution of power and inclusion. At times this can be in the form of alternates to the typical hierarchal organizational structure and more often as other actions intended to incorporate multiple views and voices (Applebaum, Herbert & Leroux, 1999).

Foucault is often seen as a founder of postmodern thought (Carter, McKinlay & Rawlins, 2002; Feldman, 1997; Gordon & Grant, 2004; Townley, 1993). His work is often applied to postmodern organizational theory. During the 1980s and 1990s he was one of the most widely cited authors in the area of organizational studies (Carter, McKinlay, & Rowlinson, 2002, p. 516). Since then other authors have advanced his fundamental ideas which include the thought that power is all around us and bountiful. It is not positive or negative as an entity. Foucault argues that power can be used to bring about oppression or productivity depending on its use. Foucault's (1980) view of power resting in multiple places within an organization is a predominant view in postmodern organizational theory, though Foucault himself never discussed power as it is applied within an organization (Carter, McKinlay & Rawlins, 2002; Feldman, 1997; Gordon & Grant, 2004; Townley, 1993, 2005). For this reason, postmodern organizational theory is taking some liberty with Foucault and his view of power.

In this way, while the hierarchal organizational structure is not the focus of the challenge the often resulting notion of power from the powerful few over the powerless many becomes one of the issues to examine. Postmodern organizational theory suggests that while those in the most powerful positions in the organization have a voice other workers do as well, irregardless of the sanctioning of these voices by senior management (Laurent, 1978; Ouchi, 1978). Instead postmodern organizational theory suggests that power and agency exist throughout the organization from numerous personal, relationships, and position related sources (McConnell, 1998). According to postmodern organizational theory, a thorough understanding of any issue requires a holistic view of the organization, issues and power sources; its context and history; and an appreciation that any solution is temporary (Bokeno, 2003; Ogbor, 2001; Shayne & Humphries, 1997).

*Benefits of Critical Organizational Theory with a Postmodern Lens*

The fusion of the two theories “can be a more powerful and pragmatic framework for scientists and practitioners alike” (Voronov & Coleman, 2003, p. 173). This combination of critical organization theory and postmodern organization theory creates a theory which shares an interest in power, and rational reason is replaced with multiple truths. A logical question is does postmodernism and the idea of “embracing counter-rationality ...also [create a culture that is] counter-business?” (Goodall, 1993, p.25). This does not mean that rational reason is abandoned, but instead it becomes one of the views of truth not the sole viewpoint.

While the theoretical framework is heavily influenced by the Frankfurt School, it traces its roots of critical reflection or reflexive critique as far back as Socrates (Abel, 2005). Furthermore, nature, biology, and social sciences impact the theory even more so than Western cultural history or the Enlightenment era (Cooper & Burnell, 1988; Feldman, 1997; Knights & Wilmott, 1989). A major benefit of this combined theory is that it can have “a combined social critique and clear emancipatory agenda” (Voronov & Coleman, 2003, p. 173) by incorporating critical theory with reflexivity and multiple narratives and constructs typical of postmodernism, though admittedly solely within the boundaries of the organization.

Critical organizational theory with the addition of postmodern organizational theory looks at a more equitable and democratic distribution of power and inclusion. It is believed that increased critical reflection on self and organization sets up the openness for transformation (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992). The addition of deconstruction encourages greater examination of organizational issues, increased inclusion, and decreased marginalization of workers. Deconstruction is used to view “taken for granted cultural practices, meaning, innovation and

creativity...the ways things are done around here” (Goodall, 1993, p. 26) and challenges these activities, looking for a more fluid and less rule dependant way to achieve company results.

In an example used by Goodall (1993)---the Nordstrom’s Employee Handbook---he argues that deconstruction and the encouragement of employees to challenge the socially constructed “ways things are” can result in a worker group that through their own “contextualization” (p.27) carries out the company mission. In fact, he argues that this occurs in a way that is superior to a worker group who blindly follows the company rules. He further argues that “attitude in what employees say and do, and the style chosen for saying and doing” help create the business culture and the image that is communicated to the market place (p. 29). He also stresses that in a postmodern business culture organizational communication is a commodity that impacts both the workers of the organization and their customers or consumers.

Furthermore, use of the combination of these theories encourages a dialectical examination of infinite issues. “A dialectical analysis explores the ongoing tensions and contradictions that constitute the process by which organizational actors attempt to shape workplace practices” (Mumby, 2005, p. 23). One such example is the examination of individual and corporate identity, especially the conflicting concepts of conformity and individual identity, and in combination with a postmodern lens searches for multiple meanings and explanations understanding that the issue is complex and multifaceted. Similarly, organizations can move to a place of “perpetual critique” which many see as the opportunity for freedom from oppression (Deetz, 1992, p. 36).

There are numerous benefits of the use of this theory to examine and better understand my interests in the role and shifts in worker power and knowledge during organizational transformation. A few of these are the beliefs that: 1) the concept that power is everywhere and no

one person or group is in control; 2) power exists in the organizational systems and in individuals as well as the relationships between them; 3) the framework democratizes power by questioning authority and promotes the notion that power is everywhere and can include everyone; and 4) it seeks freedom for the individual of oppressive systems of beliefs, such as the hegemony of corporate culture (Feldman, 1997). In this view, organizations can evolve through discourse, negotiations, and discussions rather than become imprisoned to domination, culture and the hegemony or power plays of that culture (Feldman, 1997; Wilmott, 1994). Critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens then becomes another way to look at an organization.

### Power in Organizations

The foundational areas of this section include a discussion of power and its distribution within organizations; the overlap of change language and complexity of change philosophies found in the literature regarding organizational change; and organizational transformation containing similarities and differences to individual transformation.

Since one key aspect of a combined organizational theoretical perspective on organizational change deals with democratizing power distribution in organizations and thus decreasing marginalization, it is important to understand the many places where power exists in organizations. I discuss several fundamental ways in which organizational power is reviewed in the literature, starting this discussion with an historical look at power. Since power within an organization is often viewed as mirroring society at large it is important to understand its history, not so much to dwell on the minorities, but to appreciate the fact that inclusion and all people have something to offer the organization. This segment is followed by a discussion of the numerous views of power within the context of an organization.

### *Historical Perspective on Power and Powerlessness*

Power has been defined as the medium that “influences who gets what, when and how” (Morgan, 1986, p. 158). Historically, power has often been nearly synonymous with European, white males with the exception of an occasional figure such as Catherine the Great or Carazon Aquinon, though even in these cases the women most likely stepped into the position as the widow, mother or sister of a man, and was seen as “great” based on predominantly male traits (Eisler, 1994). In fact, according to Guy (1999) throughout history, dominant cultures have limited the power of certain groups in favor of other groups.

Women and people of color in all arenas of life including social, political and religious institutions have historically been given a smaller voice or lacked voice altogether. The inequality or powerlessness of women, people of color, and others in society continues to be carried over to the workplace setting. In fact, research has shown that sagas, storytelling, and organizational myths reinforce the dominance of white European males and the dominant “white values” in society at large and often transfer into the organization’s structure and culture (Kersten, 2000; Nkomo, 1992; Ogbor, 2000; Townley, 1993).

Similarly, leadership has long since been built around “great man theories” emphasizing traits such as physical strength, power and social distance (Baxter & Mackleod, 2005; Kezar, 2002b). Consequently, being white often becomes the invisible norm in the workplace (Ogbor, 2000; Nkomo, 1992). In the 1960s and 1970s power and influence theories emerged. Commonly, leaders exercised power as “power over” those who were lower in the organizational structure. It was not until the 1980s that leadership theories began to challenge the hierarchical, powerful autocratic styles of leadership. Adding some diversity of thought but at the same time adding to the stereotypical group descriptions are comments such as: women are often seen as more relational in

their leadership style; Native Americans more focused on spirituality; and African Americans drawn to non-hierarchical, community based organizations. In addition, Eastern societies in general tend to be seen as more collective, spiritual, and holistic based while Western societies reflect hierarchical, authoritative, and individualistic focus (Kezar, 2000). While there have been some in-roads made in the area of leadership, the predominant organizational structure remains to be one of hierarchy, and democracy of power continues to be a tension point for organizations and struggle for workers within them.

The result is that today in the workforce there remain some of these same struggles as status and hierarchal positions often reflect those of greater society. For example, women and other minorities search for equality and inclusion in decision making in organizations. There is also evidence that training, education and promotional opportunities are determined based on majority factors as well. Even more frightening is the fact that words like minority and diversity encompass traits well beyond those traditionally considered. For example, though ethnic background, gender, and other minority factors still play a role, time in position, politics, length of service, knowledge, and other personal characteristics often define one's status and power within an organization, all of this making for an even larger chasm between those holding the majority of the power and those with less voice unless initiatives to close this gap are implemented and vigorously pursued.

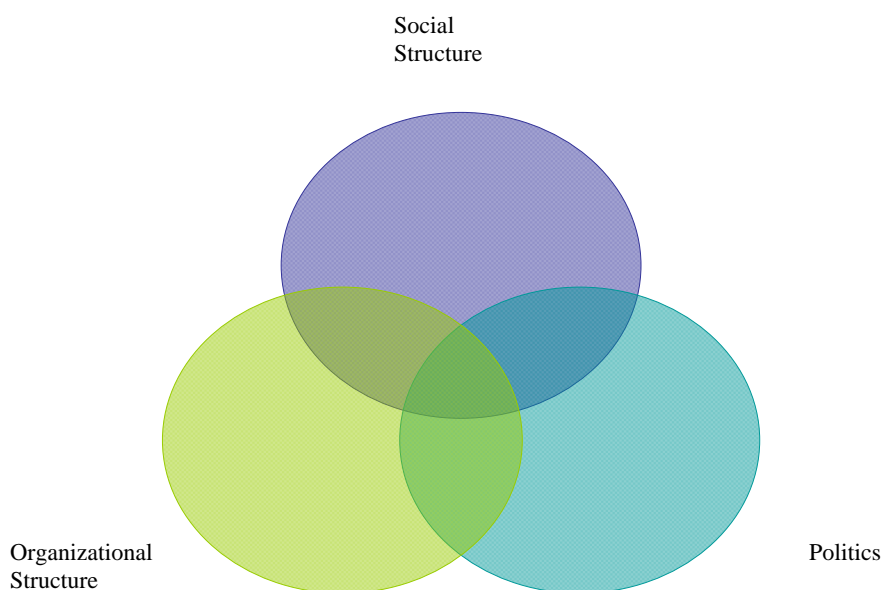
#### *Power Distribution in Organizations*

The notion of organizational power tends to carry with it the history of power and originate from many overlapping sources. Organizational power can be defined as the possession of control, authority, or influence over others; it can have relational aspects as well as individual aspects, and it can be expressed as a means of organizational energy. It is seen as a social construction, and has both positive and negative potential. Understanding of power in the



workplace comes from various sources, namely those viewing power from a structure or rule standpoint, others looking at power from more of a relationship aspect, and those focused more on individual characteristics (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Vaara et al, 2005). For this reason, power tends to lack clear-cut boundaries though it is generally assumed to be used to attain desired results or outcomes in organizations and is seen to come from many sources as described in Figure 2.1. Some of these overlapping sources include organizational structure, social structure and organizational politics (Hatch, 1997), and contribute to confusion of a specific power source and way to contend with, understand, or view it.

Figure 2.1 Power Sources.



*Organizational structure.* For many focused on organizational structure, power tends to be viewed in terms of domination and control of others and is most often associated with the hierarchal organizational structure (Carroll, 1972; Leflaive, 1996). In this model, decision making is seen as a rational process that occurs at the pinnacle of the organization and is passed down through the ranks for execution. Power distribution within an organization can be understood by examining the organizational structure and a worker's assigned position within that structure since often times the position on the organizational chart dictates to a large extent the individuals' power with the organization.

Regardless of the organizational structure empowerment may be a possible alternative and create a more democratized distribution of power. Often empowerment is defined as spreading power throughout the organization from the powerful few to the less powerful many. Empowered employees may acquire some access to resources and knowledge, decision making processes, and increased autonomy. Empowerment can mean increased variety and opportunity to challenge, relaxed formal controls, greater enhancement of sense of personal value, and a more rewarding life and work experience.

Organizational structure also determines what the important activities within the organization are and who governs the critical resources in order to accomplish these activities. Some of the theories that help to explain power from the hierarchal organizational structure perspective come from a more critical position and appear to be a reflection of the power distribution in society. In this example, leaders who exercise power as "power over" those who are workers in lower levels of the organizational structure are exercising power derived from this source (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O'Connor & Aguinis, 2001).

*Political structure.* A second view of organizational power comes from the politics of organizations. Foundationally, it is recognized that structure and power cannot be separated (Hatch, 1997; Giddens, 1979). In the most traditional hierarchal organizations, decision making is defined as top levels of management focus on strategic decision making, middle managers emphasize decisions about the internal structural arrangements and coordination among units, and lower level managers are responsible for decision about day-to-day operational activities within their assigned units (Hatch, 1997).

In this model those who actually have the most power and the ability to exercise it come from both the organizational structure and other sources. Thus, in a hierarchal organizational structure model, those at the pinnacle of the organizational structure have the most power, followed by those who report to them, in turn followed by those who report to them, and so on. Some of the other power sources are reflected in society at large since in capitalistic societies marginalized groups can suffer from oppression while dominant groups enjoy privilege. In this way, white males most often sit at the pinnacles of organizational structures and possess most of the position power. Much literature also exists arguing that since organizations mirror the power structure of the greater society, lack of inclusion and less power is available to women, African Americans, and other less dominant groups. However, just as authoritative power is recognized in this view, so is the agency of those lower in the hierarchy.

Those located lower in the organizational structure may exercise their voice in more political ways such as forming alliances with those with more position power. These alliances can take the form of shared interests or goals, mutual short range or long range objectives or relationships of other sorts. In this way diverse voices can be heard and more inclusion can be the outcome. Thus, other sources of power are made evident by reviewing the organizational chart and

still others are more hidden and based on individual knowledge, personal attributes or other less identifiable factors, all contributing to the elusiveness of the concept of power and all contributing to the organizational politics.

*Social structure.* Another view of power in an organization centers on social structure. In this view, the notion of power overlaps with both the organizational structure and the politics of the organization, creating a decision making process and a way of interaction that has both rational and irrational features. From this vantage point, power is viewed more in terms of the relationship between individuals. At times, workers may find it necessary to form relationships around tasks that are too large for individuals to perform on their own (Hatch, 1997). Relationships then develop sometimes in the direction of the hierarchy established and at other times in other directions such as for mutually beneficial task accomplishment. In addition, these relationships may remain rather static over time or may be quite dynamic.

#### *Bases of Power Concept*

Another way that power can be viewed is built on the work of Raven and French (1959) and elaborated on by Raven (1999) who described at least seven distinct but often overlapping bases of power: position, legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, referent, and personal power. While traditionally many have focused on legitimate power stemming from organizational hierarchy and position power, it is some of the more informal power sources that also need to be considered as well as those power bases utilized in relationships that offer a more comprehensive view of power. For example, those power bases often considered more related to personal power such as referent power can clearly be leveraged as change initiatives. As Watkins and Tisdell (2006) note, Raven (1999) expanded his power base theory to include “reciprocity, equity, and responsibility” even in

the legitimate power description, allowing for change even in those power bases previously seen as more static.

According to Koslowsky and Stashevsky (2005) “Regardless of the organizational type, one of the main functions of an organization is to transfer expectation, advice, and rules of work from supervisor/leader to a worker/subordinate” (p. 23); typically this is accomplished through the use of power. Often organizations under a hierarchal model are strictly controlled, highly formalized, and standardized. Leaders possess *position* power allotted to them based on the position that they hold within the organizational structure. Other power bases related to position power are: *legitimate*, the amount of power allotted to an individual’s ability to assign tasks and associate with the position that he or she holds; *reward*, the ability to reward performance, can be a manager or worker of any status or position; and *coercive*, the ability to dismiss workers from their jobs for not completing an assignment, typically a power of a supervisor or manager. *Expert*, referring to the expertise or knowledge that is required to do a job, has little to do with the job or position held. Another base of power that may or may not be job related is *referent*, meaning the qualities that make the supervisor likable including strong relational and networking skills, has little to do with the position held by the worker or manager (Raven, 1999; Watkins & Tisdell, 2006). A seventh power base was also identified; that being more associated with the individual themselves, *personal* power (Raven, 1999). Personal power appears to come from personal attributes such as character, vision, and inspiration and can be further enhanced by strong interpersonal skills and ability to influence others and has little to do with the position held by the worker or manager (Blanchard, 1995).

Thus, it is evident that power may be exercised differently by utilizing different power bases. Whether gender or other factors are used to illustrate this difference, it is apparent that a

holistic understanding of power is necessary and inclusion of all types of workers essential to create a more democratic organization. It follows then, that focus on any singular group such as stereotyped white male leadership, or any singular perspective on power limits an understanding of power distribution in an organization and its potential to transform.

### *Summary*

Understanding of power in the workplace comes from diverse sources. Partially, this phenomenon can be viewed from a structure standpoint, partially from a more relationship aspect, and partially more focused on individual characteristics (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Vaara et al, 2005). Power theories such as resource dependence theories see power used to influence decisions under the conditions of scarcity, criticality and uncertainty (Pfeiffer & Salancik, 1978). It makes sense then that all views of power have a place in explaining the phenomenon, from the most individual and independent to the most holistic, inclusive and/or relationship based. Using a critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens does not force an understanding of power through a singular selection of power source but instead encourages us to look for multiple power constructs and their interplay. Though it could be argued that some of the traditional views of power would be better addressed using solely a critical organizational theory perspective, the addition of postmodernism makes all of the views of power mutually beneficial. Power can be perceived as positive and negative. A holistic understanding of power in the workplace is called for since no singular perspective explains this complex construct. Debate may continue on choosing one theory or explanation over another. However, regardless of the outcome, it is inarguable that power plays a significant role in organizational transformation.

## Organizational Transformation

This study looked at the role of power and shifts in power that might occur in an organization during the context of attempts at transformation, a very specific form of organizational change. While most seem to view organizational transformation as a form of organizational change, the specific meaning is somewhat convoluted. In fact the term organizational *transformation* is often full of contention and confusion in the literature. For these reasons, I first clarify for the reader one definition of organizational transformation in the literature, the confusion surrounding the term, and give a brief history of the organizational change field in order to better situate this study.

The discussion in this section includes: transformation as a concept as it applies to organizations, including tenets of individual transformation which carry over to organizations; some of the major types of organizational change, a look at a three of the many models guiding both organizational change and its analysis, and the organizational conditions that potentially promote organizational transformation.

### *The Language of Organizational Change*

The meaning and use of the term *organizational transformation* is impossible to research without coming in contact with other change terms, especially *organizational change* and *organizational development*. At times the terms can be found to be used almost interchangeably. However, more often the terms are found in the literature to mean a unique set of organizational sequences or events (for example: Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Chapman, 2002; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996). Since the literature frequently uses organizational change as an umbrella term for all types of change and change initiatives, I have adopted this use (Bartunek & Louis, 1988; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996). The term organizational *development* (OD) is used as a much

more specific term in the literature and emerged during the 1960s. It rose in popularity as organizational development consultants were hired to fix or solve organizational problems, mostly through changes in mission statements, organizational structures, and by using other organizational processes or methods (Chapman, 2002). OD consultants tend to see organizations as closed systems and their role as a change agent who both introduces and manages the change process (Argyris, 1977, Argyris & Schon, 1978; Gingerella, 1993). Much of the focus is on structure versus people or culture. OD rarely involved cultural change or alterations in values, belief systems or attitudes in the early literature (Levy & Merry, 1986; Mink, 1992; Schein, 1985). Even today OD is most often associated with planned change efforts (Burnes, 2004; Chapman, 2002; Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Gallos, 2006). From a “managed change” perspective, organizational consultants both outside and inside organizations generate a variety of intervention approaches and strategies. Organizational development fits well with a hierarchal organizational structure (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). This type of change can be planned by the most senior levels of management in the organization and then forced down through the structure to all workers. Though it can be argued that OD has become broader and more encompassing in its definition both in the literature and practice (Cumming & Worley, 2005; Gallos, 2006; Horton, 2008; Jones & Brazzel, 2006; McLean & Egan, 2008) for the purposes of this study, I have used the distinctions drawn from original intentions of these types of organizational change to distinguish them from one another.

*Organizational transformation* is sometimes described as frame bending or second order change (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Levy, 1986). It is seen as quantum change, meaning it impacts both the structures of organizations as well as the management systems and workers (Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Yorks, 1986). Following this logic, organizational transformation can be



described as a holistic and humanistic change in beliefs, assumptions, values, vision, power distribution, structures and processes, resulting in a revolutionary change that affects the entire context of the organization (Fletcher, 1990). As a result, this term is used to mean a fundamental change in an organization involving the culture and people in the organization (at all levels) as well as changes to the structure, processes, or methods of the organization (Mink, 1992; Wilson & Tozzi, 2002). This type of change relies on shared decision making and buy-in of all workers at all levels of the organization. While a hierarchal organizational structure may continue, empowerment or some other form of shared decision making and democracy of power distribution is essential to transformation of core values, beliefs, assumptions of the organization (Chapman, 2002; Mink, 1992; Mintzberg, 1979).

#### *History of Organizational Change*

Since part of the lack of consistency in the use and understanding of these change terms comes from the evolution of the field, I now turn to a brief look at the history of the organizational change field. The first term appearing in the earliest literature is the term *organizational change*. Typically the unit of analysis in organizational change is a change event or episode (Pettigrew, Woodman, & Cameron, 2001). From both an individual and organizational level there is significant evidence that both try to avoid change and promote the status quo. The term has been around a long time, perhaps since the inception of an organization. As far back as 700 BC, Biblical accounts such as those described by Isaiah, Samuel, and Jonah, all list a series of steps or stages to the change process (Elrod II & Tippett, 2002).

In terms of evolution for the field, organizational change was the only change language that existed until the 1960s (Chapman, 2002) when the term *organizational development* was born. One of the major developments in the field came about when Lewin (1952) presented his

change process model (freeze, unfreeze, refreeze) out of the desire to move organizations from their status quo state to another state (Burnes, 2004; Elrod & Tippett, 2002). According to McLagan (2003), this model for thinking comes from the 17<sup>th</sup> century science field in which the machine is a key metaphor for an organization, and the main objective is to create and manage desirable types of change, overcome resistance, and rationally develop strategies with limited failure and error rates. Over time organization development practitioners added the use of scientific knowledge and power sharing between the change agent and the client to their strategies for change. However, this change process is seen as clearly distinct from spontaneous evolutionary change or accidental change. Postmodernists criticize and point to the ineffectiveness of rational decision making as the driver of change (Cappiope & Edwards, 2004; Casey, 2004; Fletcher, 1990; Scott, 2002). Both postmodernists and critical organizational theorists proposed alternatives to the atmosphere of domination through traditional hierarchal and structure power distribution. Instead they sought an organization where there was democracy of power enactment with opportunities for freedom and innovation. Organizational development became identified as the form of change which resulted in power politics either remaining the same post change or intensified.

The phrase *organizational transformational* (OT) has a long history as a form of change and stresses the angle that the organization is changed in some way to create something different or new. Due to many of the critiques of OD mentioned above, a failure rate of more than 50%, and the lack of focus on people, resistance, and cultural aspects of change, organizational consultants coined the term *organizational transformation*. They renamed their work in OD to OT work to include people, organizational culture, democracy of power distribution, the multiple changes in the external environment, increasing organizational complexity, and uncertain

outcomes demanded approaches that traditional OD did not address (Adams, 1984; Eisler, 1994; Fletcher, 1990; Henneke, 1991).

Transformation of an organization tends to deal with both the structure and people aspects of change and is seen as a more radical form of change; often a product of organizational survival initiated from either an internal or external source. According to Kegan (1994), organizational transformation (OT) is qualitatively different from other forms of change, and particularly the concept of organizational development (OD). Organizational transformation is not a rational or linear process though it includes rational components (Scott, 1997) and unlike planned change, its direction is less predictable. It may or may not result in a more productive, effective organization. Context is crucial, and as a result many of the underlying concepts really do not transfer from one organization to another. Freedom to critically reflect and learn are both parts of this form of change. Some of the words or phrases used to describe this process are: *evolutionary or radical change, double loop learning, frame bending change, paradigm shift, second order change, quantum change, punctuated equilibrium*, and many more (Argyris, 1997; Argyris & Schon, 1978; Cappelli, 1997; Goodstein & Burke, 1990; Nadler & Tushman, 1989;).

This type of change seems consistent with a postmodern perspective in which organizations “do not have set boundaries or frameworks” (Rhodes & Scheeres, 2004, p. 178). Instead empowered workers are encouraged to create results through shared decision making, increased communication, and unique approaches while considering the values of the organization. These traits make this type of change and the underlying premises different from a more cognitive or rational perspective of other forms of change.

Robert Marshak (1990) offers metaphors and language as a way to categorize different the types of change. For example, he argues that most organizational development interventions

use language such as machine metaphors and words that describe fixing the machine to run smoother and be more productive. The change agent is seen as the repair man. Resistance comes phrased as, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Conversely, transformational change talks about moving an organization from one state to another using language such as *becoming more holistic, awakening or recreating ourselves*. Words of encouragement take the form of phrases such as *breaking out of the box*, or words such as *reinventing, becoming, and liberating*; the change agent is seen as the visionary or creator (p. 48-49). Other metaphors used to describe the transformational change process include the idea of kayaking in permanent white water (Griffin, 2008) and managing a bottled tornado (Stegall, 2003).

Subtleties and distinctions in change nomenclature used in the literature to describe organizational change are essential to understand the context of this study. In addition, there are several types of organizational change and some are classified as more transformational in nature than others, and consequently of more relevance to my study. Some of the types of change appearing in this category are: second order change, emergent change, and continuous versus punctuated equilibrium change (Argyris, 1997; Argyris & Schon, 1978; Cappelli, 1997; Fletcher, 1990; Goodstein & Burke, 1990; Marshak, 1990; Nadler & Tushman, 1989). Each of these types of transformational change is described below. Since organizational development initiatives and organizational transformation efforts are often confused, an attempt is made in this section to illustrate the differences in these approaches.

#### *Types of Organizational Change*

One of the primary ways that the type of organizational change is distinguished is through the definitions of first and second order change, the difference in planned and emergent change, and the distinction between punctuated equilibrium and continuous change. Since

according to Bartunek and Louis (1988) organizational change is divided into two major categories---organizational development and organizational transformation---it is important for the reader to be able to distinguish the two different approaches.

### *First Order and Second Order Change*

Organization theorists drew upon biology to develop definitions of first and second order change. Numerous scholars of management, organizations, and change codified and described these two types of change, beginning with Lindblom in 1959. First order change is most often seen to consist of minor adjustments that can arise naturally as a system develops and do not alter the system's core. These changes include changes to "activities, problems, issues, and circumstances" (Dirkx, Gilley & Gilley, 2004, p. 43). This is the type of change is most likely to require an OD intervention (Mink, Esterrhuysen, Mink, & Owen, 1993).

Second order change, which came to be linked with organizational transformation, is "multi-dimensional, multi-level, qualitative, discontinuous, radical organizational change involving a paradigmatic shift" (Levy & Merry, 1986, p.5).

### *Planned Change and Emergent Change*

Organizational development consultants used planned change to respond to threshold phenomena indicating crises or opportunities and included mostly intentional aspects of change initiatives. For example, this perspective appeared in the business process reengineering strategies arising in the 1990's regarding reengineering—downsizing, right sizing, and so on (Sethi, & King, 1997; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004).

Emergent change refers to the ongoing adaptations that produce fundamental change—at times unintentionally at other with the intention to do so. This is what happens when people and organizations deal with contingencies and opportunities everyday. This emergent approach

assumes that key organizational decisions result from cultural and political processes which evolve over time. With emergent change came two new conceptions of organizational transformation—continuous change and punctuated equilibrium.

### *Punctuated Equilibrium and Continuous Change*

The punctuated equilibrium model (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994) posits long periods of organizational stability/equilibrium interrupted by burst of revolutionary and fundamental change. The assumption is that episodic change or punctuated equilibrium change is infrequent, discontinuous and intentional. OD consultants and other change agents can *manage* events, such as change (Miller, 1993). This model's source was the natural science's challenge to a Darwinian conception of evolution and was validated by Gersick's (1991) research on how organizations change.

The other conception, highlighted by the experience of many firms, was the continuous or transformation model. Rejecting both incremental and punctuated equilibrium approaches, its proponents (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1995; Chrusciel & Field, 2006; Feldman, 2004; Greenwald, 1996) argue that in a fast moving world continuous change is endemic to the way successful organizations compete. Survival is predicated on the ability to change fundamentally and continuously. The primary source for this perspective is complexity theory. Continuous change is described as evolving, uninterrupted, relentless, frequent, and simultaneous changes across the organization (Weick, 1991).

Continuous change is more likely to be a transformational. Though formal changes in organizational structures seem to be limited, the organization's culture is developed to be extensively interactive with much freedom to improvise; products are linked to needs as they evolve, and decision making is shared. This process is used to balance order with disorder, attend

simultaneously to multiple time frames and linkages between them, and follow steps for creating the essence of a transformed organization. Potential problems arise from this perspective, since change cannot be fully planned or controlled; it simply evolves as the organization transforms into something new. This is important because this type of change is unlikely to be managed by organizational development consultants or anyone else for that matter. The role of power and the shifting of power amidst this type of change was the context for my study.

### *Organizational Change Models*

The field of OD contains many more models and diagrams attempting to both lead and explain the many types of change efforts than the organizational transformation field. Each of these models shed a little insight into the transformation process but all fall short of full explanation. Organizational transformation tends to operate on the perimeters of the organizational development models and more importantly with a set of enhancing conditions or characteristics. First in this section, I discuss three change models: Lewin's change model; the Planned Model; and the Action Research Change Model.

Lewin's model is the most simplistic with only three stages: unfreeze, move, and refreeze. In the unfreezing stage "those forces maintaining the organization's behavior at its present level" (Huse & Cummings, 1980, p. 21) are liberated so that a new state can develop. The second stage represents the step in which new behaviors, values, and assumptions are introduced. The third step stabilizes the organization in a new state of equilibrium, incorporating the culture, norm, values, structure, behaviors, and values of the new organizational state (Elrod II & Tippett, 2002; Huse & Cummings, 1980). While this model somewhat accounts for some of the center core, cultural, and value and belief changes, the process to achieve change is very much managed and mandated by those in power, typically those heading the organizational

structure. It also fails to mention the role of power or any shift in power or shared decision making. Also, the direction and details of the change are predetermined by an elite group of those with the most power. Methods such as shared decision making and democracy of power are ignored in favor of a change created by force from those holding the most powerful positions in the organization.

The Planning Model includes the stages of scouting, entry, diagnosis, planning, action, stabilization and action, and termination, and is an expansion of the Lewin model. One of the major differences in the two models is that the Planning Model allows for feedback (often viewed as missing in the Lewin model) of the change agent and the organization members. Lewin's original theory has been criticized for failing to account for feedback and acknowledgement of context. While this model considers and in many cases includes the perspective of the entire worker group, it has been criticized for its rational, linear formation (Rosch, 2002) and overlooking the importance of emotions in transformations and organizational transitions (Kubler-Ross, 1969). It still treats change as a planned event by those in power and does not include a method to achieve democratization of power or shared decision making. It also treats change as an episodic event as opposed to an ongoing process.

The Action Research Change Model intends that change, while planned is also viewed as cyclical. It can be used to assist organizations in increasing effectiveness as well as developing new knowledge, and in this way is also a change method (Huse & Cummings, 1980; Goodstein & Burke, 1990). The stages of the Action Research Change Model are: problem identification, consultation with experts, data gathering and preliminary diagnosis, feedback to key client or group initiating the change, joint diagnosis of the problem, and data gathering after the action. Action research change is usually used to "loosen constraints on behavior...and liberate



suppressed energy” (Huse & Cummings, 1980, p. 25). The steps in this model address change as ongoing or evolutionary; however, it fails to address democratization of power, shared decision making, and freedom to critically reflect. While the model hints at liberating energy for change, at the same time it implies that a consultant or management or some group or individual with power is implementing the change event and that it has a predetermined direction. For these reasons it falls short of encouraging full participation and inclusion of all workers. It is also a rational, linear model.

Summarizing this discussion, the weaknesses illustrated in the current organizational change models are likely to include one or more of the following: a specific period of time or episode of a change event; steps or stages of a transition, making for linear, sequential, rational change processes; and all change efforts appear to be implemented and controlled by those in powerful positions within or outside the organizational structure (Elrod II & Tippett, 2002). Additionally, organizational change models fail to address power distribution and inclusion of all workers in decision making and critical reflection to attain maximum input and buy-in for change efforts. So, while some explanation of organizational transformation process (mostly transactional organizational development activities) may be illuminated by change models, other factors and practices which lie outside the change models appear to encourage organizational transformation. I now turn my attention to a discussion of some of these practices and characteristics.

#### *Circumstances Encouraging Organizational Transformation*

Though organizational transformation cannot be guaranteed, there are some organizational practices which tend to encourage the potential for organizational transformation. Two of these are organizational characteristics, often a reflection of those managing the

organization and the creation of a culture which promotes the conditions which support such transformation.

### *Organizational Characteristics*

Certain organizational characteristics tend to set up conditions which help to foster organizational transformation. Popper and Lipshitz (1998) hypothesize that there are five characteristics of organizations which are required for worker buy-in to change, shared participation, critical reflection and transformation. These characteristics are: “continuous learning, valid information, transparency, issue orientation, and accountability” (Popper & Lipshitz, 1998, p. 172). Continuous learning is defined as an organization’s desire to seek out learning activities and new knowledge and perspectives. Valid information suggests that employees hold up data on the organization for critical assessment without organizational members withholding information, distorting information or fabricating information, as a defense for themselves, for others, or for any other reason. Transparency is seen as a type of self-examination, the willingness to hold up oneself, one’s actions, and the actions of one’s team up for valid feedback. For transparency to occur there must be a prevailing culture that encourages critical reflection and actions supporting new worldviews. Similarly, issue orientation has to do with being able to evaluate a mistake or omission by its merit and not judge it by the method or the person who raises the issue (Popper & Lipshitz, 1998).

As noted by Newhouse and Chapman (1996) two tasks must be accomplished to produce organizational transformation: “constantly reinforcing the interpretive scheme by word and example and supporting the dialectical process for a sufficient length of time to permit a critical mass of organizational members to share the new scheme through conversion” (p. 1010). For this

reason, the characteristics of management or the leaders of an organization experiencing transformational change initiatives were worthy of consideration and analysis in this study.

### *Culture/Environmental Factors*

The following section describes some of the organizational culture or environmental factors which encourage organizational transformation. Freedom of choice, collaborative work, learning environments, autonomy, and a more democratic distribution of power are other factors which appear to enhance the chances of organizational transformation. Since organizational cultures serve as the filter for selecting what the organization is attentive to and values, the characteristics of this culture often indicate the likelihood and propensity of a particular organization to transform.

Some tenets of transformational learning theory which are usually applied to individuals also apply to organizations. Some theorists believe that individuals who learn and transform, create organizations that learn and transform (Marsick & Neaman, 1996) while others believe that transformational learning is an individual endeavor (Mezirow, 1997). For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that organizations can and do transform.

According to Yorks and Marsick (2001), organizations learn and transform themselves in ways that are parallel to Mezirow's habits of the mind—namely in the areas of “sociolinguistic, epistemic, psychological and philosophical” dimensions (p. 273). Organizations that seek transformation employ a process of reflection with questioning and change of assumptions, at the organizational level. Fletcher (1990) cites the use of “dialectical inquiry” in organizations as a method to assist in raising conflicting perspectives which inform each other but have no consensus agenda. Other characteristics of organizational transformation which deal with the

importance of context, non-rationality, and emotions are all similar to characteristics found in individual transformation.

Learning is tightly connected to transformation in both individuals and organizations because the cultivation of a learning culture and freedom to think and act on one's new worldview is essential to setting the environment for transformation. Additionally, organizations must embed into their culture the desire for learning (Argyris, 1997; Schein, 1996; Watkins, 1996). This learning frequently takes the form of critical reflection and double loop learning. The learning theory of Argyris and Schon (1978) distinguishes single-loop learning (first order change) which allows an organization to maintain current policies or achieve current objectives from double-loop learning (second order change) which involves modifying an organization's underlying norms, policies, and objectives. This theory continues to guide new practice approaches (West & Markiewicz, 2003).

As with individual transformative learning, the process of critical reflection takes the form of questioning current practices and evaluating a change of assumptions. An often referenced paradigm for managing the dynamic process by which organizations create new knowledge and perspectives comes from Nonaka's (1994) research and experience with Japanese organizations. Rejecting the old conception of an organization as an efficient, static and passive processor of received information, Nonaka's organization responds dynamically by interacting with its changing environment. This is an innovative process in which the organizations create and define problems, develop new knowledge to solve them through a continuous dialogue between tacit (personal, rooted in action and commitment) and explicit knowledge (codified and transmittable) then articulate and amplify the new knowledge and conceptions through a spiral process dependent upon social interaction (as opposed to strictly hierarchal structure). Ideas

circulate through an ever-expanding community on the way to becoming crystallized. Created knowledge is anchored on the commitment and beliefs of its constituency or stake holders and becomes a part of the knowledge network of the total organization. Unique about this perspective is the inclusion of workers at all levels of the organization. Again, in my study I hope to find evidence of critical reflection and inclusion of workers at all levels to solve organizational problems.

### *Summary and Conclusions*

Challenges exist in organizational settings that make transformation difficult and rare. An example is that those organizational cultures that are dominated by resistance to change may find isolated change initiatives introduced by organizational development change agents palatable, but are unlikely to seek out fundamental transformational change strategies (Schein, 1996). Altering this portion of the cultural dimension may prove difficult because culture is often “a set of tacit assumptions about how the world is and ought to be that a group of people share that determines their perceptions, thoughts, feeling, and to some degree their overt behavior” (Schein, 1996, p. 11). Organizational politics and power struggles play a role in both the culture of the organization and the potential limitations on learning accessible to workers (Clarke, 2003; Fletcher, 1990; Schein, 1996).

Models of organizational change only partially explain this particular type of change. In fact, organizational transformation tends to operate on the outer edges of these models. This being said, encouragement of critical reflection, discourse, and autonomy; increasing freedom of choice; creating a learning environment; and a more democratic distribution of power can enhance the potential for organizational transformation (Hennecke, 1991). Just as with individual

transformation, there is not a prescription that ensures it but leadership and cultural characteristics can enhance the organizational potential to experience transformation.

### *Relevant Research Studies*

In this section I look at studies first from the broad area of organizational change, including organizational development types of change. I then focus solely on organizational transformation, a more specific type of organizational change. Finally, I add power shifts to the search. Those familiar with HRD may note that some well known authors such as Block, Peters, Blanchard and many more are either absent or used minimally. There omission is intentional either because they rely mostly on conceptual literature to make their case or for other reasons as noted in Chapter Three in the Background of the Researcher section.

### *Studies Related to Change*

According to Pettigrew, Woodman, and Cameron (2001), “The study of change and development is one of the great themes in social sciences” (p. 697). However, most of the research has come out of the quantitative research paradigm in search of “hard criteria or data,” mostly concerned with the process, and focused on whether or not a specific change has occurred; the steps or stages in the change process; the methods or strategies used; and its impact on organizational productivity. From a theoretical standpoint systems theory has been the framework with which the researchers have commonly used for their studies (Abel, 2005; Katz & Kahn, 1966).

The majority of the change research encompasses either change in general or specific organizational development efforts as opposed to organizational transformation efforts. Thus, advances in understanding of the change process are more related to organizational development

types of change, resulting in organizational transformation processes, practices, and conditions being less examined and understood.

Several published evaluations of organizational development interventions have been conducted since the inception of the focus of large scale organizational change and organizations, including those looking at the time periods of 1965-1980 (Bullock & Svyantek, 1983; Terpstra, 1981), 1978-1983 (Woodman & Wayne, 1985) and (Robertson, Roberts, and Porras, 1993) and 1991-1999 (Anders, 1999). Later, Elrod II and Tippet (2002) looked at 15 change models and observed that all transitioned from some sort of normality to a form of disruption back into a state of re-defined normality, reflecting the essence of all of the change models. Much of the research has yielded results stating whether or not a change has occurred, most often considering “the notions of quality, quantity and pace of the change” (Pettigrew et. al, 2001, p. 701). In these studies performance issues tend to get more attention than do relational issues or factors.

Organizational development efforts and planned change efforts such as modification in the organizational structure or mission statement are easy targets for these studies since organizational development types of change, meaning adjustments in structure and systems are simpler to modify and study than are people or organizational culture changes (Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996). Thus, the literature indicates that OD changes may be easier to accomplish than organizational transformation changes and also easier to study. Additionally, since organizational transformation can be very different from organizational development in that the initiatives are not planned and controlled and the end result can not be predicted, studying organizational transformation can be not only more difficult to studying but less intuitively appealing.

Nonetheless, many researchers describe evidence of transformational learning in

organizations (Marsick & Watkins, 1994; Senge, 1990), including increased critical reflection, revised habits of the mind, and shifts in worldview. Three framework studies have informed many other studies in terms of their research questions. Watkins and Marsick (1993) examined 22 organizations looking for continuous learning and transformation; Pedler, Boydell, and Burgyne (1991) studied all member learning and continuous change in the organization; and Senge (1990) looked for organizational evidence of employees who created results through freedom of thought and collective action of their choice. Common to all of these studies is the concept that learning is fundamental to the study of transformation and used as evidence of transformation.

More recently, management consultants (Flamholtz & Randle, 1998) the U.S. Army from the maverick Colonel who was dissatisfied with its attempts at change (Macgregor, 2003) and the educator turned systems consultant who first introduced *new science* into the mix with organizational leadership (Wheatley, 1992) all saw evidence of organizational transformation. All three clearly believe that organizations can transform, and all three make declarations about the nature of transformation. The differences between them are the details which reflect their practice environments, in other words context. They all use language consistent with complexity science principles and transformation, meaning that there was evidence that transformation occurred but in an unplanned way, with no change agent leading it and its ultimate direction unknown.

There also appears to be a greater dependence on conceptual literature and models focused primarily on practitioner experience than actual research studies in the literature. In addition, little attention has been paid to cultural issues such as worker beliefs, assumptions or values, or power shifts during organizational transformation. Though the emergence of critical



organizational theory occurred as early as 1997, I could find no research which directly dealt with power distribution.

Most studies have focused on independent variables and many critiques argue that human interaction cannot be isolated into independent variables nor actions. As a result, more work needs to be done to improve understanding of this everyday phenomenon. Perhaps the best explanation of the many facets of change comes from the work of Mitzberg and Huy (2003) in, *The Rhythm of Change*, which argues that regardless of the definition, distinction, or category used to explain change initiatives, none of them work in isolation. Instead a multitude of perspectives must be used at once to gain an appreciation of organizational change.

#### *Studies Related to Power*

For all the reasons listed above, qualitative studies which have focused on organizational transformation are scarce. Instead most of the studies focusing on change have identified patterns, time frames, events, and structures that shape and explain organizational change efforts. Those including power as an element within this transformation are found less frequently. In fact, “studies relating power to organizational variables are noticeably absent” (Atwater, 1995). One reason for this is the complexity of the concept of power. Contributing to this complexity is the notion that power has both individual and relationship dimensions. As a result, theory development has occurred largely based on one view or the other. Likewise, the literature has also remained separate and disconnected (House, 1991).

Two examples of studies impacting the non-profit segment looked at power as associated with outside forces and internal learning of CEOs. For example, the first article identified “cause-related marketing” as a strategy to survive (Du, Hou, & Huang, 2007, p. 93). One of the issues identified with non-profit work was the reality of needing to market their services in order to

compete. Here is an example of non-profit organizations feeling the need to react to the external environment in order to survive much the same as for profit organizations. The other article (Sherlock & Nathan, 2009) used Mezirow's transformational learning framework to look at the power issues surrounding the learning of the CEO of a non-profit organization. While this article was most attentive to individual transformation, it did offer some characteristic of leaders (or CEOs) during transformation that may have application elsewhere. It also looked at the importance of the concept of critical reflection in the transformation process. The article examined the difference between introspection and reflection stating that "reflection is not the same as introspection" (Sherlock & Nathan, 2009, p. 248).

In the few studies that have looked at shifting power in organizations as they transform, they are most often found under the umbrella of empowerment studies, enhancement of organizational life, match of individual to organizational mission for turnover or retention purposes, or other reasons such as diversity. In only one study did I find the word *power*. However, even in this study it was listed among other factors potentially leading to an organizational transformation. The other factors were: the role of culture, history, structure, and politics (Pettigrew et al., p. 699).

#### *Research Gaps in Literature*

To date, most studies have been quantitative and focused on whether or not transformation has occurred rather than on the nature of the interventions---the purpose, the level, the process, the context, and the focus (Anders, 1999; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996; Pettigrew, 1985). As compared to organizational development very little research has been conducted in the arena of organizational transformation, partially due to the complexity of research design required and in part due to the unplanned nature of the transformation. Those

that have examined organizational transformation have looked at either the strategies employed or the characteristics of leadership required for organizational transformation. Using the mindset that understanding the change process is synonymous with understanding sequencing in the change, before and after results, large sample sizes, and long periods of time (frequently several years) are required. It is not surprising then, that using only this frame of reference to study change that few of these studies have been conducted. In addition, within this type of change study is the possibility that numerous change efforts are likely to be in effect simultaneously, preventing the study of a single initiative. While some research has been conducted on organizational development processes over the last 50 years, little attention has been paid to the change in individual's beliefs, assumptions, or perceptions as a part of these analyses (Camden-Anders, 1999).

Research on power shifts and transformation is virtually new territory for study. Though the emergence of critical organizational theory occurred as early as 1997, I could find no research which was directly relevant to this study in terms of shifts in power. In the one study that the word power was listed, it was included among a list of other factors leading to a transformation (Pettigrew, Woodman, & Cameron, 2001). No studies looked specifically at the role of power or the shift in power structures during an organizational transformation (Kark, 2004; Mitchell, 2005). As a result, a qualitative research needs to be conducted focused on power shifting during a transformation leading to an improved understanding of this everyday phenomenon.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this section I discuss the rationale for the use of the qualitative paradigm and explain my choice of a case study methodology. In both I examine the key assumptions and discuss them in relationship to my study. My research looked at the shifts in power from both the perspectives of management and worker staff during an organizational transformation. These shifts in power occurred due to a conscious effort on the part of the most senior members of management and staff. Included in this section are the research questions which were used to gather insight and data during the study. Also discussed is a brief history of my interest and experience on this topic as the researcher. Finally, I give an overview of the participant selection, data collection methods, data analysis techniques and verification processes, and identify in each their consistency with the research type and more specifically my qualitative research study.

#### Introduction to Research Paradigm

In this study I collected qualitative data and situated my research in the interpretive paradigm. A research paradigm is referred to as a philosophical set of basic beliefs that provides a framework to the entire research study and has implications for the conduct and interpretation of the research data (Creswell, 1998; Guba, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Schwandt, 1989). A perfunctory look at qualitative research or the interpretive paradigm may view this approach as “any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.11). More profoundly, however, the interpretive paradigm is fundamentally different from a quantitative paradigm since the researcher assumes that the human experience is not an objective fixed reality that can numerically be understood or examined. In the interpretive paradigm, the researcher looks for a

complex understanding of human experiences with events that are both interconnected with other events and are interpreted based on a unique set of prior experiences and perceptions. As such, qualitative research is founded on the assumption that each person is a product of the culture in which they live and that their experiences shape them into unique individuals with distinctive perceptions of the world around them, (Ewert, 1991). Accordingly, it is presumed that an objective world exists but each person's interpretation of this world may be different. Thus, a study of any complex social phenomenon such as a shift in power must include numerous perspectives from various vantage points to shed light on the phenomenon being explored. It is the meanings, the consensual norms, and the social interactions with this objective world that lead to increased understanding of it. Qualitative research is not looking for a cause and effect relationship. Instead, qualitative research is more concerned with process than outcomes; uses an inductive approach which may result in theory building as it uncovers data or builds on existing theory as investigation occurs; is a constructed set of knowledge and meanings of any particular phenomenon (impacted heavily by how participants experience reality from their own perspective); and includes multiple interpretations of reality that are constantly in flux and may vary over time (Bryant, 2006; Canter, 1997; Gummesson, 2006; Langhout, 2003; Sobh & Perry, 2005; Taylor, Beck & Ainsworth, 2001; Weisner, 1997).

A more specific type of the interpretive paradigm according to Schnelker (2005) is the realism paradigm. From this view, reality is believed to exist out there somewhere. However the interpretation of this reality is based on one's own unique interaction with it. In this way, "reality is defined as the interaction between the objective world and the subjective experience of this world" (Schnelker, 2005, p. 46). For example, the researcher as well as the participants shares in perspectives of this reality from their own vantage point and experiences. This idea is

important for two reasons. First, the researcher's perspective is unique and becomes a part of the data collection and analysis spirals. There is little attempt to isolate or minimize the natural perceptions brought in by the researcher. Second, the method of study must include multiple points of view and methods to gather as many different perspectives as possible in order to begin to understand the phenomenon since qualitative research assumes that numerous viewpoints are present. This approach is not intended to create a consensus or agreed-upon explanation of reality. Instead its goal is to deepen the understanding and explain the meaning of the phenomenon, in this case shifts in power, by examining multiple diverse perspectives.

This research paradigm appreciates the context sensitivity of the data. While the examination and analysis of an organization is intended to provide a better understanding of power shifts during transformation, the information is specific to this context. According to Zohar (1997), if you change the context then the entity itself may change. This means that the findings themselves may become something different, even in a similar organization. Context sensitivity is another key assumption of qualitative research. For this reason, though the discussion of this particular organization and its participants offers rich thick description, it is anticipated that the findings are not necessarily generalizable or applicable to another population or context without evaluation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Due to the fragile nature of the social phenomenon of power shifting, the context is not only very important, but, fitting with the postmodern perspective it is ever changing, fluid and a temporary outlook or view. As an example, both researchers and participants rely on language to communicate experiences and perceptions. Thus, the "central core of practical knowledge is the understanding of the subjective meaning of language and the action in acting individuals" (Ewert, 1991, p. 349). "It includes: the contextual social rules and assumptions that underlie actions; the

social norms and expectations around policy actions; and any other factors influencing decision making and organizational culture. These norms, expectations and other factors are understood, communicated, and analyzed in a specific time and place. In addition, “words develop meaning in relationship to other words” (Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995, p. 358). Each of these could be arguably different and interpreted differently by another time, another place, another context, or by another researcher. Thus, it follows that an interpretive research paradigm is an appropriate choice for examining practical knowledge. It focuses on the intersubjective meaning based on norms of social interactions which enlighten this process, even if this enlightenment is temporary (Ewert, 1991).

Heyink and Tymstra (1993) suggest that a qualitative research methodology should be used when the researcher is interested in participant empowerment or power shift changes, or when the topic is sensitive or the topic requires an in-depth examination. This topic tends to be complex and would be best understood through a research paradigm that allows for understanding through rich detail and in-depth study (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This paradigm also gives voice to multiple participants—those seen as in the majority as well as those in the minority. In this way, workers may be encouraged to participate and experience empowerment by voicing their thoughts and opinions. Embedded in the workers language and word choices are opportunities to explore power shifts due to change strategies and cultural norms (Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995). The empowerment and encouragement of multiple distinctive voices is a major advantage to the selection of a qualitative research paradigm for my study.

Qualitative research can offer a multilayered investigation to produce rich data collection and careful analysis (Langhout, 2003). In this study, since the shift in power was best explored in a variety of methods, using multiple participants to provide their unique input, a research study type

that includes this nature of exploration seemed to be a logical choice. Studies of complex constructs, such as shifts in organizational power occur in natural settings, within a particular context, with workers and managers creating infinite meanings. Thus, for all of these reasons, a qualitative research paradigm was a most appropriate choice for my study. I next introduce the type of qualitative research I used along with the assumptions underlying it.

### Research Methodology

Qualitative case studies are increasingly used as a research strategy and have been used as a significant part of management and business research for quite some time (Oz, 2004; Patton & Applebaum, 2003). A case study is defined as a research methodology that is used to examine a body of knowledge and most often examines a real-life phenomenon in its natural setting which is context sensitive, research or theory that is in its formative stages, and useful in capturing knowledge of those experiencing that being studied (Cepeda & Martin, 2005; Perry, 1998; Yin, 1994). Many argue that valuable insights and understandings of complex phenomenon are best explored using case studies (Eisenhardt, 1989; Strauss, 1987; Yin, 1994).

However, all methodologies rest within a paradigm which includes at least two other core issues—ontology and epistemology. Referring the Table 3.1 below, “essentially, ontology is ‘reality,’ epistemology is the relationship between that reality and the researcher, and methodology is the technique used by the researcher to discover that reality” (Sobh & Perry, 2005). Like other forms of qualitative research, the case study assumes that an objective world exists and one can uncover and understand this world based on exploration of unique perspective and perceptions of it. This is contrasted with the case studies or other methodologies which use the positivism paradigm and quantitative research paradigm as their framework. While sharing the viewing of the world as an objective entity that can be studied, quantitative researchers



explore this reality by gathering statistics and generalizing the analysis of these statistics to other populations.

The realism paradigm coming from a qualitative approach argues that the understanding gained from analytical analysis may be used to better understand similar phenomenon in similar contexts; however, generalization to different populations is not possible. In addition, the researcher is seen to bring his or her own personal experiences and perceptions to the research, impacting the findings and the analysis. The researcher is only required to make this explicit and acknowledge subjectivity (Patten & Applebaum, 2003). Furthermore, “realism [rather than positivism] is the preferred paradigm for qualitative case study research for several reasons” such as being essentially inductive and theory building and unique to each individual based on his or her own experiences and assumptions (Cepeda & Martin, 2005, Patton & Applebaum, 2003; Perry, 1998). From this viewpoint that reality is seen to have various different properties and it is through multiple perspectives that it is better understood (Llewellyn, 2007).

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Table 3.1 Four Paradigm Comparisons

Element	Positivism	Constructivism	Critical theory	Realism
Ontology	Reality is real and apprehensible.	Multiple local and specific “constructed” realities.	“Virtual” reality shaped by social, economic, ethnic, political, cultural, and gender values, crystallized over time.	Reality is “real” but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehensible and so triangulation from many sources is required to try to

Epistemology	Findings true – researcher is objective by viewing reality through a “one-way mirror”.	Created findings – researcher is a “passionate participant” within the world being investigated.	Value mediated findings – researcher is a “transformative intellectual” who changes the social world within which participants live.	know it. Findings probably true – researcher is value-aware and needs to triangulate any perceptions he or she is collecting.
Common methodologies	Mostly concerns with a testing of theory. Thus mainly quantitative methods such as” survey, experiments, and verification of hypotheses.	In-depth unstructured interviews, participant observation, action research, and grounded theory research.	Action research and participant observation.	Mainly qualitative methods such as case studies and convergent interviews.

**Note:** Based on Perry *et al.* (1999), which was based on Guba and Lincoln (1994) from which the quotations come.

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The case study methodology can incorporate a variety of evidence—documents, interviews, focus groups, and so on (Patton & Applebaum, 2003; Yin, 1994). The end result is a family of answers versus a single view of a complex reality (Schnelker, 2005; Sobh & Perry, 2005). Case studies also tend to focus on the answers to “how” and “why” questions, facilitate understanding of complex phenomena, pursue in-depth analysis of multiple patterns, seek to investigate a

phenomenon in its context, use an inductive approach to arrive at meaning, understand complex phenomenon, and explore topics or areas where other research studies are limited (Cepeda & Martin, 2005; Llewellyn, 2007; Patton & Applebaum, 2003; Rowley, 2004).

While consistent with the beliefs of qualitative research, case studies offer distinctiveness to other forms of qualitative research. Central to the qualitative case study methodology is the belief that the case study is essentially an integrated system that views the world as full of complexity and plurality. Interrelationships are assumed to exist among all elements present in any particular case (Patton & Applebaum, 2003; Stake, 1995). “The word system is derived from the Greek ‘systema,’ meaning a whole composed of many parts. Systems, then translated into research can view a total system, in this illustration an organization, or look at the many subsystems or parts, for example, workers, management, or documents (Arthur & McMahon, 2005; Gummesson, 2006). Thus, systems can be viewed at a micro level (individually), and at a macro level (organizational). Likewise, a “case” can be comprised of an individual, a group of individuals, a particular process, or group of processes and explored at each or a combination of these levels (Cepeda & Martin, 2005). In this way, “case” can be defined as a large or big case, meaning the entirety of the organization or the referral can be to smaller cases which make up the larger case. Most importantly, these different levels of the case affect each other and “talk” to each other. Thus, each subsystem or smaller case impacts and informs the elements in the other. This exploration can be done simultaneously, meaning one level of case can inform the other—by contrasting or comparing data from each unique case (Hendrickson & Tankard, 1997). Through the process of reflection, the researcher can explore confirming and disconfirming evidence from each round of inquiry to each level of case creating a spiraling cycle of understanding. Multiple cases add richness to the research design and allow for

greater insight into the phenomenon being explored, in this example, power shifts during organizational transformation.

A second major distinction between the case methodology and other forms of qualitative research is that while the focus of a case study may be on a single organization this differs from saying that the organization represents a single point of view. In fact, one of the foundational properties of case study is the ability to view the complex whole and at the same time maintain an understanding of the individual parts in real life events, such as the shift in power (Schnelker, 2005). Each case (individual worker, document, focus group) either reinforced a common view or offered unique insights into the power-shifting phenomenon. Since this process is not a consensus seeking one, all voices and perceptions were encouraged. It is through examination and evaluation of many perspectives that the researcher can come to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Both the critical reflection and deconstruction during the analysis are reinforced through my theoretical framework. In addition, the postmodern view of temporary, fluid and context dependant outcomes is integral to the analysis process. It is a misconception to expect that the total view is the sum of the individual parts (Gummesson, 1991). Conversely, one of the strengths of selecting a case study methodology is to encourage differing points of view and multiple perspectives in defining the phenomenon or reality (Llewellyn, 2007).

Despite the benefits of case study, “no journal of research case studies or case study methods exists” (Perry, 1998, p. 785). Though it is commonly viewed as one of the five qualitative traditions of inquiry (Creswell, 1998), it is sometimes debated in the literature as to whether case study is a research method or a data collection tool (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993). Regardless of the debate regarding its nomenclature and categorization, the case study methodology had the potential to offer great insight into my research area. Case studies are “generally, more valuable during times of

change” (Llewellyn, 2007, p. 65). This is because tied to the change element is the possibility of emergence of perspectives and power shifts that are impacted based on the changes implemented. A more in-depth description of some of the other characteristics of case study methodology and why the selection of a case study methodology is most appropriate for my study follow.

### *Holistic and Pattern-Focused*

One of the key assumptions of the case study methodology is that it is useful in studying a phenomenon that is considered both holistic and pattern-focused (Canter, 1997; Gummesson, 2006; Langhout, 2003; Weisner, 1997). Qualitative methods often are viewed as holistic for the goal is to look for patterns within or across the system (Langhout, 2003). Qualitative case study research differs from quantitative case study research in that qualitative case study research expects to pull apart cases and put them back together creating more meaning, while quantitative case study researchers seek to aggregate and anticipate meaning to emerge (Patton & Applebaum, 2003). In my study, I expected that there were many viewpoints and perspectives on power shifts during organizational transformation, I also expected there to be some overarching themes or holistic messages in each spiral of analysis. This conception of research being both holistic and pattern focused is particularly fitting with the idea that cases inform each other. While there were general observations from each spiral of analysis, great care was utilized in maintaining the uniqueness of individual cases.

Holistic thinking can also be helpful in the construction of research questions since it focuses on both the individual parts and the entire organization. In regards to power and its distribution it can look at individual and group power as well as the organization’s power allocation or distribution. Since I looked at documents of the organization including the mission statement, performance analysis summaries as well as information on company marketing, communication and training

documents, and since I did interviews with individuals and in focus groups, a holistic, or more inclusive, approach seemed to be an obvious selection of assessment. Using this method I viewed the organization in multiple ways and began to understand the shift in the power dimension as an organization transformation unfolded. Since holistic thinking is central to studying complex issues (Patton, 2002) it was essential in the examination of the transfer of power during an organizational transformation.

There are two benefits to my study in incorporating this view. First, holistic thinking is particularly helpful in bringing understanding to complex issues, those that are interconnected and interrelated. In Chapter Two I argued for a holistic understanding of power. Using a methodology that looks at the total system and subsystem and various parts fits with the view of power being interconnected, interrelated, and coming from multiple sources. Secondly, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the phenomena and this is the reason for the importance of the “how” and “why” questions. To better understand power shifts during organizational transformation, for example, the questions behind the meaning of how transformation and shared decision making is accomplished and why shifts in power may be used to seek transformation, may be important lines of questions.

### *Multilayered*

As in many examples of case studies, this study was expected to be multilayered, meaning that there is often a collection of smaller cases (or data sources) nested inside the larger case (Patton, 2002). For example, in this study each department can be seen as a case. Each level of management was seen as a separate case as well as the organization as a whole was seen as a case compared to other similar organizations within or outside of this industry. What is particularly interesting about this case characteristic is that the subsystems of the systems or (smaller cases of the large case) are

comprised of elements that have an ongoing relationship with each other (Patton & McMahon, 1999). In my study for the purpose of limiting confusion the term “data source” was used to discuss each smaller case or collection of cases.

The relationship that one case or data source had on another was important to my study. For example, reviewing the mission statement or some other documents might yield a particular perception. However, after holding a focus group interview or an individual interview a different perception might be unveiled. When viewing data sources as informing one another, the set of documents might lead to questions in the focus group or individual interviews, which might confirm or disconfirm the prevailing analysis. Pascoe (2006) uses the metaphor of a camera lens to describe various views. For example, he describes the part that helps us understand all parts and components of the system as “the still picture lens.” He explains that the “motion picture lens” assists us to understand the relationships between functions and processes of the organization (23). His point is twofold. First, he acknowledges the ability to see various views simultaneously. Second, he stresses the interaction of these views and their impact on each other and the whole.

### *Complex Phenomenon*

Qualitative approaches such as a case study can be used to address complex phenomenon which can be confusing and ambiguous and make them more understandable through the use of thick rich description of the phenomenon (Denzin, 2001; Geertz, 1973; Gummesson, 2006). This description then can allow the reader to assign meaning and significance to the issue (Patton, 2002). In this study it was important to report the findings in a way that the reader can identify with the experience of the participants in the sample. It was equally important to describe all of the documents and artifacts so that they create a case that helped to further the understanding of the shifts in power during the transformation process.

### *Context Sensitivity*

There is one final key assumption of using a case study methodology, which is significant to my research. The case study methodology tends to be very context sensitive. It allows the researcher to best capture the vast details of a particular organization and understand a complex issue such as the power shifts that may be occurring as the transformation process unfolds. Fitting with the qualitative research paradigm and the case study method of inquiry, this research study occurred in a particular organization, at a particular time, with a specific group of participants and as a result yielded a particular body of information that is highly context sensitive.

### *View of Power*

One of the primary reasons for the selection of the case study methodology was the fit with my combined theoretical approach (critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens) and the ability to view power from numerous perspectives. For example, fitting with my theoretical framework of postmodernism, instead of viewing an understanding of the world as “A” causes “B,” a more holistic perspective seeks to understand a more complete series of events and seeks a more realistic reality where sometimes A causes B, sometimes B causes A and sometimes they have little to do with one another (Gummeson, 2006). The utilization of a case study methodology and the inherent desire to represent multiple perspectives, not forced consensus, encourages multiple voices to be heard and numerous perspectives to be represented.

Similarly, multiple views of power are reinforced by the case study methodology, especially when it comes to studying all cases and sub cases as part of an integrated system. Furthermore, Gummeson (2006) says, in regards to complex issues such as power shifts in organizations during transformations, that understanding comes from an approach that “is holistic, essentially meaning



that everything is related and nothing is isolated” (p. 175). For this reason, the phenomenon should be studied from multiple angles, such as through multiple cases.

### *Critical Reflection and Deconstruction*

One of the principles described by Klein and Myers (1999) is that of incorporating critical reflection into research—the reason for the study, the historical background, and the research setting. This was particularly fitting since part of the critical organizational theoretical framework for the study called for evidence of critical reflection on the part of the worker as power is shifting and decision-making is broadened and inclusion is maximized during an organizational transformation. Incorporation of critical reflection on the part of both the researcher and the participants is a natural additive to study. Similarly, is the call for deconstruction as part of the interpretive research paradigm (Cepeda & Martin, 2005). Again, since part of my theoretical framework was a postmodern lens added to organizational theory, the examination of how decisions are made in place of maintaining status quo was an integral part of this study and one that can be explored through the qualitative paradigm particularly using a case study approach. Both of these inquiry methods encourage questions which may shed light on meaning. In this way, a spiraling of understanding can occur. Each research cycle and case can be built on the prior knowledge gained, understanding that the spiral will never be complete, but each cycle may result in deeper understanding and additional insights gained (Cepeda & Martin, 2005).

### *Summary of Research Methodology*

Qualitative research and especially case studies encourage the understanding of peoples’ feelings, thoughts, and emotions and focus on “how” and “why” aspects of the phenomenon being studied, in this instance shifts in power during an organizational transformation. Both qualitative research and case studies encourage an understanding of complex phenomena, pursue in-depth

analysis of multiple patterns, and seek to investigate a phenomenon in its context, use an inductive approach to arrive at meaning,

In particular, the case study methodology can explore topics or areas where other research studies are limited. Since a “case” or data source can be comprised of an individual, a group of individuals, a particular process, or group of processes it can also be explored at each multiple levels or layers as well as at any combination of these levels (Cepeda & Martin, 2005). Viewing an organization as a complex system in which all of the multiple levels impact and are interrelated to each other encourages a study design which allows for all of these elements to be understood as whole and also individual parts examined simultaneously. Each level of exploration and analysis can lead to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and further questions.

One data source being able to inform other data sources was a foundational principle of this research type and was very much in alignment with the purpose of this study. Critical reflection and deconstruction of the findings at each cycle of the exploration strengthen this study and fit with the theoretical framework. For all of these reasons, I chose a case study methodology to examine, explain and understand the phenomenon of organizational transformation and the power shifts during its occurrence.

### Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the role and shifts in power (if any) as senior managers consciously shifted some of their power and control to the worker staff as a result of the organizational transformation. While it can be argued from the theoretical framework of critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens that the staff was not powerless, but has some degree of agency, it was the shift in power from the senior management to the staff to increase this power and decision making ability which I was most interested in analyzing. However, a shift in power

cannot be totally isolated from other factors related to initiating or sustaining transformation. Instead, power shifting during organizational transformation is a complex issue. As such, other factors such as an organization's values, beliefs, policies, structure, culture, and other characteristics are interrelated and needed to be considered and can best be understood using a case study approach to the process. Further supporting this view are arguments from several authors who point out the lack to date of qualitative studies which examine complex business related issues such as power during transformation (Gummesson, 2006; Langhout, 2003). For this reason, a more holistic research approach was necessary.

This study explored the following questions:

- How is the transformation process intertwined with shifts in power?
  - a. What does this look like?
  - b. How is power used to meet organizational and personal goals?
- When an organizational transformation is occurring, what happens with regards to power?
  - a. What is the role of formal power and structures?
  - b. How do less formal sources of power or agency impact the organization?

#### Background of the Researcher

I was interested in the topic of shifting power because I believed and continue to believe that transformation can and does occur in organizations, based on both the review of the literature and my own personal experience. I also believe that power is central to this transformation. Because I witnessed a successful organizational transformation in which power shifting was fundamental, I have a more positive perspective of the possibilities than much of the literature would support, particularly the literature associated solely with the critical perspective. In addition, since I have seen that the inclusion and shifting of power particularly in area of decision making has created

successful organizational change in a positive direction—one that increased worker inclusion in the decision making process, drove the decision making to the lowest levels of the organization, increased the use of critical reflection and deconstruction to allowing questioning the current policies and procedures, making for a more enjoyable work environment. For all of these reasons, I know that this type of power shifting during an organizational transformation can occur.

For years I was an organizational development practitioner. As such, I implemented numerous change efforts, such as changes in policies, procedures and the like. However, in only two instances was I a party to an organizational transformation, one that attempted to change the worldview of the organization. In one case the transformation was achieved and in the other it was not. I have spent many years trying to understand the difference in the change initiatives. One of the differences that I can identify is in the case where transformation was achieved; there was also a power shift. This experience has left me curious. Senior members of management shared their power to control and make decisions that affected the staff. The staff was encouraged to challenge the “system” and all decisions. They were encouraged to reflect on the hegemony (though this word was not used) of the corporate culture and policies and procedures, which got in the way of their effectiveness, job satisfaction, or other working issues. As a result, I was left wondering if there was some relationship between power shifting and transformation. In this study I explored the role that power shifts play in organizational transformations.

Personally, I have a holistic, systems view of organizational transformation. I believe that the parts of the organization are interconnected. One change in one area can lead to other changes in other areas. For this reason, I implemented a case study examination of an organization to see if there were clues throughout the organization concerning the role and shift in power during this organizational transformation. My master’s degree came from Penn State and was in large scale

organizational change. In this study, I wanted to try to avoid literature that I had previously relied on for my Master's Thesis due to redundancy or because the literature in practice is often classified as conceptual as opposed to research literature.

### Case Identification and Participant Selection

This research study used the case study methodology to collect data. It focused on one organization in the human service industry, an organization that delivers care and support to those with profound developmental disabilities. It was founded as a not-for-profit by a woman who worked in an institution and from that negative experience decided to found her own organization—one where individuals could live with respect and dignity. She began the organization by getting a piece of land donated to her cause and building a facility of care for residents with developmental disabilities. Today this organization has grown to be a 20 million dollar facility with a multitude of locations. The central location or headquarters of this organization is the focus of this study. It is a campus setting of ten houses and where most of the vital functions are located. In addition, over 500 staff employees work at the facility caring for over 200 residents. However, over half of these employees work in houses in remote locations and were not part of this study. The senior management team is located on the central site and is comprised of about five managers though there are numerous other middle management level employees. There are various departments such as nursing, education, housekeeping and dietary on this campus as well as houses with residents living with the support and assistance of workers. In addition, the union president's office resides here.

This organization was an excellent case study choice for this study for two reasons. First, it is an organization that was going through an organizational transformation, meaning its center core was possibly being changed. The pressure to change came from the industry and thus, an external source. The industry in which this organization operates has altered the funding stream and as a

result is forcing a change in the organization's fundamental structure and culture, meaning its values, beliefs, and attitudes. At one time the funding for the industry came in the form of block grants from the Federal government, passed on to the states and then given to the counties and facilities providing whatever care was required for residents. The determination of the facility receiving both the person and the funding was open to availability and other factors. The recent change in legislature has allowed the individual with the disability or their guardian to determine where the individual resides and for how long. This change has resulted in making care facilities compete for their residents. The motive for this transformation for this chosen organization is then tied to its survival. Since my study was situated in an organization during a transformation, this organization met that criterion.

The second reason for the selection of this organization for this research study was the openness of management to put in place procedure changes, structural changes and others that might impact the power distribution in the organization. From its founding, most of the power has resided at the top of the organization. This is not only because of the traditional hierarchal arrangement of the organization, but also because the founder remains the Executive Director. As such she and a very tight group of senior management have historically created and implemented policies and procedures impacting the staff. Given the changes in regulations, this organization decided that part of its survival depended on what its staff members had to say about working, the care, and the environment at its facility. As a result, the CEO/Executive Director espoused the belief that giving more power to the average staff workers to solve problems, decide care, and share in governance of residents were in some ways to get increased staff buy-in to the organization and ultimately build an organization that is more responsive to residents with disabilities needs. The senior management was in favor of this direction (at least on the surface) because any changes to policy or procedure would

ultimately benefit the constituency for which this organization was founded---the disability population. In addition, it would better position this organization to compete in the new environment of funding allocation.

Lastly, I originally worked with this organization back in 2003 to implement training and organizational development initiatives. Recently, I was invited back to conduct my dissertation work. I assessed changes that had occurred as a result of the transformation process and especially explored evidence of power shifts due to changes in the policy, procedures, and attempts by senior management to share decision-making. While this fact does create a “preunderstanding” (Patton & Applebaum, 2003) condition in the form of knowledge and understanding of the organization’s culture and value systems and some of the social norms of the organization, all of these are explicit in the research study analysis and findings (p. 68). According to Gummesson (1991), this can be of benefit to “those that are able to balance on the razor’s edge use their preunderstanding but are not its slave” (as cited in Patton & Applebaum, 2003, p. 68).

With this said my power as a researcher and third party observer could have affected the data gathering and subsequent analysis. As a result, I confronted this problem by incorporating into my field notes conscious observations of the impact of power as a researcher during each encounter with an employee or member of senior management. Again, fitting with the theoretical framework of this study, my position as researcher and third party observer had the potential to be both positive and negative. While the focus is often on the negative potential, for example the possibility for employees not to be as open as they might otherwise be, there were also positive aspects associated with the power that I had both as a researcher and with my relationship with this organization. For example, I had access to prior and current DVDs—the organization’s monthly video newsletter that I otherwise might not have been able to evaluate because I would be unaware of their existence.

However, since the company that I work for is responsible for their monthly production, I benefit from this position. It is also conceivable that since I worked for the organization which I studied and I experienced such positive results in this prior relationship: turnover was reduced from over 60% to under 20%; a consistent new hire program was introduced lowering initial turnover 90%; and many employees were included in the strategies to reach these goals that employees were positively disposed to additional contact from me. Part of this original success was due to the ability to make changes based on employee(s) input, but at the same time not to divulge the identity of the employee(s). These skills were important in this study, too.

In qualitative research purposeful sampling is often used to select a small sample of participants from which information about the phenomenon can be learned (Merriam, 2002). It was further intended that through this purposeful sampling and the perspectives of the participants that in-depth, rich data was gathered and analyzed to bring deeper understanding and illumination to the problem being studied (Patton, 2002). Studying a purposeful sample is particularly relevant to this qualitative study because of the small sample size, particularly the management group. This organization's headquarters only has about five members of senior management meeting the criteria but about 200 workers or staff members and countless documents and other artifacts. I chose a group of nine workers to include in my study. Woven together this case became quite impressive in terms of the quantity of content or data.

In the literature, numerous views are expressed debating the appropriate number of cases. For example, Perry (1998) says, "While there is no ideal number of cases, a number between four and ten cases often works well" (p. 93). On the other hand, some authors argue for as few as two cases. Summarizing the literature, it appears that two to four is the minimum and twelve to fifteen represents the maximum (Perry, 1998). Since a case may be comprised of "a person, a group of



people, or an organization” (Cepeda & Martin, 2005, p. 853) all sizes of organizations can be studied using the case study methodology. The organization that I studied fits well within this guideline.

Since the purpose of this study was to understand the role and potential shift of power in an organization during a transformation, the focus for analysis was simultaneously on both the senior management and the staff or workers. In order to provide an understanding of the power shifts within an organizational transformation, the perspectives of both groups needed to be explored to gain a holistic and more comprehensive perspective of this phenomenon. Again, with all complex issues such as power shifting, inclusion of multiple perspectives in decision-making and critical reflection of current processes, examination of numerous perceptions was essential in furthering the understanding of observations and analysis.

Power in organizations comes from multiple sources. One way to look at power is through individual characteristics, relationships of workers and management, and organizational systems. Since the topic of organizational power is complex, I began to examine it by analyzing the systems that created and sustained power and the relationships that support it. Individual characteristics were set-aside for now. I studied the notion of power first by reviewing a shift from management exploring changes in the way legitimate or position power was exercised. This analysis was closely tied to organizational structure and the power that ensues from where one’s job is located on the organizational chart. Next, I looked at political power, which again, is closely tied to the organizational structure. Using this approach, I was able to examine both the political relationships that the workers have formed as well as structures and rules that enable political power to flourish. It was expected that after these initial power sources were considered others would reveal themselves to me as the study unfolded.

In order to get started, I explored these specific power sources in the following ways: 1) the initiatives (policies and procedures) developed and put into place by the senior management group intending to shift their control and authority and include more workers in the decision making process; 2) next I examined documents (including monthly video newsletters) to look for inclusion shifts such as including average workers to give updates on changes and other clauses of inclusion in decision making. Both of these looked for shifts in legitimate and position power from the senior management group to the workers; 3) I then examined the organizational chart and the power associated with where positions are located. Specifically, this inquiry examined what resources the workers could control; 4) finally, I examined through the eyes of the management and the workers the meanings and perceptions that these initiatives had on the distribution of power within the organization.

Both groups looked fairly homogeneous on the surface for a number of reasons. First, they had two basic factors in common. They each had been members of senior management in this organization for a minimum of two years. The two year minimum is required because the transformation began in 2006 and thus, the members of this group would have been working for this organization prior to the onset of the transformation. In addition, they should be responsible for decision-making that has an impact cross-functionally on the staff members and attempted in some way to redistribute power in the organization. All members of management are also Caucasian. However, some of the diversity representations are gender, time in position, specific assignment, past experiences, and so on. So, while on the surface, the management group appeared fairly homogeneous, I expected that each person was unique with a unique background and unique story.

The Executive Director is female and all other members of senior management are male. The Executive Director and founder of the organization was an important member of the purposeful

sample grouping. She not only founded and was fundamental in the operational policies and procedures of the initial organization, she remains central to the decision making process of the organization and the hierarchal power base. She is central to the transformation process. It was her desire to initiate policies and procedures which could possibly enable power shifts in the organization by including all levels of workers in the decision making process. She also knew all of the policies and procedures that each senior management employees had put in place since the onset of the transformation and their intended consequence. Likewise she was able to discuss the ways in which she and her staff had encouraged increased inclusion, spread out decision making, and instilled critical reflection on the part of the worker group from her unique perspective.

Since this facility had a very small senior management staff, I planned to interview each of them that fit the requirements (two years with the company and cross-functional decision making opportunities). This added additional perspectives and trustworthiness to this study and fit well with the case study methodology. To recruit these staff members, I discussed their involvement with the transformation project and what policies and procedures each of them had put in place since the onset of the transformation and their intended consequences from each of their perspectives.

The next group for analysis was the worker staff. Intentional efforts were made to seek out participants for my study which had been with the organization a minimum of two years, thus, prior to the onset of the transformation which began in 2006. The workers sample was also based on the belonging to the work classification and that of non-management. I expected that they in some ways were rather typical of the organization's worker population at large. I attempted to vary the participants backgrounds across several categories, including race, gender, and work function or area of employment. In order to get an adequate representation of perspectives and have enough group members for at least one focus group, I recruited participants.

Participants were recruited using a variety of techniques—recommendations from the Human Resource Department, recommendations from the union president, but not from recommendations from the senior management staff. These techniques proved sufficient so no other techniques were necessary. A form of survey was considered and developed but not implemented based on the direction of the CEO/Executive Director. Its intention was to assist in gathering data and identifying participants for the study. Additionally, solicitation letters though considered were not distributed. Instead, an email form was used to gain volunteers for participation. Once names were identified, I contacted the individuals by phone or emailed them. Though the intention of the project was explained prior to meeting, I explained the purpose with each person participating in the study once I met with them face to face. I asked the management participants for an individual meeting with each of them lasting approximately sixty to ninety minutes. I asked each of the workers for up to two focus group interviews lasting approximately one hour each and one individual interview lasting sixty to ninety minutes each. I negotiated with the organization that the workers will be compensated as usual for their participation.

#### Data Collection Procedures

One of the goals in qualitative research is to gather in-depth rich descriptive data to match the study's purpose. To meet this goal various data collection methods were used in this study including: facilitating a focus group, conducting semi-structured interviews, reviewing organizational artifacts, documents and records (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 2002). A major strength of a qualitative research and case study methodology is the ability to examine the organization holistically (Langhout, 2003). The use of various data collection methods increased the perspectives being examined in this study, leading to an increased level of understanding of this complex phenomenon. Furthermore, several different data sources were explored and analyzed

simultaneously. One data source case was comprised of the senior management of the company. At the same time, each member of management was analyzed as a separate data source, each informing the other, each confirming or disconfirming the findings so far. Another data source was the workers or staff members of the organization. Still another data source was the numerous documents which are included in the data collection and analysis. To allow for the diversity and their requirements, the data collection methods were intended to be slightly unique for the different cases or groupings. For example, I intended that individual interviews were conducted with the senior management group while a combination of a focus group interview and follow up individual interviews were conducted with the workers. This plan fit well with the qualitative research paradigm.

I incorporated the approach of having a list of guideline interview questions, and then based on actual answers gained in the interview; subsequent questions were formed and asked. In this way, the theoretical framework of critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens was lived---it searched and questioned data and looked for multiple meanings and explanations, constantly bringing deeper meaning and understanding to the findings with each round of inquiry or analysis.

I used a spiral of analysis model created by Cepeda and Martin (2005) to guide the study in both the data collection and data analysis phases. This model encouraged me to take the answers to questions in the initial spiral and to formulate questions in the subsequent spiral based on the response(s) to the questions in the initial spiral. This process also assisted me to develop both confirming and disconfirming types of questions depending on the responses. The model fit well with the theoretical framework, deconstructing the initial responses looking for other possible meanings or perspectives. The spiral approach, though never complete allowed for a deeper and deeper understanding of the case data as the study unfolded.

In terms of events, first, I met with the CEO/Executive Director to get an overall understanding of the intended transformation and what she had done to set the conditions of the organizational transformation. Next, I began my review of organizational artifacts, documents and records for any signal or evidence of power shifts resulting from the implementation of policies and procedures by the senior management group during the transformation and general information about the case, the reason for its founding, the guiding principle, the history, and so on. This step was then followed by a series of individual interviews with the senior management group. Next, I held a focus group interview comprised of workers, looking for confirming or disconfirming evidence of the findings from the interviews of senior management and the initial content analysis—including the annual calendars of the last two years, training and orientation materials, and policy and procedure changes. During this interview, I looked for meaning and multiple perspectives of the various participants; in particular, I sought out inclusion of all voices from all members. Finally, I conducted individual interviews with participants from the focus group looking for further understanding and examples of the power shift process, strategies, outcomes, etc. I also continued my document analysis, this time taking a close look at the video newsletter, a critical form of organizational communication, for its content and inclusion of multiple narratives. I reviewed several months over the duration of two years. Periodically, I talked to various members of study to further understand the data's meaning.

#### *Content Analysis of Archives and Documents*

This research study collection phase began with a content analysis of policy or procedure changes that exhibited examples of power shifts or other examples of lower level workers inclusion. A content analysis is defined as revealing a pattern or theme from text or documents (Patton, 2002). A content analysis of organizational materials can accomplish several purposes. Some of these objectives include identifying the significant or key issues related to the study's purpose, assisting in

bringing greater clarity to the research study by aiding in the classification of data, generally involving one of two approaches, either comprehensive or thematic, adding additional meaning or understanding to the data to increase consistency of data interpretation (Patton, 2002, Taylor, 2001). Likewise using a case study methodology, documents and artifacts may offer further clues into the phenomenon or understanding of the tacit assumptions and beliefs of the organization which could be otherwise overlooked (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002).

For my study, this initial analysis involved looking for changes to the recruiting, interviewing or hiring procedures; mission statement; training and development initiatives; or any other policy or procedure change related to the transformation process. It also included information on the case itself, focusing on the founding principles, history, organization of company and so on. Since documents and artifacts may also take the form of data such as newspaper articles and photos, pictures from events or on annual calendars, videos, and so on, they were included as well. Although, individual interviews and a focus group interview served as the predominant data collection sources, documents offered a place to begin understanding, form questions, and create a baseline of understanding both the case and the data collected so far. Likewise each form of data created a data source of its own and could be used to further understanding of the case findings. Data could also be grouped together to illustrate patterns, overall holistic messages, or to create deeper understanding of concepts related to the evidence of shifting power during a transformation.

An example of a document which was reviewed is a DVD internal communication vehicle that was created each month. The DVD is a type of electronic or video newsletter and was initially designed to allow senior management a vehicle to communicate with the workers or staff. Initially it was conceived as a 'top down' information vehicle. Since its original inception (according to senior management) it has been re-engineered to allow for full participation of the greater worker staff of

the organization. I examined the DVDs (video newsletters) over the last two years to look for examples or signs of power shifts in the inclusion of members or content. I considered both whom (the positions that were represented) and the content of the messages delivered and any type of visible change from prior to the transformation. For example, the inclusion of lower level groups or individuals as opposed to senior level managers might indicate one example of a shift in power during the transformation with the inclusion of multiple voices. This finding as well as others was then followed up with focus group questions and/or individual interview questions.

### *Interviews*

Interviews can be defined as an interactive process “which uses extensive probing to get a single respondent to talk freely and to express detailed beliefs and feeling on the topic” being covered (Webb, 1995, p. 121). For my study this process was an important data collection method since during the individual interviews with senior management I had an opportunity to deeply explore intentions and beliefs of the senior management who implemented the processes to create power shifts and critical reflection of the workers. Then I had the opportunity after conducting a focus group interview to explore through individual interviews the views of the workers on the power shift initiatives implemented by the senior management. The combination of these interviews created a complete cycle of understanding of the intention from senior management and the outcomes from the workers on the strategies employed.

In addition, interviews can range on a continuum from highly structured to open-ended, described sometimes as unstructured, semi-structured, and structured (Merriam, 2002, p. 13). Falling somewhere in the middle of this continuum is the semi-structured interview that uses guiding questions or issues but the exact wording and order of the questions are left to the interviewer to determine during the interview process (Merriam, 2002). Semi-structured individual interviews were



used as one of the predominant data collection sources in both the cases of senior management and the worker groups though they occurred at slightly different places in the data collection process for each group. For the senior management group, the individual interviews followed the review of documents, artifacts and records. For the worker staff group, individual interviews followed the focus group interview. I had a plan of topics to be covered ahead of the individual interviews, but the exact questions and order of the questions unfolded as the interviews took place and was greatly affected by the analysis of the preceding spiral and data collected during that phase. In addition, some topics were added as the interviews warranted. This method of inquiry fits well with the qualitative method of research, the case study methodology, and also the theoretical framework of critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens. In this way, as the researcher I was constantly questioning my data analysis and looking for other possible meanings of my findings. My interview guide is another good example of both the qualitative research paradigm and the theoretical framework.

I interviewed the senior management using an interview guide (see Appendix A for the initial interview questions). I conducted these interviews first, and used the information gleaned from these interviews to discuss power issues and shifts with the workers. This guide ensured that each senior management employee was interviewed using a similar line of questions and topics. However, each interview and topics covered were expected to and did *evolve* as data was uncovered, in this way, each interview was planned in a tentative way. Fitting with the framework of this study, while there was some consistency in the interview process, allowances had to be made to ensure the unique perceptions of each respondent was incorporated, each interview was fluid and allowed for necessary shifts in direction depending on the interviewee. The initial interviews were scheduled for an hour to ninety minutes in duration. During this time I gathered any organizational documents which had up

to this time been unavailable for review. All senior management interviews were tape recorded and verbal comments as well as body language were noted in the field notes. I asked for examples of what strategies had been put in place by senior managers to re-distribute the organizational power structure. I also searched for the meanings and perceptions of the actions put in place, as well as, the anticipated outcomes from the recipients of their actions. In addition, I probed about decision making. There was the need for additional interviews, particularly with Karin to find and make clear issues raised by the workers which needed amplification for further understanding of the transformation and shifting of power.

In the case with the workers or staff, I conducted a focus group first and then followed up with individual interviews. While I anticipated that much of the interview content would be determined prior to the interview based on artifacts, documents, records, interviews with the senior management, and discussion content raised in the focus group, the flexibility to ask questions and follow up questions based on the responses of the participants was critical to this study. It was also important to give voice to each of the participants. The flexibility in the interview guide design also existed due to the nature of the phenomenon being studied. If no examples of power shifts had existed then questions about a shift may have appeared leading. When however, examples of power shifts revealed themselves, I then asked follow up questions looking more for the meaning and perceptions of individual group members. In this way, the group was able to deconstruct the multiple meanings and sources of power. The initial duration planned for the individual interviews was sixty to ninety minutes. Actual lengths of the interviews were based on the findings, time required to adequately understand the circumstances, as well as the availability of the respondent or participant.

### *Focus Groups*

A focus group can be defined as “a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment upon, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research” (Gibbs, 1997, p. 1). Most often the focus group is comprised of six to ten people per small group (Patton, 2002). I chose to use a focus group to assist in gathering information from the workers or staff prior to individual interviews with group members so that comments made in the group setting were more deeply explored during individual interviews. Additionally, I chose a focus group interview since it offered breadth and depth to the data collection (Stokes & Bergin, 2006).

Several benefits of focus groups include: synergy of the group can offer a wider variety of responses; stimulation of the group process may bring out respondents’ view that they themselves are unconscious or unaware of until the discussion arises; security of the group sometimes encourages respondents to offer more candid comments since there is less pressure on a particular individual in a group setting; spontaneity of response can exist since no one person is expected to comment on a particular question; and speed in getting a wide range of responses (Zikmund, 1997). Others echo the benefits of focus groups particularly in the area of group interaction (Burns, 1989; Casey, 2000; Patton, 2002; Stokes & Bergin, 2006). In addition, the researcher can observe group dynamics and view the diversity of the perspectives within the group of participants. I used this wide array of responses and personal examples to further my understanding of power shift examples and have richer and more in-depth information to discuss during my individual interviews.

One of the major downsides to conducting focus groups is the possibility that a consensus view will be expressed from the focus group instead of representing the individual views of all respondents (Greenbaum, 2003; Stokes & Bergin, 2006). In the worst case scenario this could mean that the group expresses a consensus view with which no one either disagrees or endorses (Stokes &

Bergin, 2006). Also, power dynamics of position, positionality, personal power, or other power-related dynamic may emerge and need to be facilitated by the researcher. For example, an overzealous participant may over-participate and use up much of the “air time” if the researcher does not appropriately intervene.

In order to minimize these possibilities, I did a couple things. First, I had participants introduce themselves by their years of service. I also used an interview guide and a preplanned agenda to provide structure to the discussion but allowed flexibility so that the deconstruction of concepts and discussion of ideas could be encouraged. The initial conversation gave me some clues as to the diverse perspectives, narratives, and experiences of the group participants. I used this information to promote the discussion in the follow up interviews as well as during the focus group interview by giving voice to all the participants and encouraging multiple perspectives. I also took copious field notes, facilitated the group in such a way as to solicit information from the more quiet members of the group, and attempted to read the nonverbals expressed by individual group members. Nonverbal communication was also evaluated such as body language or pitch of voice (Boote & Matthews, 1999) to assist in the analysis of the focus group’s overall input.

In terms of logistics, I conducted the focus group interview for approximately ninety minutes in duration. During this time I reminded the participants of their informed consent forms, discussed the purpose of the study and the focus group process, and introduced any issues gathered from the senior management interviews that were deemed appropriate. Participants were seated around a simple table so that they could have eye contact with both me and the other participants. The focus group interview took place during the scheduled work hours of the participants. The focus group was audio recorded. This aided me by adding to the accuracy related to capturing the tone and the content of the messages. I relied on my field notes for observations concerning body language and other

unspoken messages and clues from the speaker. I remained aware that my own power as a researcher and prior consultant status could alter the findings and I made note of such. However, in the focus group and in the individual interviews, my prior relationship with this organization did not appear to have an adverse effect on the data gathered. Instead, the prior consulting relationship appeared to have the opposite effect.

In summary, though I was informed that participants can conform to group thought and produce group responses through group norming, I have significant experience (more than ten years facilitating and analyzing focus group responses), both internally in an organization and as a consultant outside an organization. I drew on this previous experience as this study unfolded. My initial data collection plan included: company artifact information; interviews with the senior management group; a focus group interview with the workers to confirm and disconfirm issues raised so far and gather new perspectives; follow up individual interviews with the worker staff to better understand the evidence of any power shift examples; and periodic clarification from the CEO/Executive Director to further my understanding of the organization or her transformation intentions. Due to the need for additional clarification of some of the findings extra interviews were required of the CEO and others, but overall I was able to execute the study as initially planned. From the numerous sources discussed, I was able to create a well balanced study and one that fits with the qualitative research paradigm and the theoretical framework chosen.

#### Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is the process of sorting and making sense of the data that allows the researcher to ultimately interpret and write the findings. Since, qualitative research typically yields vast amounts of thick descriptive data; it requires on-going data analysis throughout the data collection phase as well as at the end (Cepeda & Martin, 2005). The data analysis phase of the study brings

understanding of this data through inductive analysis, discovering patterns and themes, and providing explanations (Patton, 2002). In the words of Denzin and Lincoln (2000), “qualitative research is endlessly creative and interpretive” (p. 23). Since “there is no single interpretive truth” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) multiple interpretive constructions can be conveyed simultaneously (p. 23). Fitting with this thought process; the case study method of data analysis had two goals. The first goal was to seek understanding and bring meaning to the data, and the second goal was to maintain the individual perspective (Langhout, 2003). Both of these goals fit well with my theoretical framework—seeking multiple perspectives and understanding the unique meaning of the individual viewpoint and the spiral analysis model developed by Cepeda and Martin (2005) explained more below.

I have broken the findings of this study into spirals. Dividing the study and analysis in this way accomplished two things: 1) it preserved the chronological perspective that I had as the study unfolded and 2) it also allowed for emerging viewpoints or temporary conclusions to be identified and yet left the study open-ended through the series of questions that are still unanswered at the end of each spiral. Within each spiral, I have further broken the data into smaller segments using primarily two perspectives. First, I introduce the participants in the case study by name, position, and add comments, often using their own words and phrases. The segment approach is intended to give the reader an opportunity to “get to know” the various participants and understand their perspectives on the transformation. Secondly, with in each spiral I incorporate an analysis of the data gathered in this section.

By this, I mean each spiral not only includes my initial reactions about the topics and findings emerging from the study thus far, but also develops a series of questions still remaining or being revealed as a result of this spiral’s examination. I started each spiral of study with a plan of

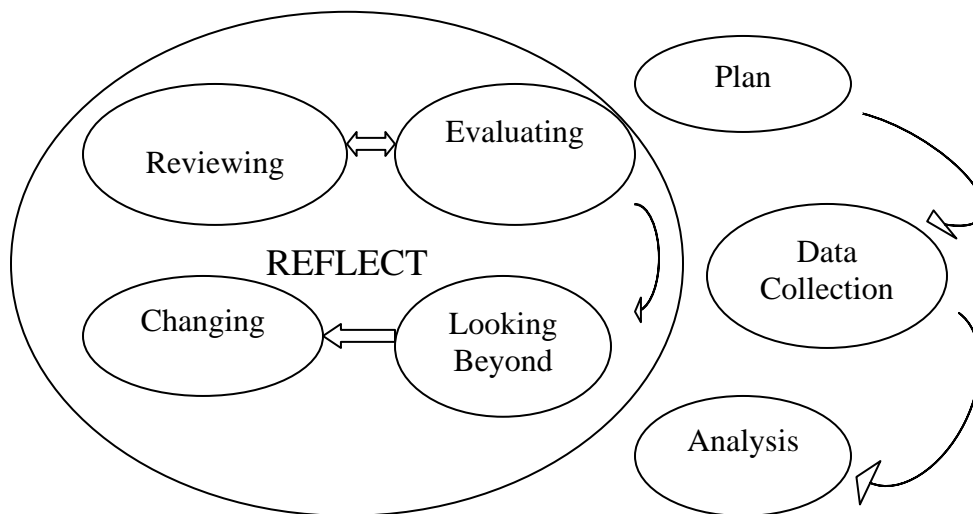
action: sometimes the analysis would confirm a prior assumption or understanding and other times the analysis led me in another direction. It was the use of this reflection and constantly challenging my own understanding that I believe led to a greater understanding of the complexity of this study. This process fits with the theoretical framework of the study: constant questions and deconstruction of concepts such as “What does decision making look like in this organization?” “Who is making what types of decisions?” and “What is power and how is it intertwined in the transformation process?” The model also encourages the researcher to find multiple ways of looking at the data and search for multiple understandings of it. At times the researcher may even hold contrary conclusions at the same time or be challenged to find solutions that are at best tentative and fluid (Cepeda & Martin, 2005).

Figure 3.1 contains an illustration of how this spiral of analysis works. Each spiral starts with a plan, has a section for data collection and analysis. What differentiates this illustration from others is what occurs in the circle once these steps have been accomplished. It is then up to the researcher to continually review the data, evaluate the raw data and the themes or meaning derived from this data analysis, and reflect on other possible meanings. The model then encourages the researcher to look beyond the obvious assumptions and question the multiple meanings possible.

In some cases, using this process caused me to confirm my initial analysis and in other cases it caused me to change my mind or at least pursue contradictory evidence. In this way, a “spiral towards understanding is never complete” (Cepeda & Martin, 2005, p. 861), each cycle of analysis may result in a richer and deeper understanding allowing for further insights. However, it is likely that the cross-case analysis coupled with time allowed for reflection has yielded unique views and understanding of the data. It was through this process that I raised specific questions to examine in the next spiral of inquiry and analysis.

This model promoted review or reflection of any and all conclusions of perspectives and replaced this understanding with tentative or temporary understanding. The model encouraged multiple truths and sought multiple narratives to more holistically explore the organization, its power shift and transformation. It assisted me in deconstructing concepts and findings by promoting a look at plural practices, contrary evidence, contradictions, and paradoxes.

Figure 3.1 Spiral Case Analysis.



Adapted from (Cepeda & Martin, 2005).

Fitting with the case study method, some of the more traditional data analysis techniques were also used: constant comparative method (continual evaluation of findings measured against existing understanding); word repetition (words or phrases that are frequently used); missing data (what is not stated or said); and triangulation (use of multiple sources to gain increase understanding and perspectives) of the data. The employment of these various techniques and the incorporation of the spiral model (Cepeda & Martin, 2005) allowed for the construction of the most complete understanding and description of the case as possible.



### *Trustworthiness and Authenticity*

Trustworthiness is assessed by the level of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability that a qualitative research study demonstrates (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Increasing trustworthiness in a study also means incorporating ways to avoid sloppiness, distorted data, or poor interpretation of data (Cross, 2004). In the instance of the case study methodology, trustworthiness is especially important from two views---that of developing themes and categories to understand the vast amount of data and to simultaneously maintain the individual perspective. Combined with my theoretical framework of a critical and postmodern lens on organizational transformation, the importance of the analysis of the participants' views, voice, status, resistance to the organizational transformation or changes in policy, procedure and decision making, all must be addressed with sensitivity and accuracy. As a result, while exploring "the how and why" of power shifts during organizational transformation, I relied on the principles of trustworthiness to conduct a sound research study.

### *Confirmability*

Confirmability refers to the likelihood that the research findings can be confirmed or corroborated by others (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To increase confirmability, I kept a journal throughout the study comprised of field notes. Field notes were descriptive and included: the date of the event, the place, who was present, a description of the physical setting, the details of the experience, and any power issues that could be detected (Patton, 2002). These notes were then analyzed for process and content, meaning the methods employed in the study as well as the semi-structured individual interviews notes and the focus group notes were analyzed as well as the unspoken or missing data. In a similar vein, in order to increase confirmability, I searched for examples of negative cases and contrary evidence. The initial understanding of this data was shared

and audited by others including my committee advisors. The findings of the study were also periodically shared with the participants to get their viewpoint. The confirmability of my research study also was increased through the use of the triangulation of analyzing data, namely, the data acquired through individual semi-structured interviews of the management, the worker or staff, focus groups, and document review and content analysis. This also served to give a more holistic perspective of the power shifts occurring in an organization during a transformation by incorporating diverse views and points of views.

### *Credibility*

Credibility relates to the truth or believability of the research findings from the perspective of the participants (Merriam, 2002). Ways to elevate the credibility of the study include the following: member checking, triangulation, peer examination, and reflexivity to improve consistency and congruency. Member checking means consulting with the participants who provided the data on the researcher's interpretation of this data for the purpose of increasing accuracy (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). The participants of the study had the opportunity to check the data, once it was collected, for its accuracy in capturing their perspectives.

I used several steps in the triangulation of my data to ensure the credibility of my study. First, triangulation of the data sources occurred through the use of several different methods of data collection---from content analysis of the organization's document and archive data, focus group interviews and individual semi-structured interviews. These different sources of data allowed for triangulation of data analysis. However, fitting with the theoretical lens of critical and postmodern theory, triangulation did not seek "a single objective reality but rather multiple subjectively constructed realities that are incommensurable" (Sobh & Perry, 2005, p. 1202). This way triangulation can provide a group of answers that captures the complexity of the phenomenon

(Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Different answers to the same questions then do not need to be viewed as confusing, but rather adding to the understanding of the phenomenon and particularly to the question “why” (Sobh & Perry, 2005, p. 1203).

Because cases can be comprised of a singular individual or process, triangulation is necessary to comprehend and create a larger understanding of reality. Thus, no single reality or person or process becomes the sole answer. Instead, there is a “family of answers” that helps to explain a complex phenomenon such as power shifting, decision making, and increased inclusion, in an organization experiencing transformation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997, p. 152). This complexity of reality and multiple perceptions makes triangulation of data an essential phase of refining the observations and analysis of any themes or messages (Perry, 1998).

In addition, I used peer examination to increase the credibility of the study. Peer examination is defined as “a process where one or more qualified persons, professional peers, review a person’s work” (Taylor, Beck, & Ainsworth, 2001, p. 165). Additionally, I kept a field journal with notes to improve the recall of the semi-structured interviews and focus group(s) and provide a tool to go to in the case of the omission or error in analysis, an additional source of verification. This tool was also useful in the continual reflection and evaluation of what has been said, observed, and evaluated.

### *Dependability*

Dependability or reliability of the study refers to the sense of quality, understanding of the procedures used by the researcher, and the extent that the research findings can be replicated (Merriam, 2002). Some of the ways that I increased the dependability of this study are: included an audit trail, kept a detailed journal of methods and findings so that interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations could be traced to their original source (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); reduced researcher bias by member checking (Merriam & Simpson, 1999); and used a variety of data

collection methods such as the use of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and content analysis of organizational documents to triangulate the data.

### *Transferability*

Transferability relates to the extent that the findings will be able to be generalized or extrapolated to other contexts or settings (Patton, 1990). Specifically, when considering case study methodology, generalization tends to mean not statistical generalization but analytical generalization, meaning the more cases that show replication, the more future research that can be encouraged and conducted (Rowley, 2004). Enhancement of transferability can occur through the use of purposeful sampling, dense description of the context and findings, and rich descriptive data. In accordance with this thought process, a case study methodology coupled with the use of purposeful sampling should be expected to provide dense, rich description which though context sensitive may shed light onto other contexts, settings or studies (Perry, 1998). Furthermore, case study findings may then be helpful in understanding the phenomenon studied, in this study power shifts during an organizational transformation in other settings.

Conversely, due to the contextual nature of this qualitative research study and relying on one organization to build cases and further understanding of the shift in power during transformation, some may argue that the findings in this particular case may limit the applicability of these findings to other cases. However, according to Stake (1978), to better search and understand the particulars of one case can be extremely useful and the goal need not be to use a particular case solely with the purpose of extrapolating the findings for applicability to another setting or context. For example, according to Yin (1994) while it may not be possible to generalize findings to other populations, analytic theorizing or generalization may be appropriate in different contexts.

Merging these points of view, it seems the extent that the findings can be generalized beyond a particular setting depends on the similarity of the situation in which the findings will be transferred. For this reason, the findings of this study served as a part of the base of knowledge construction in the area of power shifting during organizational transformation and the degree of generalizability was measured by future readers and researchers. One of the foundational beliefs about qualitative research is that it attempts to bring meaning and understanding to a particular phenomenon during a particular time and place. Its intent is not to provide or prove generalizable knowledge that hold true in various settings.

#### IRB Compliance Information

In accordance with the Pennsylvania State University Office of Research Protections, the participants of the study were in compliance with the institutional review process. Informed Consent (Appendix B) was provided to each participant describing the study's purpose and intention. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, each participant was assigned a pseudonym. In addition, all interview data and all conversations within the focus groups were treated with confidentiality. The institution may is undisclosed though the data was available for study and analysis. It will also be available for publication. The IRB Compliance form is found under Appendix B.

#### Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a review of the purpose of the study, followed by an overview of qualitative research and a rationale as to the selection of this paradigm. Next it discussed the research type including major tenets of the case study methodology. Subsequent sections discussed the guiding research questions, background of the researcher, and selection of the participants.

Finally, the chapter included the data collection and analysis methods and a discussion on trustworthiness.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

This chapter offers a detailed description of the case setting including the history, guiding principles, and current table of organization of this institution. Each of the data sources within the case study is discussed. Each source of data is then followed by the major findings from this data source. The findings are divided into spirals as described in detail in Chapter Three. In keeping with the framework of this study—a critical organization theory with a post modern lens—each spiral ends with a series of questions, looking at the findings and their meaning from multiple perspectives. Throughout this Chapter and the analysis are examples of inclusion of multiple voices, critical reflection on hegemony both in principle or concept and in behavior, micro-emancipation, deconstruction of over-arching ideas or concepts, multiple truths and narratives, fluidity of conclusions or solutions, power shifts evidenced in decision making and empowerment, and an indication of fragmentation, paradox and contradiction. Power exists throughout the organization and is held by the management in a more traditional form of position or hierarchal organization power. The workers also have what may be classified as agency or power stemming from their work, namely expert and information power. They also have other sources of power as described in more detail in the spiral in which they occurred.

#### Introduction to Case Study

I have included a history section of the case study to assist the reader in understanding the organization and context for this study. Because the current CEO is also the founder of this organization, the founding history and principles play a significant role. For this reason, I have also included the founding principles and values of Angelina.

In addition, since the study is considering two different groups—the workers and the management group, I have included a Table of Organization as background information to allow the reader to put these groups in the proper relationship in terms of reporting structure and hierarchy. I have only incorporated those positions germane to the study and not the entire organizational chart.

### *History of Case*

For the purposes of referring to this facility in the case study discussion I call this organization “Angelina.” The history of Angelina often is referred to as the “Angelina Story” because it reads somewhat like a fairy tale. At times the story is full of metaphors and fills a need that is almost too good to be true. The organization was founded as a non-profit organization by three women who had a common goal—each wanted to help someone they loved. Two of these women had children of their own who had profound disabilities. They are referred to as Mary and Doris in this narrative. The third woman, being referred to as Karin met a child living at an institution in which she worked who transformed her, and as a result she later became the CEO/Executive Director of Angelina.

“Angelina might not have come into being if the three of us had not met one another,” she says (email, 2008). These three empathetic women understood each others pain and dreams. However, it took more than empathy to construct this facility; it took strength and courage. It was the pain associated with watching children struggle to survive and the maternal instinct of each woman that created this story.

One of these founding women was a mother, whom I refer to as Mary. She had a child whom I call Gerad. He was born in the late 1940s into her family and was the unfortunate victim of phenylketon. Though his condition was preventable, at this time, if diagnosed during the first three weeks of life, it remained undiagnosed for nearly a year resulting in a child who never learned to walk or talk and was eventually institutionalized. During her child’s residence Mary became personally



immersed in a crusade to better the conditions she witnessed in this institutional setting. Her child later contracted pneumonia and died at this institution. On a more positive note, however, Mary met Karin and was shared a dream of an organizational setting that was superior to what she and her child had witnessed at this state institution.

Meanwhile another mother, Doris had a child named Tina in the late 1940s and due to a misdiagnosis of the mother's Rh factor, the child became desperately ill. As a result of this unfortunate condition, the child never advanced beyond the brain development of an infant. Because of the family's privileged status in society in terms of financial success, and because there were few alternative facilities for support or treatment of the profoundly compromised child, Tina was cared for at home predominately by her mother, until Tina's death at about age 25. Again, somewhat fortuitously Mary and Doris' paths crossed. Through the mutual pain of the loss of a child and the shared belief that facilities were inadequate to care for a compromised child, a friendship developed. They also had in common a strong faith in God and came to believe that their crossing of paths might have been for an unknown purpose.

In the mid 1960s, the third woman whom I refer to as Karin started her first job at the institutional facility which "housed" Mary's child. At this moment in time, there was insufficient funding for those with mental retardation, bare subsistence and even abusive conditions were prevalent in a health care system that was fragmented and ineffective. Karin met not only Mary's child, Gerad, but also a young child named Angela who had been institutionalized since she was three. As a new employee, Karin was shocked to find this beautiful child tied to a chair. Very soon however, she learned why Angela was so restrained. The child began to beat herself because she could not express the rage inside of her in any other way. Over the next several months and years, Karin helped Angela cure this self-abuse. There was a reciprocal effect, however. Karin's

life was not only significantly impacted by this child but was ultimately transformed by the relationship that she developed with Angela. Karin gained a quest to provide better respect for all persons with disabilities. She also had a desire to create surroundings and conditions that were far superior to the institutional setting in which she worked.

Through her care of Gerad, Karin met his mother, Mary. Karin was then introduced to Doris through Mary. At this point in our country's history, places to serve people with severe intellectual disabilities were being phased out and state institutions had long waiting lists. So, these three women, inspired by severely challenged children, joined forces to create a place where those with severe intellectual and physical challenges could live and flourish with dignity and respect. The women's goals simply stated were to provide ongoing dignified care and treatment for the profoundly retarded or developmentally challenged children and adults such as those whom they had encountered as a result of their own experiences. By now, both Mary and Doris had lost their children. Regardless, they like Karin were inspired to create an organization where developmentally challenged people of all ages could be treated with dignity and respect.

The ground breaking of Angelina took place in 1979 on a location donated by a local resident. It was established as a residential agency for residents with disabilities and as an alternative to the institutions prevalent at that time. It became known as the campus setting and was comprised of ten houses. The founders named this campus of ten houses after a combination of the three names of the children who inspired the origin of the organization. After receiving the numerous government and health system approvals, and the generous donation of 13 acres of land, Angelina raised over \$5.0 million through an Industrial Development Authority bond issue and began building. However, it wasn't until January of 1981 that Angelina formally opened its doors and seventy-nine residents moved into the facility.

The interior design of the ten family-centered houses on the campus all had a decorator's touch. The paintings and furnishings were each chosen to compliment the décor and would not have been out of place in an art gallery. One of the reasons for this décor was the belief that families of the residents would be comfortable encouraging their family members to live there. The opulence of these homes then created a living environment that also sought to relieve guilt from the family members who placed their loved ones with physical and mental deficiencies as residents of this organization as well as provide a comfortable environment for those residing at Angelina.

It was thought that the environment played a role in the development of those even with profound mental and physical disabilities. While at times these houses surpassed those that the residents' relatives lived in, one of the reasons for the opulence was a reaction to the facilities commonly thought of as institutional settings. While many of the residents needed help with basics such as eating and personal care and might never be able to dress themselves, speak, or live independently, it was believed that their level of dependence could be lessened by luxurious surroundings.

On the campus were also other buildings such as an administrative building, therapeutic recreational facilities such as a swimming pool, music training, riding stables, educational classrooms for development such as communication, physical and occupational therapy, the nursing facility, housekeeping and maintenance departments, food preparation and cooking, laundry facility, and others. Many of these buildings were named for the residents. This remains a significant issue since this is one of the few places where the names of buildings have been given to those with profound disabilities instead of those founding the organization or donating large sums of money to the foundation to fund its operation.

On June 30, 1983 the Angelina Foundation, Inc. underwent a change in its corporate structure. A plan of division was adopted by the Board of Directors splitting Angelina, the parent corporation into three parts: **The Angelina Foundation, Inc.** to operate the intermediate care facility for persons with mental retardation, **Angelina CLA** (Community Living Arrangements) to manage the community living family homes program in various near by communities, and **Angelina Endowment**, to receive and manage all endowment funds and conduct all capital campaigns. All three are non-profit organizations serving the needs of people with profound retardation and physical disabilities. This study only addresses issues at the campus or Angelina Foundation, Inc.

Following a planning study, the Board of Directors determined that the future of Angelina depended on raising substantial additional funds; therefore in October of 1984 a presentation was made to representatives of corporations and foundations displaying Angelina's decision to embark on a capital campaign to raise nearly \$4.0 million. The campaign was very appropriately named "A Margin of Excellence."

On June 1, 1985, because of the dedication of more than 30 volunteers, Angelina's Catholic residents were able to receive their First Holy Communion. Religion continues to be a fundamental right of the residents who reside at Angelina. In addition, an Episcopal church was located near the campus grounds and has been used over the years as a celebration setting.

Angelina continues to grow and expand as a company. In January 1989, they opened a facility in Mercer County. This new home accommodated eight residents. In 1990, they developed an Expansion Program for the mentally retarded clients where three new Intermediate Care Facilities for Mentally Retarded clients were opened. A similar home was opened in February of the same year. Angelina completed its expansion program in August of 1991 with

the opening of a home which serves a total of 20 residents. By 1992, The Angelina Foundation, Inc was serving 156 persons with developmental deficiencies.

Today, in all locations, Angelina serves 225 residents ages 12 and up, including clients with autism. Angelina's main campus still includes 10 large family-centered homes, 42 other community homes, and four adult training facilities. The campus location alone serves more than 100 residents with severe disabilities. One of its residents residing there is now over 50 years old and is one of the three children for which the facility was named. On this campus and in one other location a union, the United Steel Workers of America has existed for more that 20 years.

Currently, this industry is undergoing a significant change. The pressure to this organization to change originates from an external source. In essence, the industry has altered its funding stream or the way the organization gets its money to operate. As a result of this change in financial allocation, residents or their guardians will now have the final say in where a resident with developmental deficiencies resides. The decision will no longer be based on the state's preference of organization or its available beds.

This choice will be made predominantly based on the public's awareness of organizations providing services and the organization's perceived ability to meet the needs of the resident affected. It follows then that this funding change has caused the need for each organization providing services to raise awareness of their particular services and become competitive with one another. It has become imperative that those who reside and work at a particular organization say positive things about working and residing there. The continued existence of this facility and the funding to support its mission depend on it.

From this understanding the CEO/Executive director of Angelina put a plan of action in place. According to her, the organization's fundamental culture, meaning its values, beliefs, and

attitudes can no longer be understood or implicitly known solely by those who work there. Instead, these core values and services must be not only explicitly espoused but positively communicated to the public by those who work at Angelina and the guardians of those who live at this organization. This move to counting on those who work at Angelina and the guardians for those who live at Angelina as the marketing messengers for the organization is new.

This is where the transformation and power shifting of the workers and guardians comes in for Angelina. While it can be argued that the organization has a desire to have the workers and family members say positive things about the organization, what is said cannot be controlled. Nor can the emotions, values or beliefs of the workers or family members be dictated. As an alternative, conditions can be set that create the environment for transformation and procedures and policies can be put in place to allow for increased decision making and power shifting of workers. Some of the guiding principles of Angelina make this climate possible.

#### *Guiding Principles and Values*

One of the goals of the organization has long been to see all people (including those with disabilities) accepted as people first, with everything else following. Fitting with this goal are some of the founding principles which were joy, love, dignity and respect (The Bridge, 1982). Angelina was also built on Christian principles since two of the three children's families who inspired the founding of this organization had a close alliance to these religious values.

Phrases such as "stand out from the crowd," "do the right thing" and "state of the heart" are found in print and verbalized frequently by the CEO/Executive Director. Many examples of these phrases are found today in written forms and exist in brochures, training materials, and video newsletter scripts and presentations. Christian phrases such as: serving God, God's graces and blessings, gifts from the heart, and joyful noise are also common place as is an upbeat,

uninhibited worship service that brings together the disabled and volunteers. References to religion and God have been explicit since the beginning and continue to be prevalent. The population of disabled residents is often referred to as “innocents” or “angels of God.”

However, while these principles were initially obvious, over time they became more imbedded in the culture and less apparent to the outsider. Originally the Executive Director, Karin, was a hands-on manager and created the organization based on the values and beliefs that she held dear. However, as Angelina grew and expanded she became less hands-on and more removed from the everyday operation of the facility. She relied on a very tight group of senior management to create and implement policies and procedures to direct the staff.

It was as a result of the changes in regulations that Karin realized that adjustments would need to occur at Angelina as well. In her words, reflected in the introductory letter that she sent to me describing the transformation of the industry and inviting me to conduct a study at her facility, she said “our industry is experiencing much change...one of our major funding streams is changing...and how we market ourselves and communicate the important work we do to the state and beyond is crucial.” It became clear to Karin that the ultimate survival of Angelina depended on what its staff members had to say about working, the care, and the environment of the facility.

For this reason, Karin also believed that the work of the Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) or workers needed to be brought to the forefront by all who encountered the DSPs as well as the guardians of the residents who reside at Angelina. She said, “the input and involvement of each staff worker is encouraged and appreciated...it is important that we reflect on the great work done by our staff and give them credit and respect for the life altering work that they do...” It was making “the state and beyond” aware of this contribution, increased

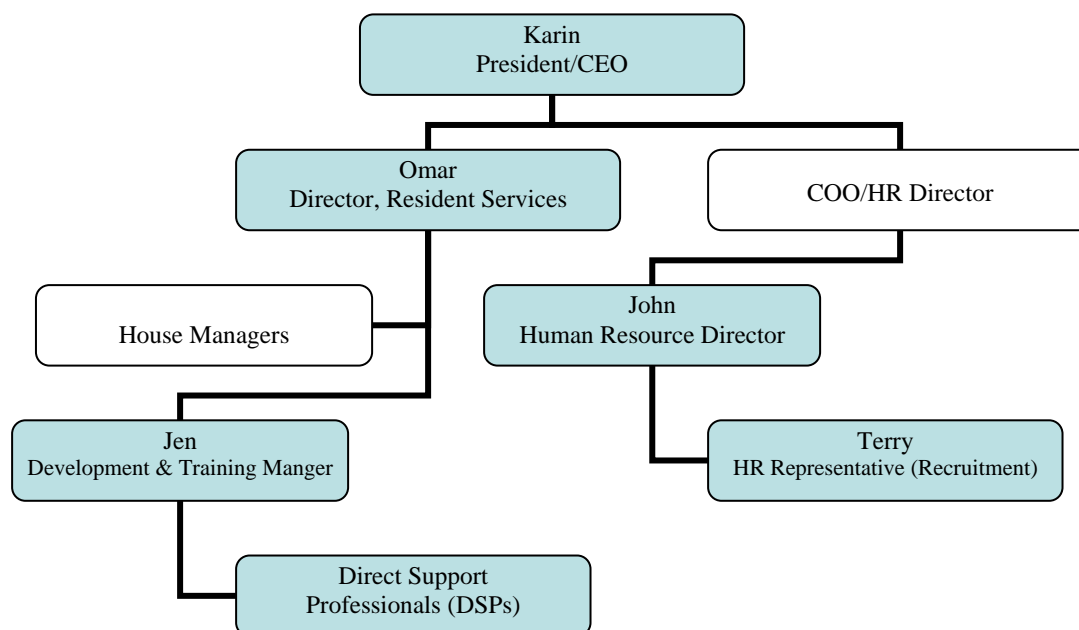
decision making about one's job and in this case governance of the residents that she saw at the root of the transformation process at Angelina.

*Table of Organization*

Figure 4.1 contains a Table of Organization for the organization being studied illustrating the management positions and worker positions which were targeted for inclusion in this study. In addition, the reporting relationship is indicated by the chart. The reason for the inclusion of this chart is to illustrate those included in the study and give a visual picture of how they relate to each other so that the discussion of this case is more understandable. Those positions noted with a blue background were included and those with the white background were omitted.

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Table 4.1. Table of Organization.





The structure of the organization is comprised of both a campus and community setting. For the purposes of this study, only the campus setting was considered. Thus, the selection of management involved in this study was chosen based on their ability to influence the decision making and power transfers of this campus setting. For this reason, the CEO/Executive Director (overseeing the entire organization), the Human Resources Manager (responsible for policy and procedure development for all aspects of the organization), the Director of Resident Services (responsible for all program, staffing, and day-to-day operation of the campus), the Human Resources Representative (responsible for recruiting) and the Staff Development Manager (responsible for training new hires and all existing Direct Support Professionals). The COO/HR Director was not interviewed since he did not meet the requirement of joining the organization prior to two years ago or being hired prior to 2006.

All levels of middle management (including the house managers) were omitted in this study due to the focus of studying the workers or DSPs (direct support professionals) and the shift in power from the senior management staff to them during the transformation. The workers or DSPs are the people who have the daily, personal contact with the residents receiving support. A group of eight DSPs were selected for the focus group interview from a staff of just over 200. Following the focus group interview was a series of individual interviews. These were conducted with those in attendance of the focus group who wished to participate in further individual interviews. The number of individuals who wished to be interviewed was a little smaller (only two) than those who participated in the focus group interview. The reason these people gave for non-inclusion in the individual interview process was that their work schedule did not permit it or that they had already participated fully in the focus group interview and had nothing noteworthy to add.

### Spiral One: Inclusion of Multiple Voices, but Power ‘Over’

As discussed in Chapter Three, a Spiral of Analysis as adapted from the work of Cepeda and Martin (2005) was used to both gather and evaluate data as it was collected. Spiral One introduces the senior management team of Angelina—Karin, Omar, Jen, John, and Terry, by starting with a solo interview of the founder, Karin. In Spiral Two, I then turn my attention to the DSP or worker group, beginning with the comments made by those DSPs included in the focus group. Spiral Three includes those comments by the DSPs who were members of the focus group. Throughout these spirals is the inclusion of the analysis of documents. Included in this spiral are the management staff interviewees, beginning with Karin. Following her interview are the remaining management staff interviews. Next is part of the document analysis which was comprised of annual calendars, the policy and procedure manual, various new hire training materials, and a review of other pamphlets and brochures. Finally, each spiral of analysis ends with a series of questions resulting from the analysis of the current phase and intended to be explored in the subsequent spiral.

#### *The CEO/Executive Director—Karin*

The first participant in the study was the CEO/Executive Director, Karin. She was selected to be first because of her far-reaching impact on the organization and her position as one of the founders of Angelina. I saw her as the best choice to “set the stage” for the reader in regards to both the progress of the transformation and the strategies she implemented hoping for a large scale organizational change. In this initial interview though she answered my questions, she also spent much time directing me to written sources and documents to gather a foundational understanding of Angelina’s history, founding principles, and funding stream on my own. As a

result, the interview focused so heavily on the history of Angelina that came at the expense of discussion of the transformation and its process.

Karin plays multiple roles—chief administrator, cheerleader for the organization, visionary, and ultimate decision maker. Since she is also the founder of the organization and the one responsible for the principles on which the organization was founded. Some of her words describing the fundamental principles of Angelina were:

We have passion for what we do, we should do what's heartfelt passion, have heart for the work. We should be careful about the money, how we spend it. ....and we never want someone who was heartless taking care of us in a hospital. We all hate it, we all hate to get a bad nurse, and we hate it if we have a bad clerk at the store... You know what I'm saying. So at Angelina I feel that everything comes from the heart. We want to have a heart for God and we know God has a heart for people with disabilities. Look at Jesus. He healed the sick. So I really do feel our mission comes from that (statement) 'serve from the heart.'

Since she could so easily recite the principles that Angelina was founded on, I expected to discover many of the initiatives implemented by Karin to be alignment with these principles and further espouse the intended meaning of these beliefs. However, what I found initially were changes in policy and procedure that impacted the work of all of the staff of Angelina but in no explicit way mentioned or incorporated founding principles. Instead those changes that I observed or were told about (so far) appeared transactional or operational in nature—such as changes in policy, establishing a creed, producing banners, and the alteration of other documents. I had been led to believe that transformation was her intention at Angelina, so I looked for evidence of such. My understanding of organizational transformation required a change in core beliefs, resulting in a shift in world view. It follows then that a change in core beliefs could not occur if these beliefs were not on the table for discussion.

When I asked Karin for examples of discussion of Angelina's beliefs she pointed initially to a new hire activity. She said that she had started a "tea and cookies" session for new hires as a way to impart her values of Angelina to them. When asked specifically what she said during these sessions, she responded:

You know treat people as you want to be treated, no swearing, be kind, be good and *do the right thing*. Also you know all of the culture stuff- that it's a great place to work...You know the right thing to do. Don't take shortcuts. If somebody tells you, "No we don't do it that way" then you should say "Oh yes we do...I was just trained like this, let's call the supervisor, or let's call the trainer or, let's call Karin..."

She also gave examples of those staff members who did not exhibit the values that she saw important. For example, she told several stories of staff failure. One of these stories she told as follows:

(The DSP) said something she wasn't supposed to, and she was wrong. So I called the house and this woman answered, and I said Ann don't be curt when you answer the phone. I can hear it in your voice and it makes me think that what I heard about you is true.... (another DSP) said you were rough and took food away from one of the residents, which is totally illegal. I said I would consider it a re-training issue and it could have been reportable...I was as nice as pie but I'm going to call a spade of spade...

Karin then explained that soon after this conversation Ann left the organization. She felt that this was good news saying, "Well, I'm happy that I did it because if I didn't maybe she would have stayed." She went on to explain that, "We do talk English and we talk from the heart, we try to relate (the Angelina beliefs) to their (the DSPs) own life, to their own family." She went on to ask the rhetorical question, "What else can you do?"

I completed this interview feeling a sense of confusion. On the one hand, I felt awe for a woman who had accomplished so much. She stayed true to her values and she used a mixture of control and charisma to achieve success in her various roles of chief administrator, cheerleader, visionary, and ultimate decision maker of Angelina. Yet on the other hand, the stories she had

chosen to share made her look cold and intolerant. She used the process of hegemony and a taken for granted way of seeing the world to initially create an environment that challenged the status quo and now she appeared to use this same tactic to control and to have power 'over' the staff. I turned to the rest of management to further my understanding of this organization and this issue.

#### *Remainder of the Management Team*

The remaining members of management namely, John, Terry, Omar and Jen are introduced and discussed in this section. Their stories echoed more of the same, while they recounted examples of empowerment and inclusion of multiple voices, they also shared numerous examples of use of their power to keep the workers in their place.

#### *John -Human Resources Manager*

John is in charge of human resource policy and procedure formation. His job is to develop policy for both the campus and community settings. He is responsible for the Employee Handbook (which has not been revised since 2005) and all new policy generation. He is also the key link between Angelina and its Union, the United Steel Workers of America. He describes this relationship as "a good partnership." One of the major accomplishments he and the union led for the DSPs in the recent years is the COLA (cost of living allowance) in 2003 and the shift differential paid to the workers for the third shift assignment. He gives the union great credit in their lobbying efforts on behalf of the DSPs. The only area that the union is involved in that he wishes he could change is in the discussion of performance. He explained that no performance review or formal written program of objective performance evaluation existed and instead the focus was on longevity of the worker and pay for this seniority or length of service. According to John, "our union says that their big thing is seniority, how long they (the DSPs) have been here-- - not so much behavior, performance or anything else, but longevity."

While he points to several examples of involving workers or DSPs in policy or procedure development, all of these changes focus on operational issues which ultimately benefit the residents who live at Angelina. For example, he says that a committee has been formed made up of management and workers to focus on issues which affect the residents. He gives the description of the committee and then the following example:

[The committee is called] Employer Management Participation Team. ...we have some union employees, some management employees and worker employees on this committee to really cover all of the departments that work here. We meet about every two weeks, for about an hour and a half each. We have notes from each meeting. Its purpose is brainstorming; it's not really a complaint committee. It is more of a trying to increase communication or even to improve operations. Let me give you a couple really important accomplishments or recommendations that were made in the committee.

We had a problem here about a year or so ago, at the campus with a diaper that all of our residents use. The company that had manufactured this diaper for many years got out of the business. They just said like "hey sorry we are not servicing you any more". So we got another vendor. They were very thin. We were having a lot of our residents, because of the design of the diapers, soiling their clothes, the bedspreads, and the chairs they were sitting on...

So in this committee we talked about it and we made a recommendation to management to look for another vendor. We showed them what the problem was. We had a meeting with the new vendor and we showed them the issues. They said, 'Oh, here is the problem, it was the design. It is too thin in certain areas.' It was just not designed properly for our type of resident. Ultimately what happened is we changed vendors.

I think this was a big accomplishment for the committee.

John readily acknowledges that the workers or "hourly employees" as he calls them "do most of the work and have the knowledge" about the residents. He also feels that "we want suggestions from our employees." He personally believes that "some of the best ideas come from the staff that does the job everyday" and "its management's job to listen" to the workers.

It is also his job to develop policy which reinforces the rules and regulations that provide funding for Angelina. Much of his interview discussed policy and procedure enforcement, documentation, and other measures which lead to survey success and meet or exceed funding requirements such as the following:

[Management must] *ensure that the plan of care is being followed to the letter...* and it is in documentations and charting...you just to have a comfort level that everything, the meals are being done as timed, the bathing, the physician care [are being conducted according to the policies and procedures].

From this comment it is apparent that while John believes that there is benefit in involving the workers in decisions that affect them and the care of the residents, it is his fundamental responsibility as Human Resource Manager to develop policies which ensure that all behavior of the DSPs is monitored as it evaluated according to the necessities of meeting survey measures and funding requirements. He often talked about ways to monitor and control the behavior or activities of the DSPs. For example, he frequently used phrases such as “We need ...to more closely supervise the DSPs.” He made the following analogy:

There are times when there is no supervision in the homes and you almost have a self-driven workforce. I mean look at a factory or even a retail store, usually you have some management employees’ work all the time, monitoring the workforces’ actions. At Angelina (this monitoring) does not happen all of the time. Instead, we have to rely on the staff to do the job, there is not a supervisor right working with you side by side all of the time....

He also discussed other policies which affect the DSPs’ work life. When I asked what was the most important issue impacting Angelina and the DSPs he replied giving the following example:

Attendance. I think that is one of the biggest challenges we have is making sure that all of our employees make their work schedules. Our policy at Angelina is not overly harsh, but it is not easy either. The employees do get disciplined for attendance. We work with the union on that issue. We

tell them when the employee isn't coming to work when they are scheduled; we do make exceptions if there is a medical emergency, you know some things come up and we give only documentation. We understand this situation versus someone who says oh I'm not coming to work today because I just don't feel like coming to work.

From here, John went on to explain all of the specific rules that apply to attendance and those steps leading up to termination. One aspect which is notable, the statement of the policy uses the words, "may lead to termination," leaving room for both interpretation and exceptions. I left this interview feeling a mixture of the appreciation for the knowledge of the DSPs and the desire to have their input along side a simultaneous need for control over their behavior. It was clear to me that while he encouraged multiple voices to be heard to solve organizational issues, he at the same time relied on his power base to control the behavior of the DSPs.

#### *Terry -Recruiting and Hiring Manager*

Terry is responsible for the hiring of the workers of Angelina. She talked about the hiring process including screening applicants and scheduling the applicants for an interview in which they fill out an application, get a job description, and see a video portraying the DSP position. She also explained that "if it is someone that I feel that we would like to hire we will run the clearances, check references, and as long as everything is good there then we will schedule them for a physical and a TB test." When I asked her what she looked for in a DSP she gave the following description. It was in here that she balanced what she looked for in terms of values with the criteria of availability and testing.

The DSP is not just a job it is something that you really have to have a passion for and want to get up and come to work every day and do your best and really have the resident's interest at heart. Taking care of people is what you do.



Terry explained that the current group of DSPs was finding their voice and a force to be reckoned with. In her words she said, “The DSP’s especially are making it pretty rough on the some of the managers by not cooperating...” I did not fully understand her comment until later when I met with the DSPs during the focus group (findings and discussion are in Spiral Two). At this juncture I did not even ask her a follow up question regarding this issue since I thought I fully understood her interview responses. I left her office feeling that she had given a fairly balanced interview, covering the special gifts that someone would need to possess to succeed in the DSP position and the control and process driven nature of the position. She had done a fairly good job of deconstructing the job of a DSP. She answered for herself and for me the question of what it takes to be a successful DSP.

*Omar -Resident Manager*

Omar is the Resident Manager and his job is to enforce all policy and procedure that Angelina develops. He is responsible for the DSPs behavior in the areas that are managed by State Surveys and thus, ultimately responsible for the funding that Angelina is awarded. It is also his job to make sure that the DSPs behavior does not in any way expose Angelina to law suits. He has been in this position for 3 years but been with Angelina over 10 years, starting out as a DSP. English is his second language since he came to the United States from an Arabic country. I found myself wondering if some things were not only lost due to the translation, but also due to a difference in culture and perspective.

Omar understands that the DSPs at times just want to be heard as opposed to approaching him with an issue for him to solve. He talked about how this revelation came to him. I initially asked him, “is there any difference in how you try to include what people have to say today

versus how you tried to include people when you were brand new?" He responded in the following way.

Well yeah, I mean because every single client is unique and every single DSP is unique. I know over the past in this position that not necessarily was everyone listened to. People do not necessarily care what you, but they want to be listened to. They want to be heard.

When I started I took every comment seriously. But then over time I just let people vent. And when they are done, they say I hope I didn't bother you.

I found out that most of the people just want that opportunity to sit down and share with you their ideas. Basically, what they want is for you to listen. Then they will give you all the answers you need. I used to try to answer these questions. Try to find a way how can I answer this, to satisfy them. I have found that it is always a waste of time.

Even though he gave some remarks that indicated that perhaps he felt it was important to develop a positive relationship with DSPs by listening to their ideas, it was obvious that he saw his primary job and that of the other supervisors as one of keeping the DSPs in line and forcing them to do what they were supposed to do. He was quite outspoken on how to enforce company and state policy and how to avoid behavior that the DSPs might exhibit if left unattended and able to exercise their own judgment. For example, he said the following:

They (the DSPs) don't want a house manager... they don't want somebody...with them all day. For example, if I was a smoker and there was no house manager, I might have one and then 5 minutes later have another and I'm going to go back and then go back and then go back. So, (if I am a DSP) basically why do I want a house manager, someone who is strict and makes me follow the rules?

Another example, when you are a DSP, you know during dinner you cannot take your break, you need everyone to be working. Now if you don't have a house manager, other DSPs working in the house might say, "oh ok, you can take a break now." But you know you shouldn't do it...but if you can get away with it then, you do it, and also when you are doing it the first time and you know it is wrong and you do it again, you do it again, you do it again, at one point it is no longer wrong and it

becomes normal. This is how bad habits get formed. It is the nature of people and it is very hard to break.

He gave yet another example:

Through problems and observations we realize that we need house managers because when you have a supervisor in the house the staff is most likely to do the right thing, follow the proper procedure, not to violate or to take shortcuts... without a supervisor you are not teaching, you are encouraging laziness to the staff such as sitting down and watching the TV and not following the proper procedure. (Without a supervisor) the DSPs are not organized....If you have a supervisor then those things cannot happen. So what we did is we hired supervisors.

He also discussed all of the rules for bathing residents and feeding them. He gave the following example of a new hire and the typical indoctrination to the job that is given.

Thorough understanding of what the job duties are (is imperative). For example, let's say there are 9-10 residents in a home. There's usually three staff working together with the residents. They have to have equal responsibility; they have to get 3 or 4 baths every day. If a new hire does not pitch in, I might ask, 'What aren't you understanding? Don't you think that you will be expected to do 1/3 of the work?'

When I asked questions about decision making and his ability to make decisions, he replied, "We implement things that are just our level. If it is a decision above our level then somebody else has to decide ..." when I asked Omar what he thought I would hear from the DSPs when I talked to them, he said the following"

'You guys never listen to us.' It doesn't matter what I say because the DSPs are not interested in the rules, they are just interested in why it is not happening the way they want it to happen. And it is hard because we have probably (nearly 150) employees here, just DSPs, and everybody has their own goals, their own way of how to run things.

I left this interview feeling that the DSPs were given specific rules and policies about their jobs whether they were new hires or veterans. They had little impact on policy making and could only make decisions that were expected to come from their level. While Omar spoke about inclusion of multiple ideas and perspectives, I felt that Omar and his staff used coercive power

and other negative sources of power to force the DSPs through control to perform in accordance to Angelina's rules and policies. He was very focused on structural power and he seemed to rely on the hierarchy for decision making ability. Omar did not speak of empowerment or agency of worker, or any challenges to the system at all. Instead he relied on the rules.

He was also the only person interviewed that I noted in which my own power as a researcher possibly affected his responses. He at times seemed guarded and appeared as if he was trying to decide what I wanted to hear. Perhaps this observation was in part tied to his cultural origination and mine and the differences between the two. It was also possible that because I was a female interviewing him (an Arabic male) that a power issue was encountered.

#### *Jen -Development and Training Manager*

Jen is responsible for meeting and training all of the new hires. She is also responsible for all of the current staff "in-service" training. The "in-service" training can be quite extensive. It is her responsibility to be a liaison between both the workers and the management. Her own title is of management status, though she must earn the trust of the workers to be successful in her job. The interview with Jen was unique. It proved to be very different from the rest of the management team.

When I asked Jen about the management team, she gave the following description.

They are way too removed. They should take more of an effort to know and interact with the staff. They don't know any of these people (the DSPs or staff). They don't know the residents as they should.

She offered the following example.

Here is a prime example; we have once a month a kind of lunch-in type of thing. You will see management. They come to the luncheon in a little group, come through the line get their food, and leave taking their food with them. They don't even sit down.

Jen explained that the management team resided in a building that was referred to as the “brown building” and one that housed fear and anxiety. She said the following in regard to the management’s office area and the power residing there:

Things can happen here, bad things can happen here if somebody is reported this is where they have to come for their hearing. This building has a stigma about it. Somebody got terminated and this is where they came first...

Jen also talked about the lack of confidentiality as she explained the rift between the management staff and DSPs or workers.

This place is a wildfire for rumors and gossip and information, everybody has to know everything about everybody. The rules are, go directly to your supervisor, if something happens no matter what it is, go directly to your supervisor. This may be the rule, but I wouldn’t go...because of prior experience. For example, I have tried it twice (going to my supervisor). I went to a supervisor and said this issue is totally confidential, you cannot say anything to anybody. I have a problem with somebody here... 5 minutes later, I was told by somebody else, ‘I heard you have a problem’.... I tried it twice to see if it really worked. I could see somebody threaten me and go to that supervisor and the supervisor going, what did you just threaten somebody. Thank you for putting my life in danger.

When I asked about the types of decisions that DSPs were able to make and the receptiveness of management to these suggestions Jen said in reply, “I can bring up all their suggestions as long as I don’t say that they came from them (the DSPs). There is a division between management and the DSPs.” However, she was quick to say that the DSPs were the experts when it came to knowledge about the residents who reside there. Below are a couple of her examples.

You should go directly to the DSP’s they have the knowledge. For example, if you spent 12 hours with a resident, you will know that a resident might have a urinary tract infection because she is walking funny. The DSPs know something is wrong. I have seen them be right way too many times to doubt them.

Every topic (in training) that I do, I say you are the professionals, not me, but I am going to tell you stuff you didn't know and I am going to make it interesting and you are going to walk out of here knowing more. Me telling you how to do your job, not a shot. Not a shot. You are the pros and when I get called into work as a DSP I'll walk in and go hi the worthless person is here. I can do meal time but (the DSPs) know best; they are the professionals. In return, they treat me good, they treat me good, but they are the pros, they are the ones that have the information...

She explained that she had a unique position of understanding the concerns of the DSPs and the management staff at the same time. Her position allows her to have this distinctive vantage point and her personality furthers this possibility.

It takes somebody with a whole lot of energy to do this job, but I love it. I absolutely love it and I love the DSP's. I am probably the luckiest person on this whole campus. I am Switzerland. I don't report anywhere, to anybody and I work for everyone, the management and the DSPs. I have the perfect spot in the universe. I mean I am in the perfect place and I can go to any department and get anything I want. I don't belong anywhere. It's very bad at Christmas; I'm not invited to any parties but I don't belong anywhere but it is great, I am very tight with the DSP's and with management. I can go to any department.

I mean you get to understand both parts of it and the DSP's appear to management as if they are being stubborn. For example, they might say, "They (the management) wrote me up, they did this or they did that....." but from the management perspective there is a reason. From where I sit, you see both of them; there is still conflict.

She gave the following example of how she tries to work with each group to make Angelina's worker staff successful.

.....but I can maybe try and help like the one girl, phenomenal girl, it was Angela—Karin's Angela's whatever birthday 50? 54? and this girl (new hire) was only in that house a month and Karin was coming for dinner, for the mealtime and then she (the new hire) said she was going to quit, she said, 'I don't know enough, I can't do it.' I told her 'Don't quit we have a whole week to learn.' So, I brought two of the house managers and said please go work with this girl. She is scared to death. Scared to death that she doesn't know enough or will make some stupid mistake in front of Karin. The managers went and worked with her, showed her mealtime duties, walked her through the whole process. They worked with her for three days.

She talked about how she leverages the emotions of those she works with to get their cooperation. She relies on tactics such as, “being everyone’s buddy, using the trio of “fear, laughter and enthusiasm” in her training. Jen also admits that she has been criticized in this job and past one for “having too many friends.” She asks the rhetorical question, how can you have too many friends?

She also points to numerous examples of where staff does things for her because of their affection for her. For example, she says in regards to participating in the company communication vehicle that staff participate not because they want to but, “because they are doing it for me.”

I left my interview with Jen feeling that she was the one member of management who had been successful in bridging the chasm of management and DSPs. Though perhaps she was not cognizant of it, she referred to power coming from several sources. She had referred to relationships that she had with the DSPs, she talked about individual power coming from the hierarchy such as position power or coercive power of the management, and she referred to agency and information power of the workers. I also reflected on the power source that she had chosen to use—as opposed to coercive power or control, she used a form of referent power. She had said that people—staff and management—did things for her and ultimately for Angelina because they liked her. I could not help but wonder how this played into the overall power structure. The comment about Switzerland and not belonging to any one place stayed with me as well.

### *Document Analysis*

Several different types of documents were analyzed in this spiral. They included the annual calendars produced by the organization for fundraising and marketing purposes. Each

calendar is comprised of the normal monthly layout and a group of photographs, mixed from photos of staff members—worker and management, and residents who reside at Angelina. Other documents included one of the policy and procedure manuals, the Employee Handbook and new hire training materials, as well as marketing materials such as the Referral Brochure, Angelina Folder, and DSP position pamphlet.

### *Annual Calendars*

Before the change implementation and after the change implementation were the two periods of time analyzed. In each time period, two years of calendars were analyzed. They were reviewed based on the content of the photos that they contained. Each photograph on the cover and representing each month was divided into two categories: management employees and direct support professional or staff photographs. The results are included in Table 4.2.

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Table 4.2. Calendar Analysis

2005 Calendar	Management Photos—25%	Staff Photos—75%
2006 Calendar	Management Photos—39%	Staff Photos—61%
2007 Calendar	Management Photos—61%	Staff Photos—39%
2008 Calendar	Management Photos—51%	Staff Photos—49%

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Given the breakdown of the photographs listed above, the body of management photos increased while the number of staff or DSP photos decreased. While this may be purely an arbitrary decision and based on the quality of photos of each year, it does show a trend that favors management photos over DSP photos in this sampling. It is also contrary to the



transformation effort underway at this organization. If the goal of the organization is to show inclusion and support of the role of the DSPs than it is reasonable to assume that the workers or DSPs would have a greater, not lesser, representation of photos in the annual calendar, a form of written communication that is distributed within and outside the organization.

### *Policy and Procedures*

Policy and procedure manual changes showed no evidence of DSP involvement or participation. Instead these policies appeared to be a way for management to exercise control, especially control of operational aspects of the DSPs' job. They tended to deal with issues such as attendance and work schedules, smoking areas and permission, pay policies, cell phone guidelines, promotions and transfer policies and other job related matters.

When asked about how workers find out about changes in policy they replied that sometimes policies were posted at the time clock and some they find out about by violating the new policy. Other times they find out about them in less formal ways, such as through communication with other staff members. The lack of a formal way to publicize new or changes in policies serves as an example of managers using a 'power over' management style.

The main source of policies and procedures, Employee Handbook for example, had not been revised since May of 2005 (at the time of this case study, which was conducted in 2008.) One of the policies described in this Handbook and yet not utilized at the time of this study was found under Work Performance. There was a discussion of a formal written evaluation system. A performance appraisal system of any sort was not in force, according to several members of management including the Human Resource Manager. The absence of this evaluation system was discussed by the Human Resource Manager. His interpretation of this absence was intertwined with the Union's desire to reward tenure or time in position as opposed to performance-based issues. The Employee Handbook also describes a

Problem Resolution process. This process involves the worker raising their issue first to their direct supervisor, then the department head and finally to the Human Resource Director. The CEO/Executive Director was not mentioned in this process. All of the policies and changes to the policies were completed without the inclusion of the voices of the workers. They appeared to be adopted and enforced by a management staff that looked to coerce the DSPs by the nature of their power drawn from the position or organizational structure.

### *Other Document Analysis*

Included in this section are other written materials such as the new hire training materials, numerous brochure and pamphlets, annual newsletters, the Angelina creed, banners hanging outside the houses to celebrate the latest anniversary of Angelina's existence, and magazine articles, which are all used for internal or external communication purposes.

Most notable are the Angelina Creed, the new hire mentoring program, and the welcome letter written by Karin for the new hires. The Angelina Creed is as follows:

Because disabilities continue to occur, Angelina has a purpose.  
 Because each resident has needs, Angelina has a job.  
 Because each resident has sensitivities, we must be considerate.  
 Because each resident is vulnerable, we must be trustworthy and honest.  
 Because each resident has high expectations, we must excel in our services.  
 Because each resident has urgent needs, we must be immediate in our response.  
 Because each resident is unique, we must be flexible.  
 Because each resident is at risk, we must treat them with respect and dignity.  
 Because each resident's needs are complex, we must be competent.  
 Because each resident has influence, we have a future.  
 Because of each resident we serve, Angelina exists.

Interestingly, the DSP staff, as well as members of management was excluded from the creed. The focus of the creed instead was on the residents. All three of these documents serve to communicate the Angelina values to both the new hires and existing staff. For example, in Karin's letter to the new hires she describes some of Angelina's values such as "do the right

thing” and “state of the heart.” Furthermore, she talks about the founding values principles and their relevance today in various ways such as in text in brochures and other written materials and on videos such as those for the video newsletter. She uses these methods to talk to both internal and external audiences. However, from all of these sources it was impossible to tell the reaction of the recipients. Did they feel as they read the written materials or as they heard Karin’s words as though they were controlled and coerced to follow the guiding principles of the organization? Were they aware of the habitus or hegemony of corporate culture (Ogbor, 2000)? Or did they feel that they could critically reflect on the principles and assign their own meaning to them based on their own individual experiences?

*Interpretation of Spiral One: Inclusion of Multiple Voices, but Power ‘Over’*

In this initial spiral the management staff was interviewed and some of the document analysis was conducted. What I had learned was that the management team appears to fall into two major groupings, those who create and enforce policy and procedure and those who support the transformation of beliefs, culture, power shifts, and values associated with both the care of the residents and the worker staff or DSP.

The overall analysis of this first spiral was that a transformation as initially conceived (passed through the hierarchy) had not occurred at Angelina. The reason for this impression was the lack of changes in the way that the management staff held and used the power and control over the DSP staff. I could find no evidence that the core beliefs, assumption, or values of this organization had been changed. While there was one member of the management staff that appeared to identify with and support the DSP staff, the remainder of the management staff was more focused on operational issues of the organization and reinforcement of policies and procedures governing the DSPs’ behavior. There were a few examples of inclusion of workers

but equal examples of management exercises their power base derived from the hierarchy or organization.

Some large scale organizational changes had been implemented. However, these initiatives are often categorized as organizational development initiatives and can be mandated, changed, and controlled by senior management (Chapman, 2002). In addition, these initiatives tend to perpetuate the power sources already present in the organization and not create any real change in decision making, reflection, values or belief shifts associated with transformational change.

The document analysis was comprised of all history documents, the annual calendars and the photos used in them, the policies and procedures especially those that had changed in the last two years and the phrases representing the values of the organization in written text of many of the documents—the mission statement, the creed, symbols such as the banners, programs for the anniversary year, and brochures. All of these sources pointed to an organization that was experiencing change, but only change that was controlled and implemented by the senior members of management.

#### *Questions for Next Spiral: Deconstructing Power*

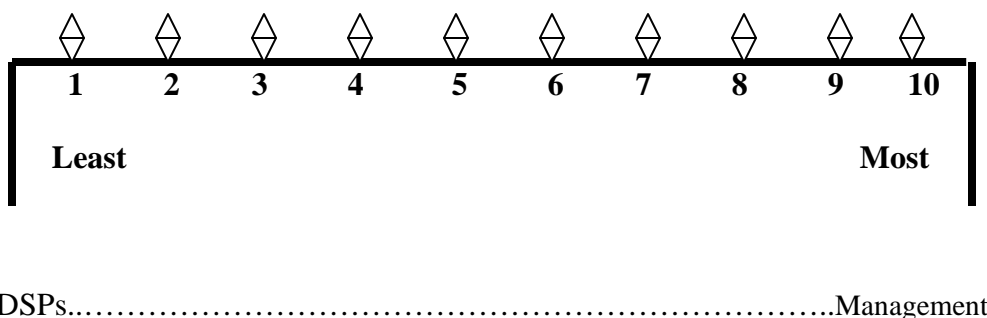
Though the question of transformation, appeared not to exist as I had expected, there lingered a sense that the DSPs might have a different story to tell. It appeared that they had significant latitude in the treatment of the individuals or residents of Angelina even if they had little input into the operational policies which governed their job. Some of these operational policies dealt with attendance, smoking permission and designated places to smoke, pay policies, and other job related policies and procedures. After re-reading the interviews with Karin, Omar and Jen, I was left with an inkling that the entire story of transformation and change was yet to

unfold. I then reread my dissertation proposal and made notations based on my first round of understanding of the analysis of this organization and the literature herein. During the reflection of these two processes questions began to occur to me.

Lingering questions included: What about the DSPs’ agency? Could they leverage some of the expert, information or other power bases that they appeared to have to provide services to the organization to create a transformation in beliefs, values, and assumptions? Did they have the ability and control over their own interaction with the residents to make decisions that seemed “right” to them? Did they have the ability to critically reflect on changes? What were these changes specifically? Did all transformation have to occur either as 1) through the hierarchy or 2) from grassroots initiative as the literature describes? Additionally, do power shifts have to include traditional empowerment strategies? Was there some delineation between different types of power and its use?

One of the key questions that I had at the end of this first spiral of analysis revolved around this last question. What kept coming to mind was the following visual.

Figure 4.1. Operational Decision Making Index.



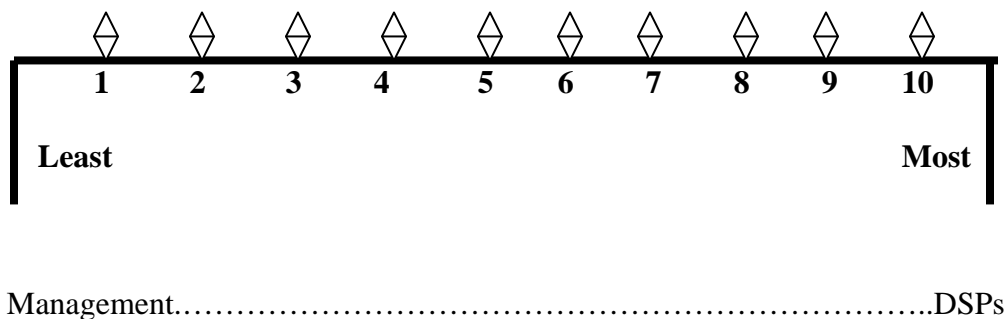
Operational Decision—Mostly Based on Policy and Procedure

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In this illustration, the managers have the majority of the power to control the job of the DSPs. In nearly all regards, the managers exercise control over the DSPs using the abundant rules and policies of Angelina. Also, the house managers (though not included in this study) were described by the rest of the management staff as put in place for the purpose of watching over the DSPs and making sure that they follow the correct procedures as they care for the residents. Some of these procedures are activities such as bathing residents, feeding them, and changing them in addition to monitoring DSP behavior such as attendance, timeliness, smoking, and so on.

However, I also had an image of the possibility that agency and power was exercised on the part of the DSPs for the residents might be quite different outside the operational parts of the job.

Figure 4.2. Care of Residents Index.



Care of Residents

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It appeared through the analysis of this initial spiral that the DSPs were the ones most concerned and close to the residents' care. Even stories from management illustrated that the DSP position was the one in which most individual expertise resided. For example, according to

the Director of Resident Services, the DSPs are “in the client’s minds.” “They know the residents and their behavior better than anyone else.” “They know when the client is not acting as usual—if the client is too quiet, or not eating as normal, or behaving in some uncharacteristic way.” All of this seemed curious to me. It felt like the DSPs were in some way champions for the residents. I had little evidence to substantiate this intuition, only questions to pursue.

For this reason, I closed this spiral of the analysis wondering if power could be divided into categories of power and if an organization could transform only a part of its form and still be considered transformed. The literature discussed shifts of power as either occurring through the hierarchy or raising up through a grass roots initiative. How did this notion of power apply here? Did it? Something told me that there might be multiple views and sources of power from the DSPs perspective which were in play at the same time. I would need to investigate this issue more.

I also wondered if I had misunderstood some of the comments during the interview with the CEO/Executive Director. For example, as I reread her interview I saw the control aspects that I had initially seen, but I also observed the possibility of agency and power of the DSPs as I read between the lines. It was apparent to me, that I needed another interview with her to clarify some of these points.

There was also this haunting question of transformation. Karin had seemed so adamant about the change of core elements of the organization—changing the beliefs, values and assumption of the organization, as well as giving people the chance to reflect on these core principles. What were some of the procedures that she had put in place and how was their purpose tied to the overall goal of transformation? Were only organizational development types of change implemented and labeled organizational transformation? For example, were changes in

mission statement and policy changes dictated and implemented but the assumptions and values of the organization remained the same and no real opportunity for reflection or challenges were encouraged? In postmodern organizational theory language, was there really a forum in which the DSPs could become aware and question hegemony? Was a counter hegemonic culture really encouraged? Was there room for multiple truths and multiple narratives?

I also wondered if transformation could be an incremental process, or did it have to be an all or nothing event? In other words, could I, the researcher have entered this organization in the midst of transformation and the process was not complete? Furthermore, I wondered as my charts would imply could transformation and power shifts occur in some areas (DSPs and their care for the residents) and different types of power or control (policy decision making and other job-related requirements) remain intact. Was it possible that these two different outcomes exist simultaneously? Or did transformation have to occur as workers rise up, unite and overthrow management? As Kilgore (2001) suggested, could truth be dependant?

### Spiral Two: Multiple Truths

With the understanding and the questions generated from Spiral One, I prepared for round two of the information gathering. I was planning to conduct a focus group meeting with the DSPs and then individual meetings or interviews with those DSPs who participated in the focus group. However before I could consider conducting the focus group meeting or individual interview meetings with the DSPs, I needed a better understanding from the CEO/Executive Director of the intention of the transformation process and the shifts in power she was anticipating.

In this section of the chapter only the focus group meeting and the discussion with the CEO are included. The next spiral, or Spiral Three, has the individual interviews with the DSPs. I have separated these interviews for two reasons. First, they occurred at different times. Second, and



more importantly, the focus group interview changed my perspective on the study and I needed time to digest the findings from this interview as well as prepare questions for the next round of individual DSP interviewees.

*2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting with Karin, Encouraging Critical Reflection and Transformation*

Karin originally stated that transformation was to begin as a result of industry changes. In a letter to me regarding this study, she said the following about this change:

Our industry is experiencing much change and transformation. One of our major funding streams is changing....and how we market ourselves and communicated the important work done here at Angelina.... is crucial. The input and involvement of each staff worker is encouraged and appreciated...it is important that we reflect on the great work done by our staff. They deserve great credit and our respect for the life altering work that they do.

From her letter, understanding of her organization at the start of this study, broad understanding of the funding issue affecting this organization and other not-for-profit entities vying for these funds, and my initial interview with Karin, the following intentions of the transformation were defined. These are: 1) due to a change in funding started in 2006 in the state of Pennsylvania in this industry, a radical approach to illustrate need and receive this funding was necessary; 2) the senior management has implemented processes and procedures to distribute power from the senior management team to the workers as one of their main strategies to meet this new approach; and 3) the organization is looking for feedback on their effectiveness in reaching and changing the power relationship with the workers.

It was armed with this previous understanding that I formatted my questions for my second interview with the CEO/Executive Director. During this second conversation with Karin, she affirmed that the above three goals of change were still her priority and she believed that *essential to all of them was the altering of beliefs, values, and assumptions of her workforce*. As early as her

letter concerning my study and again in this interview she used the word “transformation” to describe the type of fundamental change she intended. Since part of the transformation process in her mind was to bring to life again all of those principles which she originally held dear—respect and dignity for the residents, superior care of the residents, inviting surroundings and house décor, and grounds that any person would be proud to be identified with—to develop a facility that was seen as the Cadillac of facilities. She began to plan strategies that would create this environment for transformation.

Initially, she felt the goal should be to move the organization closer back to the founding principles. It was her subsequent hope that these values would be espoused by both those that worked at Angelina and the families of its residents. She thought that this change in attitudes and beliefs of the workers would meet the external pressure of changes in the funding stream. She was convinced that people would want to send their loved ones to Angelina and the organization would flourish.

She noted the following as evidence of her initiatives working. First, she stressed the need for the workers of Angelina to say positive things about the care of residents (being a great place to live) and at the same time she wanted the workers to say this is a great place to work. She believed that the DSPs were making positive remarks on both of these fronts. She talked about numerous conversations that she had with DSPs, both new hires and existing staff, but ended this discussion by encouraging me to find out for myself by “talking directly with the workers.”

Next, she explained that she had done some things to facilitate change—such as changes in the mission statement, changes in policy, and other written documents. She also pointed to other new processes such as meeting with all the new hires for tea and cookies, using this time to discuss the founding principles of the organization and many of the values, assumptions and beliefs she

hoped that others would embrace based on his or her own unique experiences. Since the turnover rate in the organization was on the rise—fluctuating between 50 and 70 percent (up from single digits) Karin felt that a multitude of initiatives were necessary to reach her goals. New hire training was taking place nearly every other week so the opportunity to meet new hires and espouse her values was present frequently.

During this “tea and cookies” meeting, Karin tells the story of meeting Angela, the child who changed her life. It became apparent to her that love and “a normal life separated her from this child and dozens of others like her.” She then relays the story of the founding of Angelina and the key principles which she explains are still relevant today. She then challenges each of the new DSPs to do “what they know is right” for the residents. She asks them to reflect on their own childhood and the values that they have. She hopes that everyone will build on the values that they have experienced as being “normal” in the world in their own unique way. It is her vision that each worker will interpret her guidelines based on his or her own unique experience.

An example of this is found in the Welcome Letter written by Karin where she describes that “your work defines our reputation.” In this remark, she suggests that Angelina becomes a sum of the individual beliefs and assumptions that the workers bring to the job. She explains that individual DSPs’ experiences and transformations which impact how the workers see the world are welcomed and encouraged during that session and thereafter.

Also, Karin uses the new hire session to explain her open-door policy and share her background as a DSP and some of the challenges that she has faced both in the industry and in the position. She readily describes her background being raised in a poor rural community. She discusses how she experienced adversity and did not give up when perhaps it would have been easy to do so. She reflects on the positive effects that these moments have had on her own

character development and her appreciation in retrospect for the occurrence of these events. She also talks about love, the love of her parents, and the love from her siblings and again, the effect that these values had in shaping her own.

For the existing hires she uses VNN (Video News Network) an electronic version of a newsletter to communicate her values and expectations. She also has produced several videos or DVDs to tell the founding story of Angelina and communicate the principles that Angelina revolves around. From here she encourages each DSP to reflect on his or her own experiences and bring learning's and reflections to work.

For both groups she emphasizes a key part of her own leadership style is defined by *service*. This notion ties to her religious beliefs. She explains that each morning she awakes wondering "how can I better serve" my staff? This reference to service and acting as a servant is found in the management literature (Kouzes & Posner, 1993).

Karin also appears to have several traits that are often discussed in relationship to transformational leadership: knowing yourself, appreciating your followers, developing followers' skills and abilities, relaying and affirming shared values, servitude of purpose, and creating a vision and hope (Gradwell, 2004).

Illustrating this belief is included some of her comments during this interview with me. She explained that these were many of the types of comments that she makes in the tea and cookies session with new hires and regularly in other forums. She said, "I tend to make some of the same comments (repeatedly) because they are what I believe:"

I feel like if you have a good heart, everything follows like those. Like in the Bible, wherever the heart goes, so goes the rest of the body, so goes the mind...We have passion for what we do. We should do what we have heart for. The people that are living here depend on us for everything. So do their families. So at Angelina, I feel that everything comes from the heart. We want to have a heart for God and we know God has a heart for

people with disabilities. Look at Jesus. He healed the sick. So, I really do feel our mission comes from that to serve from the heart.

You know the right thing to do. You know treat people as you want to be treated, no swearing, be kind, be good and do the right thing. Also you know all of the culture stuff—that it's a great place to work as well as live. We don't want people leaving Angelina.

I mean there's no standing up without courage, there is no fighting without honor. I mean nothing happens magically.

I also mean that as supervisors, we should not be an impediment to the work that needs to get done. We need to be problem solvers for these people [the workers, DSPs]. We are there to *serve*.

I mean my attitude about decision making can be summed up in a couple of sentences. Lead, serve, and you should not be an impediment you should be a facilitator. You should be able to help solve problems, help keep things going, make things the way they should be. It shouldn't take forever to get things done—because you are in the way enforcing some policy or procedure that should be changed.

When I was nearing the end of my interview, I discussed my findings from Spiral One with her and the focus of the management staff being absorbed in operational responsibilities and transactional activities (as opposed to transformative ones). In fact, when I had initially discussed lack of evidence of the transformation with her, it was these same operational tasks that she had pointed to trying to convince me. She acknowledged the feedback I offered and gave the following explanation. She said that perhaps the missing element in the managements' actions was the "sense of servitude." She admitted that perhaps she had not exposed the management staff to the same founding principles as she had the worker staff. She felt that this might account for the absence of transformation observed at this junction of the organization. As this interview came to a close she was still pondering this last point.

For me, this interview had been rather illuminating. I was left wondering if different levels of staff were focused on different types of issues and if there was a tie to transformation,

based on this focus. With this possibility I prepared for my interview with the workers. I intended to search for both evidence specific to this transformation and power shifts based on it as well. I also intended to find out if Karin's words were just hollow verbiage or held greater meaning for the workers. What I found was quite surprising.

*Focus Group of Workers (Direct Support Professionals): Multiple Voices*

During this spiral, I had the opportunity to conduct a focus group interview and ask questions in part based on some of the lingering questions from the analysis from Spiral One. The focus group was comprised of eight workers or DSPs who had worked for Angelina for a range of four to over twenty years. There were five females and three males involved in the focus group. The focus group was held for one and one half hours. Several of the participants rearranged their schedules to participate in this group and the individual interviews that followed due to their desire to take part in this session.

Since this focus group was conducted as one interview, though the different voices of those present are discussed within the narrative, it is not identified who said what. The reason for this is twofold. One reason is that this method of reporting further protects the participants by dealing with the *issues* as opposed to the *messenger* of the message. Thus, instead of getting caught up with the issues specific to one individual participant, comments from all group members are included. Secondly, the reporting process is closer to the benefits of the interview type. It allows for a large number of responses, there is no need for consensus of the group and a variety of opinions are expressed.

*Angelina's Values*

In this section Angelina's values are discussed along with the values of individual workers and their level of alignment with Angelina's espoused values. The values that

Angelina's management uses to describe its facility and what the staff provides are stated on paper and found in print marketing tools such as brochures, pamphlets, and employee handbooks. They include: caring, enthusiastic, respect, loving, active, nurturing and dependable in reference to the treatment of the residents.

In response to what the understanding of the workers had on these espoused values they discussed the following: At Angelina, we want to be the Cadillac of facilities; we want to deliver better care than any other facility” They went on to explain that “Karin always talks about – quality care; it’s her main thing. We want to deliver it for her and for the residents.” They felt that the residents deserved it. They also discussed how Karin expected premiere service be delivered at Angelina. Examples of these remarks are: “Karin wants Angelina to go to the front of the line” and “so do we.” They also discussed some of the phrases that Karin often repeats such as: “do the right thing” and “make the right decisions.” One participant even quoted Karin saying, “Like Karin says, ‘what is popular is not always right and what is right is not always popular.’” When I asked the participants what the phrase meant to them, they gave the following explanation. “This means you do right by the resident; the residents deserve dignity and respect; they deserve the best care that we can possibly deliver; and we should all take pride in what we do.”

When asked about how the workers learned these values were important to Angelina they said, during orientation, at Karin’s tea and cookies session, on videos produced by the organization, and on the monthly video newsletter (VNN).

### *Changes in Policy*

At the same time, the exercise of position power appeared to be used by management to keep the DSPs or workers in their place. For example, managers might use information power to

their benefit, for instance when policies are changed management may or may not convey these changes to the workers. In the words of the workers when asked how they find out about policy changes they said: “Sometimes they are posted; sometimes they are not; you might get a memo or sometimes, I just wait for management to tell me I can’t do that any more, basically.”

When I asked the management about communication of policy changes, they echoed essentially the same message, sometimes the new policies were in the form of a memo, sometimes there was a sign off sheet, and sometimes they could not be certain that all employees had received the new policy or procedure. I did not find the management staff overly concerned about this issue. Instead they were more focused on new policies being created each year which are not redundant. In John, the Human Resource Manager’s words,

....we don’t want to have a couple policies out there, that they mean the same thing. Let’s just make one. We want to cut out any type of overlap and also make sure we don’t have any gaps and things that are missing.

Another statement that I found interesting was the last comment made by a member of the focus group who talked about discovering policy changes by breaking the new rules. This participant expanded on her avowal explaining that her expectation of finding out about a new policy was being told that she was now doing something wrong. She gave the example of the change in the smoking location. She went out to smoke where she always had and was told that she was in the wrong location, “didn’t she read the memo on location change?” When I asked her what she thought about the way she found out about the policy change and management’s comment, she just shrugged. It was her expectation as well as the consensus of the group that they all fully expected to find out about subsequent policy changes the same way that this person found out about this one, by being told that they were violating it.



*Rewards—Where They Come from*

This area of the focus group discussion was probably the most revealing in terms of comments from the members of the group. As I reflect on my belief changes about the study, they began with these remarks. What the DSPs said, was that the rewards of this job came from the residents as opposed to intangible rewards from supervisors or the common rewards of having a job and getting a paycheck, healthcare, and other rewards normally associated with employment.

*Rewards from the residents.* Some of the comments made by the focus group included the following statements. One person said, “Making people happy is like the best thing ever!” Another participant echoed the first one and further clarified the thought by saying, “I mean when you see a smile on your residents face, you are proud of the job you do. And that makes the day worthwhile all on its own.” Others talked about the residents and their reaction as a form of reward by saying: “I mean you see them [the residents] happy and you know you have done your job well, that is the biggest reward of all.” Still others talked about the emotional connection that they felt between the job, the residents and themselves. Making remarks like, “I feel blessed every day. And you have fun with them. I mean you interact with them and you just go. If you can make one person smile at the end of the day then it’s been a worthwhile day.”

Several of the focus group participants also commented that the residents became “like family” to them. Some of these feelings are reflected in the following comments. “This is not like a normal job where you are here just for the money. It’s not like a normal paycheck, if it was we wouldn’t be here. If it was just a paycheck I wouldn’t be here.” They went on to explain that money would not be *enough* of a reward for them saying, “You couldn’t give me enough money. I don’t consider this a job; it is my other family. I mean like they were your own kids. I

have lots of children but only three that I gave birth to. If you are just here for the money, you are not going to make it. You are going to be miserable.” The participants completed this part of the discussion by describing the relationship that they have with many of the residents, “Making them [the residents] feel like someone cares about them because not all the residents here have family any more...many have nobody. They have us.”

Many of the DSPs told stories of how the residents had become part of their families. I found myself wondering about their comments and the emotion behind their words.

*Rewards from supervisors/ reward power.* When asked about the rewards that are given to the workers from their supervisors the workers at first were silent. They could think of nothing to say. This reaction was quite a contrast to the chatty nature of the conversation on a similar question directed to the workers concerning the rewards they received from the job itself or from residents. Finally, they discussed how supervisors could use their reward power and give out “accommodations” for work that was viewed as superior performance and deserved attention. Some in the group expressed past receipt of such recognition. However, one worker gave an emotional example of how this reward power had ultimately been used to discount her performance.

.... my supervisor was fired. So, I ran the department by myself. I did everything for all 94 residents and I didn't have any errors so I got an accommodation for that because there were no deficiencies. Someone from another department saw that I had gotten an accommodation and got upset because I'm not a supervisor and they said that I should not be doing something that a supervisor should be doing and took it all the way – it was a big, big thing for me.... It was this big stink, I mean they changed all these policies so people like me [without a degree] can't sign off on certain things. I did it [the job] better than the supervisor that was there but... it was horrible.... Yeah, management took my accommodation away. Isn't that something? It was posted on the bulletin board and they took it down. They took it out of my file. The one that my supervisor gave me I had to give back.....

The supervisor's power to reward and punish was acknowledged by the group. However because this group unanimously felt that there was an abuse of this power by some of the management, erosion to the power to reward normally associated with the position of management was occurring. A future example in the individual interview section further illuminates this point.

*Rewards from other staff members.* The rewards given to the DSPs from their peers extended the divide of management's ability to control or have power over the DSPs' behavior. There was definitely a bond that developed among the DSP staff. Some of the comments made in support of this thought are as follows. "You are here because of the people, not just the residents but other staff too because you are working with them and you all are like a family." Other members of the focus group echoed this emotion by making the following statements. "I love the people I work with and I love the residents." "I do too, we have a good staff and I love where I work."

#### *Ability to Make Decisions*

While the DSPs felt that their ability to affect policy and procedures about their job was rather low, they felt a high level of ability to make decisions which impacted their day to day responsibilities and those tasks that affected the residents, especially their ability to influence the satisfaction level of the residents who live at Angelina and their happiness. They felt that they were able to decide the right time to do all the housekeeping functions for the facility in which they work. They could also decide on small activities such as assisting the residents they care for, picking out their clothes, bonding with them, and taking them on outings.

They gave many examples in which they had taken the residents and decisions they had made concerning these outings. Below are listed only a few of their many examples. One person

said, “I often request outings such as shopping trips. Residents like to go shopping.” Another mentioned meal preparation, “Clients (residents) help us choose a cooking activity, a meal for them.” Another talked about food grown and eaten at one of the houses, “I know at the one house we [the staff and] the clients grew a garden. So, in the summer on the weekend when I worked one of the staff would go out and buy chicken breast and make them [the residents] salads and just grill the chicken to make lunch or dinner. We did it on our own. We paid for the garden and the chicken breast.” Others mentioned other activities around food such as, “Camping. We go in cabins and the residents help us cook the meals on the fire, and prepare them.” or “We like to take them (the residents) out to eat, they love it. They won’t eat before; they love to go out and eat food. Chow down. It’s a treat. They know real food...”

Another topic discussed by the members of the focus group was a destination form of outing. Some examples of this are: “I’ve taken clients to their relatives; one in Florida. He liked that. We went to Disney, too.” And “We all went to Ocean City—the residents and the staff.” Others talked about more local attractions.

Some of the DSPs and I have taken residents to Wagon Trails and we have taken some of the guys up there to ride on a big wagon. Some of the animals’ heads come right over top of the gates. Seeing the expressions on their faces of our residents is unreal. I think that’s like the best thing in the world is to see our residents happy.

Others talked about inviting the residents to their homes. For example, one talked about Christmas.

There was this one client, I won’t say his name, but he didn’t go home for Christmas and I felt bad. So I took him with me to my mom’s house. We had to carry him in because he is physically challenged. He couldn’t get his electric wheel chair into the house, but I had a friend of mine help me carry him in, and we just hung out for Christmas.

Another talked about Thanksgiving, "A lot of residents go home with the DSPs. They don't have anyone. I took a resident home for Thanksgiving; he had four plates of food and I let him." One member gave the example of Easter, "I remember one time I took a resident home at Easter because he is Catholic, so I also took him to church with me." Another member talked about taking home residents in general (without a holiday) "One resident would always cry over the holidays because no one would come to visit him; his brother wouldn't come. I felt bad so I took him home with me. He loved it. He had such a good time."

*Evidence that the DSPs Know Better*

The workers also talked about their ability to make changes that were outside the limits of their manager's realm of influence. One worker told a story of how she does what she believes is right for the resident regardless of endorsement of management. She talked about a resident who comes to see her in therapy and has lost some of his prior ability to function.

.....there's a resident who is now not ambulatory anymore... then he used to crawl because he couldn't walk...Now they [management] won't let him crawl anymore because he is G-tube and they think that crawling will pull it out. Why don't they put a button in there [for the g-tube]? I come in here and do therapy with him. I put him in a walker and walk him up and down the hallway, about a thousand feet. The whole time he is laughing and smiling... I am able to give him back abilities that were taken from him.

*Expert and Information Power*

The DSPs definitely felt that they held the information and expert power when it came to knowledge of the residents. When asked for specific examples of the expertise they felt they had about the residents they gave the following examples. One participant said, "If you notice the residents are pretty good all day and then you catch them hitting their ear or something like that and you know something is not right." Another one gave the example of change of eating habits saying, "Yeah, the residents stop eating for an unknown reason. We know that it is not normal

for that resident. If they will only eat breakfast, and won't eat nothing else the rest of the day. You're there to catch it."

Additionally, each resident has a program review each year of which the DSPs are a part. Their input is taken quite seriously, since they are perceived as the people who live with the residents each day and possibly know more about their habits than anyone else.

In the words of one participant, this is how the program works.

Once a year every resident here has an annual meeting to discuss everything that has happened to the resident in the past year. The DSPs are part of this meeting and so is every department that is involved in their care. They talk about if the resident has deteriorated or gotten better. Every single thing that has happened in a year, we [the team] will go over it. If there are any concerns we will go over them. We also have ITR meetings, which are every three months. In these meetings we discuss residents by house. So it will be for house 101. Then we talk about all those residents. Then we go on to the next house and so on.

In this way, the management staff validates the knowledge and expertise of the DSPs. They invite them to committee meetings and count on them to be the experts. For example, in the words of John, the Human Resource Manager, "We want suggestions from employees about the residents day to day, hour to hour. We have had a few meetings where employees have come forward; we made some changes to the residents based on their comments." When I asked John, was there any other way he might get information about the residents, he replied, "No that is right. We would not know without them."

#### *Protection of the Residents by the DSPs*

The DSP staff also talked about how they were at times called on to (in their words) "protect" the residents. Below are some of their comments. The first participant relayed a story of taking a resident out for food, "I've been out and had someone come up to me and says, 'Can I buy your friend a drink or some fries?'" Another talked about how the general public sometimes

bonded with a resident saying to the care giver, “Can I tell you a story? My son has so and so [problem], too.”

The participants also discussed how the public sometimes was impacted by the quality of care that they witnessed. One participant said the following, “I’ve had people ask me, ‘Is that your son, because you are taking such good care of him?’ They actually think that [the resident] is your child. They think only a parent could show such affection... and that’s a compliment and a half.” Another participant gave the following example, “We take guys in wheelchairs and it’s really hard to get a door with out some kind of help. So people help us.”

Another DSP offered a different view and described how he compensated for his philosophy,

When I’m not working, I go to church and I sit right behind the residents because no one knows how to shake their hands and give them peace and all that, they won’t even go near them. ... That’s the kind of thing that makes them feel better. Makes them feel human. They feel like they are a part of something, positive attention...

Most of the discussion was about positive examples of the general public helping out those residents and those who care for the residents. However, the DSPs gave a few examples of how they protected the residents from the general public when they felt a need to do so. Below is some of what they said. One participant said, “Then you have people that are ignorant. You go some place and they don’t want to wait on you.” Another echoed this sentiment and said, “Yeah, I’ve had that happen. It’s worse if you ignore than if you stare. I mean I used to ignore when I would see someone like that.” Still another participant told the following story. “We, my particular friend and I, went to see a movie one time, and my friend hums and somebody got so offended by it, they went to the person [manager] and said we can’t have this person here. We are so distracted that we can’t even watch the movie. We want a refund of our money.”

When I asked the group why they defended the residents they said, that “people only act the way they do for a couple reasons.” One of the possible reasons that they gave was that sometimes people fear those who look or act differently than they do. They argued that, “If they were around them [the residents] more often, then they wouldn’t be like that.” They also discussed the concept of walking in their shoes a while. In their words, “put your feet in their shoes you try to walk around a little it’s not so easy.” They also challenged that each of us should consider if “we were like that” or “if the resident was their child” then they might behave differently. The focus group participants felt that if the general public would really consider the residents trials and tribulations, then they might behave differently.

*Interpretation of Spiral Two: Critical Reflection, More than just Hegemony*

Karin started a “tea and cookies” session with all new hires. While having tea and cookies may seem innocuous enough, it was a key strategy according to Karin to both reveal her own values and how they relate to Angelina and to get new hires to reflect on their own. During this session she communicates her original vision and values for the residents care and Angelina. However, the encouragement on Karin’s part to have each DSP interpret the values and principles in their own way based on their own past experiences helps to create a culture which encourages transformation and raises awareness of otherwise taken for granted behaviors and thoughts. Thus, the DSPs saw many of the phrases, “do the right thing,” “stand out from the crowd,” and “state of the heart” as encouraging them to define these phrases in their own terms and then react accordingly. If the founding principles or values had simply been espoused by Karin or written in print, it could be argued that what they created was just another form of hegemony and control of the workers. However, since Karin encouraged the workers to reflect on the guiding principles and attach their own meaning to them based on their own personal



experiences, a form of micro emancipation or freedom was felt and communicated by the workers.

The freedom to implement the mission of Angelina in any way they deemed appropriate allowed the DSPs to see a broader scope of power and responsibility and as a result somewhat limit management's power over them. The DSPs said that they would follow the guidelines set by management, "as long as those guidelines seemed reasonable." In the event that they seemed nonsensical, the DSPs planned to take further action, ending at the CEO/Executive Director's door if necessary. An important underlying point about this process was that the DSPs were comfortable expanding their power base and bringing issues to Karin if necessary because they believed that their values were in alignment with hers. Specifically, they believed that whatever they saw as best for the residents, Karin would concur with regardless of their supervisor's perspective. Furthermore, it was their belief that supervisors were most often focused on operational and policy reinforcement as opposed to issues dealing with resident care—those issues that they saw as most important and the reason for Angelina to exist. Thus, on the one hand the DSPs saw their power expanding and limiting managements' ability to control them, but on the other hand and at the same time, they saw management as focused on issues that were different than those that most concerned them.

A term used for Karin is "mother." The DSPs talked about how they would abide their supervisors' instructions as long as they believed that they were valid, however, in the case that the supervisor's judgment or direction seemed inadequate, they all agreed that they would seek "mother." What I found really interesting about this was the fact that the DSPs said that they would seek "mother's" opinion even if they did not personally know her. I made a note to talk to the participants further in the upcoming individual interviews.

In the area of the worker staff sharing and meeting the goals as outlined by the CEO/Executive Director of transformation for this organization, the DSPs are in alignment with her vision. For example, the values of dignity and respect for the residents and having the ability to solve problems, decide care, and share in governance of residents are apparent in the behaviors of the DSPs. This benefits the organization and ultimately the residents by increasing continuity of care, which is more responsive to residents with disabilities needs. This change in essence of the DSPs position has led to the workers saying positive things both about the work and living experiences of the individuals who become residents at Angelina. In all of these ways, the transformation has moved the organization closer to the goal of survival, especially in the area of change in funding source.

While procedures and policies are normally closely adhered to and in fact there are levels of middle management whose sole purpose is to ensure that these rules are followed, the message of “doing the right thing” appears to supersede any other written policy. It is obvious that “doing the right thing” as defined by each of the workers and “answering a greater calling” as each worker interprets this statement surpasses the policies, for example. Even the term creating a facility which would be “a Cadillac of facilities” was not only repeated by the DSPs but they had each attached their own meaning to this concept.

To the employment related questions of, “how important is your job to you” and “does preservation of your job trump all other personal goals?” Focus group participants agreed that having a job was important, but they did not believe that having this job and obeying a particular supervisor was always more important than following your heart or doing what you believed was right. In fact, they agreed on just the opposite. They gave numerous examples of following supervisors and policies as long as they believed they were right. However, any time they felt

that the policy or a particular supervisor were wrong they reacted accordingly. Either they went around the supervisor, sought a next level supervisor, or talked to Karin herself.

They had total confidence that Karin would support any idea that they had that was sustaining the disabled resident. In this way, they unanimously felt that they had the power to make the best decisions for the care of residents and this power superseded any rules of Angelina. In fact, many of the DSPs explained that the rules of man were superseded by rules of a greater calling, whether they originated in a spiritual greater being or in ones own definition of following personal guiding principles. Instead of following rules, policies, procedures of Angelina, they followed their own decisions based on guidelines given by Karin, the families, and their own sense of right and wrong.

These remarks also serve as a great example of using one's own base of personal power to go beyond those bases of power that supervisors were able to leverage—coercive power, for example. It is also a good example of how social networks may not follow the organizational structure. In many of these examples, we are looking at the CEO/Executive Director and the DSP and omitting the entire middle and upper management to fulfill the Angelina principles the way they view them. They further felt that their supervisors were at times focused on policy enforcement that was counter productive to the goals, objectives, and purpose of Angelina.

At the close of this focus group interview I had an overwhelming sense that while management was focused on control of the DSPs behavior and enforcing the rules which led to adequate survey results and continual funding, it was the DSPs that determined the care of those who resided at Angelina. The group listed several examples of how they saw the erosion of managements' power base in the last two years since the start of the transformation. For example, they said:

I think Karin has gotten wind of [all that she has been missing...] She has found out the difference in what she is being told and what is really happening. So, she is questioning [management] and, she is encouraging us to question what we [the DSPs] think and what we do.

There was evidence of power shifting at two different levels. First, there has been a shift of the workers or DSPs increasing their power base by leap-frogging over the management staff and bonding with their vision of the CEO/Executive Director as they defined it. This behavior has caused the second level of shift—decreasing some of the power of management, particularly in the areas of management control of the treatment of residents and decisions made concerning them.

At the same time, power appeared to be shifting to involve numerous sources and from numerous directions. Evidence of power coming from numerous sources became evident as I looked closely at the origination of rewards for the DSPs. If rewards had followed the hierarchy, rewards would have been expected to have been given by the supervisor. Since the DSPs saw the majority of their rewards coming from other sources—namely the residents and the residents' families, the expected source of reward power was not leveraged. Though this power shift is clearly not accomplished by using the Table of Organization (Figure 4.1) or chain of command, it nonetheless is occurring. This fact offers additional questions and insights into the transformation and power shifting within this transformation process.

#### *Questions for Spiral Three: Multiple Power Sources*

The DSP or worker position appeared to be in more alignment with Karin's espoused beliefs about the organization and further in the transformation process than much of the management staff. I wondered why. Most other organizations that I had been associated with used each level of management or staff, as indicated on a table of organization, to pass down the

values of the organization to the next level, culminating at the lowest level of the organization. Angelina appeared to have some managers in alignment with Karin's vision for change but most were focused on enforcing policies and procedures that were more operational or transactional in nature than transformative. It appeared that much of the treatment from the managers left the workers feeling unappreciated and over-managed. The DSPs understood the focus of the managers, but felt that they were spending too much of their time on issues which were not germane to the treatment of the residents, in their minds the reason for Angelina's existence.

Other questions that kept occurring to me were the following. Could it be that the intrinsic rewards received from the residents (that the DSPs so obviously valued) allowed them to be somewhat removed from the manager's ability to exercise their reward or punishment power over them? In other words, did the rewards they received from the residents supersede any consequences that the managers could deliver through use of their position power? Could this detail make them somewhat *laissez-faire* about the rules and behaviors that the managers were able to deliver? How did each DSP determine what they felt was "right" for the residents and at the same time not create bedlam in the organization? Was there a critical reflection process? If so, how did it work? I had made some attempt during my focus group interview to divide types of power exercised by each group—the workers or DSPs and the managers. I began to focus more on the types and sources of power. I felt a need in the individual interviews to pursue the DSPs' perspective of this further.

### Spiral Three: Multiple Narratives, Perspectives, and Power Sources

During Spiral Three, I interviewed six of the focus group members individually. As one part of the interview, I asked them to identify which sources of power they thought the management staff exercised and which sources of power they felt they were able to exercise

using the power bases initially developed by French and Raven in 1959 (Raven, 1999). Also, in this spiral I looked at other documents including watching the CEO/Executive directors' message in the monthly Video Newsletter and analyzed numerous messages from 2007 and 2008.

After the focus group had been conducted, interviews were held with six of the individual workers, lasting from 30 minutes to 90 minutes. These interviews were held the same day as the focus group or the following day. The same people participated in the one-on-one interviews that participated in the focus group interview with the exception of one female. She was interviewed by phone. A couple members of the focus group did not attend individual interviews. They gave the following reasons for not participating in the individual interviews: 1) they had already given their opinions and answers during the focus group interview and so felt their interview would be redundant, 2) their work schedule did not allow for their attendance, and 3) they simply felt that they needed to work in the house because the residents needed them. Many of the issues that the participants talked about in the individual interviews were similar to those represented in the focus group. However, a few of the stories they told were more illustrative of their position or offered something different. These are their stories and some of their comments. From these interviews, I developed a deepened understanding of the issues related to power at Angelina.

#### *Patsy*

Patsy was a member of the focus group who had worked at Angelina for several years as a single woman. Now she found herself a single woman with a child because she was raising her sister's daughter. Perhaps due to this situation, perhaps due to something else, Patsy had decided that money in and of itself was not a reward.

### *Rewards*

She agreed that making enough money from her job to provide for her daughter was important. However, she defined reward a bit differently. She said instead, “It’s not about making a lot of money. I tell my daughter, it is about being loved. That’s the main reward in life, to be loved.” This definition of reward carries over to her interaction with the residents at her job. She said the following to further illustrate her position

I feel blessed everyday. I mean I make their (the residents) day every day and they make mine. I come into the house that I work at and the residents who live there are all smiling, like hey. I make their day everyday and they make my day. So, I feel blessed. It’s not about the money. It’s about feeling loved.

### *Ability to Make Decisions*

When I asked Patsy about her ability to make decisions, she talked about caring for the residents and the freedom to make decisions about day to day activities surrounding their care.

Basically if we have enough staff, we can do what ever we want.

With us our schedule is very flexible. If I want to take my 15 minute break, I take it...I mean if someone is wet then I have to go change them and the floor isn’t going to get done right a way. I take care of the clients needs first.

### *Alignment with Angelina Values*

When we discussed her values and their alignment with Angelina’s she talked about care of the resident and putting their needs first. This value made sense to her and felt very natural.

Everybody should take care of the client first; take care of their needs. I think that’s everybody’s (DSP’s beliefs). Everybody I work with, we all think about the client first.

I do think the DSPs that come in here (at Angelina) come with a heart. They always want the clients needs taken care of first. That's just the right thing to do. I mean wouldn't you want your child to have the right care?

Patsy felt that Karin was very clear about her expectations. She also felt that her own beliefs about the care and dignity of the residents were very much in alignment with those of Angelina. She insisted that it all started with the heart—having the heart to care for the residents, putting the needs of the residents first, and having a sense of appreciation, “being blessed.”

### *Donna*

I interviewed Donna over the phone since she was unable to attend the focus group interview. She reaffirmed what the focus group members had said the day before about their rewards coming from the residents themselves and also gave an example of exercising her decision making concerning taking the residents places.

#### *Rewards*

Donna talked about the rewards she got from her residents. These rewards were intangible but highly valued by her.

I get my reward from working by just watching the residents grow old. It is the best reward of all.

The smile the residents give me or the hug they give me, that's another good reward.

#### *Ability to Make Decisions*

Donna also shared her position on decision making. She felt very comfortable in her ability to make decisions about the residents care and especially outings.

Mostly, I can take the residents anywhere that I want. I have taken them to my house and my mom and I ordered them pizza. We have taken them on the trampoline or a couple times we have gone swimming. Sometimes we just go to my house to hang out. Other times we go out into the



community or we stop by some of the staff member's house that is off that day.

I found this last comment especially interesting upon analysis later. Donna said that she sometimes stops by staff members' houses that are off that day. I could not help but wonder what separated the DSPs from other types of workers. What made them want to invite residents to their house when they were not working?

#### *Alignment with Angelina's Values*

Donna talked about "doing the right thing" and what she believed these words meant. To her the phrase represented, "no matter what the cost is you need to do the right thing." She even went so far as to say that "If I saw somebody doing something that wasn't right, I would turn them in."

She went onto illustrate with a story that "doing the right thing" was a fundamental belief of her own and one that she has incorporated into the values that she has taught her children. She gave the following example.

I guess that is what I try to teach my children is to do the right thing no matter who is against you. But if you feel that it is right, you need to speak to somebody about it. My daughter was in elementary and they had several special-needs kids in her class. One time she saw a teacher hit one of them. My daughter didn't even hesitate. She went straight to the principal and stood up for the special-needs kid by telling on the teacher to the principal. To me she was doing the right thing. She wasn't worried about her own teacher or what might be the consequences of her actions. She just did what she thought was right.

Donna also talked about the meaning of "state of the heart." She said, "I would have to say that the treatment and care of the clients come first." Again, she reached back to her own experience to further explain this notion. "I think it's something my mother always taught me. You treat people the way that you want to be treated."

She went on to make these comments.

One of the things that keeps me at this job is wondering, “Who is going to take care for the residents if I was gone? Next, I would wonder if they were going to do a good job. These kinds of questions make me feel like I would be abandoning the residents if I left them for another job.

...when new people (DSPs) start we (the more experienced DSPs) are worried about that too. The residents are like your kids and when you go home you are thinking that the DSPs that you left them with better take good care of them. Also, if you work a different shift you are like ‘that resident is my favorite, don’t do that.’ You find yourself protective of resident’s care even with other DSPs.

Donna gave one other example that I found interesting. She explained that it was normal for DSPs to be worried about times that they were away from work and what care the residents they were assigned to would be receiving in their absence. She gave the following illustration.

You know the DSPs that have been here a long time, when they are on vacation; they will call in once or twice to see how everyone is doing. The same thing happens if you (a DSP) go home and you know someone is sick, you call in and check on them. You care about the residents and their welfare.

I finished this interview still wondering about the relationship that the DSPs developed with the residents and what effect it had on the ease of belief changes that appeared at this level at Angelina and not the management level. I also was curious about individual values of Angelina and how they were uniquely interpreted by each DSP. I could not help but hear Karin’s words repeated in my head, “what is popular is not always right, what is right is not always popular.” In the story Donna had conveyed about teaching “doing what is right” to her child, she had interpreted Karin’s words and made them values of her own. I continued to wonder, just how did this happen?

*Matt*

Matt had been with Angelina for about seventeen years. While he felt no animosity with his management staff, he at the same time felt that most of his rewards for working came from the residents he was assigned to or their family members and not from the management staff that he reported to. He gave the following example of rewards that he had received from a family of a resident that he had provided support for.

A guy came to us from a place that had closed. He was a good guy. He was quiet and real reserved. He wouldn't eat very well because he would choke on his food. He had come here because he could not do much. We used to put him on a big ball and we'd walk him around and take him down the hill near the house. I wish I could feed him more but he would just choke on it. So, they wanted to give him a feeding tube. When a person gets a feeding tube it is close to the end, they aren't going to last much longer. I don't know if he had cancer or what, but he slowly died. It was sad. He just deteriorated. That was very hard...it was just a slow deterioration. We went to his funeral. The positive thing was that they (the family) didn't want him to leave us (Angelina) before he died because they thought that we could give him quality care. We got a plaque after his death for quality care and we hung it in the house. That was very kind of the family to do that for the DSPs. I think that we gave him the care that he needed in the end although it was very sad. It was very painful and at the same time it was nice to know that the family appreciated our work.

Matt also talked about the personal rewards that he got from the residents that he worked with and for. He shared with me the following reasons that he was drawn to this work.

I do this because of a feeling that I am making a difference. I am not moving boxes or waiting on tables or dispensing beer. I am doing something that takes a special person. My brother works for Ford Motor Company. He has an MBA and he says that's a good job to have. He makes over \$100,000 and has a nice house, but he also says to me that, 'you aren't pushing paper; you are doing something to help people.' It's not like I am a doctor or a nurse, but I am making a difference and I am helping people out. I feel that (as a DSP) you get a certain love for the clients and they get attached to you. It is like a big family setting. You are family. You love the staff even though you get upset with them, you love them. I have been here for many years, now. ...the residents have unusual ways, but they are neat guys. I mean that is the way that you start to feel

about them; they are cool guys. Even their unusual kind of unconventional ways, they are kind of cool. They are unique residents, special guys.

### *DSPs as the Experts*

Matt used the following recount to illustrate that management was somewhat out of touch when it came to the needs of the residents. In his opinion they continually made decisions that left the residents in precarious positions if not harmful ones. He told the following story.

...our house is complicated. There are three residents in wheelchairs and one is mobile, and they have different physical needs. One gets seizures in the cold and in the hot. They have complex issues. For example we went out to an activity which we went to a concert in the park, and they [management] only had two staff members scheduled for that outing with three people in wheelchairs and one mobile guy. I said look can you send me out with three people and if I can get the van close enough to the concert I won't have a problem. Management assured me that they had made arrangements for me to park close and I would be ok. But when we got there we were not close. We had to park far away. So, we were struggling trying to get three wheelchairs (out of the van at the concert). So a person walking by offered their assistance. I said sure because we were struggling. I mean we had to go down a little ramp, too.

When we left I pulled the van as close as I could to the exit. I brought one client to the van and locked them in, while the other member of the staff stayed with the rest of the clients. Then I had to go back for the others. By the time I got back to the van the first client was so upset and emotionally distraught that she was crying. The other staff member said to me, 'she is upset because you left her.' I don't know what I could have done differently. I tried to tell management that in order to take so many clients out with so little staff that I needed to be able to park near the entrance. I tried to tell them...

I remember this other time that we went to a parade... and two of us (DSPs) went with three residents in a wheelchairs and a walker. We would push one so far, leave and turn around to get the other one while still watching the one you left...

Matt went on to explain that he had tried to bring up this issue to management.

One time the manager asked if they could be of help and I said 'yeah.' Well, I was talking to Omar (the Resident Director) about it and we (the

DSPs) aren't supposed to do that. However, it makes us look bad though not having enough staff for three wheelchairs when we go out. I've brought it up with management and they just say 'awe you can get the van close enough.' But even when we get close to the activity, it's not close enough. What can you do? You have to leave one resident behind and then when you come back and they are crying...

Matt summed up his understanding of his role and management's in this way, "I know more about the residents that are assigned to me than administration because they don't deal with the residents day to day." He went on to explain that from his view, "They are not lacking intelligence...they simply don't deal with the clients at all. They don't really work with us or know part of our schedule." They (management) just do things and makes decisions "without consulting" those who are really the experts and know better. He gave examples of outings he had had with particular residents, meals and even the following discussion of managing a fastidious behavior of one of the residents.

There was another guy who had a schedule for going to the bathroom. He would look at his watch and if it was time he would want to go whether he had to pee or not. It also didn't matter if someone was in the bathroom then or not. He couldn't understand why he could not go in the bathroom if his watch was telling him it was time to go to the bathroom. He would call it his privacy time. He would throw a tantrum if there was some reason that he could not go to the bathroom when his watch told him it was his privacy time. We started to get him out of that habit...but it was not easy. As a DSP, you have to deal with the resident's behavior.

All of these encounters of the DSPs and the residents appear to add to the perception that the DSPs are the experts when it comes to resident behavior, likes and dislikes, changes in their habits, and so on.

#### *Alignment with Angelina Values*

When I asked Matt about his understanding of Angelina's values and his alignment with them he chose to talk about the following.

I try to focus on doing my best. I don't want to be such a perfectionist that I fail but I want to get the ingredients in to succeed. I want to do my best and the most excellent job I can do. If I can get something perfect, I want it perfect. However, very rarely does my work get that way. No perfect day or activities, maybe it's timing issue... Like today when I got here I was looking at the clients to make sure they were all right, and this one lady had food stains on her mouth. So, I check it and got a napkin and wiped it off. I just really want the best. So I try to make it my goal – give the best quality of care I can give on a daily basis. It just gets boring if you are just here doing a job, the bare minimum...just to get by until the paycheck. That doesn't interest me. I want my job to be exciting and fun. It interests me to come to work. I want to come to work and offer these guys the best. I want to take pride in my work. I feel like I am leaving a mark here with the clients in the work that I do. I worry about every issue with these guys. I worry about missing things physically. Sometimes I go overboard with that, worry about documenting every bump, bruise or scratch. I worry about missing something that could be important. I worry about everything being right down to the 'T'. I mean you are here to take care of these guys.

When I asked Matt about his alignment with Angelina's espoused values, he said the following.

Yeah. I like Angelina's desire for the best and Karin's desire to be exceptional. I can relate to that. I think like they were saying yesterday (at the focus group interview), she strives to be exceptional. She's not afraid of that. She wants you to stand out and be exceptional and that's what I think 'standing out from the crowd' means. She's not afraid of standing out from others. I like that kind of value. I worked at a place before that was more like just do what it takes to get by...just do your job and do what it takes to put in the hours and get your paycheck. They had a kind of motto of that. The people, the administrators, just doing your job and not going overboard with it. Karin has a philosophy where she desires the best and doing an exceptional job. I like that, doing a good job and trying to excel. Also, I pray over it quite a bit. I am fairly religious. Karin is too.

In his responses Matt demonstrated how he was both aligned with the espoused values of Angelina and how these values were incorporated into his life.

#### *Toni*

Toni had been with Angelina for four years. She started our interview by describing one of the key principles that she found at Angelina was the ability to care. She felt the process of

determining your ability to care started with the hiring process. Since she was one of the newest hired of the group, I asked her to comment on the hiring process and the new hire experience and how she thought exposure to the founding principles impacted the successful DSP candidates.

*Alignment with Angelina's Values*

First, Toni talked about how a new DSP was selected and was challenged to exercise his or her power and provide for the residents by both incorporating Angelina's values and interpreting the meaning of these principles for themselves. She explained that Angelina's values were first presented to the new hire during the hiring process by way of the DSP video. It was Toni's impression that the beginning stages of understanding Angelina's values started with the watching of this video, describing the founding of Angelina and the culture. She also thought that the video laid the ground work for the manner that the residents were to be treated or cared for. This was then continued by the orientation spiral of training, including meeting with the CEO/Executive Director. In addition, she felt that these founding principles were reinforced by each printed and media publication.

They [the Human Resource Division] are looking for people who will care for everyone that they are assigned to take care of. I think they are trying to get people that will go above and beyond. They aim for that and that is very difficult. Not everyone is like that. There are some people here that go above and beyond. For example, there are people here that buy residents bags and bags of clothes, and they take the tags off so when they turn them in to the housekeeping staff they don't know how much they were. They do this so that they can't get reimbursed. They are like gifts for the residents. They (the DSPs) don't want paid for them.

When I asked Toni about the values at Angelina here is what she had to say:

Like everyone was saying yesterday (at the focus group interview), the care of the residents comes first. That is definitely the main thing. It's always about care, people getting the proper care. I mean a lot of people only care about themselves and maybe their family, but everyone who works here is able to care about others...

Toni then began to talk about Karin, other members of management and her personal story of transformation. She told the following to illustrate the point of how connected she felt Karin and the DSPs were.

I mean some people will tell you Karin is on our side. I think she is. I've been in meetings with her in this room and I've heard her talk. I know she cares. I know she wants the same thing I want for the people that live here. I know we are in sync.

[for example, one of the residents I cared for] went into the hospital and I thought he was going to be ok. I had no idea what was really going on, no one here at Angelina did. I had been through so much with him; watched him fight cancer and go into remission... I always took care of him. He was like my son and then he died. I was in the hospital with him the whole time he was there. I was calling off work to go and sit with him. I knew he was dying. We all knew, everybody knew. They weren't feeding him anymore at the hospital. I was so upset that they hadn't found this cancer sooner. I loved him... When I look at the residents I don't look at their age, I look at their mind. He was like a toddler. I mean he was a 46-year-old man and yet his mind was a toddler, it never developed past that stage. So it was like I lost a child not a man I took care. Karin was on my side. She wanted to do what ever it took for him to survive. We thought he should be fed or at least given liquids. She decided she was going to do whatever it took. She was going to fight to take guardianship over him if she had to...but it was too late. No food and water for two weeks. It was like torture for everyone. I don't think people realize who she is and what she will do for the residents who live here. I mean that was the point that I realized how willing she is to fight for what she believes is right. I mean I still don't know her that well, but I know that she is a good person. She is really committed to the values of Angelina...

I had gotten a fairly positive image of Karin and her alignment with Toni's values, but Toni had not mentioned her supervisor. So, I asked her about the supervisor. In fact, I asked the following: "In that example that you just gave, where was your supervisor? I mean I did not hear you mention that your supervisor was fighting for the same goals?" In response to my probing, Toni said the following:

No, my supervisor was not there, it was Karin. There was like three of us that were at the hospital with the resident all the time. No, none of them (at the hospital) was my supervisor. Actually my supervisor gave me hell



for wanting to be with the dying resident through his death. It was something she didn't understand. She didn't understand how I looked at him. They [the supervisors at Angelina] didn't understand that I didn't care about my job at that time because someone was dying. My job wasn't important right then. I think that kind of changed me. It helped me figure out what is really important---and it is not a job....

I have thought and thought about this story and the emotion behind the telling of it. It was told with a strong commitment to the principles that had become clear to this DSP. It was a wonderful example of a DSP taking the founding principles and making them their own. However, I could not help but wonder how much the relationship developed between the DSP, the residents, and their parents or guardians had to do with the belief changes of Angelina at the DSP level. Did the absence of this transformation at the management level have anything to do with the absence of relationship with the residents and their families? What caused a DSP to care so much for a resident and abiding by their own principles that superseded having a job? Furthermore, did this behavior render the ability of the management team unable to exercise their position power? At the very least, was management no longer able to exercise the reward and coercive power normally associated with the position of management? I found myself unable to put this story and the many questions that arose from its telling out of my mind.

### *Frank*

Frank had originally come to work at Angelina as a temporary employee some twenty two years ago. About the rewards at Angelina, Frank echoed a common theme. It was the residents and the intrinsic rewards that he got from giving care to them that made him come back each day and provided perseverance to him. Some of his comments follow.

### *Rewards*

"I am an average guy who likes to do my best. I am here to take care of the kids, for good times and bad. I have stayed here to do that job. We have a theory here; we call ourselves

‘lifers.’ If you are here for more than five years, you are staying for life.” He first talked about rewards that he gets from the residents’ parents as he told this story.

Me and another guy I work with every year take this one client out for Mexican food because he loves it. It is like a tradition. His mother loves it, too. She will tell me that I can take her Ed anywhere I want. That’s how much you get to know the parents too from taking care of their kids. They know you take good care of their kids. That makes you feel good, too...

Next he described his ability to make decisions on behalf of the residents that he is assigned to.

#### *Ability to Make Decisions and Protect the Residents*

You can go on walks or just take them outside. If they (the residents) are able we will take them out on the swings and just swing back and forth. Simple stuff.

After you are here a while, you take to them (the residents) and you get to know their personalities. Their likes and dislikes. You start to think of them as your kids. You aren’t supposed to, but you can’t help it. I tell people in my house all the time that these are my kids. When you take them out in public you find yourself protective. You don’t even think about it, it just happens. Like I took this one kid out and someone threatened him, didn’t know any better. And in front of people. I am lucky I didn’t get fired because I told the guy if you touch my kid I will knock your head off. It just came out. I mean my client wasn’t doing nothing but minding his own business. It just happens. I think it is one of the reasons you stay too because you get protective, like they are your own children.

#### *DSPs being the Experts*

Frank also talked about his view of the DSPs and the management staff when it came to knowing the residents and their needs. He also talked about the management staff today and his lack of confidence in them.

I am sure Angelina doesn’t like to hear this but I have forgotten more about some of these clients than some people (management) know. Basically my philosophy is, leave me alone and let me do my job. You don’t have to tell me to do things. I have done this job for enough years I know what to do. People say it is a hard job. It is easy. Once you get to know the kids, it’s easy.

Now years ago when I started a lot of the supervisors and management started out as DSPs. I could go to them for anything and it was done. Now it's like chain mail, go here go there or I'll get back to you on that. I don't need that. I need to know now, but they (management) don't have the answer because a lot of them have not done direct care work.

They don't have the same day to day responsibilities or contact with the residents that the DSPs do. They don't get to know them. It is like they are just a number, a case file. They don't know the residents and they don't understand how staff can get upset with them for this fact. Staff loves these guys.

The management staff has become detached from what Karin's founding values were. I don't think they are in touch with the pulse of the place. This has led to a lot of resentment and a lot of anger. There are certain supervisors that could tell me something and I wouldn't believe them until I found out on my own, because there have been so many things that they have said in the past that did not turn out to be right. Now, I just don't trust them.

### *Rewards*

When Frank talked about rewards, he mentioned either the family of the residents or the residents themselves. However, the management staff was noticeably absent in his discussions.

I had another young guy Jimmy who was in my room and he was another one with sweetheart parents, but his death bothered me. His mom called and asked if me and my friend would be pallbearers. How could you say no? She liked us. At the funeral home she had taken me aside and told me thank you for taking such good care of her Jimmy. His death bothered me. It is like family. When I started, I didn't think that way. When I started I thought oh someone dies I can handle that. I thought, so what? Now, once you are with them (the residents) a little while, they are like yours.

Frank told this story to illustrate his strong ties to the residents and at the same time his lack of reverence for management. This story shows how sometimes he has felt compelled to even go against management in order to protect a resident's dignity.

We had this one resident named Lisa and she was in my classroom. Her nickname was 'Boopy' because when she could talk she would call herself 'Boopy Girl.' She was hard headed. Every day at lunch we would take her down (to the group cafeteria) because she was hard to feed and one day the residents were home bound and she was on this wedge (a training

mechanism) and she went into distress. So they called me and it was sad because they were trying to do CPR and she was gone. All of a sudden people from the brown building (where management has their offices) and they were just standing there looking at her. I said to the one supervisor, get these people (management) out of here this is not a circus. So the supervisor eventually made all of management leave. But it hurt because she was one of my favorite residents and she was treated with such disrespect by management. That really bothered me.

### *Deconstruction of Power*

At the close of each interview, I asked each DSP to select from the bases of power which ones they felt that they exercised and which ones that management possessed. This Figure 4.6 represents the results of this discussion. The bases of power with the largest number of asterisks (three) illustrate the most agreement and the bases of power with the least (one) asterisks show an absence of agreement. Those cells with no asterisk represent those power bases that were not mentioned at all by that group.

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Table 4.3. Bases of Power Analysis

	DSPs	Mgmt
Position or Legitimate		***
Information	***	
Reward	**	**
Coercive		***
Expert	***	
Personal	*	*
Referent	*	*

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In the cells with three asterisks (\*\*\*), it was clearly unanimous and without much discussion that the group—DSPs or management—possessed these power bases. For example, position or legitimate power was based on management's position of supervisor and not disputed or discussed much. All members of the individual interviews were well aware of the reporting structure and the Table of Organization (Figure 4.1). They also understood that management was given through this position certain power bases by the nature of this position, for example, the ability to use coercive power. In extreme circumstances they understood this to mean severance from the company in the way of job loss.

Similarly, it was clear and unanimous that the DSPs felt that they had information and expert power. The discussion that ensued from this was not whether or not they possessed this power base but how they used the power they had. They insisted that they were the only group who worked closely with the residents and they were the only ones in a position to have information and expert power. They also felt that they had Karin's ear and support. Both of these details encouraged the DSPs' to use this power when necessary on behalf of the residents they supported. For the most part, the DSPs did not exercise these power bases with the intention to diminish the power of management; they simply used information that they had to bring to life the founding principles of Angelina.

A second interesting discussion came from the area of reward power, the area with two asterisks (\*\*). Though all DSPs were acutely aware that the management team had potential to reward and recognize the DSP staff, it was the rewards that were received from the residents or their families that held the greatest meaning. This reoccurring theme diminished the managements' ability to exercise power bases that are usually associated with their position.

The two areas designated with one asterisk (\*) were not discussed at all by any DSPs during the interviewing process. The areas of personal and referent power could have been discussed in association with either the management or DSP staff but were omitted.

### *Monthly Video Newsletters*

After the individual interviews I reviewed the monthly Video Newsletters for additional clues of structure and belief or value changes leading to transformation, focusing especially on the words of management and the CEO, Karin. Video newsletters were produced and distributed to all members of the organization monthly. They were distributed to the workers or DSPs by each house receiving a DVD copy each month and served as a vital means of organizational communication.

Each video newsletter is comprised of several components or segments that are repeated each month. There is the opening in which the month is identified. Next, it is followed by a “What’s New” section. The subsequent segment deals with a brief “Management Minute” which often introduces a new member of management or discusses some relevant upcoming issue. This is followed by a couple feature stories comprised of family members, residents, and staff members in particular houses. Next is a reading of a portion of Angelina’s Creed followed by an interpretation of that portion of the Creed. This can be particularly important because individual managers or DSPs tend to elaborate on their personal understanding of this portion of the creed. After that there is recognition of employees. This can be a management or worker status employee. Names are then listed for length of Service. There is then a message from the CEO/Director. This appears to be one of the most important segments of video newsletter and one that the employees watch closely to gather upcoming information and guidance. Each

month closes with a teaser section, meaning a section including a brief look at the upcoming month and stories within.

In this investigation the months of March, April, May, and October were chosen arbitrarily for analysis. To maintain consistency some of the same months were chosen for each year under examination and three different quarters were selected. The years of 2007 and 2008 were chosen as post the initiation of the organizational transformation to see if the message of the VNN supported the transformation if not enhance the conditions to make it possible. Below is a written synopsis of each Video Newsletter.

#### April 2007

A couple of the managers explain the beginning of the new Medication Administration Curriculum and the new guidelines for the teaching and the administration of medications throughout Pennsylvania. Human Resources Manager explains that Angelina has had a safety committee for over ten years, representing different parts of the organization. Some enhancements to the houses have been made to increase Angelina's sensitivity to the residents. One of the DSPs discusses how he has grown to love everyone here at Angelina and would never choose another place to work. Much of the content is dedicated to policy changes and focused on rule changes. The CEO/Executive Director then thanks everyone for their time and talks about the annual Staff Recognition Luncheon. Karin ends by saying that the staff at Angelina truly makes this a wonderful place to live and work.

#### May 2007

In this month's issue some general information was covered such as admission requirements, the data base system, and general health guidelines. There was a great discussion by a resident and a DSP staff member recognizing his participation in basketball and bowling for the Special Olympics where he won two medals at this event. Service awards were given. The Feature story was about a DSP and featured his work and the house he works in. His testimonial talks about living and working at Angelina. The creed section was read by a DSP. It stated, "because each resident is vulnerable, we must be trustworthy and honest." The DSP pointed out in her interpretation of this statement that families and friends offer trust and honesty and she sees Angelina as a family offering these same values. Karin's message this month focused on the Government Surveys and their importance to Angelina's future success. The message also incorporated a message on recruitment, retention and training. Karin also started a committee to look at important issues to the DSPs. The first accomplishment was to award a shift differential to the second shift, believed to be the most difficult shift in terms of requirement and responsibilities necessary to care for the residents. She encouraged the team to think outside the box, challenge the status quo, and reminded them that "team thinking always produces better results."

### October 2007

The Benefits Manager's message was focused on wellness and improvement of the health of all the workers. Discussed by management during the management minute was respect and support for the worker staff. The Human Resource Manager talked about the DSP referral program. The Trainer talked about ergonomics but again in relationship to the DSP position—concern about lifting and other duties. Karin's message was about the HR 1279 bill which supports the Direct Support Professional job. She told the story of how she and three DSPs from Angelina marched at the Capitol to raise awareness and support of this Bill.

Except for the recognition of the payroll manager in the Recognition segment of this Video Newsletter, the entire edition spoke to and was in support of the DSPs.

### March 2008

Four segments dealt with DSP issues. It was mentioned that Angelina was a great place to work. The organization's history was made explicit as part of the groundbreaking and reason for choosing the site were expanded on. Early days and values were also made clear. Karin's message was about the national challenge of elevating the DSP position both in pay and status. She is personally working to get additional congressmen to sponsor the National Advocacy bill. She also talked about speaking to the Board of Angelina on behalf of the DSPs and trying to persuade it to raise the salaries of the DSPs by using some of their Foundation Funds to support the salary increases.

### April 2008

This issue begins by describing some new technology at Angelina—the streaming of Angelina's videos. Next, this issue discusses some new additions to Angelina attempting to make the residents more comfortable. One of these additions deals solely with redecorations. A special thank you is extended to management for the perfect surveys results which are received every year. Furthermore, the CEO's message talks about the biggest change in the field since the MHMR Act of 1966, which will hit starting July 1, 2009 and she thanked all levels of staff—management and DSPs—in advance for their work in the success of this change.

### May 2008

The issue focused on changes that Angelina has made to provide residents with a variety of activities designed to improve socialization and independence. Crafts, painting, baking, and a weekly visit from a musician are among the many activities provided to work on resident growth and development. Creating relationships outside the home is also a key goal. Management at Angelina also discussed their commitment to DSPs to push our government representatives to give a cost of living increase to all staff. Teamwork and communication were discussed as important skills to keep things running smoothly. The CEO discussed the arrangement with a local college to try to both educate the DSPs and provide research data on technology that might assist the DSPs in working with the residents.



*Analysis of the Video Newsletter*

The video newsletter was used to support and enhance the organizational transformation process at Angelina. For example, in the April 2007 issue, in the remarks from Karin, she used the words, “wonderful place to live and work.” This is a consistent way to reinforce the intention of Angelina’s transformation both inside and outside the organization. May 2007 was perhaps the best issue for the DSPs. In this issue a DSP continued the theme of living and working at Angelina via a testimonial message. Also, in this issue was an interpretation of Angelina’s Creed by a DSP. She talked about the care of the residents and the trust that the family puts in the hands of the DSPs with their family members. Both of these examples reinforced the message of values and beliefs shifting. The October 2007 issue was also an issue focused on the DSPs. The first part of the issue dealt with respect and support for the DSPs and the second half of the issue told the story of Karin and her march on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. with the DSPs and in support of DSP issues. Probably no other gesture could have been stronger to show the DSPs her and Angelina’s commitment to their cause of increased status and pay. The next VNN issue, March 2008 reinforced Karin’s personal and professional commitment to the DSPs. In the issue for 2008—April there was for the first time a weaving together of the many activities that make Angelina’s organizational transformation a “text book” success—a marriage of both the policies and procedures that create good survey results (and continued funding) and the values and belief shift that the DSPs illustrated. Again, in the May 2008 VNN, there was expressed commitment to the DSPs. This time the focus was on their education goals.

Missing from the VNN was a straight forward discussion of the goals of transformation or any policies or procedure changes instituted to create power shifting from the management staff to the DSP staff. Instead these messages were told subtly, sometimes by Karin herself,

and at other times through other members of management and worker staff or DSPs. She used this communication vehicle to stress the founding principles of Angelina.

*Interpretation of Spiral Three: Multiple Truths, Critical Reflection*

It appears that the interviews with the DSP staff confirmed the belief that the espoused values of Angelina were both internalized by the staff members and varied. For example, Patsy's desire to find a sense of reward and alignment to Angelina's value of caring was shaped by raising her sister's daughter. Donna on the other hand, found "doing the right thing" a value that she lived by and taught. She connected with the phrase "state of the heart" through the teachings of her mother. Matt identified with doing your best and "delivering the best quality care." Meanwhile, Toni talked about "fighting for what you believe in" and "doing the right thing" when it came to medical treatment for a resident and answering to a greater calling than laws made by man. She and Matt both mentioned Karin's faith and how they related to it. In this way, Karin had been successful in her desire to espouse the founding principles of Angelina and ask each DSP to internalize and through their own life experiences bring something unique to the care of all those that reside at Angelina.

She had also been successful in letting the DSPs know that she both understood their jobs and the requirements of them. Karin had encouraged each DSP to deconstruct their jobs and then fulfill the requirements accordingly. She knew in a first hand way what it was like to perform intimate duties for the residents and receive rewards from them and their families. For example, one DSP said of Karin the following.

Years ago when she started, she was really hands on. She was here all the time...She built this place; it was like the Cadillac of facilities. When she built Angelina there was nothing like it. It was top notch and...it was unheard of at the time.

Another question that I had back at the end of Spiral Two was about the rewards given by the residents and their families, did they really supersede those rewards or consequences exercised by management? I feel that after talking to the DSPs, there is no doubt that the rewards gotten from the residents themselves and their families were highly valued. Several of the DSPs including Donna and Frank talked about them. A couple of the DSPs even discussed the value of the residents and their families in relation to the management team as they told their stories. Some of these DSPs include Matt and Toni, for example.

While there were countless examples of alignment between Karin's espoused founding principles of Angelina and the DSPs values, the absence of the management staff in this objective concerned me. Words from one of the DSPs like the following were particularly disconcerting.

I just wish Karin knew more of what was going on because I think if she knew she would be shocked and be like this is not what I had in mind.

Somehow in Karin's desire to bring to life the founding principles for Angelina to the DSP staff—superior care for the residents, development of a Cadillac facility, standing out from a crowd, doing the right thing, and so on— had she failed to intertwine the management staff's beliefs, assumptions and values in to their transactional goals? A power shift and a change or transformation of Angelina was what she believed was necessary. Clearly, the DSP staff experienced both, but what about the management staff? I examine each of these issues and anchor them in the literature in Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The study took place in an organization in the midst of transformation. The context was during an organizational transformation; that a transformation was occurring is an assumption of this study. To reiterate, in the Purpose of the Study section in Chapter One, it is stated that the intention of the study was to seek an understanding of the role of power and any shifts in power that may occur in an organization during an organizational transformation from the perspective of both the senior management and the workers or staff. Since the study was not conducted pre and post the transformation, there is no point “A” and point “B” to compare. Furthermore, since the transformation took place in an industry and for a not-for-profit company (where there was less reliance on marketing of services in return for a piece of the business) there existed no hard or factual beginning data. In fact, the notion to compete for business and establish your care as superior to other agencies in the same business was a new perspective for this organization. Furthermore, the comments about the behavior of the staff or interaction with the residents had never been measured since granting of residents by the state was not predicated on whether or not an resident or their guardian chose the organization based on level of care or service to the individual; instead facilities were selected by the state totally on the basis of availability.

In the absence of this beginning data, I have relied heavily on Karin’s perceptions and anecdotal evidence of both the “word” on the street about Angelina and the perception of Angelina’s founding values prior to the onset of the transformation. As a reminder, prior to this study and Karin’s initiatives, she felt that the founding principles had become imbedded in the culture of the organization and unnoticed by the workers. Specifically, this means that the

founding principles were buried and even if the workers or management followed them, they did so unaware of doing so. She felt that the average worker did not participate in the decision making process affecting their work or the care of the residents and instead these decisions were made by the DSPs' supervisors.

As a result, the meaning of the phrase "shifts in power" refers to the movement of what is traditionally considered managements' power and its redistribution to the workers both in comparison to what Karin had to say and the literature available on how power during a transformation usually is distributed—either through the hierarchy or from a grassroots initiative. The study then seeks to find evidence of, and understand the notion of power redistribution as it is transferred from the senior levels of management to the workers during this transformation and describe the role of power during this transformation.

Thus, I looked to see if the everyday workers were given an opportunity to be involved in decision making—a sign of inclusion and power re-distribution from senior levels of management to workers in a hierarchal organizational structure. I also looked at belief, value, and assumption changes in both groups, the management and the workers. More specifically, I looked to see the extent that these values, beliefs and assumptions were raised to staffs' consciousness, critically reflected on, and interpreted by each staff member in their own way. These are signs of transformation and possibly related to a shift in power (Camden-Anders, 1999; Bartunek, 1988; Burnes, 2004; Chapman, 2002; Giddens, 1979; Yorks, 1989).

In this chapter, I discuss the relevant findings of this study in relationship to the literature. I then turn to implications for practice, future research and recommendations and finally end with a summary and some concluding thoughts. Throughout this discussion, I address my research questions: 1) how is the transformation process intertwined with shifts in

power? And 2) when an organizational transformation is occurring, what happens with regards to power?

### Transformation at Angelina

Organizational transformation is described as quantum change impacting both systems and workers (Bartunek, 1988; Burnes, 2004; Chapman, 2002; Giddens, 1979, 2004; Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Huy & Mintzberg, 2003; Levy, 1986). Though during the initial spiral, it seemed as if transformation had not occurred since no large scale quantum change impacting both systems and workers had occurred (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Burnes, 2004; Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Levy, 1986). However, I kept remembering the letter of invitation to conduct the study at Karin's facility and the state of the organization as Karin described it. The theoretical framework of this study also played a role in suggesting that I look for contrary evidence once I had a sole point of view, suggesting that even if this initial view of lack of transformation was confirmed, there still may be other ways to interpret the initial findings (Cepeda & Martin, 2005).

As the study unfolded, it appeared as if the workers or DSP staff experienced a shift in power and a transformational change in core values and beliefs as described in the literature (Camden-Anders, 1999; Bartunek, 1988; Burnes, 2004; Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Giddens, 1979; McLagan, 2003; Mink, 1992; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996). It was the DSP staff that was encouraged to take the Angelina founding principles and incorporate them into the decision making process that they used to support the residents. They did this not so much through following the rules but instead through deconstruction of the principles and then applying the concepts to their own unique behavior as described by Goodall (1993).

In contrast, the management staff was asked to support the change in funding by meeting the standards of the state survey that leads to continued funding for Angelina. This called for enforcement of transactional types of activities which supported the transformation effort (Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Gabriel, Fineman, & Sims, 2000; Kroth, 2002; Rothwell & Sullivan, 2005). The management staff's direction was to meet and exceed those standards that allowed funding to continue to flow to Angelina. There was no message of values or beliefs and how they tied to the policies and procedures that the management staff was to uphold. According to Marshak (1990) everyone "interprets events through a set of beliefs and assumptions" that are "subconscious and rarely examined or questioned" yet have a profound impact on how a person sees a certain situation or takes action based on it (p. 44). Unfortunately for the management staff, this opportunity to be cognizant of values of Angelina and how to make decisions based on these founding principles was not encouraged. Karin even acknowledged that perhaps a "sense of servitude" was a missing element at the management level. Only through the VNN, written pamphlets, brochures and other materials used for communication or marketing or through osmosis did the management staff have the opportunity to learn about the re-commitment to Angelina's founding principles. There was no evidence that Karin directly provided them with the values and beliefs that she went out of her way to convey to the DSPs. Even the Employer Management Participation Group whose purpose was to bring about changes that yielded benefits to the residents, did so without Karin's direct input.

This result may in part be because of Karin's own background as a DSP. Since she originally held a DSP position, she may be more inclined to share those values that she perceived as important to success when she held this position with the DSP staff. Likewise,

since she never did the job of any of the management staff, she may (even at an unconscious level) feel it is less critical to interact with the founding beliefs in the same way as the DSP staff.

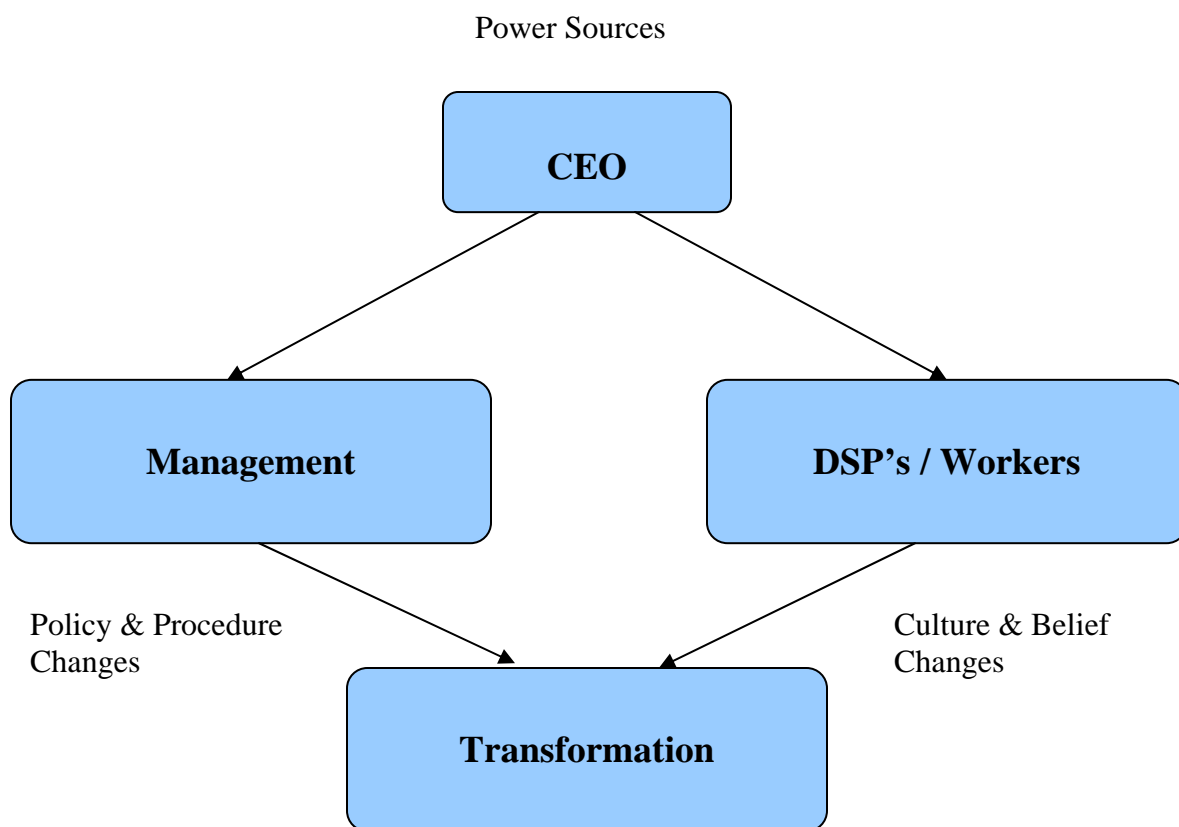
As a result, management appeared to be more focused on transactional types of activities sometimes known as organizational development interventions—changing the mission statement, changing and enforcing policies and procedures, printing and hanging new banners, and so on (Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005; Goodstein & Burke, 1989; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996; Porras & Berg, 1978; Trahan, Burke, & Koonce, 1997). They sought to maintain Angelina’s funding stream by forcing the DSPs to follow the rules and regulations of Angelina to the letter, as described by several of the management staff in Chapter Four: most notable were the interviews with John and Omar. Like the early literature on organizational development specialists, they saw their role as managers to be able to “fix” or solve organizational problems, mostly through changes in organizational processes or methods sometimes called transactions (Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990). Managers involved in transactional activities often aim to assist the organization to be more productive or effective, and frequently the strategies employed fall under the definition of first order change and include small or incremental adjustments in work processes or methods (Fletcher, 1990; Chapman, 2002; Gabriel, Fineman, & Sims, 2000; Kroth, 2002). Managers at Angelina fall into this category.

As this Diagram 5.1 would indicate, there appeared to be a split in the types of activities that the CEO/Executive Director relied on each group to make to support the transformation. The management staff was expected to uphold more traditional operational or transactional types of responsibilities that would continue funding for Angelina by meeting



and exceeding state requirements. The DSP or worker staff was expected to treat the clients in a way that would result in the families and the DSPs saying that Angelina was a great place to live and work. Both of these behaviors were intended to support the goals of transformation of Angelina and Karin. While it could be argued that only the DSP staff witnessed a core change in worldview from an alteration of value and belief changes, both the DSP staff and the management staff supported the organizational transformation.

Figure 5.1 Transformation Responsibilities



As noted in Chapter One and illustrated by this figure (5.1) while some strategies can be classified as more transactional initiatives, the overall intent is to transform the organization. According to the literature, organizational transformation is a more holistic way of looking at the organization and both includes people and structure (Bartunek, 1988, Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Golembiewski, 1979; Kegan, 1994). The transformation occurring at Angelina is a good example of both transactional and transformative activities that are necessary to create an organizational transformation type of organizational change (Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Gallos, 2006; Jones, 2006; McLean & Egan, 2008).

#### *Initiatives to Promote Transformation at Angelina*

According to Karin, as a result of the changes in regulations, she realized that adjustments would need to occur at Angelina. In her words, “our industry is experiencing much change...one of our major funding streams is changing...and how we market ourselves and communicate the important work we do to the state and beyond is crucial.” It became clear to Karin that the ultimate survival of Angelina depended on what its staff members had to say about working, the care, and the environment of the Angelina facility. Though my first interview with Karin focused mostly on the history of Angelina and background information, my second interview with her and subsequent other data echoed her intentions. Evidence of transformation eventually did exist and several strategies that Karin put into place were responsible for setting the condition for transformation to be possible.

Karin employed numerous strategies to promote conditions in which the transformation of Angelina was possible. Some of the strategies to communicate her values were aimed at the new hires and others at the DSP population at large. Regardless

of ultimate tenure of the audience, Karin’s focus was on the DSP staff. While the management was in no way excluded from the messages or from being a part of the transformation of values, beliefs, or assumptions, the message was intended to be received by the DSP staff. It was this group of workers that Karin felt possessed the potential to assist her in reaching her goals for returning to the founding principles of Angelina and communicating these principles to the families of residents. Table 5.1 below describes the various initiatives and their intended audiences.

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Table 5.1. Initiatives and Their Intended Audiences

Initiative	New hires	Existing DSPS
Tea and cookies discussion	X	
Video newsletter	X	X
Brochures	X	X
House meetings	X	X
Other video messages	X	X
Marketing materials	X	X
Annual reports	X	X

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The “tea and cookies” session is a simple but good illustration of Karin trying to plant the seeds in the newly hired DSPs’ during the orientation process to make these beliefs and assumptions explicit and create the environment in which organizational transformation could flourish. In this sense, the simple tea and cookies session can be seen as a rather profound

organizational intervention. This action is fitting with the literature in Chapter Two (Mintzberg & Huy, 2003) which states that empowered workers are encouraged to create results through increased communication and unique approaches while considering the values of the organization. It is also through deconstruction of these principles and the critical reflection on the workers' behavior as well as the interpretation of these principles that real creativity can be exercised and freedom of "unnecessary baggage" can be achieved (Goodall, 1993, p. 27). This means that critical reflecting on questions such as: What does it mean to be a good DSP? What qualities need to be present? What should my interaction look like with the residents? How can I attach meaning to the founding principles?

Karin also used marketing materials to consistently reinforce her message. These came in the form of pamphlets, brochures, mailings, annual reports, and so on to communicate her message. She also used video communication and the Video Newsletter to further her transformation agenda. She developed videos about Angelina's goals and activities and used these videos both internally and externally. She also used the VNN as an internal tool to describe progress of the transformation (though she never named it as such), acknowledge and reward performance, and keep open the lines of communication with her Angelina employees.

### *Introducing Critical Reflection*

Karin chose to accomplish the goal of how the DSPs viewed and spoke about the care they gave to the residents of Angelina by increasing the DSPs level of critical reflection of these principles. She began the process of setting a transformational condition by making members of the staff aware of the founding principles in accordance with the literature (Goodall, 1993). Karin believed that over time the organizational culture had become one where the Angelina values and beliefs were no longer explicit,

but embedded into the culture, making them unnoticeable to the employees and even less apparent to outsiders. This thought coincides with the description that Bourdieu (1990) and others have given when they have described the potentially dangerous side of hegemony to mean that people are so absorbed in the values, beliefs, and culture in which they live and have been socialized into, that any type of critical review of these beliefs is very difficult. When this happens, employees often become comfortable with the way things are and do not try to challenge them (Casey, 2004; Fleetwood, 2005; Garrick & Rhodes, 1998; Voronov & Coleman, 2003).

In accordance with the literature (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Fletcher, 1990; York & Marsick, 2001), there were several examples of where the DSPs were challenged to critically reflect on their experiences. Some found transformation in their prior experiences and others found transformation in their jobs with an individual to whom they were assigned. For example, the story that Donna told of her raising her sister's daughter and teaching her to "do the right thing," illustrates her taking the founding principles and making them her own. A very different example of a change came from Toni as she talked about the individual that she followed to the hospital. In all cases, the DSP staff was encouraged to take the Angelina principles and associate their own meaning to them.

At the end of this study, the DSP staff felt an increased comfort level, more voice, and freer to express their point of views. They also were given a forum to critically reflect on the founding principles and interpret them based on their own unique experiences. In some ways, perhaps Karin's intentions to focus on the shift of beliefs, values, and assumptions only with the DSPs staff and not the management team from the outset set in motion the boundaries of the transformation. It was the DSP group which saw a change of worldview and alteration in

their beliefs and values in support of the organizational transformation. The management staff did not see this same shift in worldview and only supported the transformation through transactional activities, such as enforcement of policies and procedures.

*Encouraging Deconstruction of Behavior*

Karin did not try to force a transformational change, but rather created a condition which allowed it to flourish. Goodall (1993) describes a similar concept in regards to his article using a postmodern organizational theory to deconstruct the employee handbook of Nordstrom employees. This handbook, according to him does not rely on rules and policies to coerce workers into exhibiting the desired behavior. Instead, it simply states that each worker should use deconstruction as the method to discover what the desired behavior is and then how that behavior relates to them personally. Through the process of critical reflection and self-discovery individual workers exercise creativity and innovation as they bring meaning to their workplace. This is very different than complying to a “list of dos and don’t or rules” (Goodall, 1993, p. 26). She also set up a condition of micro-emancipation and freedom from rules for the DSPs according to Goodall.

Similarly, Karin informed new hires of the founding principles of Angelina and then suggested to each of them to identify with them based on their own life experiences and treat the residents accordingly. She reiterated these principles using the technology offered by the video newsletter—VNN and in all written forms of communication for all existing hires. It was clear that she believed that getting back to the founding principles and make them part of the decision making process used to determine care for the residents would produce the type of change that was required of Angelina--to receive continued funding.

### *Transformational Leadership Characteristics*

Though organizational transformation cannot be guaranteed according to the literature, there are some organizational practices which tend to encourage the potential for it (Fletcher, 1990; Mink, 1992; Stegall, 2003; Yorks, 1986). Likewise, as noted in Chapter Two, it has been hypothesized that certain leadership characteristics encourage transformation (Popper & Lipshitz, 1998; McLagan, 2003; Watkins, 1996). Karin appears to have several traits that are often discussed in relationship to transformational leadership: knowing yourself, appreciating your followers, developing followers' skills and abilities, relaying and affirming shared values, servitude of purpose, and creating a vision and hope (Gradwell, 2004). For example, for both the DSP and management groups she emphasizes a key part of her own leadership style is defined by *service*. This notion ties to her religious beliefs. She explains that each morning she awakes wondering "how can I better serve" my staff? This reference to service and acting as a servant is found in the management literature (Kouzes & Posner, 1993).

According to Marshak (1990), successful leadership through large scale change calls for a leader to help shape how their staff members conceive and think about things. Freedom of choice, collaborative work and learning environments, autonomy, and a more democratic work culture are other factors which appear to enhance the chances of organizational transformation occurring (McLagan, 2003; Watkins, 1996). In addition, learning and the types of learning are seen as very connected to the potential of transformation (Hatch, 1997; Kotnour, 2001; Mink, 1992). Furthermore, according to Kotnour, "learning reduces uncertainty by producing knowledge; learning therefore becomes central to transformation" (p. 1053). Following this logic, then learning can support the organizational change process by creating a more informed and educated workforce.

McLagan (2003) lists several additional qualities that have been associated with organizational transformation. Several of these qualities are apparent in the Angelina transformation. These include: supporting day to day changes and improvements, encouraging mavericks, integrating technology, and building a deepened trust.

Karin appears to have developed some of these same characteristics in the DSP staff. They are encouraged to support the residents based on their own unique understanding and interpretation of the Angelina principles. Technology such as the Video Newsletter is used to discuss the direction of Angelina and communicate with the workers. Clearly, a bond of trust has developed between the DSP staff and Karin. Noteworthy is that the lack of many of these transformational leadership qualities in the management staff.

#### The Role of Power

In this section I look at some of the findings related to power and tie them to the power literature. I start by deconstructing power, looking at power through my frameworks lens. Specifically I look at power through the hierarchy of positions as control and empowerment are exercised. I then consider the bases of power, sources of power and multiple views of power from a more postmodern perspective. I then turn my attention to the decision making at Angelina, looking specifically at what types of decisions are made and by whom. Decision making is central to the question of power because most often during a transformation there is an alteration in the decision making process. Incorporated throughout this discussion are the answers to my research questions 1) how is the transformation process intertwined with the shifts in power? And in question 2) when an organizational transformation is occurring, what happens with regards to power?



*Deconstructing Organizational Power*

According to the literature, power can be seen as the possession of control, authority, or influence over others; can have relational aspects as well as an expression of organizational energy and can at times contribute to the status quo and at other times be leveraged to create change (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Vaara et al, 2005). Furthermore, power can be derived from several sources. Some of these overlapping sources such as those which originate from organizational structure, social structure and politics were discussed by authors such as Cervero and Wilson (1996) and Hatch (1997). Power from all sources was present at Angelina, both formal and informal sources (Cobb, 1980; Hammond & Houston, 2001; Havel, 1985; Hatch, 1997).

Power was also associated with cultural and gender dimensions, though these aspects of discussion were less pronounced, less espoused, and not examined in particular in this study. Still it is of note, that the organization was founded by three women. These women were explicitly maternal in their reasons for initially founding the organization. Though again this circumstance was not examined in this study, it may impact the organization and the findings. In addition, the organization was founded for those with disabilities who have little social capital. Again, this situation was not studied specifically but was mentioned as the DSPs discussed protection of the residents. If examined specifically, the population (those with disabilities) would most likely emerge with unique power issues. Likewise power associated with any relationship with the union and management or the workers was not explored in this study.

Angelina, like most organizations today continues to be organized using a hierarchy (Mercer, 1999; Mintzberg & Huy, 2003). They are frequently found in the not-for-profit sector, commonly incorporate other organizations such as unions or regulators to assist them in keeping

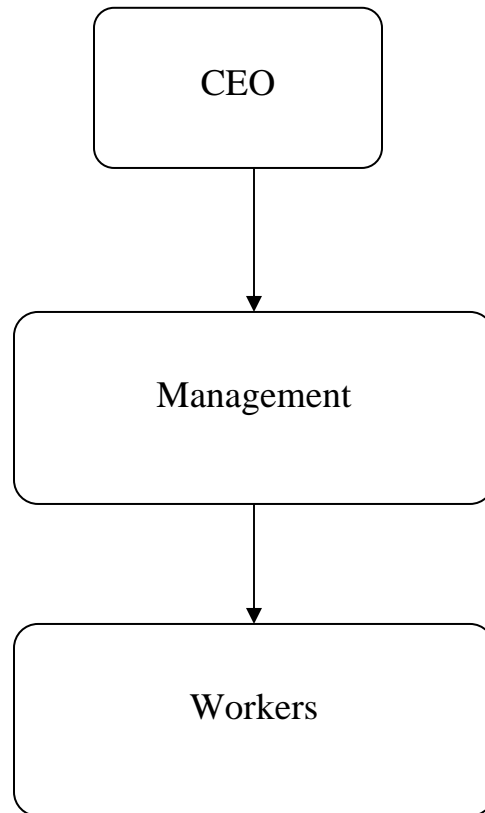
closer tabs on their worker staff and functions, and include other structural tensions (Deal, 1991). Often these organizations are structured around divisional or departmental functions in an effort to increase economies of scale and responsiveness without undue economic risks. Angelina was no different. Each department had well defined responsibilities and levels of management were in place partially to “watch over” the level beneath it.

Organizations with a hierarchal designed structure are most likely to experience those at the pinnacle of the organization having most of the power. Power from this view is often centered on the control and domination of others (Cobb, 1980; Leflaive, 1996; Townley, 2005). Angelina’s management staff relied on this form of power as they often referred to the “T. O.”—table of organization to describe the boundaries of decision making that were considered appropriate for different members of the staff. Mentioned in the literature review in Chapter Two is the concept that an organizational transformation may be introduced by those in power, typically at the pinnacle of a hierarchally organized organization (Mintzberg & Huy, 2003; Trahan, Burke, & Koonce, 1997; Vredenburg & Brender, 1998) as Figure 5.2 indicates. Using this perspective, power is expected to remain static so that planned change may occur according to the literature (Laurent, 1978; McConnell, 1998; Ouchi, 1978).

#### *Power ‘Over’*

According to the power literature in Chapter Two, most of the power using a traditional hierarchy is found at the pinnacle of the organization (Atwater, 1995; Koslowsky & Stashevsky, 2005; Vredenburg & Brender, 1998).

Figure 5.2 Transformations Using the Traditional Hierarchy



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In contrast to these values, the managers focused on the control of the DSP staff's behavior. For example, John gave the analogy of a factory, retail, or other establishment and said "usually you have some management employees monitoring the workforces' actions." He felt this was the ideal situation, a manager watching over the behavior of the workers making sure that they did the right things. Likewise Omar said, "Because when you have a supervisor in the house the staff is most likely to do the right thing, follow the proper procedure, not to violate or to take shortcuts... without a supervisor you are not teaching, you

are encouraging laziness.” In contrast, the DSPs talked about the founding principles—dignity and respect to the residents, doing the right thing, supporting with your heart, striving to be a Cadillac of facilities, and the idea of servitude to the individual and Angelina. Though at times, multiple voices were included or encouraged such as the Employee Improvement Committee, still management controlled and coerced the DSPs to comply with the rules of Angelina.

### *Power from Empowerment*

Empowerment is defined as spreading power throughout the organization from the powerful few to the less powerful many, creating a more democratized distribution of power (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1996; Clegg, 1989; Fiol, O’Connor & Aguinis, 2001). The literature goes on to explain that lower level empowered employees may acquire some access to resources and knowledge, decision making processes, and increased autonomy (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999; Hatch, 1997). Empowerment can mean increased variety and opportunity to challenge, relaxed formal controls, greater enhancement of sense of personal value, and a more rewarding life and work experience (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999; Cacioppe, 1998; Schein, 1993).

Empowered workers are encouraged to create results through shared decision making, increased communication, and unique approaches while considering the values of the organization (Hammond & Houston, 2001; Hardy & Leiba-O’Sullivan 1998; Harari, 1994; Mitchell, 2005). Empowerment is only a partial answer to the observed behavior of the DSPs at Angelina since it most often follows the organizational chart in flow of chain of command and it usually touches all levels.

Traditional empowerment strategies, however, are not endorsed by critical theorists because these theorists wonder how much the process of hegemony is responsible for ‘perceived empowerment’ (Alvesson, & Wilmott, 1992; Grubbs, 2000; Ogbor, 2001; Wilmott, 1993). These theorists believe that the critical few remain in power while they essentially ‘fool’ the masses into thinking that they have greater say in decision making than they actually do (Hardy & Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998). The strategy is used to enhance buy-in from the workers of what the management would like to accomplish. Real freedom to act is not a goal from this perspective.

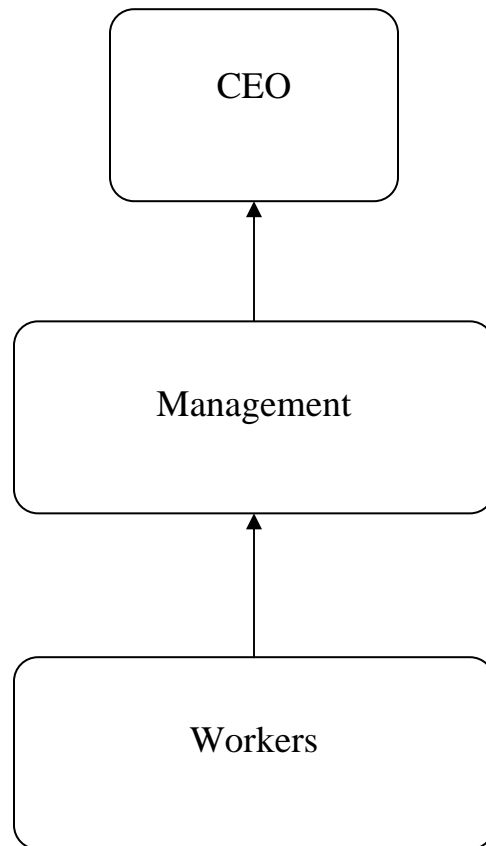
Using the theoretical framework, increased reflection on various “aspects of corporate culture” (Ogbor, 2001, p. 592) can foster raised consciousness and debate. Thus, increased awareness could lead to higher commitment, shared philosophies with the company, and the ability to exercise voice and consider multiple voices (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999; Hardy & Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998; Schein, 1993). According to the postmodern organizational theory literature is the thought that not only could empowerment be good for the organization, it is possible that empowerment might be a preferred way of working in organization and workers might enjoy being empowered (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992; Hardy & Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998). This perspective does not call for a dismissal of this concept but in alignment with the theoretical framework, it considers empowerment as just another way of considering power. Regardless, of the many benefits of empowerment, according to the literature, all forms are seen as an endorsement from management and still follow the hierarchal chain of command (Applebaum, Hebert, & Leroux, 1999; Cacioppe, 1998; Schein, 1993).

#### *Micro-Emancipation*

Also discussed in Chapter Two is transformation initiated from the grassroots (Mintzberg & Huy, 2003). One would expect the transformation to look like the representation in Figure 5.3

where the change is started by the workers (a grassroots initiative) a certain amount of power is usurped by them (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998; Nord, 2003).

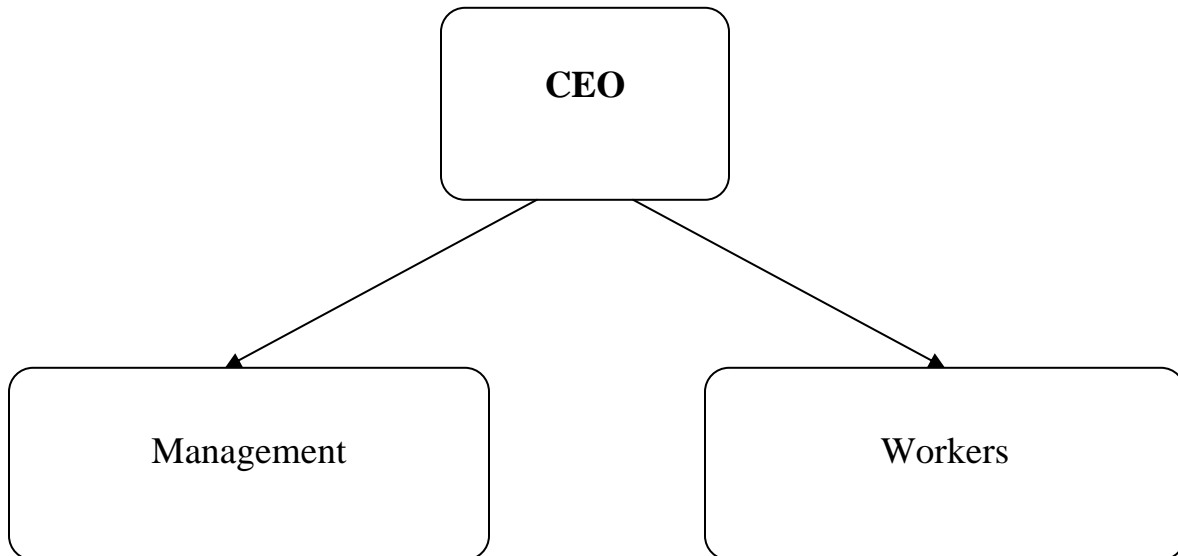
Figure 5.3 Transformations from the Grassroots



At Angelina, while the transformation was introduced at the pinnacle of this organizational chart and the hierarchy remained in tact, the resulting power shift effect was an organization that split the types or power and activities into two primary groups—those activities that produced survey measured behavior and those that supported care for the residents. This

type of transformation is illustrated in Figure 5.4. No where in the literature did I find a structure split on types of power exercised.

Figure 5.4 Transformation and power breakdown at Angelina




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#### *Multiple Views of Power*

In the Foucauldian (1990) view, the belief is that power exists all around us and we need not find just one source. Furthermore, identifying a source of power does not in any way diminish the power found from a different source (Casey, 2004; Goodall, 1993; Hatch, 1997; Kaufmann, 2000; Kilgore, 2001). It is possible that the connection between the CEO/Executive Director and the DSPs is a result of the founding process of the organization and the CEO's own background. Since she originally did the job of the DSP, she might understand and identify with it better than the duties or functions of the management staff. This could help explain why she might be more

inclined to bond with the DSPs in relation to the founding values and look to the management for the paper work, policies, and procedures that lead to continued funding. It is also possible that the power distribution found in this organization is in some way a product of this organization being a non-profit one. The organization was originally founded to care for those with little social capital, the disability population. Power distribution may be linked in some way to this social issue as well. Regardless of motivation or reason, in alignment with the theoretical framework numerous power distribution views are encouraged and even contrary views are sometimes held simultaneously.

#### *Structure Power*

Most often found in a hierarchal organizational structure model those at the pinnacle of the organizational structure have the most power, followed by those who report to them, in turn followed by those who report to them (Carroll, 1972; Leflaive, 1996). The transformation that occurred at Angelina did not follow this structure. This finding came as one of the largest surprises in this study to me. Though the transformation was introduced by a member of management found at the pinnacle of the hierarchy the transformation did not follow the Table of Organization. Instead, it appeared that different types of power were awarded to different groups of staff, and the change desired at Angelina was not passed down through a normal chain of command. Instead the DSPs leapfrogged over management at times to align themselves with Karin, the CEO/Executive Director. Of course, there are other examples, such as the change in policies and procedures where the managers or DSP supervisors were clearly in charge.

#### *Social Power*

Another source of power discussed in the literature is known as social structure in which workers from all levels bond around a task and at the same time form a social relationship (Hatch,



1997). This power source was particularly exemplified at Angelina by the DSPs and their working relationship with their colleagues. It was also mentioned as the primary source of power exercised by the manager responsible for training and staff development. In her remarks below she describes ways that she identifies with both the DSPs and the other managers and yet remains neutral. In fact, she describes herself as Switzerland.

*“I love the DSP’s. I am probably the luckiest person on this whole Campus. I am Switzerland. I don’t report anywhere, to anybody. I have the perfect spot in the universe...I mean I am in the perfect place and I can go to any department and get anything I want.”*

This quote clearly shows the power that this manager feels able to leverage from any and all members of the staff through her social connection with them. It also shows that she feels free to associate with the DSPs and accomplish tasks for them that otherwise might be difficult for them to achieve. What was surprising was that only one DSP mentioned this type of power relationship with this individual manager. Other DSPs mentioned their supervisors in a more vague way. Using the theoretical framework of the study, critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens, though the training and staff development manager was the only one in management to mention this type of power its existence it acknowledged and recognized.

### *Political Power*

The third view of organizational power in the literature is that power comes from the politics of organizations. According to some writers the organizational structure and power cannot be separated (Hatch, 1997; Giddens, 1979). In accordance with this view, I was expecting to find an organization similar to the ones described in the literature—where there is a traditional hierarchal organization, decision making is defined as top levels of management focus on strategic decision making, middle managers emphasize decisions about the internal structural arrangements

and coordination among units, and lower level managers are responsible for decision about day-to-day operational activities within their assigned units (Hatch, 1997). Instead what occurred was a bond between the CEO/Executive Director and the DSPs.

### *Bases of Power*

Another view of power according to the literature review is built on the work of French and Raven and their description of at least seven distinct but often overlapping bases of power: position, legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, referent, and personal power (Erchul, Raven & Wilson, 2004; French & Bell, 1973; French & Raven, 1959). As part of the interviews with the workers bases of power were listed on a flipchart.

The individual DSPs (after some definition of the words) used this list to discuss their experience with management and their own ability to influence decision making. They talked about the fact that management had position and legitimate power. At the same time, the exercise of position power appeared to be used by management to keep the DSPs or workers in their place. For example, managers might use information power to their benefit: for instance when policies are changed management, may or may not convey these changes to the workers.

The DSPs saw themselves as having expert and information power because of their intimate knowledge of the residents. The area that was most noteworthy from their discussions was the areas of reward and coercive power. These are traditionally powers that are associated with the organizational chart and awarded by the position one holds on that chart (Atwater, 1995; Blanchard, 1995; Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Vredenburg & Brender, 1998). Solely from the review of this chart, an outsider might expect that managers would hold most of the reward and coercive power over the DSPs. In this case of Angelina, what was reported during this study was that the DSPs looked to the residents, their families, and even colleagues to gain their

rewards as opposed to their managers. Though at a cognitive level, the DSPs knew that their supervisors were able to administer coercive power, in the most extreme example—loss of job, the DSPs said over and over again that they listened to the managers selectively. When they felt that the supervisors were offering the correct guidance, they followed it. However, whenever there was either a debate about the accuracy of the managers' direction or the direction was in direct conflict with what they believe to be following a founding principle of Angelina, for example, doing the right thing for an individual, and then they either sought another opinion or followed their own path.

When the DSPs talked about rewards for their jobs, they talked extensively about those rewards that they received from the residents and their families. They told numerous stories of growing old with the residents, protecting them, checking on them when they were off work, and so on. When it came to rewards from the families, they told stories of trips, being selected as pallbearers, and plaques to hang in their house as a memorial.

However, when it came to rewards that the DSPs received from their supervisors, there was little to say. In fact, one of the stories told was about taking away an accommodation from a prior supervisor. The DSPs told stories of how the managers got in the way when it came to providing for the residents. They agreed that they would follow the rules and regulations of the supervisors as long as these policies or procedures did not interfere with their own definition of providing good care for the residents. The values to provide appropriate care for the residents came from Karin, or the CEO herself, but not from the DSPs' supervisors as would be expected.

#### *Decision Making as a Measure of Power*

The ability to make decisions regarding an employees' behavior and in regards to the tasks or requirements of the job is a measure of autonomy (Henneke, 1991; Mintzberg

& Westley, 1992; Porras & Berg, 1978). For this reason, this activity was followed closely and analyzed both for the DSPs and the management groups.

### *DSPs' Decision Making Power*

The DSPs accepted the managers' roles as supervisor on general policy issues and those actions measured by the state for funding. Regarding these issues they listened to their supervisors providing they felt they were receiving accurate information. If for any reason, they felt that the guidance was erroneous, they went around the supervisor to "mother," Karin, for support. Similarly, when it came to issues concerning the residents and their welfare, they saw themselves as the experts.

Even the managers acknowledged that they viewed the DSPs as experts on the residents' care. According to the Director of Resident Services, the DSPs are "in the client's minds." They know the residents and their behavior better than anyone else. "They know when the client is not acting as usual—if the client is too quiet, or not eating as normal, or behaving in some uncharacteristic way." Another member of management said the following.

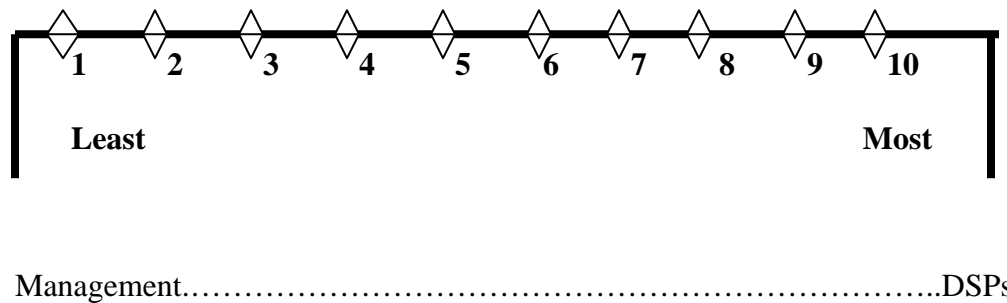
...the DSPs they have the knowledge...The DSPs know... I have seen them be right way too many times to doubt them.

In this way, the management staff validates the knowledge and expertise of the DSPs. They invite them to committee meetings and count on them to be the experts. For example, in the words of John, the Human Resource Manager, "We want suggestions from employees about the residents day to day, hour to hour. We have had a few meetings where employees have come forward; we made some changes to the residents based on their comments." When I asked John, was there any other way he might get information about the residents, he replied, "No that is right. We would not know without them."

We, my particular friend and I, went to see a movie one time, and my friend hums and somebody got so offended by it, they went to the person [manager] and said we can't have this person here. We are so distracted that we can't even watch the movie. We want a refund of our money.

John, the Human Resource Manager also readily acknowledges that the workers or "hourly employees" as he calls them "do most of the work and have the knowledge" about the residents. He also feels that "we want suggestions from our employees." He personally believes that "some of the best ideas come from the staff that does the job everyday" and "its management's job to listen" to the workers. The DSPs themselves gave countless examples of their intimate knowledge of the residents and their behavior as noted in Chapter Four. The Figure 5.5 indicated below shows that when it comes to the care of the residents, it is the DSPs that make these decisions.

Figure 5. 5 Care of Residents Index.



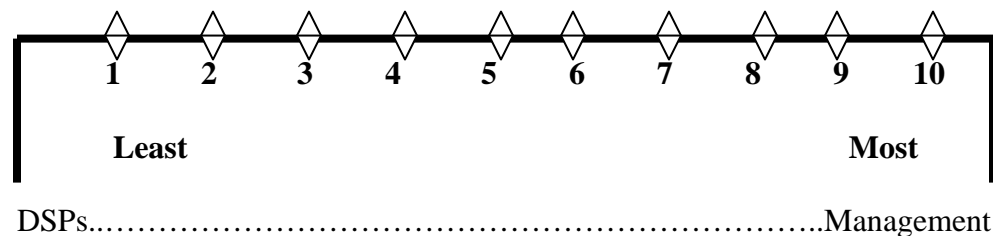

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### *Management's Decision Making Power*

Management most often made decisions concerning policy and procedure, what is often defined as transactional types of activities (Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990). They also indicated that they saw their own decision making ability linked to their position. For example, the Human

Resource Manager when asked a question about his ability to make decisions, replied, “We implement things that are just our level. If it is a decision above our level then somebody else has to decide...” Just as the managers used the Table of Organization to define their ability to implement decisions, they used this same thought process to enforce policies and procedures at Angelina when it came to those that worked for them. This gave the managers the majority of the power to control the job of the DSP, in terms of rules and regulations which governed their behavior. Figure 5.6 illustrates that most of the operational or transactional decisions were both made and enforced by management.

Figure 5.6 Operational Decision Making Index.



Operational Decision—Mostly Based on Policy and Procedure

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#### *Power as Fluid*

It is clear that a variety of power sources were utilized simultaneously as was described in the literature (Erchul, Raven & Wilson, 2004; French & Bell, 1973; Fiol, O’Connor & Aquinis, 2001). Some of these sources such as the over-riding of management’s decision were only utilized temporarily and when perceived necessary. Other sources of power, often referred to as the bases of power-- information and expert were much more predictable and static (Atwater, 1995; Drea, Bruner & Hensel, 1993; Erchul, Raven & Wilson, 2004). This matter is

supported in the literature and endorsed by Hammond and Houston (2001) who argue for a holistic look at power (Fiol, O'Connor & Aquinis, 2001; Foucault, 1990). The concept of power is fluid and exists all around us and “cannot be understood in isolation” (Hammond & Houston, 2001, p. 50). Similarly, power is seen to have individual and relational aspects simultaneously (Foucault, 1995; Hammond & Houston, 2001; Havel, 1985). In this way, the notion of power is interdependent and has overlapping qualities making it a tentative concept that is fluid (Hammond & Houston, 2001; Giddens, 1984).

### Summary and Conclusions

Critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens offers an understanding of power that is holistic. Since the Angelina workplace calls for no singular perspective to explain this complex construct this was a particularly effective lens to view the organization through. While there exists a separation in the roles and duties of the management staff and the workers or DSPs and there also in a relationship that exists between them. This interrelationship is dynamic and ebbs and flows as the power is shifted between these groups, making for tentative solutions and perspectives (Cervero & Wilson, 2006; Feldman, 1997; Hatch, 1997).

One position on the Angelina transformation is that power is a finite entity and as such the DSPs gained power at the expense of the management staff. Fitting with this more traditional view of power is some evidence of the Angelina transformation. In the area of the worker staff sharing and meeting the goals as outlined by the CEO/Executive Director of transformation for this organization, the DSPs appeared to be in alignment with her vision. For example, the values of dignity and respect for the residents and having the ability to solve problems, decide care, and share in governance of residents are apparent in the behaviors of the DSPs. This benefits the organization and ultimately the residents by increasing continuity of care, which is more

responsive to the needs of residents with disabilities. This change in essence of the DSPs position has led to the workers saying positive things both about the work and living experiences of the residents who become residents at Angelina. In all of these ways, the transformation has moved the organization closer to the goal of survival, especially in the area of change in funding source.

Karin started a “tea and cookies” session with all new hires. It proved to be a key strategy according to Karin to both reveal her own values and how they relate to Angelina and to get new hires to reflect on their own. During this session she communicated her original vision and values for the residents care and Angelina. As noted in the literature (Ouchi, 1978) power may be relaxed, creativity of care is encouraged, and critical reflection is incorporated into day-to-day activities. This is but one example of how Karin built creativity of care of the residents and the encouragement of critical reflection into otherwise menial daily activities. This critical reflection process allowed for plurality of interpretations (Kilgore, 2001) and a sense of freedom for the DSPs.

The message of “doing the right thing” appears to supersede any other written policy. It is obvious that “doing the right thing” as defined by each of the workers and “answering a greater calling” as each worker interprets this statement surpasses the written policies. Even the term creating a facility which would be “a Cadillac of facilities” was not only repeated verbatim by the DSPs but they had each attached their own meaning to this concept. On the one hand, these are wonderful examples of a DSP taking the founding principles and making them their own. However, on the other hand, these acts can serve as examples of erosion of the power that management has to govern its subordinates—coercive and reward power.

In summary, there was evidence of power shifting at two different levels. First, there has been a shift of the workers or DSPs increasing their power base by leap-frogging over the



management staff and bonding with their vision of the CEO/Executive Director as they defined it. This behavior has caused the second level of shift—decreasing some of the power of management, particularly in the areas of management control of the treatment of residents. Though this power shift is clearly not accomplished by using the Table of Organization (Figure 4.1) or chain of command, it nonetheless is occurring.

However, I believe there is another way to view the transformation at Angelina. Using a postmodern lens to view power as fluid and multifaceted, while it is true that the DSPs gained power as they became the experts on the residents and their care, they did not necessarily erode power from the management staff. Instead, the management staff chose to focus on different tasks to create the transformation. For example, evidence of this comes from the management staff concurring that the DSPs were “in the heads” of the residents and “noticing when something was wrong.” These comments were not made by the management staff with remorse or resentment, but as factual. They were “ok” with the reality that the DSPs were the expert and held the information concerning the residents. The workers or DSPs did not gain power through empowerment strategies from management or from their own grassroots initiatives as they rose up against management.

These facts offer additional questions and insights into the transformation and power shifting within this transformation process. In combination with the theoretical framework it also encourages other perspectives on power shifts. Like the study would show, maybe power does not follow organizational lines and maybe it does not matter who or at what level a transformation is introduced. It is possible that I, the researcher, entered the organization during the transformation and the management staff will make decisions based on Angelina’s values that will become more explicit over time. It is also possible that this will never occur and the

outcome may be similar. Transformation is not an all or nothing occurrence or event. Power shifting does not have to be about one side losing so the other can win. Transformation can occur, as it did at Angelina, where one group (the DSPs) was more in alignment with the cultural and foundational principles and the CEO, and the management staff was more focused on transactional tasks and yet both in their own way supported the transformation.

### Implications

This study focused on the evidence of power shifts in organizations consciously implemented by the senior management during a transformation is important to practice for numerous reasons. For Human Resource Development (HRD) a subdivision of adult education, the study's findings add to the base of knowledge on the element of power. Especially noteworthy is the fact that power shifts do occur during a transformation, but can be quite unpredictable in location. They may or may not follow organizational structure lines. Furthermore, the meanings associated with the concept of shifting power during an organizational transformation may be different for different levels of employees.

The findings of this study have the potential of adding to the working theories of organizational power. The literature is full of discussion about either a hierarchal structure or the power distribution traditionally associated within it, or an organization with a flattened hierarchy and dispersed power, such as found in the concept of empowerment. An organization that has a hierarchal design but where power is found not only along the hierarchy but throughout the organization is less pervasive. The current literature is also nearly nonexistent when it comes to the addition of a transformation. In the case of Angelina, it was introduced at the pinnacle of the organizational structure but the power distribution came from several sources. Remembering that a postmodern organizational theory anticipates that answers come in multiples and outcomes are

fluid, but solutions do prevail (even if temporary) allows for a belief that in such an organization, agency and legitimate power can coexist.

Unintended outcomes of this study are some clues about the conditions that may make organizational transformation possible. For example, the leadership characteristics noted by several authors (Popper & Lipshitz, 1998; McLagan, 2003; Mink 1992; Watkins, 1996) appeared to be present at Angelina. These characteristics included: valid information, transparency, issue orientation, accountability, freedom of choice, collaborative work environment, and a learning environment. Also the ability for workers to critically reflect and question policies was important to transformation. Likewise, the process of examining the organization's values or job requirements by the use of deconstruction can be very effective. Teaching students and workers how to set these conditions and learn these skills could make organizations stronger by creating a more fluid and adaptive structure.

According to the literature, learning is tightly connected to transformation in both individuals and organizations because the cultivation of a learning culture and freedom to think and act on one's new worldview is essential to setting the environment for transformation (Argyris, 1997; Schein, 1996; Watkins, 1996). This learning frequently takes the form of critical reflection and double loop learning. As a reminder, the learning theory of Argyris and Schon (1978) distinguishes single-loop learning (first order change) which allows an organization to maintain current policies or achieve current objectives from double-loop learning (second order change) which involves modifying an organization's underlying norms, policies, and objectives. In Angelina there are numerous examples of critical reflection and double loop learning. The DSPs exhibit a freedom to act and think on their own as they care for the individuals and attach their own meaning to the founding principles of Angelina.

As a Human Resource professional there are numerous benefits of the use of this the combined theories used to examine and better understand the role and shifts in worker power and knowledge during organizational transformation. A few of these as noted earlier are the beliefs that: 1) the concept that power is everywhere and no one person or group is in control; 2) power exists in the organizational systems and in individuals as well as the relationships between them; 3) the framework democratizes power by questioning authority and promotes the notion that power is everywhere and can include everyone; and 4) it seeks freedom for the individual of oppressive systems of beliefs, such as the hegemony of corporate culture (Feldman, 1997; Goodall, 1993; Ogbor, 2001).

My hope from the onset on this study was that organizations could evolve through discourse, negotiations, and discussions rather than become imprisoned to domination, culture and the hegemony or power plays of that culture (Feldman, 1997; Wilmott, 1994). This study serves as a small example of this occurrence. While the DSP staff feels a close connection with the founder and current CEO of the organization, the management staff does not suffer a lack of attention. Instead of experiencing a feeling of being “played out of position,” they just feel they are playing a different position, both playing on the same team and both working towards the same goal.

#### Future Research and Recommendations

Many dissertations suggest the use of alternative methodologies and theoretical frameworks for future research. However, since research studies are so thin on the subject of power shifting within an organization undergoing transformation, I feel a similar study in a different organization would be appropriate. In any event, the content message from this study is that transformation and power shifting can occur in many directions. It can follow the

organizational structure by beginning with the pinnacle of the organization and flow downward, it can start at the grassroots level and move upward, or it can move in a less traditional way.

In this study, the management staff was focused on operational duties to make the organization run smoother. This focus on operational activities had the impact on the DSPs of added control and more traditional forms of power use—power coming from organizational structure; reward, coercive, position and legitimate power sources. Additional research should be conducted on power shifts and tied to the organization's structure. Possibly there are some dynamic and interrelated power relationships between management and workers.

Other studies could be conducted on grassroots initiatives and their organizational impact. In this study the group which is most fitting with type of transformation is the worker group. They showed evidence of total transformation in the area of change of beliefs, values and assumptions. Their power gains occurred as they took power away from the management staff. Similarly, studies concentrating on the hegemony of corporate culture or subcultures as described by Ogbor (2001) or focused on power from a critical management studies perspective (Carr; 2005; Grimes, 1992; Grubbs, 2000; Sementelli, 2005) could offer additional insight into power and organizational change.

Another area ripe for additional study would be a company, such as Angelina, where responsibilities are split in order to facilitate the transformation. Much has been learned about both the nature of transformation and the shifts of power required within this transformation process of this particular organization. One natural question that arises for future research is: Do other organizations experience similar power shifts as they transform? Does the notion hold true that some aspects of control and power continue to exist in similar form both pre and post an organizational transformation? How does the founder's own experience play a role in the

findings? Is this situation only found in a small organization? How does the finding compare to other not-for-profit organizations?

Since in every organization and organizational structure, there exist those who have more power, control and voice than others (Cervero & Wilson, 2006; Mojab & Gorman, 2003) and these non-dominant groups are sometimes women, minority ethnic group members, those with less experience, less information, or a position further down on the organizational chart, all of these groups would be expected to initially have less voice and be ready for study. How does the fact that this organization was founded by three women impact the findings? What about the organization being founded for those with profound disabilities; how does this impact the study and findings?

Another remaining question is: How were the outcomes of this study impacted by the organization under scrutiny in this research—namely a not-for-profit organization? To some extent non-profit organizations tend to align themselves with those seeking equity and seeing capitalism as focused on “dirty” money. How does this fact impact the transformation? Since critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens omits capitalism in its theoretical framework, what does this theory look like when applied to a for profit organization? Is there any type of conflict or concession?

Is transformation an all or nothing event? Or it is possible, as this study suggests that transfer of power and transformation are ongoing processes that remain fluid and tentative. And perhaps as stated in Chapter Two the best explanation of the many facets of change comes from the work of Mitzberg and Huy (2003) in, *The Rhythm of Change*, which argues that regardless of the definition, distinction, or category used to explain change initiatives, none of them work in

isolation. Instead a multitude of perspectives must be used at once to gain an appreciation of organizational change.

#### Afterward

Can any researcher go through the research process and not be forever changed by it? I thought so. I had learned so much from my classes and my cohort of classmates who journeyed through this program with me that I thought the enlightenment for me was over. The cohort, like me, was made up of all adult students who had rich experiences in which to share. Through discussions and class content they made me question my belief system, philosophy of education, and view of the world. I had been challenged so greatly (before starting the dissertation phase) that I could not imagine being challenged further.

I also had a good history of research and analysis. As stated in my Background in the Researchers section, I had been an organizational development practitioner for many years. Throughout that career I had plenty of experience gathering information and analyzing it and then packaging it in an anonymous fashion for consumption by an organization, most often for the senior management staff of that organization. I knew how to conduct a study and present the information gathered from it.

Since I already had both of these experiences, I can remember saying that I did not expect to learn much from analyzing, gathering the data and writing up the findings of this study. I guess that I thought the learning from my doctoral program was coming to an end. Simply put, I was wrong.

The framework for this study—a critical organizational theory with a postmodern lens forced me to gather the data and look beyond the obvious answers for a family of explanations or contrary evidence. The spiral process of data gathering and analysis made this effort further

come alive. At times, days or weeks would go by and I would come to specific conclusions of what the data meant, only to think of new ways of looking at the data and new questions to ask. I came to trust the process. The data sometimes changed the meaning or only provided part of the answer and so additional questions or analysis was required to understand its full meaning. I retraced the steps put forth in the model for deeper understanding of the data. The model and the theoretical framework became one. The dissertation process made me get comfortable with fluidity and ambiguity. It made me critically reflect upon my own conclusions, question where and why I assumed certain things or held particular beliefs.

In this way, the learning process continued very much as it did when I had scheduled classes. I have continued to question my belief system and view of the world. As a result of this program and the dissertation process, I have learned not to take surface information as the final word on any subject. I will as a result of this learning, continue to look for other possible meanings when I think that I understand a particular situation. It is so easy for me to think that I understand a situation. I must remember. As the old adage goes, “there is more than one side to every story.” Searching for the other sides sometimes takes perseverance and a second or third set of questions or pass at the data. Finding the other sides sometimes requires looking beyond a current level of understanding. Critical reflection, seeking contrary evidence, and remaining open to new data are just good ways to interact with the world. And the reward of deeper understanding can be satisfying and worth the effort. At least I think so.



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**APPENDIX A**  
**ALL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### Interview Questions-Used for all DSPs and Management

1. Describe the organizational structure and the responsibilities of each level of workers and management?
2. (Showing an Organizational Pyramid) Indicate where on this pyramid would you say most of the ability to influence decisions is?
3. How would you describe your personal ability to make a difference here at Angelina?
4. How confident are you that your ideas and concerns get passed on to Senior Management?
5. Using a scale of 1 – 10 with 10 being the most, where would you rate your personal ability to affect change or implement an idea?
6. Describe one idea that you have had, that this organization has written in to its policies, procedures, etc?
7. How do decisions around here get made? Who makes them? When are they made, how do you find out about them? Who implemented them?
8. Have recent changes in policies or procedures occurred? If so, describe them. Who do they affect?

9. If you could alter / change one thing about this organization and its operation, what would it be?

Senior Management Questions—Used for all interviews

1. When you make a decision, how does it get implemented? What is the process? How does everyone find out about it?
2. What types of decisions do you make on your own (in a vacuum)?
3. What types of decisions do you include others in?
4. What does this inclusion look like?
5. What are some of the decisions you have made in the hopes of encouraging group involvement?

### Focus Group Interviews (Workers)

1. Describe the organizational structure here, and the responsibilities of each level?
  
2. (Showing an Organizational Pyramid) Indicate where on this pyramid would you say most of the ability to influence decisions is?
  
3. What types of decisions are reserved only for Senior Management to make?
  
4. What types of decisions are workers included in?
  
5. Tell me about a time that your decision, idea was implemented as either a formal or informal practice?
  
6. Are all employees treated the same? If not, who has more privileges or status than others?

## Individual Interviews

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Values of Angelina are...

Yours are...

2. Beliefs at Angelina are...

Yours are...

3. Attitudes about work are....

Attitudes about individuals are...

Attitudes about life in general...

4. Personal examples of taking individuals places home with you.

Why you do it?

5. Describe appropriate decision making.

Give me some examples.

6. What decisions lie outside your position boundaries?

7. What does the word “complain” mean to you?

8. What are your avenues to complain? How? To whom?



**APPENDIX B**  
**CONSENT FORM**



**Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research**  
The Pennsylvania State University

**ORP USE ONLY: IRB# Doc. # 28603**

The Pennsylvania State University  
Office for Research Protections  
Approval Date:  
Expiration Date:  
Social Science Institutional Review Board

**Title of Project:** Participation in Dissertation Study

**Principal Investigator:** Jacqlyn S. Triscari  
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**1. Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this research is to evaluate how decisions get made and who makes them in an organization which is in the midst of change. The study will focus on power shifts that may occur during an organizational transformation. It will look at the role of power and what happens with regards to power and power structures when an organizational transformation occurs. A case study methodology will be utilized. The study will be conducted as follows. Step 1 Once participants have agreed by signing the consent form to participate in the research study, they will be scheduled for a focus group interview. Step 2 One or two focus group interviews will be conducted based on the number of responses to the research study request email. A focus group will ideally have 8-10 participants. If the response rate exceeds 8 – 10 participants, then a second focus group will be formed. Step 3 The focus group(s) meeting will be conducted on the institution premises in a room in a building removed from the administration office building but familiar to the potential participants. Step 4 All of the focus group participants will then be invited to participate in individual interviews. Step 5 Since this research study is fully on a volunteer basis, only those members of the focus group who wish to participate in individual interviews will be scheduled to do so. Step 6 Individual interview times will be scheduled based on the convenience of the participants. Interviews will be conducted in the same site as the focus group meetings which will be in a room in a building removed from the administrators' building and familiar to the potential participants. Each interview will last approximately 90 minutes.

**2. Procedures to be followed:**

Participants will be asked to attend one focus group interview with 7-9 other participants and then be interviewed individually (if they chose to do so). They will be asked questions about their ability to make decisions about the work they do. Questions will deal with both the scope of their decision making as well as the type of decisions they are able to make in their current positions.

**3. Discomforts and Risks:**

There are no reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the participants (beyond those experienced in everyday life) since none of the information gathered will be passed on to the employer with a specific participant's name attached. Instead any communication to the organization will be summarized and confidential in nature.

**4. Benefits:** Though no benefits to the participants in this study are promised, there is a possibility that a summarized report of the findings may encourage the organization to make changes that the participants have identified and /

or recommended.

5. **Duration/Time:**

Each interview (and meeting) will last no more than 90 minutes.

6. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Participation in this research is confidential. No personally identifiable information will be shared because participant's name is in no way linked to their individual responses. However, if participants speak about the contents of the focus group outside the group, it is expected that they will not tell others what individual participants have said. All meetings and interviews will be audio recorded (if you give your permission) so that I can ensure accuracy in analysis of conversations. However, no information discussed in the interviews will be distributed to your organization using your name. Instead, any feedback given to Angelina's management will be summarized and anonymous. The data will be stored and secured at Jacquyn S. Triscari's locked office. All data collected will be destroyed in three years (July, 2011). Only the principal investigator, Jacquyn S. Triscari, will have access to information pertaining to this study including recordings. Penn State's Office for Research Protections, the Social Science Institutional Review Board and the Office for Human Research Protections in the Department of Health and Human Services may review records related to this research study. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.
7. **Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact Jacquyn S. Triscari at (717) 975-3348 or email jst106@psu.edu with questions, complaints or concerns about this research. You can also call this number if you feel this study has harmed you. Questions about your rights as a research participant may be directed to Penn State University's Office for Research Protections at (814) 865-1775. You may also call this number if you cannot reach the research team or wish to talk to someone else.
8. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study early will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission to be Audio taped.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not give my permission to be Audio taped.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

Completing and returning the survey implies that you have read the information in this form and consent to take part in the research. Please sign both copies of this form. Retain one for your records or future reference and hand the other one to Jacquyn S. Triscari, the principal investigator at the first focus group interview.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Jacquyn S. Triscari  
Person Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**VITA**  
**JACQLYN S. TRISCARI**

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**EDUCATION:**

D.Ed. Candidate, Penn State University  
Dissertation Topic: Power Shifts during an Organizational Transformation  
Certificate in Organizational Development from DePaul University, 2001  
MS Degree in Training and Development, Penn State, 1993  
BS Degree from Florida State University, Cum Laude 1977

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

Owner, Capital Area Data Services	2008-Present
President, La Paul Freeman Animation Company	2006-Present
Senior VP, COO, Triscari Group	2001-Present
VP of Training / OD/ Employment, Bon-Ton	1986-2001
Buyer, Bon-Ton	1980-1986
Store Manager, Ivy's (Florida) and Bon-Ton	1977-1980

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:**

AERC Conference (2008, 2009)  
National Transformational Learning Conference (2007)  
Department of Education's Migrant Workers Recruitment Program (ID&R Conference 2008)  
National ANCOR Conference

**SKILLS AND INTERESTS:**

- Has over 20 years experience in recruiting, training, and organizational change effects
- Produced and delivered more than 165 training programs
- Developed trainers manuals, workbooks, and media support used by the MERC Trainers
- Chaired National Committee for Retail Human Resource Directors for 4 years
- Supervised Communications Training and Organizational Development departments for 16 years and was responsible for all print newsletters, magazines, brochures, multimedia, training and communication initiatives, as well as large scale organizational change efforts
- Collected and analyzed Focus Group information from a variety of organizations for the purposes of changing culture, reducing turnover, attracting outside talent, creating increases internal efficiency, developing optimal campaigns, and identifying "correct" language for marketing
- Awarded \$500,000 Grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to improve Recruiting, Retention and Training Efforts. Included producing 48 hours of training, revising hiring and selection process and instituting Realistic Job Previews. Resulted in increasing the applicant flow, reducing open positions from 150 to an average of 5 and saving the organization more than \$300,000 annually

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

ASTD, SHRM, Pi Lambda Theta (International Honor Society and Professional Assoc. in Education)