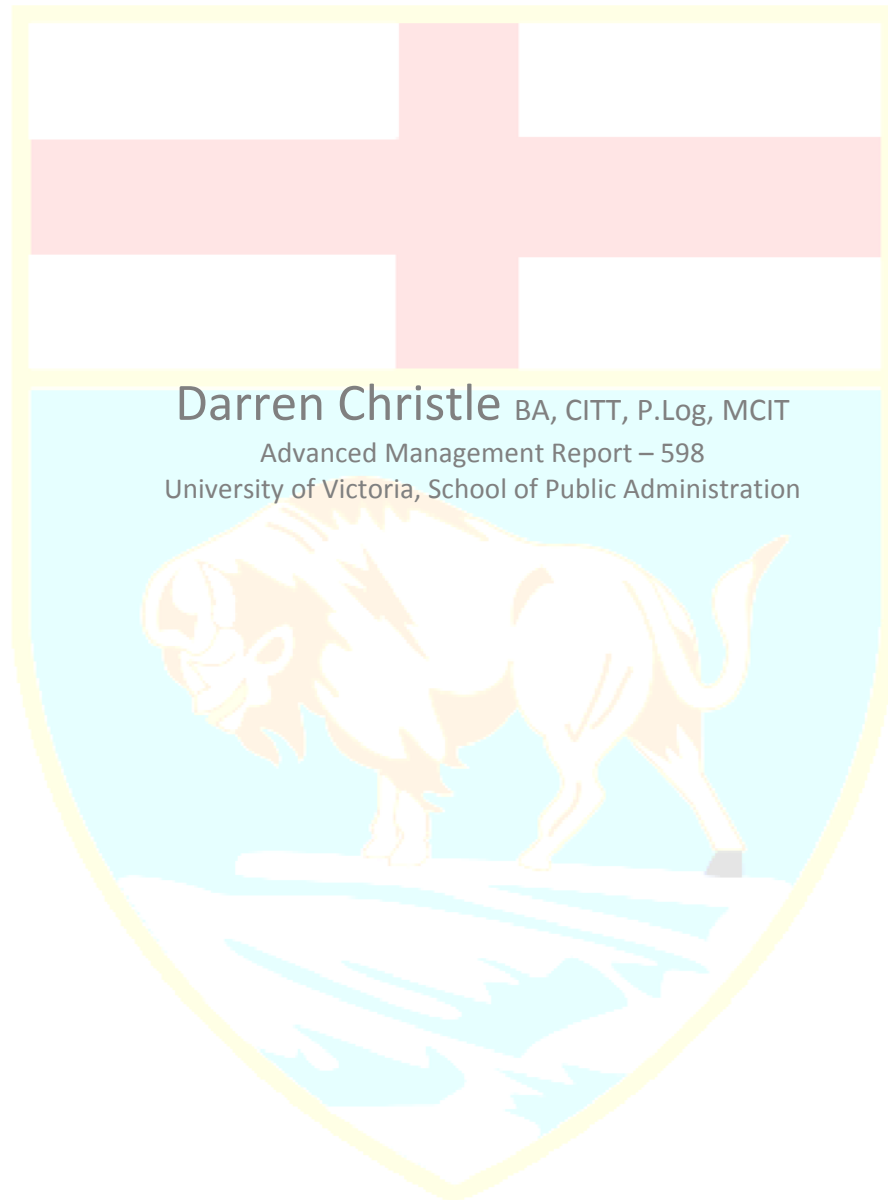


Impacts of Employee Optimism and Leader Motivation on Career Progression within Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation



Darren Christle BA, CITT, P.Log, MCIT
Advanced Management Report – 598
University of Victoria, School of Public Administration

Supervisor:
Dr. Bart Cunningham
University of Victoria,
School of Public Administration

Client:
Mr. Paul Rochon
Associate Deputy Minister,
Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank God for the gifts of intellect and opportunity both of which I believe are imperative when pursuing academic goals. I would like to offer my most sincere thank you to Dr. Bart Cunningham and Dr. Jim MacGregor for their guidance and support both as my Professors during my academic studies and throughout the development of this Advanced Management Report. Additionally, I would like to thank Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT) Assistant Deputy Minister John Spacek for his consistent support of my pursuit of advanced education. Thank you to MIT Associate Deputy Minister Paul Rochon for agreeing to be my client and allowing me to engage my talented colleagues in MIT for advice and support throughout this exercise. I would like to make a special mention of the valuable contributions from the gifted team from the MIT Transformation Innovation Office and of Cindy Bell from the Civil Service Commission.

Most importantly, I would like to thank my wife Kim and daughter Ashley for believing in me and for their many years of unwavering love, patience, support, and encouragement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Within the next five years, Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT) could experience a retirement of one third of its current work force. This situation is not unique to MIT or any specific public service department. As a result of a demographic shift resulting from the baby boomer generation reaching retirement age, many organizations could experience a significant skills and knowledge deficit. MIT realized this trend and initiated a number of countermeasures to mitigate this situation.

One approach which the Department initiated was the voluntary creation of employee learning and development plans (LDP). Although a majority of MIT employees do not presently have LDPs, some program areas have embraced the initiative. The Executive Management Committee of the Department, under the banner of the *Ensuring Excellence Campaign*, has identified the need to refine, promote, and deploy LDPs to a greater extent throughout the Department. Employee learning and development plans are living documents which should evolve, integrate and accommodate the interests of the employee as well as the needs of the employer. They are a framework for personal development and may involve a range of choices for acquiring skills or knowledge by different means such as training, coaching, formal and informal education or planned experience exposure.

This advanced management report will examine how employee optimism and leader inspired motivation influence LDP choices made by MIT employees. The concept of employee optimism shares similar characteristics with the Galatea effect. Leader inspired motivation is similar in many respects to the Pygmalion effect. The research methodology provides participants with the opportunity to share comments and observations on employee expectations relating to LDPs, leader expectations relating to LDPs, and employee LDP choices. This report should provide advice to MIT based on the research findings, which indicate approaches to enhance LDP training and deployment.

SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

The researcher elected to use two methodologies to explore this topic. The initial methodology involved the use of a comprehensive literature review of academic articles and publications. These materials concern the various theories which share many characteristics with employee optimism and leader inspired motivation. The literature review served to develop an insight which could be drawn upon to understand the outcomes of the employee survey. Secondly, the researcher used a comprehensive survey of MIT staff in order to capture and distill the opinions, perceptions and experiences of the Department's employees. The survey incorporated both open- and closed-ended questions and by utilizing the internal intranet communications tool as the distribution mechanism, was available to approximately 1716 potential research participants in the month of February 2012.

RESULTS

The researcher found that there are significant correlations between the independent and dependent variables as well as internal reliability. The independent variables were encompassed within a series of six survey questions under the heading of Employee Optimism Dimension, and six survey questions under the heading of Leader Motivation Dimension. The six dependent variable questions are grouped under the title of the Learning and Development Dimension.

The research paper utilized results from eight open-ended qualitative questions to learn about MIT employee's thoughts, opinions and advice respecting LDP optimism and motivation. These findings were further supplemented with knowledge acquired through a literature review which examined these variables by reviewing literature on the Galatea effect and the Pygmalion effect.

The findings have resulted in the researcher submitting the following recommendations to assist in LDP program enhancement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Link new employee engagement and orientation materials to the LDP initiative.

Individuals are most optimistic about learning and development (L & D) when they are new employees. Strategic synchronous deployment of LDP materials during this period could maximize employee and leader buy-in and participation.

Recommendation 2: Supplement the existing intranet communication tool (“IM IT”), with LDP creation, maintenance, and outreach tools and messages.

MIT has made a significant investment in a web-based intranet communications tool. Any LDP enhancement and outreach materials should utilize this existing IT infrastructure to increase distribution and remove perceived program barriers.

Recommendation 3: MIT should establish performance targets respecting LDP creation for each Division.

The on-going MIT “*Ensuring Excellence Campaign*” initiative requires periodic reporting to the executive sponsor, to ensure the initiative has progression. LDP enhancements should include a formalized performance target approach and uniform reporting protocols at the divisional level.

Recommendation 4: MIT should align existing management development courses to include additional instruction in soft skill competencies.

Development initiatives such as the Executive Learning and Development Program, the Middle Management Development Program, and the Women in Leadership Development Program should include soft skills instruction as part of the curriculum.

Recommendation 5: MIT should consider the impacts of limited fiscal resources on the LDP initiative prior to program expansion.

Employees communicated that when fiscal resources are limited, educational opportunities become less prevalent than employee’s expectations. Limited resources may be interpreted as a lack of demonstrated support from MIT to support the LDP goals.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 INTRODUCTION	3
1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE	3
1.3 ORGANIZATION OF REPORT	3
CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND	5
2.1 MANITOBA INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION	5
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW	6
3.1 INTRODUCTION	6
3.1.1 THE EXAMINATION OF EMPLOYEE OPTIMISM USING THE GALATEA EFFECT	6
3.1.2 THE EXAMINATION OF LEADER MOTIVATION USING THE PYGMALION EFFECT	7
3.1.3 COMMON CHARACTERISTICS	8
3.1.4 SUMMARY	8
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS	9
4.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	9
4.2 RESEARCH METHODS	9
4.2.1 PILOT STUDY	9
4.2.2 SURVEY DESIGN	10
4.2.3 PARTICIPANTS	11
4.2.4 DELIVERY	12
4.3 METHOD OF ANALYSIS	12
Figure 1: Representation of Common Responses	13
Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Scores for Employee Optimism and Leader Motivation	14
4.3.1 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS	14
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS	15
5.1 ANALYSIS OF LEADER / EMPLOYEE QUALITATIVE RESPONSES	15
5.1.1 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS RELATING TO LDPs	15
5.1.2 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: LEADER EXPECTATIONS RELATING TO LDPs	18
5.1.3 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: CLIENT NEEDS DIMENSION	23
5.2 ANALYSIS OF THE CLOSE ENDED QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONS	25
Table 2: Descriptive statistics	26
Table 3: Pearson Correlations - Employee Optimism	26
Table 4: Pearson Correlations – Leader Motivation	27
Table 5: Pearson Correlations – Learning and Development	27
Table 6: Pearson Correlations – Optimism and Motivation correlated to Dependent Variable Responses	28
5.2.1 EMPLOYEE OPTIMISM	28
5.2.2 LEADER MOTIVATION	28
5.2.3 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	28
5.3 ANALYSIS OF SUGGESTIONS MADE	29

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION	33
6.1 IS THERE A CONNECTION BETWEEN LEADER EXPECTATIONS AND THEIR EMPLOYEE'S DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION?	33
6.2 IS THERE A CONNECTION BETWEEN EMPLOYEE EXPECTATION AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION?	34
6.3 CONCLUSION	35
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION	36
REFERENCES	39
APPENDICES	41
APPENDIX – A	41
LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT SURVEY	41
APPENDIX - B	48
DIMENSION #1 – THE EMPLOYEE OPTIMISM SURVEY	48
APPENDIX - C	49
DIMENSION #2 – LEADER MOTIVATION SURVEY	49
APPENDIX - D	50
DIMENSION #3 – LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT CHOICES (LDC) SURVEY	50
APPENDIX - E	51
DIMENSION #4 – CAREER PROGRESSION SURVEY	51
APPENDIX - F	52
DIMENSION #5 – CLIENT NEEDS	52
APPENDIX - G	53
DIMENSION #6 – PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS	53
APPENDIX - H	54
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION (N=286)	54

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Manitoba Civil Service Commission Learning Policy encourages staff to develop individual learning plans for improving their career. Learning plans allow employees to set learning goals which help them strengthen their workplace skills and competencies which assist in career growth.

Learning and Development Plans (LDPs) are the mechanism for career progression, but questions arise on how learning and development choices are made. Is there a connection between employee self-esteem, self-efficacy, and optimism with LDP choices? What influence do a leader's behaviour, attitude and expectations have on motivating employee LDP choices? The researcher engaged MIT employees through a comprehensive survey in order to learn about their LDP experiences. Additionally, a significant amount of literature exists regarding employee optimism and leadership motivation. This research paper will explore these concepts by utilizing the similarities contained in the Galatea and Pygmalion effect theories for foundational knowledge.

The Galatea effect suggests that a person's beliefs and expectations about themselves will affect their likelihood of succeeding while the Pygmalion effect suggests that a leader's beliefs and expectations affect a subordinate's motivation, choices and performance. Employees will often interpret inductive clues and copy behaviour of individuals which they hold in high esteem (Kohei, 2007, pp1). Often, in vertical hierarchical organizations, these individuals are leaders or mentors.

Employees with an existing self-development disposition have increased general self-efficacy as well as improved overall performance when vetted against peers which do not demonstrate these inclinations. General self-efficacy pertains to a person's belief that they possess the abilities and competencies to be successful in their goals and pursuits. People with this orientation devote more time to achieving goals and developing the knowledge and skills necessary for optimal performance and ultimately, career progression (White & Locke, 2000, pp409).

1.2 Research Objective

The purpose of this report is to examine the effect of employee and leader expectations in relation to the choices employees make in the development of LDPs. By examining the employee and supervisor expectations and their impacts, the report attempts to answer questions like:

- Is there a connection between leader expectations and their employee's development and progression?
- Is there a connection between employee expectation and their development and progression?

1.3 Organization of Report

The report is comprised of seven chapters, including this introduction. Following this introduction, a brief background of the client – Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation, is presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides a literature review which is a theoretical background of the concepts, empirical evidence of studies and a framework used to guide the research addressed in the survey. Chapter 4 presents the

research design and methods used in this study, and Chapter 5 outlines research findings and common themes. Chapter 6 provides a discussion and analysis of research findings and to conclude, Chapter 7 summarizes the key points addressed in the report and provides recommendations for next steps.

MIT has identified learning and development plans as part of its employee engagement strategy necessary to support the Department's multifaceted *Ensuring Excellence Campaign*. It has created a project team that is mandated to improve the quality of LDPs in addition to conducting a gap analysis between what exists and a proposed improvement strategy. This research report is intended to support this MIT initiative by providing a series of recommendations for consideration on how the LDP outreach materials may be enhanced.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

2.1 Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation

Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT) is responsible for the development of transportation policy and legislation, and for the management of the province's vast infrastructure network. To meet these responsibilities, the department delivers a wide range of programs and services that play a critical role in sustaining the contributions of the transportation sector to Manitoba's economic growth.

MIT's transportation responsibilities include corporate policy and provincial legislation development, motor carrier safety and regulation enforcement, carrier permits and the development and implementation of sustainable transportation initiatives.

The department's water control, drainage and transportation infrastructure management duties cover the construction, maintenance, and operation of 19,000 kilometers of all-weather roads, 2,200 kilometers of winter roads, over 21,000 bridges and culverts, 4,700 kilometers of drains, 75 dams, 61 reservoirs, 41 pumping stations, 24 northern airports, and many other components.

MIT is also responsible for the delivery of several transportation and infrastructure-related services or programs such as air ambulance flights, water bomber operations, property management, procurement, material distribution, fleet vehicles, Crown Lands stewardship, mail management, and government building security across the province (Web Source: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/mit/index.html>).

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

Many academic and management journals have contributed to understanding the behaviours associated with human optimism and motivation theories. Researchers have the opportunity to explore these concepts from numerous pathways. This section of the Research Report provides a background and foundation for the concepts of employee optimism and leadership inspired motivation by examining two theories which share commonalities with these two concepts. The two theories are the Galatea effect and the Pygmalion effect.

By examining the Galatea effect, the report will survey concepts such as employee self-esteem, self-efficacy, and confidence. It will share published justifications that these characteristics can lead to greater success and goal achievement. When an individual is able to successfully reach a goal, the result is often an increase in their self-belief. This raises their optimism and the cycle often repeats itself.

The principles of the second theory are related to the former, but also unique to their own characteristics. The Pygmalion effect occurs when a leader is able to inspire and motivate an individual to the point where the Galatea effect occurs. A leader may use overt influence or subtle communication tactics to signal to an employee about the leader's expectations. Employees will often adjust their behaviours in order to meet the leader's expectations if they hold the leader in high regard. In this manner, the Pygmalion effect will be used to explore employee motivation.

The literature revealed that a number of researchers have studied these features by conducting experiments in areas such as education, the military, business and healthcare. There appears to be a deficit of literature where the effect theories were studied in the public sector.

The two theories are not mutually exclusive nor is there research which suggests a natural order for them to occur. Some research argues that the Galatea effect is an unintended consequence of the classic Pygmalion effect (White & Locke, 2000 pp393), while others suggest just the opposite (Burgess 2007, pp07).

3.1.1 The examination of employee optimism using the Galatea effect

The basis of the Galatea effect is that if a person believes that they will succeed, they are more likely to succeed (Kohei 2007, pp1). It occurs when employees raise expectations of themselves and these are realized in their higher performance. High self-optimism is linked with high general self-efficacy. The latter term means that an individual has a self-belief in their own competence and ability to reach increased performance or goal achievement (White 2000, pp394; Eden 1992, pp287). It is often attributed to individuals who have learning orientations rather than fixed mindsets. These individuals believe that they are capable of change and are not reluctant to try new learning and development opportunities in order to achieve their goals. Individuals with high general self-efficacy benefit from a learning orientation by focusing on improvement rather than just avoiding failure (Seymour 2009, pp16; White 2000, pp409).

An inherent belief in one's own success can in itself be a motivating catalyst towards goal achievement. Self-set goals lead to the highest self-efficacy (Schunk 1990, pp77). A subordinate's performance also influences one's own achievement, motivation and level of aspiration (Eden 1984, pp68).

The Galatea effect has clear ties to other self-optimism and motivation theories (White & Locke 2000, pp394). It results from a combination of intrinsic characteristics such as self-confidence, efficacy, motivation and expectancy. Expectancy refers to the strength of a person's belief about the degree to which a particular performance will result from his actions. High expectancy means the person has little doubt about his capacity to attain the outcome. Self-efficacy is one of the variables affecting a person's expectancy (Wang 2000, pp7). The common thread among the different forms of the Galatea effect is the subordinate's belief that he or she will do well (White & Locke 2000, pp394).

3.1.2 The examination of leader motivation using the Pygmalion effect

The Pygmalion effect has been largely explained in terms of two mediators: leadership behaviour and self-expectations (White & Locke 2000, pp391). When a leader is able to raise subordinates' self-expectations by convincing them that they have high potential and they exhibit increased self-efficacy and succeed as a result, it is called the Pygmalion effect (Bass 1988, pp26; McNatt 2004, pp551). It involves a person or a group of people acting in accordance with the expectations of another. That person or group may, on some level, internalize the higher expectations placed on them and then motivate them to act in ways to fulfill those expectations (Kierein & Gold 2000, pp914). A leader may be taught how to influence subordinates using techniques which increase a subordinate's general self-efficacy and motivation. The subordinates tend to react to the leader's *a posteriori* clues and a behaviour change occurs (Bass 1988, pp25; Eden 1984, pp68; Loftus 1995, pp19; McNatt 2004, pp550; Rosenthal 1973, pp1).

The literature established that it can be produced in work organizations (Kierein & Gold 2000, pp923). What leaders expect of subordinates and the way they treat them largely determine the subordinates' performance and career progress (Livingstone 1969, pp98). The Pygmalion effect is widely known due partly to George Bernard Shaw's story entitled *My Fair Lady*. This fictional tale was successfully recreated by Dr. James Sweeney who was a professor of industrial management at Tulane University. Dr. Sweeney recruited an illiterate janitor named George Johnson as his Pygmalion participant. The two individuals worked together daily with the common goal of motivating and enabling Mr. Johnson to become an assistant to the computer operator of a bio-medical computer center. This goal was not only attained but surpassed when Mr. Johnson became a programmer for Tulane University followed by a successful career as the Director of Data Processing Operations for the Pan American Life Insurance Company (Look Magazine 1965, pp117; Livingston 2002, pp6).

An often reported experiment involved leadership trainees of the Israel Defense Forces. The 105 trainees were falsely described to their instructors as possessing high, regular, or unknown command potential. Following the conclusion of the training program, the staff expectation coincided with trainees objective achievement scores. Greater satisfaction and motivation were reported for the trainees who were initially rated as having high potential. The instructors' expectancies about the performance of the trainees appear to have transferred into the trainees' self-expectations (Bass 1998,

pp26; Eden 1984, pp68; White 2000, pp394). The size of the Pygmalion effect was found to be significantly stronger in military settings than in business settings (Kierein & Gold 2000, pp924).

When leaders expect a higher level of performance from certain subordinates, they are usually better leaders to those subordinates. Through this special treatment, subordinates then develop higher motivation and self-expectations. As leaders convince subordinates that they can reach certain goals or that they have high self-worth, subordinates may develop high expectations for themselves as an indirect result of their leaders' behaviours. The difference between the Pygmalion effect and the Galatea effect is not an instant reaction to the expectation; rather it is the process of the employee realizing self-efficacy, optimism, motivation and attribution (Wang 2000, pp6).

3.1.3 Common Characteristics

The literature identified that both theories produce initial improvements in participants but they appear to be non-sustaining. It was observed that the positive impacts end as soon as attitudes return to their normal state (Lied 1998, pp203). Additionally, it was noted that the anticipation of rewards enhances motivation and self-efficacy (Shunk 1990, pp74).

It has been discovered that the theories have a more pronounced impact on younger participants compared to older participants (Eden 1984, pp70; McNatt 2004, pp553; White 2000, pp411). Researchers have speculated that this fact may be due to younger participants' self-efficacy being more malleable than older or more experienced participants (Eden 1984, pp71; Livingston 2009, pp4; McNatt 2004, pp553). A young person's first manager will likely be the most influential on their career (Livingston 1969, pp103). If high but achievable targets are set and the necessary support is provided, the younger person will likely live up to those targets (Eden 1984, pp66; Loftus 1995, pp19; Rosenthal 1973, pp6).

3.1.4 Summary

"There is a consensus among scholars that expectations and motivation are positively associated" (Eden 1992, pp272). Employees with high self-expectations are often more highly motivated to devote effort to their performance to reach obtainable goals. Once high performance has been attained, the model becomes cyclical in two senses. First, when an employee performs well, high self-expectations are reinforced and thus the motivations in high performances are elicited via the Galatea effect. Additionally, the high performance confirms the supervisors' expectations that the employee had high performance capabilities. The supervisor then maintains his expectations of the subordinate, and based on the Pygmalion effect, the behaviours continue (Kierein & Gold 2000, pp915).

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

4.1 Research Questions

This research project will examine two research questions. The first question inquires if there is a connection between employee expectation and their development and progression. Employee expectation is often associated with employee optimism in addition to sharing similar characteristics with the Galatea effect. Employees who believe they are capable are often optimistic. When they are optimistic, they select tasks which are obtainable; they persist longer when working towards their goals, and expend more effort in achieving them (Schunk 1990, pp81).

The second research question asks if there is a connection between leader expectations and their employee's development and progression. Leader expectation is often coupled with motivation theory and is linked with similar principles contained in the Pygmalion effect theory. What leaders expect of subordinates and the way that they treat them largely determines the employee's performance and career progress (Livingston 1969, pp98).

This research report will seek to more clearly understand the influence of employee optimism and leader motivation on MIT employee learning and development choices which may impact career progression. The intent of this research is two-fold. Firstly, to add to the existing body of knowledge and secondly, provide recommendations on how MIT learning and development outreach materials could be enhanced to increase effectiveness.

MIT plans to embark on an initiative to be an "employer of choice", and to ensure that employees are engaged and have opportunities to develop and progress in their careers. A major motivation for this focus is due to the emerging demographic shift whereby MIT will need to compete for new skilled employees and ensure existing employees are challenged and motivated.

MIT currently has a number of existing initiative clusters designed to increase employee engagement, including materials to encourage development of employee LDPs. The current process has not been fully deployed, or assessed for effectiveness. This research will contribute to this client need.

4.2 Research Methods

4.2.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted utilizing five volunteers from the Manitoba Water Stewardship Department (MWS). The five volunteers assessed the adequacy and clarity of the survey and suggested question adjustments. Post-survey interviews were used to gain insight on the open-ended qualitative answers and to resolve confusion of any survey questions. The qualitative interview was similar to a conversation between the respondent and the interviewer, and the wording and order of the questions varied from interview to interview. Two survey questions were amended based on the advice of the pilot study volunteers.

4.2.2 Survey Design

Thirty-four quantitative and qualitative questions were used in the survey (See Appendix A for survey). The initial two questions were used to filter participants. The first question asked potential respondents to declare which of the six MIT Divisions they were currently employed in. The second question requested them to declare their present pay classification. These answers enabled the researcher to ensure that the data was submitted by a current MIT employee and determine which of the three population target groups the data belonged to.

The researcher was able to use the divisional declaration responses to determine preliminary divisional response rates. The researcher requested that three assistant deputy ministers encourage additional employee participation in divisions where the response rate was low.

The survey contained twelve quantitative questions which used a five-step Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree. Additionally, seven nominal quantitative questions offered yes or no options. There were nine open-ended qualitative questions which were designed to extract rich, detailed responses from the participant population. Nine questions were adopted from an existing thesis for standardization reasons. Lastly, the survey contained seven demographic questions.

The literature review provided a conceptual framework for the research design. Literature regarding the Galatea effect revealed significant similarities between the theory and employee optimism. Additionally, literature concerning the Pygmalion effect provided complementary information between the theory and leader expectations. Survey questions were organized into six dimensions:

- “Dimension #1 – Employee Optimism” is a set of nine questions which were designed to explore possible connections between employee optimism and LDP choices and career progression (Appendix B).
- “Dimension #2 – Leadership Motivation” is comprised of nine questions which were crafted to examine a possible link between leader inspired motivation and LDP choices and career progression (Appendix C).
- “Dimension #3 – Learning and Development Choices” is a body of six nominal questions which were intended to extract valuable data on employee LDP choices (Appendix D).
- “Dimension #4 – Career Progression” is comprised of two questions that were designed to assist in investigating career progression which is the dependent variable (Appendix E).
- “Dimension #5 – Client Needs” contains two qualitative open-ended questions which were designed to provide valuable feedback regarding preferred learning tactics and employee advice on enhancing the present MIT LDP approach (Appendix F).
- “Dimension #6 – Demographics” has seven questions. The demographic questions were included in order to generalize the sample of respondents and determine the demographic characteristics (if any) of themes that would be drawn out from the analysis of the results (Appendix G). Demographic information for the entire respondent population has been tabulated (Appendix H).

4.2.3 Participants

MIT has 3090 employees deployed throughout the Province¹. These employees include permanent full-time staff as well as seasonal or casual employees. MIT has 2543 permanent full-time equivalent (FTE) employees². The department has 1697 computers, which are network enabled, deployed to MIT employees³. The total research target sample was 300.

The following three groupings are a representation of the research population.

- Group #1 is comprised of permanent full-time MIT clerical employees. These participants perform support functions within all six divisions of MIT. The desired target sample from this group is 100.
- Group #2 is comprised of permanent full-time MIT administrative employees. These participants perform more complex functions within all nine divisions of MIT. Individuals in this population could be at the supervisory level and can influence career progression of individuals which are employed in the clerical series. The research considers the administrative employees group as both leaders and employees. The desired target sample from this group is 125.
- Group #3 is comprised of permanent full-time MIT professional employees. These individuals tend to have the highest remuneration classifications and occupy leadership positions within MIT. Individuals in this series have the greatest opportunity to influence career LDP choices. The desired target sample from this group is 75.

Data obtained through the Manitoba Civil Service Commission's Systems Applications and Products (SAP) software indicates that in 2012 there are 154 pay classifications (PC) in use within MIT. Sortation of this data has determined:

- 21 of the PCs' are consistent with Group 1 positions;
- 49 of the PCs' are consistent with Group 2 positions;
- 10 of the PCs' are consistent with Group 3 positions.

The remaining 74 PCs' are inconsistent with the three target population groups. The first survey question requested respondents to disclose their current PC. A data filter was constructed to eliminate responses which did not fit into one of the 80 PCs' which are consistent with the three target groups. This methodology has merit for several reasons. Firstly, by coding the filter question, data was sorted very quickly without compromising validity due to selection bias. Secondly, by disclosing PCs' which is public information, the researcher was able to avoid lengthy or confusing explanations of what is considered a usable response for the purpose of the research project. Finally, the reason this was necessary was to extract responses from participants which had the greatest learning and development opportunities. Based on these criteria 38 responses were purged from the data sample. The total number of responses was 286. The total adjusted sample was $n = 248$.

¹ This data was obtained from the Manitoba Civil Service Commission (CSC), Systems Applications and Products (SAP) software system on February 24, 2012 for the month of January 2012.

² This data was obtained from the Manitoba CSC- SAP software system on February 24, 2012 for the month of January 2012.

³ This data was obtained from the Information Technology Services Branch (ITSB), MIT on February 24, 2012 for the month of February 2012.

For the month of January 2012, MIT had 2543 permanent FTE's and a vacancy rate of 14.58%, thus 371 FTE's were vacant. Based on a 3 year average for the month(s) of January, MIT employees were absent 9573.39 days for multiple reasons such as vacation, sick leave, voluntary reduced work days, workers compensation, and long term disability, etc. On average, there are 21 paid working days in the month(s) of January. This equates to 456 employees being away from the workplace in the month⁴. The researchers' premise is that the month of February is substantially similar to the month of January for determining the number of potential survey respondents⁵. Based on the previous data, potentially 1716 MIT employees were eligible to voluntarily participate in the survey. The Information Technology Services Branch (ITSB) confirmed that 1697 network enabled computers are deployed to MIT. This suggests that there was a computer available for each MIT employee targeted for the survey.

4.2.4 Delivery

The researcher utilized "Survey Monkey" software, and the e-based survey was delivered via the MIT intranet site named "IM IT". A chance to win a \$50 gift card was used as an enticement to submit completed surveys by February 28, 2012. The random draw was conducted by the client on March 9, 2012. Benefits of using the MIT intranet system to conduct the survey include: expense deferral, distribution speed, and enhanced confidentiality since the MIT website has existing security protocols. Only MIT employees have access to the intranet, thus data contamination from non-MIT respondents should be minimal.

All questions contained in the survey were voluntary responses and participants could withdraw at any time. The researcher does not know how many respondents began the survey and then quit before submitting it. The MIT website does not have a protocol which would prevent an employee from taking the survey more than one time. This could impact the accuracy of calculating the response rate.

The survey period was conducted over 24 days (February 4 – 28, 2012). Based on the adjusted population at the end of the response period, the response rate was 14%.

The covering letter for both email and hard copy versions outlined information regarding the survey, its intended use, instructions for completing the survey, confidentiality of results, and information regarding implied consent (Appendix A).

4.3 Method of Analysis

Prior to conducting an analysis, the PC filter question was purged from the data. The question was used exclusively to determine if the respondent met the pre-established sample criteria. The criterion was that the respondent was a permanent full-time employee of MIT and employed in either a clerical, administrative or professional series position. The second question was used exclusively to determine if a particular MIT division had an unusually low response rate and required additional encouragement to complete the survey.

⁴ All employee availability data was obtained from the Manitoba Civil Service Commission (CSC), Systems Applications and Products (SAP) software system on February 24, 2012.

⁵ Although the survey was conducted in the month of February 2012, the data necessary for determining the response rate would not have been available prior to the submission of the report, thus a three year average of the Month(s) of January was used to determine the potential number of staff available to complete the survey.

The surveys were examined to determine if there were patterns of incomplete information. Surveys including only demographic information were removed since demographic information on its own does not provide any value. Six respondents answered only the filter questions and the demographic questions. Finally, the results were reviewed to remove identifying comments in the qualitative answers. For example, responses including a person's name was removed and replaced with "NAME" to ensure the results did not identify specific people. Once results were cleaned and prepared for analysis, the quantitative responses were then coded as a number. The Likert questions coding key is as follows:

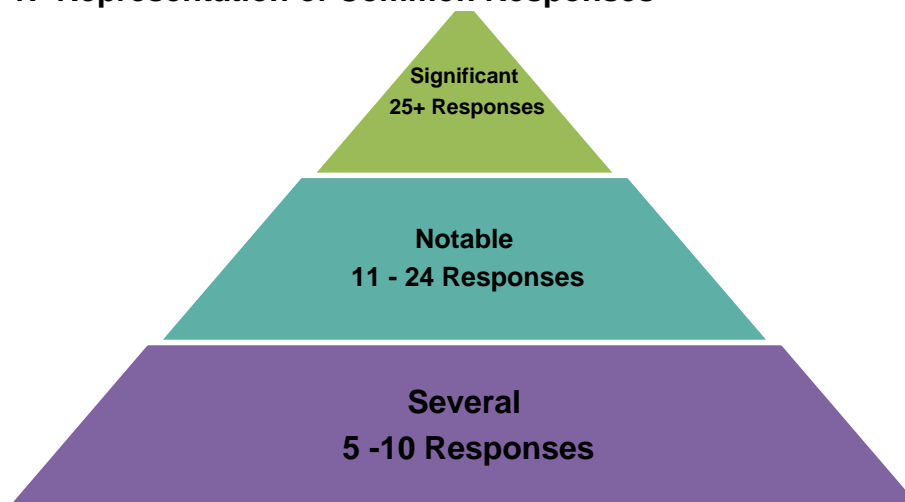
Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1

The nominal questions coding key is as follows:

Yes = 7, No = 6

A representation of common qualitative responses is provided in Figure 1. When the researcher refers to a "significant" number of responses, this should be interpreted as meaning more than 25 responses. When the researcher refers to "several" responses, this means between 5 – 10 responses.

Figure 1: Representation of Common Responses



The internal reliability test for both independent variables using Cronbach's alpha demonstrates that both the employee optimism variable and leader motivation variable have high internal consistency (Table 1). Alpha scores exceeding .70 indicate high internal consistency.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Scores for Employee Optimism and Leader Motivation

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha (test for internal reliability)</i>
<i>Employee Optimism</i>	<i>.72</i>
<i>Leader Motivation</i>	<i>.86</i>

4.3.1 Research Limitations

A number of possible research limitations have been identified.

1. It is plausible that participants may provide inaccurate answers due to intentional deception, poor memory, or misunderstanding of the question.
2. One of the difficulties with the survey approach is that since the answers were self-reported by respondents, accuracy is very difficult to verify.
3. Since the survey was delivered via the intranet and self-administered, a respondent could have read the entire questionnaire before answering any questions and go back and change answers. This fact reduces bias related to sequencing.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

5.1 Analysis of Leader / Employee Qualitative Responses

The research contained 11 open-ended questions which provided participants with the opportunity to provide comments and observations on employee expectations relating to LDPs, leader expectations relating to LDPs, and LDP choices. Several broad themes emerged from these series of questions and are summarized in Section 5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 5.1.3.

5.1.1 Open-Ended Questions: Employee Expectations Relating to LDPs

This first series of questions were designed to learn about MIT employee optimism in achieving learning, development and career goals. Their optimism manifests in challenging self-directed goal selections and sustained voluntary participation in learning-oriented opportunities. Employees that possess high self-belief and self-efficacy tend to be more highly motivated and devote effort to their performance. A strong belief in one's own capabilities can itself be a motivating catalyst towards additional learning and developmental achievements. This series of three questions revealed a total of seven themes from the survey responses. Participants were asked: *"Please describe a time when you were very optimistic about achieving your career or learning & development goals."* The response rate for this question was 81% with 196 responses (n=242).

Increases in Optimism Related to Career. The most significant response was that the participants were very optimistic when they were new employees or had just made a career change within MIT. Positive career change inspires employees with new and exciting opportunities. Respondents communicated that opportunity for skills development and potential future advancement resulted in their greatest degree of self-optimism during this period.

- *"I was very optimistic about achieving my goals when I first started with MIT."*
- *"Early in my career path with MIT when I had greater potential for advancement."*
- *"I was most optimistic when I began as a new employee with the Manitoba Government."*
- *"I had the greatest optimism the first time I joined government."*
- *"My optimism was the greatest at the start of my career."*
- *"I was most optimistic when I started with government and then after I returned from a one-year maternity leave."*
- *"When I first started in government, I was very hopeful and excited."*
- *"When I started with government, I thought there would be opportunities to develop my skills with the department."*
- *"Many years ago, when I first started work with MIT I was the most optimistic."*
- *"During the early phase of my career, I was very optimistic about learning and development goals."*

Optimism Increases When Learning and Development Programs are Completed. A notable number of respondents indicated they were optimistic about their careers as it related to implementing their Learning and Development Plan (LDP). This extended into optimism about becoming involved in educational opportunities and educational successes. As employees experience success in LDP achievements, they become inclined to pursue additional opportunities which will have similar results. This is

especially notable if the completion of the educational programs has contributed to a positive career change or progression.

- *“I felt optimistic about reaching my career goals upon completion of three certificate programs.”*
- *“I had the highest hopes and motivation after completing my Master’s certificate in Project Management.”*
- *“When I completed my Applied Management course I felt there were many opportunities to progress in this organization.”*
- *“I was very optimistic after graduating from post-secondary education.”*
- *“I was very optimistic after completing all of my courses and training and was ready to set out and do the job.”*
- *“I am optimistic because of the considerable emphasis on employee training, learning and development.”*
- *“I was very optimistic about achieving my career goals when I was given an opportunity to complete a learning plan.”*
- *“I am extremely optimistic within the last two years since I have had the opportunity to be part of LDP.”*
- *“Now that I have a learning plan, I am currently engaged in three professional development programs.”*

Optimism Increases When Participants Receive Challenging Projects: The third key theme resulting in positive employee optimism became evident when respondents described receiving challenging projects and opportunities to demonstrate their abilities.

- *“When supervisors have been supportive of my education requests with flexible work arrangements and let me use this knowledge in project work.”*
- *“When the Gov’t finally recognized the importance of learning and development for staff and encouraged it. I was able to use what I learned to try new things.”*
- *“I was the most optimistic about LDP when I had challenging projects, autonomy and ability to show leadership and move ahead with my ideas.”*
- *“I am currently very optimistic as I feel my Managers can see my potential and are willing to work with me as I strive to attain my goals.”*
- *“I became optimistic when my duties were changed by my Director to a more responsible role.”*
- *“When I’m given new duties and responsibilities and do more involved work, I become very optimistic.”*
- *“This occurred when my senior Manager asked me to assume the duties of a recently departed leader.”*

The second open-ended question had a response rate of 77% and is the antithesis of the first question: *“Please describe a time when you were not very optimistic about achieving your career or learning & development goals.”* The converse patterns appeared to be more narrowly focused than the previous responses. Most participants’ responses were organized into one of three broad paradigms. Participants expressed that LDP optimism is significantly negatively impacted by fiscal resource issues, being unsuccessful in previous competitions, and a perceived lack of management / leader support. The two additional patterns that were identified had a notable number of responses.

Optimism Decreases When Participants are Limited by Fiscal Resource Constraints: Survey participants significantly expressed that they were not optimistic about LDPs because of the negative impacts of limited fiscal resources. When fiscal resources are

limited, educational opportunities are often less prevalent than employee's expectations. Limited funding may be interpreted as a lack of demonstrated support from the organization towards LDP goals.

- *"Recently, when my opportunities were all eliminated due to travel restrictions."*
- *"The reason I was given for lack of management support of my LDP courses was because costs were higher for staff in rural areas."*
- *"During the lean years of the recession where management took a survival stance and did not foster opportunities."*
- *"No optimism existed during the era of decreasing budgets, lay-offs, and other restraints imposed by government."*
- *"I was not optimistic about achieving my goals when I found out that we were only encouraged to take free training most of which doesn't apply to anything I'm interested in."*
- *"Very recently my optimism was reduced when learning opportunities were all but eliminated due to travel restrictions."*
- *"Recent budget concerns and lack of available time to take courses has made career development difficult."*
- *"No optimism exists when no funding is available."*
- *"We are rarely permitted to take courses that cost any money."*

Optimism Decreases When Employees Have Been Unsuccessful in Employment Competitions: Employees are often motivated by past successes. Respondents shared that their optimism and motivation becomes diminished when they have been unsuccessful in employment competitions. When this occurs self-efficacy becomes low as employees doubt their ability to obtain the desired career aspirations.

- *"After applying for a position that I felt I could do, I was overlooked for someone from outside government."*
- *"When I didn't get the job I applied for."*
- *"I lost my optimism when I was not successful in competitions for promotions."*
- *"I am not optimistic since finding out that highly skilled individuals have been overlooked for advancement."*
- *"I don't have optimism when after taking a course, thinking that I will need it for my job and then finding out the job has gone to someone else."*
- *"I have become unoptimistic after not being successful in being screened in for internal competitions."*
- *"I am disappointed that I was not hired for a job that was a step up from my current role."*
- *"I am unhappy about not being asked to fill a vacant position."*

Optimism Decreases When Employees Perceive a Lack of Support: Respondents communicated that optimism is unsustainable when they perceive a lack of support from their leader. Lack of leadership support is interpreted as a barrier to career progression. This lack of support may be represented by a withholding of information, approvals or assistance. It results in an inconsistency between the learning-centric values of the organization and the behaviours of the leader. Participants become disheartened and resentful.

- *"All my L& D requests were rejected by my boss."*
- *"My boss's response for his lack of LDP support was because no one had ever helped him."*

- *“Management said that they would not support my education request because it was inconsistent with my present job responsibilities. They failed to recognize that I wanted to progress to different positions within MIT.”*
- *“I am not optimistic about this, because there were no opportunities provided.”*
- *“My previous supervisor would not work with me to develop an LDP.”*
- *“I perceive there is little or no opportunity to learn and develop.”*
- *“A lack of management involvement to recognize training and education to assist in career advancement.”*
- *“It’s hard to be optimistic when plans promised by management were never acted on.”*
- *“I became unoptimistic when I was told there was no place in MIT for training to gain new technical skills required to advance to management.”*

The final open-ended question had a 74% response rate and asked participants: *“What guidelines or materials do you wish you had for developing your own learning and development plans?”* A significant number of participants indicated that the current LDP materials were sufficient.

Responses Indicate that Current LDP Materials are Sufficient: They have expressed that adequate LDP materials are accessible.

- *“The materials currently available are adequate.”*
- *“I don’t feel that there are any additional guidelines or materials that I wish I had.”*
- *“I have everything I currently require.”*
- *“I believe that the current LDP materials are acceptable and available.”*
- *“At this time, I’m using the Civil Service Commission (CSC) learning plan as a guide.”*
- *“I believe that I have received enough information to work through my career plan.”*
- *“I feel that I have very good tools at my disposal for learning and development.”*
- *“I have gained a lot of experience developing learning plans when I used to work for the CSC. I do not require additional materials.”*

5.1.2 Open-Ended Questions: Leader Expectations Relating to LDPs

The intent of the three questions in this series is to learn about leader expectations and their impact on employee motivation. Understanding the impacts of leadership expectations is important because of the influence it has on individual self-expectations and motivation. Numerous research studies have established that a subordinate will react to a leader’s behaviour and expectations and adjust their actions and attitudes accordingly. The participant responses revealed a total of 12 themes which are organized under each of the survey questions.

The initial question in this series had a response rate of 88% which represented 212 responses (n=242). It asked participants to: *“Please describe the characteristics which are the most important to you, for a leader to be considered a mentor.”* The employee responses provided an extensive and detailed list of the characteristics which they believed were critical for an effective and motivating leader. A significant majority of responses included the need for a leader to have integrity and honesty. A notable cluster of participants expressed the requirement for a leader to have a vision and be able to effectively and honestly communicate that vision. The list revealed a notable desire for the leader / mentor to have the skills, knowledge and abilities needed to be an enthusiastic coach to staff and provide meaningful development opportunities. They must possess patience and the ability to listen in addition to being empathetic and

consistent. A notable set of responses stressed the desire for leaders to be respectful, polite, and sincere.

Respondents Experience With Integrity and Respect: Without the two foundational characteristics of integrity and respect, a leader cannot successfully inspire or motivate their employees towards success. Employees are more inclined to follow a leader which they respect. Respect is both earned and given. What managers expect of subordinates and the way they treat them largely determines the subordinates performance, progress and actions.

- *“One who is patient, kind, polite, a team player, respects confidentiality, is willing to help and is competent.”*
- *“A leader must be thoughtful, patient, well mannered, considerate, and empathetic and demonstrate integrity.”*
- *“They must be respectful, have the ability to listen and a broad knowledge that is shared so insight can be gained.”*
- *“A great leader is someone who has respect for everyone, trusts their employees, has credibility, is honest, and is a good communicator.”*
- *“Someone who possesses integrity, respect and values.”*
- *“To be a mentor a leader must be honest, trustworthy, and open to share experiences and knowledge.”*
- *“The characteristics which are most important to me are being respectful, intuitive, supportive, and knowledgeable.”*
- *“The three most important characteristics of a leader is to be trustworthy, possess honesty and have integrity.”*
- *“To me a mentor has integrity and is impartial. They have sound judgement, are honest, approachable and knowledgeable.”*

Motivation Increases When Leaders are Inspiring and Supportive: An inspiring and supportive leader establishes a trusting relationship with the employee. Subordinates will not be inspired to meet expectations unless they consider a supportive leader’s high expectations to be both realistic and achievable. An inspiring leader is able to raise an employee’s self-efficacy and confidence with respect to behaviours and a positive self-concept.

- *“Honesty, integrity and loyalty are qualities I expect in a good mentor.”*
- *“Patience with a desire to be a mentor.”*
- *“They are approachable and challenge you, but have confidence in your abilities. This helps nurture your goals.”*
- *“Knowledgeable and empowering. A good leader must have wisdom.”*
- *“He is someone who thinks of how they can help and motivate others before thinking of themselves.”*
- *“My leader uses the mantra – my job is to make the people who work for me, the best that they can be.”*
- *“A good mentor is inspiring without exception.”*
- *“To be effective a mentor must be approachable and give advice and guidance in a respectful manner.”*
- *“A leader/mentor is someone who is looking out for what is best for me and has confidence in my abilities.”*

Motivation Increases When Leaders are Approachable and a Good Communicator: Respondents said that a leader or mentor must be approachable and be able to establish positive relationships within their organization. They suggest that an

approachable leader is both patient and non-judgemental. These types of leaders are considered mentors and able to guide employees by appropriately communicating expectations.

- *“They must be good at communicating and inspiring about their expectations.”*
- *“They must be able to communicate so I can understand but also be a good listener so they can understand.”*
- *“They must have excellent communication skills, be a strong listener and accept accountability.”*
- *“The person should be helpful, encouraging and approachable.”*
- *“A mentor must be good at communicating and always be there to help you.”*
- *“My boss provides constructive feedback in an objective and fair manner.”*
- *“The mentor must be patient and be able to communicate in a manner which I understand and not talk over my head.”*
- *“A leader should be open, transparent and have excellent communication skills.”*
- *“I believe that a mentor should have sufficient knowledge, be able to communicate well and be readily available and not afraid to share information.”*

The second open-ended question had a 73% response rate and asked: *“Please describe a time when a leader exhibited characteristics which motivated or positively influenced your learning and development choices,”* and asked the employee to explain why these characteristics were important to them. The responses to this question determine that there are four themes. The four themes are that a leader needs to be stimulating, they need to encourage career pursuits, they must demonstrate positive behaviour, and a notable number of respondents stated they have not been positively influenced “yet”. High leader expectations lead employees to setting more specific and more difficult learning goals, which in turn influences the employee to become engaged in learning activities.

Motivation Increases When Leaders are Stimulating: The significant majority of responses to this question were rich with examples where the employee was inspired and motivated by a leader. Respondents shared many examples of leaders providing opportunities, leading by example, and instilling confidence through encouragement. One employee shared that their leader “Showed more faith in them, than they themselves did.”

- *“One of my first leaders encouraged me to keep up on the levels of education that the department was offering to their employees. In doing that it allowed me to advance to the position I have today.”*
- *“I was encouraged to consider a development program that I would not have otherwise considered. It turned out to be a very positive experience.”*
- *“I was brought in on a high level meeting and the situations were explained to me and I was asked for my opinion. This made me feel important and needed.”*
- *“The ongoing encouragement from my leader has been a very positive influence on me.”*
- *“I have had a leader in MIT which has demonstrated all the characteristics that I believe a great leader must possess. He is the type of leader that I try to emulate.”*
- *“My leader encouraged me to take initiative and follow through with my work plan/activities and supported and affirmed the good work I was doing.”*
- *“I was fortunate to have a manager who saw my potential and made me aware of that.”*

Motivation Increases When Leaders Encourage Employees to Pursue Opportunities: A significant number of participants said that a leader encouraged them to pursue job postings that the leader felt they were qualified for. Other participants stated that their leaders had nominated them for developmental programs and opportunities and went on to express their loyalty, appreciation, and respect for their leaders.

- *“My leader greatly influenced me by listening to my career goals and providing guidance on how to achieve them.”*
- *“My leader provided continuous encouragement with ongoing education and new work experiences to build my knowledge and confidence in career development.”*
- *“My leader assisted me in making a decision to apply for a higher position because he felt I would do a good job with my skillset.”*
- *“A leader suggested a course of action that would better prepare me for another position.”*
- *“My manager suggested and nominated me for the Women’s Leadership Development Program.”*
- *“A leader gave me good advice and coaching about a job that I had an interview for.”*
- *“I had many positive leaders in my development that continually encouraged me to decide to take the next step in my career.”*

Motivation Increases When Leaders Exhibit Positive Behaviour: The participants offered a notable collection of comments that their leader’s positive behaviours and examples have resulted in an increase in confidence and motivation, and challenged them to pursue opportunities that they might not have pursued in different circumstances.

- *“My present leaders have shown that they have respect for my abilities and appreciate the work that I do, by giving me more responsibilities and supporting my decisions and recommendations. Because of my respect for them, I feel more confident in my abilities and decisions.”*
- *“My leader inspired me a lot by being very connected and inclusive.”*
- *“My leader was positive and supportive even when doing corrective action on myself.”*
- *“My leader made me realize that my goals were achievable by living them himself.”*
- *“My manager had faith that I would be an excellent candidate for a job and helped me excel.”*
- *“My director both motivates me and makes me feel optimistic about my future.”*
- *“It means so much to be thanked for doing great work. It is positively reinforcing.”*

Participants State that They Have Not Been Influenced by a Leader “Yet”: The researcher noted that there were several responses which indicated that a leader has not positively influenced the employee, “yet”. By including the adverb “yet”, the researcher considered if the respondents possibly anticipate a future leader providing this type of motivation.

- *“That has not happened, yet.”*
- *“I can’t say that this has happened yet.”*
- *“Not yet.”*
- *“My leader has not motivated me in any way yet.”*

The final open-ended question had a 74% response rate and is contrary to the first question. Four themes were revealed when participants were asked: *“Please describe a time when a leader exhibited characteristics which discouraged or negatively influenced your learning and development choices”, and asked the employee to explain why these*

characteristics were important to them. The four themes are: negative feelings, frustration, negative communication, and no negative experiences. Employees are less inclined to pursue learning and career development opportunities in an unhealthy work environment. When interactions are disrespectful, employees' emotional and psychological well-being is negatively impacted. Additional negative impacts include lower productivity, lack of trust and deteriorating relationships.

Motivation Decreases When Leaders Cause Negative Feelings: Respondents significantly expressed LDP discouragement for intrinsic reasons after experiencing a leader's behaviour which they interpreted as inappropriate, apathetic or inconsistent. In these circumstances, the employees' motivation was diminished based on how the leader "made them feel". They expressed the desire for trust, honesty, manners and sincerity when considering LDP development. They shared that perceived negative behaviours in other interactions with their leader heavily influenced how, or if, they approached a leader for LDP requests.

- *"My boss hurt my feelings by saying that there was no training required to do my job."*
- *"I have a leader that questions everything that I do and does not support any type of career advancement – I have given up."*
- *"Morally, they did something that I didn't agree with. I understand Gov't bureaucracy but lies and ruthlessness are never idolized."*
- *"I often feel that there is no point in going through the exercise of developing my career. I feel totally unappreciated and only receive negative feedback. I have succumbed to the negativity."*
- *"Management has no interest in a work/life balance."*
- *"When I asked for guidance, the only thing I got was a cold shoulder."*
- *"I was provided with feedback that humiliated and discouraged me from trying anything on my own."*

Motivation Decreases When Employees Experience Frustration: A notable accumulation of employees' comments said that they became frustrated with the process when leaders "forgot to approve their education requests which resulted in missed opportunities" or "would only approve education and training which did not have any fiscal impacts to MIT". Frustration leads to discouragement which leads to a lowering of self-efficacy, ultimately impacting employee development.

- *"My current area discourages formal educational opportunities due to fiscal matters."*
- *"My leaders depreciate the importance of higher education when a cost is involved."*
- *"My requests for LDP training have been denied due to budget cuts."*
- *"When I was going over my LDP with my leader, I was told to only choose training that was free. This was humiliating and embarrassing and discouraged me because it seemed that this is just all talk when money is involved."*
- *"My present leader gets you to create a learning plan, but you can't sign up unless it's free."*
- *"When it's time to register for a course or training, I receive the answer of "let's see if we can afford it."*

Motivation Decreases When Employees are Subject to Negative Communication: Other notable responses which hindered LDP requests included situations where the leader demonstrated overt negative body language such as "rolling of the eyes" when discussing requests, dictating the employees' training regardless of the employees' desires or expressing a lack of patience or support for the LDP program. Employees

expressed that these types of behaviours “hurt their self-esteem, raised stress levels and made them feel humiliated.

- *“I have experienced negative response body language, eye-rolling when discussing my LDP, big sighs, and passive aggressive comments about staff on maternity leave. This is important because I don’t ask her anything which could hamper my own development.”*
- *“I was discouraged because I could not find a role model.”*
- *“A leader discouraged me by warning me that the courses I was going to be taking were extremely hard and most people don’t pass.”*
- *“I have hostile, negative daily interactions.”*
- *“My director disregarded my request for guidance then became angry with my lack of progress.”*
- *“My manager denied a secondment opportunity saying I was too valuable to lose.”*
- *“Will not share leadership or provide opportunities to assume leadership roles.”*

Respondents State that They Have Had No Negative Experiences: A significant number of respondents expressed that they have never experienced behaviours as noted above. They suggested that greater management accountability for staff LDP development, and targeted training on how leaders could better support staff in this initiative would be beneficial to MIT.

- *“In my career, I have never experienced such a time.”*
- *“This has never happened to me.”*
- *“Thankfully, this has never happened. My managers have always been supported.”*
- *“I don’t remember a time when I have been negatively influenced.”*

5.1.3 Open-Ended Questions: Client Needs Dimension

An open-ended question was included in the Client Needs Dimension in order to elicit MIT employee’s advice on learning preferences and ideas on ways the Department could augment the existing LDP initiative. The open-ended question had a response rate of 98% which represents 236 responses (n=242). Employees were asked to *“indicate if they learn best in structured, one-on-one or on-line courses”*, and to explain what was most appealing about their choice. The responses were examined both from a quantitative and qualitative perspective. The analysis revealed that participants preferred structured courses before one-on-one and on-line learning. A number of employees offered graduated selections in their answers including preference for “hands-on learning” which was not included when the question was drafted, and an additional 11% had no preference. The largest percentage of respondents preferring structured learning was in the professional category at 60%. The one-on-one learning option was preferred by the clerk category followed by participants in the administrative category, at 29% and 26% respectively. On-line training was the preferred option for 22% of the clerk category, followed closely by 20% of professionals and 16% of administrative employees.

Responses for Employees Preferring Structured Learning: A significant number of feedback responses for those preferring structured learning, stated the following dominant reasons: group interaction, which included the sharing of ideas, learning from others and the ability to network. A notable grouping of respondents indicated that having an instructor available to provide guidance was desirable. Additionally, a notable number felt that having established deadlines with focused materials were necessary for optimal learning.

- *“Structured – I enjoy learning where you can share your ideas and learn from the experience of others.”*
- *“I like structured because it provides the opportunity to network and learn from the experience of others.”*
- *“Structured programs allow participants to exchange ideas and grow together.”*
- *“A structured program keeps me accountable for doing the work. If I’m left on my own I procrastinate.”*
- *“I like structured programs because you are motivated to perform at a higher level when you are training with your peers.”*

Responses for Employees Preferring One-on-One Learning: Participants preferring one-on-one learning significantly indicated that intimate, immediate feedback was the major rationale for their selection. They suggested that this was the best method for hands-on learning and for exposure to specific tasks rather than formal course materials.

- *“One-on-one provides more chances to work closely with the instructor, ask questions, and get dedicated help.”*
- *“One-on-one instructors have more time to explain, review and provide feedback especially when the material is technical or difficult to understand.”*
- *“One-on-one is best when dealing with specific technical tasks. I like hands on training too.”*
- *“I learn best one-on-one. I like to see how things are done and then try it myself with the instructor’s input.”*
- *“I like one-on-one because I’m a visual learner. I catch on faster by observing.”*

Responses for Employees Preferring On-Line Learning: Those employees that preferred on-line learning pointed out that students’ have the greatest opportunity to learn at their own pace, with on-line tools. They significantly communicated that independent study materials tend to be well organized and that geographic limitations are removed.

- *“On-line allows me to work at my own speed and take my time.”*
- *“On-line provides the most flexibility.”*
- *“I prefer on-line courses because I am able to study when it’s convenient to my schedule and my location in Manitoba is irrelevant...assuming that I can connect to the web, of course.”*
- *“I prefer on-line courses because I like the flexibility.”*
- *“I like on-line as I am shy and it allows me to learn alone.”*

SUMMARY

The employee optimism responses demonstrate that optimism is impacted and influenced by a number of factors. The principle reason positive optimism is linked to goal achievement is because positive employees are more motivated to actively pursue new opportunities.

Leader expectations and the manner in which those expectations are communicated provoke a reaction from employees. When the expectations are achievable, challenging and communicated in an empowering and supportive manner, employee motivation increases.

5.2 Analysis of the Close Ended Quantitative Questions

This section of the research paper will involve a response analysis to 18 quantitative questions. The responses are organized into three dimensions. Dimension #1 encompasses six employee optimism questions and utilized a five-point Likert scale which ranged from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Dimension #2 involves six leader motivation questions. It also used a five-point Likert scale for response selection. Finally, Dimension #3 includes six nominal yes or no questions, and is classified as the learning and development dimension. This last dimension is comprised of the dependent variables.

For the descriptive statistics of the survey findings please refer to Table 1, and for the Pearson correlations please see Tables 2 - 4. The Pearson correlation tables are organized by dimension.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

	Description	Mean	SD
Employee Optimism Questions			
Q3	Employee will achieve goals	3.73	1.04
Q4	Employee can accomplish difficult tasks	4.15	.79
Q5	Employee can succeed in endeavors	4.28	.77
Q6	Employee is able to overcome challenges	4.11	.89
Q7	Employee is best judge of L & D options	3.80	.95
Q8	Employee progression due exclusively to their hard work.	3.54	1.10
Leader Motivation Questions			
Q12	Leader is confident in employees abilities	3.93	.89
Q13	Leader feels skills and abilities are important to the organization	3.95	.94
Q14	Have received LDP advice from leader	3.45	1.10
Q15	Leader influenced an LDP choice	3.38	1.12
Q16	Had a leader who was a mentor	3.49	1.18
Q17	Without leader involvement employee would have missed opportunities	3.45	1.08
Learning & Development Questions *			
Q21	Familiar with existing LDP Materials	6.38	.49
Q22	Taken courses within last 12-months	6.34	.48
Q23	Progression due to L & D received	6.39	.49
Q24	L & D influenced progression	6.06	.23
Q25	Has an existing LDP	6.61	.49
Q26	Interested in further career development	6.19	.39
<i>*nominal options where Yes = 6 / No = 7</i>			

Table 3: Pearson Correlations - Employee Optimism

Variable		Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Q3	Achieve Goals	1					
Q4	Accomplish Difficult Tasks	.407**	1				
Q5	Succeed in Endeavors	.256**	.647**	1			
Q6	Overcome Challenges	.470**	.605**	.653**	1		
Q7	Best Judge of L & D Options	.031	.176**	.225**	.254**	1	
Q8	Progression due To Hard Work	.299**	.273**	.188**	.250**	.326**	1
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							

Table 4: Pearson Correlations – Leader Motivation

	<i>Variable</i>	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17
Q12	Confident in Abilities	1					
Q13	Skills important to Organization	.711**	1				
Q14	Received LDP Advice	.427**	.535**	1			
Q15	Leader influenced LDP Choice	.329**	.466**	.759**	1		
Q16	Leader who was a Mentor	.447**	.486**	.629**	.622**	1	
Q17	Missed Opportunities	.269**	.410**	.498**	.513**	.494**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: Pearson Correlations – Learning and Development

	<i>Variable</i>	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26
Q21	Familiar with Existing LDP Materials	1					
Q22	Taken Courses within last 12-Months	.129*	1				
Q23	Progression due to L & D Received	.253**	.168**	1			
Q24	L & D Influenced Progression	.135*	-.031	.238**	1		
Q25	Has Existing LDP	.291**	.188**	.225**	.005	1	
Q26	Interested in Further Career Development	.037	.188**	-.30	.199*	.078	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6: Pearson Correlations – Optimism and Motivation correlated to Dependent Variable Responses

<i>Variable</i>	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26
Employee Optimism	.157*	.109	.115	.137*	.066	.098
Leader Motivation	.277**	.121	.394**	.272*	.179**	.091
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

5.2.1 Employee Optimism

One of the aims of the research report is to develop a better understanding of how employee optimism influences learning and development choices. The quantitative survey findings indicate that the mean scores for this dimension indicate a better than indifferent or neutral reaction to the questions. Three of the answers indicate an “Agree” response and the mean for the remaining three questions reveals a range between 3.54 – 3.73. The dimension’s standard deviations (SD) ranged between .77 and 1.10. Further, each response in this dimension positively correlates and is statistically significant with all other employee optimism questions with the exception of Question 3 / Question 7 ($r = .031$).

Question 3 asked the participant to indicate if they will be able to achieve most of the goals that they have set for themselves. Question 7 asked respondents to rate their beliefs on whether their career progression was a result of their hard work and education exclusively.

These findings suggest that employee optimism is important to understanding how LDP choices are made and the influence it has on career progression. The findings in Table 6 suggest that employees are optimistic when they are familiar with LDP materials ($r = .157$) and believe that L & D can influence their career ($r = .137$).

5.2.2 Leader Motivation

The second independent variable series that was examined was the leader motivation dimension. The series mean ranged between 3.38 – 3.95. The responses signified a mid to high range neutral selection as the preference with the dimension SD ranging between .89 – 1.18. The Pearson correlation for this dimension reveals that all responses were positively correlated and statistically significant. We might infer that leader motivation is also important for understanding how LDP choices are made and the influence it has on career progression, even though the dimension mean is lower than what was established for employee optimism. The findings in Table 6 indicate significant correlations between leader motivation and being familiar with LDP materials ($r = .277$), a belief that career progression has resulted from L & D ($r = .394$), a belief that L & D can influence their careers ($r = .272$), and when they have an existing LDP ($r = .179$).

5.2.3 Learning and Development

The dependent variables in the learning and development dimension utilized nominal options for respondent choices. The Pearson correlation table demonstrates that there are eight correlations between responses in this series which are statistically significant

at the 0.01 level. An additional three responses are correlated and statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Question 26 asked participants if they are interested in further career development. It was noted that the response to this question has the least amount of correlations when assessed against other questions in the array.

SUMMARY

Analysis of the quantitative responses demonstrated that there are significant positive correlations within all three dimensions. Additionally, the analysis revealed that there are correlations between a number of independent and dependent variables.

5.3 Analysis of Suggestions Made

The final qualitative question had a response rate of 83%. Participants were asked to “describe what would be the best thing that MIT could do to enhance learning & development.” Respondents provided a significant number of thought provoking suggestions, which were grouped into nine themes, on how to improve the LDP initiative. For example, participants who did not have a plan overwhelmingly requested a mentor or coach to lead them through this process. A notable cluster of participants indicated a need for web-based LDP development tools to facilitate the LDP process. A notable number of participants have advocated for external training opportunities. Both notable populations of participants with existing plans and those who had yet to develop them suggested that more comprehensive Human Resource (HR) information be made available for long term career planning. Additional suggestions include increasing leadership knowledge, financial support, improvements in communication and a balancing of work load expectations.

Suggestions Made for Increasing Coaching and Mentoring: Participants that did not have a plan overwhelmingly requested a mentor or coach to lead them through this process. Employees felt that they would have greater success of completing a meaningful plan which would receive leader support, if there was a dedicated and knowledgeable person to assist them in the development and maintenance of the plan.

- *“I wish I had access to someone knowledgeable about the process and how to break it (LDPs) down into manageable pieces.”*
- *“I have all the materials I need to do my LDP, but finding individuals that can help me express my goals and how I go about achieving them is probably the best asset – WE NEED MORE COACHES.”*
- *“I wish there was more training and development plans for rural areas.”*
- *“I need coaching services.”*
- *“We require more direct feedback and involvement by managers to assist us in reaching our goals and career progression.”*
- *“Appropriate materials must be supported by an appropriate mentor.”*
- *“The written resources are there, but the time and support are not always available.”*
- *“I would really appreciate a guide or a friendly hand to provide the tips and advice on the do’s and don’ts.”*
- *“I was told to develop a learning plan but received no input from management on what was required to obtain my goals.”*
- *“Provide professional mentors and enable development to happen.”*
- *“Assist me with developing a plan or let me know what resources exist and how I can access them.”*
- *“Coach people on LDP’s and provide opportunities to job shadow and underfill for future vacancies.”*

- *“Have someone follow my progress with the intent of guiding me towards advancement.”*

Suggestions Made for Development of Web-Based LDP Tools: A notable combination of responses desired web-based tools to facilitate the LDP process. The requests for these resources were suggested in order to assist MIT in providing the widest distribution of LDP assistance possible in the least intrusive manner. It was offered that on-line tools would reduce the “inconsistency of access” between urban and rural based employees. There was significant advocacy for MIT to become a more learning-centric culture which should be promoted as a priority within the Department.

- *“How about an L & D for dummies tutorial...or how about a YouTube type video.”*
- *“Training seminars and webinars.”*
- *“On-line courses and training films.”*
- *“There should be an on-line tool which employees can use to work through the LDP process themselves.”*
- *“We need more internet-based programs.”*
- *“Develop an on-line – easy to use tool and mandate that every branch manager be responsible to ensure all staff who want them, have a current LDP. Maybe this could be reported in the MIT annual report?”*
- *“Create an environment within MIT that promotes and supports learning for every employee. It should be in the departmental value statement.”*
- *“Send the message that it’s okay to spend time to learn. This is very important and direct or implied consent will help a great deal.”*
- *“Create a corporate culture where continuous learning is encouraged and celebrated.”*

Suggestions Made for Increasing External Learning Opportunities: A notable set of participants’ comments requested additional departmental support to pursue training, development, and courses which are not offered through the Government of Manitoba. They observed that external education may provide access to skills and knowledge development opportunities which currently does not exist within MIT or the Organizational Staff Development (OSD) syllabus.

- *“Access to outside programs for which no internal training exists.”*
- *“There are many courses and development opportunities through the U of M and CGA that I would like to take but are not available through the LDP rules.”*
- *“I would like to see a more extensive list of courses and training available which is offered by HR and other departments and divisions other than my own.”*
- *“We need the ability to consider courses and programs which are outside of the government structure.”*
- *“I would like to take courses outside of OSD like RRC and U of M.”*

Suggestions Made for Increasing HR Planning Information: There were a notable number of participants who suggested that Human Resource (HR) information be available as a resource to employees so they can use this information for long-term career planning. Requests for this information included: employment forecasts for specific jobs, position competency requirements and a tool to identify any skills gap between the employee’s present skills inventory and the skills required for the desired position.

- *“Samples and templates provided by our HR Consultant.”*
- *“MIT needs a website with various positions and a detail about what each position entails and what skills or education is required for each position.”*

- *“Employment forecasts showing the number of new positions or vacancies anticipated over the next 5 – 10 years.”*
- *“I would like materials and guidelines which would allow me to see how my goals and aspirations align with the government.”*
- *“I wish HR would provide a guideline that would help me make up my mind on what to include on my LDP.”*

Suggestions Made for Increased Leadership Knowledge Development: There were a notable number of concerns that present leaders may not possess the awareness, experience or time necessary to guide subordinates toward meaningful LDP creation. It was suggested that guidance resources be dedicated individuals, such as a school guidance councillor.

- *“Provide better training to supervisors, not just EMC, so they understand the spirit of the LDP and the importance of the commitment to the employee.”*
- *“Train strong leaders to support strong employees.”*
- *“Ensure leaders understand the LDP program sufficiently.”*
- *“Ensure leaders are experienced and educated in LDP before directing others in the program.”*

Suggestions Made to Increase Financial Support: Access to funding resources continued to be a concern for a significant number of respondents. Participants recommended that MIT make reasonable financial resources available to encourage follow-through of LDPs. Other ideas suggest paying for professional association fees or establishing annual learning accounts similar to the Government of Canada.

- *“MIT should support learning through Professional Associations by reimbursing for annual fees.”*
- *“Remove the training budget freeze.”*
- *“Financial constraints are the biggest problem right now.”*
- *“MIT could assume more of the financial burden for training.”*

Suggestions Made to Improve Communications: Additionally, a significant number of employees advocated for improved communication within MIT. These suggestions included more frequent one-on-one discussions with leaders, better dissemination of advancement opportunities, and promotion of a continuous learning culture.

- *“Provide a clearer overview of what opportunities are available within the Department.”*
- *“We need better communication of available options.”*
- *“We need one-on-one discussions with upper management concerning LDP’s.”*
- *“When you make a submission for an OSD course, management needs to be quicker in their response.”*

Suggestions Made for Increasing Targeted Mentorship: A notable cluster of employee comments suggested that MIT dedicate resources to train leaders in how to enhance their leadership skills thus becoming a greater support to subordinates. A significant number of employees indicated that they plan to retire in the near future, and suggested that they be paired with more junior staff in order to share their extensive experience and knowledge.

- *“We need more priority for succession planning in training employees who desire to advance to senior positions.”*
- *“Increase the amount of training for younger employees to fill positions that will be vacated by retiring employees.”*

- *“Job shadow retiring employees in order to learn what they do.”*
- *“Pair senior employees with junior employees for knowledge transfer and mentorship.”*

Suggestions Made for MIT to Balance Workload Expectations: A pattern emerged which conveyed an inconsistency between MIT’s desire for staff to have LDPs and the existing work load expectations. A significant number of employees communicated that while staff positions appear to be vacant on an increasing basis, work load expectations have increased for those remaining individuals. This contributes to increased workplace stress and reduces the time necessary to pursue learning and development opportunities. It was suggested that leaders must focus attention to balancing work load expectations to a more “realistic” level.

- *“Realistically, work load balancing must enable two hours a week for reflecting reading to maintain currency.”*
- *“I feel guilty if I’m not plowing away and my staff sees me reading a trade publication or journal.”*
- *“In the future, perhaps flex-time would allow me to take degree courses offered during work hours.”*
- *“Reducing the work load expectations will better enable time for learning and training.”*

SUMMARY

Participants have offered an inventory of suggestions and ideas on how MIT’s LDP initiative can be improved. Most prevalent among the suggestions is to increase the availability of knowledgeable and well trained coaches and mentors. Reduction of success barriers such as insufficient tools, planning information and resource limitations will also result in increased optimism and motivation.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to engage MIT employees and solicit their opinions, perceptions and experiences in order to better appreciate how these factors impact learning and development choices. The research not only sought to understand if leader expectations influence subordinate development and progression but also to explore if there is a connection between employee expectation and their development and progression. The ultimate intent of this research report is to use this knowledge to guide improvements in the LDP initiative.

The survey yielded a wealth of information from 242 MIT employees. There were many common themes between the findings and the theoretical concepts presented in the literature review. This section will review the findings presented in Chapter 5 in relationship to the general goal of improving employee development and progression.

6.1 Is there a connection between leader expectations and their employee's development and progression?

Leader expectations may affect learning behaviour and may be similar to what has been described as the Pygmalion effect, which suggests that a leader's expectations influence an employee's performance and career progression by raising their self-efficacy (Bezuijen et al. 2009, pp1249).

A series of questions were used to probe MIT employees' opinions in the areas of guidance, leaders' influence on LDP choices, and mentorship. The ability for the leader to significantly influence a subordinate's choices appears to be related to the strength of their individual relationship with them. The same leader may be a positive influence to some of their subordinates and a negative influence to others (Eden 1984, pp70). Survey responses indicate that employees have a clear perception of the most desirable characteristics for a leader to possess. Response data implies that a majority of the sample population has had a leader with these characteristics and has received learning and development guidance from them.

Leader expectations are communicated by both verbal and non-verbal techniques. Examples of leader-subordinate communications ranged from overt demonstrations of the leaders' faith in the employee, to an incident of the leader "rolling their eyes" when engaged in LDP dialogue. People are inclined to respond in accordance with interpersonal signals and conditions (Wang 2000, pp5). What is critical in the communication of expectations is not what the boss says so much as the way they behave (Livingstone 1969, pp100). Rosenthal noted that a leader's expectancy communications are subtle and involve visual and auditory clues including tone of voice (Rosenthal & Jacobson 1968, pp29).

Mentorship was explored through both the quantitative and qualitative questions. A majority of respondents indicated that they have had a mentor. Subordinates are more inclined to accept advice from a leader which they respect. Employees are motivated by high positive expectations and will try hard to meet them. This motive to please is strongest when there is a respectful and trusting relationship between the leader and the employee (Burgess 2007, pp6).

The analysis of the quantitative findings suggests that leader motivation is positively correlated with the number of LDP choices which an employee may make. It was revealed that employees are more motivated when adequate LDP guidance materials exist and when they have an existing LDP. This is consistent with similar qualitative responses. Participants who have LDP plans are satisfied with the guidance materials which presently exist, however those that have yet to complete plans strongly advocate for guidance mentorship and support.

Quantitative findings also indicate that motivation is significantly correlated with the beliefs that LDPs can or have influenced career progression. People are likely to act when they believe an action will produce positive outcomes and when they value those outcomes (Schunk 1990, pp75). A record of success builds confidence and motivation since it provides credibility to their leader's expectations. Respondents indicated that motivation is enhanced when a leader encourages and assists them in pursuing challenging goals.

Demographic information was examined in conjunction with the most common response for each survey question. In each instance, staff 50+ years old and with more than 20+ years of service dominated the most prevalent answers selected. The smallest demographic category comprises of employees between 20-29 years of age and with 1-5 years of service. These respondents had the highest proportion of affirmative responses to the leader expectation questions. They selected the "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" options 60% of the time. Additionally, it was noted that these employees most often requested mentorship, templates, and on-line tools in order to complete LDPs. The qualitative answers further revealed that these employees are excited about the LDP initiative and the potential career opportunities that may result. These findings are consistent with the theoretic knowledge disclosed in the literature review. Managerial expectations have their most magical influence on young people. As subordinates mature and gain experience their self-image gradually hardens (Livingstone 1969, pp102).

6.2 Is there a connection between employee expectation and their development and progression?

The findings suggest that participants who have already completed the LDP process are very optimistic about it positively influencing future career progression. These findings are reflected in both the quantitative and qualitative responses. Approximately 50% of the respondents have experienced some type of career progression within a four-year window. More than 80% of employees indicated that they are interested in future career development. When an individual has a strong self-belief in their competence and abilities, they are considered to have high self-efficacy. The frequency of preferences selected suggests that the respondents possess high self-efficacy. These individuals benefit from involvement in organizations that embrace learning orientations. The qualitative responses to the LDP series of questions revealed that LDPs are considered relevant tools for assisting employees to realize their goals.

Quantitative data indicates that respondents believe that they are best at determining which LDP choices are most appropriate to reach their career goals. In relating this to the Galatea effect, if people believe that they will succeed, they are more likely to succeed (Kohei 2007, pp1).

Respondents offered that their self-esteem and motivation is negatively impacted when compensatory issues exist or when they were unsuccessful in competitions. Self-esteem is a central element underlying a positive self-concept. It is related to self-knowledge and is strongly related to performance (Judge et al. 1998, pp169).

It was noted that employees who had successfully completed educational programs were quite optimistic about undertaking additional learning and educational opportunities. This suggests that as confidence increases, based on past successes, employee motivation and expectations for initiating future learning and development also increase. Self-efficacious learners expend greater effort and persist longer than students who doubt their capabilities (Schunk 1990, pp74).

6.3 Conclusion

The survey findings demonstrate consensus with the knowledge gained from the literature review. There is also concurrence between the correlated quantitative findings and the responses generated from the qualitative questions. The examination of the mean values exhibited that the variables have a better than “neutral” response. The open-ended questions have supplemented the research by providing a collection of valuable opinions, experiences and advice.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the introduction, the purpose of this report is to examine the effect of employee and leader expectations in relation to the choices employees make in the development of LDPs. By participating in the surveys, MIT employees had an opportunity to share their LDP opinions, experiences and advice, and in this way have provided active input into the recommendations of how to make improvements to the LDP initiative.

The report utilized a literature review and a series of quantitative and qualitative survey questions in order to answer two key research questions:

1. Is there a connection between employee expectation and their development and progression?
2. Is there a connection between leader expectations and their employee's development and progression?

The findings section of the report explained that there is a significant correlation between several independent variables with the dependent variables. The respondents shared numerous examples where they demonstrated that there is a connection both from an employee and leader expectation perspective, with LDP choices. This was further supplemented with the knowledge gained in the literature review.

Recommendation 1: Link new employee engagement and orientation materials to the LDP initiative.

The quantitative data established that employees are very optimistic about career progression when they are familiar with LDP materials. The qualitative data demonstrated that employees are most positive about their career opportunities when they are new to the department or position. LDP materials should be a module in employee orientation materials. Providing new employees with LDP materials immediately reinforces the organizational values regarding L & D, demonstrates these learning-centric philosophies in a pragmatic way, capitalizes on the new employee's optimism about knowledge development and contributes to building trust between the leader and employee.

Recommendation 2: Supplement the existing intranet communication tool ("IM IT"), with LDP creation, maintenance, and outreach tools and messages.

"IM IT" should contain current LDP employee peer success stories. The quantitative data indicated that employees become optimistic about LDP choices when they believe that L & D can influence their careers. The open-ended responses produced an inventory of inspirational stories of how employees were mentored, coached, inspired and motivated about knowledge and career pursuits. MIT may wish to provide an inducement for employees to share stories of their successes for publication on the intranet site. These stimulating examples may motivate employees towards achieving their own goals.

A notable number of responses suggested that there is a significant need for LDP templates, tutorials, mentorship and coaching. Additionally, respondents stated that

there is a desire for additional outreach materials to be made available on-line. Participants raised concerns about the availability of materials due to geographic locations as well as limitations due to fiscal resources. The “IM IT” intranet site should be enhanced to provide a user friendly step-by-step tool to create an LDP. Additionally, hyper-linked video tutorials and examples could be made available for maximum distribution at a reasonable cost. Several responses indicated a desire for better communication respecting employment opportunities. The “IM IT” site could contain a link to the CSC employment opportunities web page in addition to the creation of an internal secondment notification page. Employees requested well informed and available coaches to assist them in LDP creation. The “IM IT” site may contain a dedicated bulletin board or text message capability so that employees receive real time, on-line assistance on a scheduled basis from trained coaches to assist them with the on-line LDP creation tool.

Recommendation 3: MIT should establish performance targets respecting LDP creation for each Division.

Both the quantitative and qualitative responses revealed that employee optimism increases and leader inspired motivation increases when employees have implemented a Learning and Development Plan. By establishing a reasonable performance benchmark for each Division, MIT would encourage greater deployment with a managed and tactical implementation strategy. Some respondents communicated that there may be a perceived lack of LDP program support from leaders. Additionally, several respondents indicated frustration when tardy education approvals resulted in missed opportunities. One respondent suggested that LDP deployment targets should be included in the Departmental annual report.

Establishment of Divisional deployment targets and reporting may be a useful mitigation strategy to address the perceived lack of LDP support or management buy-in.

Recommendation 4: MIT should align existing management development courses to include additional instruction in soft skill competencies.

A number of quantitative responses explained that employee optimism and motivation is heavily influenced by a leader’s soft skills. Employees provided a significant list which they believe a leader should possess in order to become a mentor. Characteristics such as honesty, integrity, empowering, patient and polite were included in this extensive list. When a leader is able to demonstrate positive behaviour and positive communication signals, negative feelings are reduced and a more respectful environment results. Employees are more inclined to be motivated by a leader that they respect and trust.

The research identified that leaders can be taught how to apply the Pygmalion and Galatea effects and thereby positively influence employee optimism and motivation. MIT has a number of existing learning and development opportunities which are designed to increase skills development in future leaders. The course curriculum should be reviewed in order to explain the significance of soft skills development and their potential to be either positive or negative motivators to employees. Any resulting enhanced soft skills training should include understanding the impacts of body

language, verbal communication, tone, and motivation techniques and how they affect MIT projects, such as the LDP initiative.

Recommendation 5: MIT should consider the impacts of limited fiscal resources on the LDP initiative prior to program expansion.

During times of limited resources, discretionary expenditures such as employee learning and development, may be reduced or deferred. Respondents have expressed a number of concerns about the impacts of resource reductions of the LDP initiative. They include:

- Being restricted to “free” training;
- Not having professional association membership fees recompensed;
- Being denied out-of-province travel for training opportunities;
- Experiencing a non-balanced work load due to vacancies which reduces the availability for training opportunities; and
- Being denied training requests at venues which are external to Government.

Employees communicated that when fiscal resources are limited, educational opportunities become less prevalent than employee’s expectations. Limited resources may be interpreted as a lack of demonstrated support from MIT to support the LDP goals.

REFERENCES

- Bandura, A., (1986) "Social foundations of thought and action: A social-cognitive view", Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, pp1 – 617.
- Bass, B., (1988) "The Inspirational Processes of Leadership", Journal of Management Development, Vol. 7, Iss: 5, pp21 – 31.
- Bass, B., (1985) "Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations", The Free Press, A division of Macmillan Inc. New York, NY, pp1 – 256.
- Bezuijen, X., van den Berg, P., van Dam, K., Thierry, H., (2009) "Pygmalion and Employee Learning: The Role of Leader Behaviors", Journal of Management, Vol. 35, No. 5, pp1248 – 1267.
- Burgess, K., (2007) "Pygmalion Pedagogy: Reevaluating Educators' Expectations of Students", 20th Annual Ford Scholar Forum, pp1 - 14.
- Cervone, D., Peake, P., (1986) "Anchoring, efficacy, and action. The influence of judgmental heuristics on self-efficacy judgments and behaviour", Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 50, pp492 - 501.
- Denova, C., (1968) "The Hawthorne Effect: One of the results of training Evaluation at Hughes Tool", Training and Development Journal, pp46 - 49.
- Diaper, G., (1990) "The Hawthorne Effect: A Fresh Examination", Educational Studies, pp261 - 267.
- Dvir, T., Eden, D., Banjo, M., (1985) "Self-Fulfilling Prophecy and Gender: Can Women be Pygmalion and Galatea?", Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 80, No. 2, pp253 - 270.
- Eden, D., (1984) "Self-Fulfilling Prophecy as a Management Tool: Harnessing Pygmalion", The Academy of Management Review, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp64 - 73.
- Eden, D., Shani, A., (1982) "Pygmalion Goes to Boot Camp: Expectancy, Leadership, and Trainee Performance", Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 67, No. 2, pp194 - 199.
- Eden, D., (1992) "Leadership and expectations: Pygmalion effects and other self-fulfilling prophecies in organizations". Leadership Quarterly, Vol. 3, pp271 - 305.
- Gephart, W., Antonoplos, D., (1969) "The Effects of Expectancy and Other Research-Biasing Factors", Phi Delta Kappa International, Vol. 50, No. 10, pp579 - 583.
- Judge, T., Erez, A., Bono, J., (1998) "The power of being positive: The relation between positive self-concept and job performance", Human Performance, Vol. 11, pp167 - 187.
- Judge, T., Jackson, C., Shaw, J., Scott, B., Rich, B., (2007) "Self-efficacy and work-related performance: The integral role of individual differences", Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 92, pp107 - 127.
- Kierein, N., Gold, M., (2000) "Pygmalion in Work Organizations: A Meta-Analysis", Journal of Organizational Behaviour, Vol. 21, pp913 - 928.

Kohei, D., Hideshi, I., (2007) "*The Pygmalion and Galatea Effects: An Agency Model with Reference-Dependent Preferences and Applications to Self-Fulfilling Prophecy*", Kwansai Gakuin University – School of Economics, Nishinomiya, Japan, pp1 – 37.

Lied T, Kazandjian V., (1998) "*A Hawthorne strategy: implications for performance measurement and improvement*", Clinical Performance and Quality Health Care, Vol. 6, Iss: 4, pp201 - 204.

Livingston, J., (1969) "*Pygmalion in Management*", Harvard Business Review, Vol. Motivating People - January 2003, pp97 - 106.

Locke, E., Frederick, E., Lee, C., Bobco, P., (1984) "*The effect of self-efficacy, goals, and task strategies on task performance*", Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 69, pp241 - 251.

Loftus, P., (1995) "*The Pygmalion Effect*", Industrial and Commercial Training, Vol. 27, Iss: 4, pp17 – 20.

Look Magazine, "*Sweeney's Miracle*", (Nov 16, 1965) Vol. 29, No. 23, Look Magazine, New York, NY, pp117-179.

McNatt, D., Judge, T., (2004) "*Boundary Conditions of the Galatea Effect: A Field Experiment and Construction Replication*", Academy of Management Journal, Vol. 47, Iss: 4, pp550 - 565.

Merrett, F., (2006) "*Reflections on the Hawthorne Effect*", Educational Psychology, pp143 - 146.

Priyabhashini, A., Krishnan, V., (2005) "*Transformational Leadership and Follower's Career Advancement: Role of Pygmalion Effect*", Indian Journal of Industrial Relations, Vol. 40, No. 4, pp482 - 499.

Reynolds, D., (2002) "*The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly of Incorporating "My Fair Lady" in the Workplace*", SAM Advanced Management Journal, pp4 - 14.

Rosenthal, R., (1973) "*The Pygmalion Effect Lives*", Psychology Today, pp56 - 63.

Rosenthal, R., Jacobson, L., (1968) "*Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development*", New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, pp1 – 231.

Seymour, D., (2009) "*The Galatea Effect: Training Managers to Raise the Specific Self-efficacy of Subordinates to Improve Performance*", University of Nebraska, MA Thesis, pp1 - 63.

Shunk, D., (1990) "*Goal Setting and Self-Efficacy during Self-Regulated Learning*", Educational Psychologist, Vol. 25(1), pp71 - 86.

Stajkovic, A., Luthans, F., (1998) "*Self-efficacy and work-related performance: A meta-analysis*", Psychological Bulletin, Vol. 124, pp240 - 261.

Wang, L., (2000) "*The Upward Pygmalion Effect in the Organization*", Western Kentucky University, MA Thesis, pp1 - 52.

White, S., Locke, E., (2000) "*Problems with the Pygmalion effect and some proposed solutions*", University of Maryland, The Leadership Quarterly, Vol. 11, Iss: 3, pp389 – 415.

Zanna, M., Sheras, P., Cooper, J., (1975) "*Pygmalion and Galatea: The Interactive Effect of teacher and Student Expectancies*", Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, Vol. 11, pp279 - 287.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX – A

Learning & Development Survey

Learning & Development Survey

To Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation (MIT) Staff

Re: Participation in a Public Administration Research Paper

Thank you for participating in this research exercise. Many of you are aware that MIT has embarked on a number of initiatives which were identified to "ensure excellence". One of these ensuring excellence clusters has identified learning and development within its scope. I am a long time member of the MIT team and am currently in the process of completing my Masters in Public Administration degree. If you have any questions about the survey, I can be contacted at mit.researcher@yahoo.ca. This step in the degree requirements is designed to allow students to complete a research paper in consultation with a client for which it will demonstrate value. I have chosen to conduct research which will support MIT's learning and development ensuring excellence goal. Manitoba Infrastructure & Transportation, through Associate Deputy Minister Paul Rochon, has agreed to serve as my client for the purposes of this research.

Please be aware that your decision to respond to my survey is voluntary. This survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. The purpose of this survey will be to obtain your perspectives on a number of factors which could or has influenced learning and development. I know that you have been asked to complete surveys like this in the past. I want to assure you that, while some of the questions may look familiar, the focus of my research is different as it is specifically related to this topic and MIT. I will not have access to or include any data collected from past surveys. I request that all participants complete the survey only once.

All individuals who submit a completed survey on or before Feb 28th, 2012, and wish to be included, will be entered in a random draw for a \$50 Gift Card.

Please note that all data will be treated in a confidential manner and all responses are anonymous – your name or email is in no way connected to a data file unless you choose to share it. The survey uses the "Survey Monkey" program which assures that responses are anonymous when received. Furthermore, your participation is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse to answer questions in the survey or withdraw from the survey at any point.

Attached to this email is an implied consent letter. Please review this before answering the survey.

I am looking forward to learning about your views and perspectives and I think my research will be of significant benefit to MIT. I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best wishes for a safe and successful year!
Darren Christle.

Learning & Development Survey

Letter of Information for Implied Consent (page 1)

Letter of Information for Implied Consent

Research associated with learning and development for MIT employees

You are invited to participate in a research exercise which will support MIT's learning and development ensuring excellence goal.

I am a long time member of the MIT team as well as a graduate student in the department of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. If you have further questions, I may be contacted at mit.researcher@yahoo.ca

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master's degree in Public Administration. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Bart Cunningham. You may contact my supervisor at (250) 721-8059.

Purpose and Objectives

This research will ultimately be used to assess the effectiveness of MIT's learning and development strategy, outreach materials and training.

Importance of this Research

Research of this type is important because it will assist MIT with achieving one of its ensuring excellence goals. Additionally, any resulting process improvements should help employees not only improve personal job performance/improvement but also foster employee contribution to the organization's goals.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a staff member of MIT.

What is involved

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include responding to a survey.

Inconvenience

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including the time it will take to complete the survey (estimated time is 20-30 minutes).

Risks

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Benefits

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include assisting (through your anonymous reply to the survey) in the development of a potential framework or set of recommendations to evaluate the adequacy of the MIT learning and development excellence process.

Learning & Development Survey

Letter of Information for Implied Consent (page 2)

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. You need not answer every question in the survey and you can choose to not participate in the survey. You can also decide upon completing the survey to not submit it.

Researcher's Relationship with Participants

The researcher may have a relationship to potential participants. To help prevent this relationship from influencing your decision to participate, the following steps to prevent coercion have been taken; the survey is anonymous.

Anonymity

In terms of protecting your anonymity your survey responses cannot be traced to you. The survey uses the "Survey Monkey" program which assures that responses are anonymous when received. At the conclusion of the research project, all data stored on all computers will be deleted and any paper copies will be destroyed.

Confidentiality

Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by ensuring paper files are kept in locked cabinets and computer files are password-protected. Please be advised that your information gathered for this research study uses a server or web program located in the United States. As such, there is a possibility that your information may be accessed without your knowledge or consent by the American government in compliance with the U.S. Patriot Act.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: report and presentation of the report to the Associate Deputy Minister.

Disposal of Data

At the conclusion of the research project and research paper, all data stored on all computers will be deleted and any paper copies will be destroyed.

Contacts

Please see introduction to this consent form for contacts.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

By completing and submitting the survey, YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

Best Regards,
Darren Christle

Please retain a copy of this letter for your reference.

Learning & Development Survey

Definition of a "Leader"

A "Leader" is defined as any MIT person of whom you have OR have had a direct or indirect reporting relationship.

***1. Please identify your present alphanumeric pay classification code. (examples: CL3, A02, P6)**

***2. Please identify your MIT Division**

3. I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
3.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
4.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavour to which I set my mind.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. I am the best judge of what learning and development is best for my career.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
7.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. My career progression is a result of my hard work and education exclusively.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
8.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Please describe a time when you were very optimistic about achieving your career or learning & development goals.

Learning & Development Survey

10. Please describe a time when you were not optimistic about achieving your career or learning & development goals.

11. What guidelines or materials do you wish you had for developing your own learning and development plans?

12. My leader feels confident about my abilities.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

12.

13. My leader feels that my skills and abilities are very important in this organization.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

13.

14. I have received learning and development guidance from a leader.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

14.

15. A leader has influenced a learning and development choice that I have made.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

15.

16. I have had leader which I thought of as a mentor.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

16.

17. Without direct involvement of a leader, I would have missed opportunities.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

17.

18. Please describe the characteristics which are the most important to you, for a leader to be considered a mentor?

Learning & Development Survey

19. Please describe a time when a leader exhibited characteristics which motivated or positively influenced your learning and development choices. Why were these important to you?

20. Please describe a time when a leader exhibited characteristics which discouraged or negatively influenced your learning and development choices. Why were these important to you?

21. I am familiar with existing guidance materials on how to create and maintain a learning and development plan.

21. Yes No

22. Within the previous 12-months, I have taken courses or training.

22. Yes No

23. I have experienced career progression that I can identify as having resulted from training or education that I have received.

23. Yes No

24. I believe that learning or development can influence my career progression.

24. Yes No

25. I have an existing learning and development plan.

25. Yes No

26. I am interested in further career development.

26. Yes No

27. List all the alpha numeric pay classifications that you have had (oldest to newest) between 2008 - 2012.

Learning & Development Survey

28. Do you learn best when involved in a structured program, one-on-one, or on-line courses? Please explain what is most appealing for you about your choice.

29. Could you describe what would be the best thing that MIT could do to enhance your learning and development?

30. Do you anticipate retirement within the next three (3) years?

30. Yes No

31. Please Identify your gender.

31. Female Male

32. Geographically, how would you classify your employment?

32. Urban Based - such as Wpg or Brandon Rural Based

33. Please indicate your age.

33. less than 20 20 - 29 30 - 39 40 - 49 50+

34. Please indicate your years of service to the Manitoba Government.

34. Less than 1 year 1 - 5 years 6 - 10 years 11 - 20 years more than 20 years

35. This question has been intentionally left blank. There is no response required.

Thank you for participating in the survey.

35. A. B.

A random drawing for a \$50 Gift Card will be made from the list of people who have submitted a completed survey. The selection will be made by an independent third party thus the researcher will not know who was selected. If you would like to enter this draw please send your name and phone number via e-mail to the attached e-mail address. Once the draw has been made, the link and list of participants will be deleted by the third party.

interview.volunteer@yahoo.ca

APPENDIX - B

Dimension #1 – The Employee Optimism Survey

Response Scale for Questions 3-8

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

- [3] I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself. *
- [4] When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them. *
- [5] I believe I can succeed at most any endeavour to which I set my mind. *
- [6] I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges. *
- [7] I am the best judge of what learning and development is best for my career.
- [8] My career progression is a result my hard work and education exclusively.
- [9] Please describe a time when you were very optimistic about achieving your career or learning and development goals.
-
-

- [10] Please describe a time when you were not optimistic about achieving your career or learning and development goals.
-
-

- [11] What guidelines or materials do you wish you had for developing your own learning and development plans?
-
-

* Questions were taken verbatim from Danielle Seymor's 2009 Thesis presented to the U of Nebraska for standardization reasons. Total = 9 questions.

APPENDIX - C

Dimension #2 – Leader Motivation Survey

Response Scale for Questions 12-17

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

- [12] My leader feels confident about my abilities. *
- [13] My leader feels that my skills and abilities are very important in this organization. *
- [14] I have received learning and development guidance from a leader.
- [15] A leader has influenced a learning and development choice that I have made.
- [16] I have had a leader which I think of as a mentor.
- [17] Without the direct involvement of a leader, I would have missed opportunities.
- [18] Please describe the characteristics which are the most important to you, for a leader to be considered a mentor?

- [19] Please describe a time when a leader exhibited characteristics which motivated or positively influenced your learning and development choices. Why were these important to you?

- [20] Please describe a time when a leader exhibited characteristics which discouraged or negatively influenced your learning and development choices. Why were these important to you?

* Questions were taken from the Indian Journal of Industrial Relations (IJIR) for standardization reasons. Total = 9 questions.

APPENDIX - D

Dimension #3 – Learning and Development Choices (LDC) Survey

Response Scale for Questions 21-25

1-Yes 2-No

- [21] I am familiar with existing guidance materials on how to create and maintain a learning and development plan.
- [22] Within the previous 12-months, I have taken courses or training.
- [23] I have experienced career progression that I can identify as having resulted from training or education that I have received.
- [24] I believe that learning or development can influence my career progression.
- [25] I have an existing learning and development plan.

Total = 5 questions.

APPENDIX - E

Dimension #4 – Career Progression Survey

Response Scale for Question 26

1-Yes 2-No

[26] I am interested in further career development.

[27] List all pay classifications that you have had (oldest to newest) between 2008 – 2012.

Total = 2 questions.

APPENDIX - F

Dimension #5 – Client Needs

Questions Related to Client Needs

- [28] Do you learn best when involved in a structured program, one-on-one, or on-line courses? Please explain what is most appealing for you about your choice.

- [29] Could you describe what would be the best thing that MIT could do to enhance your learning and development?

Total = 2 questions.

