

THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS
OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT MANAGERS IN HOSPITALS

by

JOAN R. W. SMITH
B.Sc.N., University of Windsor, 1967

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

ACCEPTED

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department


of

Communication and Social Foundations

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard



Dr. Yvonne Martin



Dr. C. Hodgkinson



Dr. C. Brian Harvey



Professor D. Protti

© JOAN R. W. SMITH, 1986

University of Victoria

June 1986

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by mimeograph or other means, without the permission of the author.

Supervisor Professor Yvonne Martin

Abstract

Staff Development Managers and Coordinators make decisions daily in situations that are fraught with uncertainty and conflict. Nine staff development managers and two coordinators in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island were interviewed to determine how they make decisions in an atmosphere of uncertainty and conflict. Grandori's (1984) contingency model, developed to match decision strategies with levels of uncertainty and conflict in decision making, was used. The primary focus was on factors which most influence the decisions of staff development managers and coordinators, how they deal with uncertainty and conflict in their decision making, and to obtain their views on Grandori's (1984) model as a tool for staff development decision makers. No particular decision making strategy was apparent. Ensuring that the request for an education program was valid influenced their decisions more than the needs of the learners. Uncertainty was reduced by obtaining more information while problem solving through consultation was used to deal with conflict. Grandori's (1984) model was received positively, however, some had reservations as the time to

absorb the model was limited. It was found to be somewhat academic and more than half of the subjects found it enlightening primarily on the process of decision making. Newer members of the staff development departments were more likely to try to use it than were long standing managers or coordinators.

There was very little difference in the way managers ~ and coordinators handled any of the questions.

Examiners

[Redacted]

Dr. Yvonne Martin

[Redacted]

Dr. C. Hodgkinson

[Redacted]

Dr. C. Brian-Harvey

[Redacted]

Professor D. Protti

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
DEDICATION	x
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
Introduction	1
Purpose	4
Statement of Significance	8
Definition of Terms	9
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	11
Theoretical Literature	11
Overview of Decision Making	12
Information Seeking	15
Developing Objectives	18
Developing Alternatives	20
Analysis of Alternatives/Consequences	23
Choice	28
Influences on Decision Making	28
Conflict	32
Uncertainty	33
Models of Decision Making	34

Satisficing	35
Incrementalism	36
Successive Limited Comparisons .	38
Heuristic Model	38
Contingency Models	39
Stufflebeam et al.	39
Beach and Mitchell	40
Nutt	41
Grandori	42
Empirical Literature	53
Information Seeking	54
Conflict	54
Uncertainty	55
Group Decision Making	56
Models of Decision Making .	57
The Research Questions	59
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE .	63
The Sample	63
Method	67
Instrumentation	69
Pretests	73
Data Processing	74
Data Analysis	74
Consistency	75

		vi
CHAPTER IV	FINDINGS	78
	Strategies	78
	Influences	82
	Uncertainty	85
	Conflict	89
	Model	91
	Other Findings	94
CHAPTER V	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	96
	Summary	96
	Conclusions and Discussion	98
	Strategies	98
	Influences	100
	Uncertainty	101
	Conflict	103
	Model	104
	Suggestions for Further Research	104
	Limitations of the Study	106
REFERENCES	107
APPENDIX A	- Some Definitions and Measures of Uncertainty from Psychological Decision Making Research and Survey Research in Organizations	112
APPENDIX B	- Biographical Outline of Staff Development Managers and Coordinators	115
APPENDIX C	- The Problem and Answer Sheet	117

APPENDIX D	- The Interview Guide for Probe I and Probe II . . .	120
APPENDIX E	- Grandori's (1984) Contingency Model of Decision Making . . .	121
APPENDIX F	- Consistency of Analysis . . .	124
APPENDIX G	- Transcriptions of the Interviews	128

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

1	Respondent Profile of Decision Strategy - Managers	80
2	Respondent Profile of Decision Strategy - Coordinators	81
3	Most Influential Factors In Decision Making as Reported by Respondents	83
4	Reported Methods of Dealing With Uncertainty in the Decision Situation	86
5	Consistency Check on Questions Measuring use of Information To Resolve Uncertainty	88
6	Methods of Dealing with Conflict in the Decision Situation	90
7	Respondent's View of Grandori's Contingency Model of Decision Making (1984)	92
8	Comments on Grandori's Model (1984)	95
9	Percentage Agreement Between Judges Assignment of Statements to Categories for Four Items with the Researcher's Assignment	127

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author acknowledges with gratitude all assistance received.

Dr. Yvonne Martin gave unstintingly of her time and guidance, encouragement and expertise throughout this endeavor. It was very valuable and received with gratitude.

Dr. Christopher Hodgkinson provided suggestions and advice which were always timely and helpful in the production of this study. For his assistance the author is sincerely grateful.

Thanks are also due to Dr. C. Brian-Harvey for his suggestions which brought a new dimension to the study.

This author wants to provide a special acknowledgement to Marion Oxland for her speed and dedication to detail in transcribing this study which made my task possible.

Finally, but not least, a special thanks to my family, coworkers and friends for their understanding and support.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to
John Donald McInnis
in recognition of the fact that
it would never have been
produced without his
constant encouragement
and support.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Staff development managers in hospitals, as do managers in all large organizations, make many job related decisions daily using various decision strategies. Staff development managers are responsible for the planning, organizing, coordinating and implementation of orientation and continuing education programs which are designed for hospital staff according to identified needs. They also act as consultants on education endeavors within the hospital for which their services are requested. In this capacity they are faced daily with the need to make decisions about program planning. Furthermore, these decisions are made in situations with varying degrees of uncertainty and varying degrees of conflict. Uncertainty results from the fact that many people indicate an interest in a particular program and then choose not to attend once it is offered, so staff development managers do not know until after they have advertised the program whether or not the program will attract a large or small crowd. In addition, the decision maker is often dependent on hear-say reports about speakers one employs to teach in the program. They often have no chance to evaluate the speaker before committing the organization's resources. Other sources of uncertainty are the reactions of the

decision maker's superiors to selected topics and speakers.

Conflict on the other hand is the result of the need to please a wide variety of staff who are drawn from all levels of the organization and include professionals, managers, unskilled workers and technical staff. Each group believes it has unique needs which must be met. Conflict also arises over the allocation of funds, giving preference to one group's interests over another.

How can decisions be effective when fraught with uncertainty and conflict?

How can the staff development managers feel confident in their decisions made under such circumstances?

Do staff development managers know the best strategy to use under conditions of uncertainty and conflict?

Decision making under these conditions have, perhaps, two clear disadvantages:

1. The decision maker may use an ineffective strategy through ignorance of other available strategies.
2. The decision may not be the best possible in the situation.

While studies have been done on decision making in large organizations this researcher has not been able to discover any study to date on the decision strategies used by staff development managers in hospitals.

Therefore, we are aware of the existence of uncertainty and conflict in the decision situation faced by staff development managers, but little is known of the strategies they use to make their decisions.

Specifically, we do not know if they consider the degree of uncertainty and conflict and modify their decision process to overcome the difficulties presented by uncertainty and conflict, and produce a more effective decision.

Grandori (1984) developed a contingency model of decision making which prescribes a particular decision strategy based on the degree of uncertainty and conflict which exists in the decision situation. She recommends that the decision process be manipulated differently in different decision situations to produce the most "rational" decision in all situations. Grandori (1984) uses "rational" here as Simon (1976) does when he states that any strategy which helps to achieve an organizational goal is "rational". Grandori (1984) states that "each strategy is a set of procedures for relating some outcomes to some objectives of the organization" (p. 194).

In her contingency model there are five decision strategies. These range in a hierarchical order from "optimizing", in which the goal is clear and all alternatives and consequences are known or knowable and the problem has only to be analysed for the decision maker

to make the best possible decision, to "random" in which nothing is known and the decision maker uses a trial and error mode. "Optimizing" is at the top of the hierarchy being the most comprehensive strategy possible. The next strategy in order of comprehensiveness is the "heuristic" strategy in which there is a moderate degree of uncertainty and conflict. Here, to achieve a rational decision the decision maker must modify the process by altering the goal, and the way of looking at alternatives and consequences as well as altering the process of information seeking. In descending order of comprehensiveness is the decision strategy hierarchy, in each successive decision strategy there is more uncertainty and conflict and for each situation she would have the decision maker modify, in a different way, the decision process. By matching the strategy to the degree of uncertainty and conflict in the decision problem Grandori (1984) contends that a more effective decision will result.

Purpose

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to investigate the decision strategy used by staff development managers, given a specific problem, and to determine what factors are the most influential in their decision making. Furthermore, the methods used by staff

development managers to deal with uncertainty in the decision situation and the methods used to deal with conflict in the decision situation will be studied. Finally the reactions of the staff development managers to Grandori's (1984) model will be reviewed. Primary focus will be on the decision making process and on factors which influence this process in staff development departments in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island.

Grandori's (1984) model will be used to develop the criteria and for the development of a typical decision situation in staff development departments and to assess the strategy used by the staff development manager.

Specifically the objectives are:

1. To determine what strategy is used by staff development managers for a decision problem with a moderate amount of uncertainty and conflict.
2. To determine what factors are most influential in their decision making.
3. To determine what methods are used by staff development managers to deal with uncertainty in the decision making situation.
4. To determine what methods are used by staff development managers to deal with conflict in the decision making situation.

5. To determine whether or not staff development managers consider their decisions rational and if so why.

6. To determine the staff development managers' reaction to Grandori's (1984) contingency model of decision making.

7. To determine if staff development managers find Grandori's (1984) model academic and/or enlightening.

8. To determine if staff development managers could or would use Grandori's (1984) model.

Grandori (1984) does not define effectiveness except as a form of "rationality" in that the decision must be a means of achieving some objectives of the organization. Webster's Dictionary defines effective as "producing a desired effect". Therefore, for this study a decision will be considered effective to the degree that it could reasonably be expected to achieve the goals of (a) the person requesting the program, (b) the staff for whom the program is intended, and (c) the decision maker's boss.

Grandori's (1984) model includes five decision strategies. The first two were described above. The third strategy, which she labels "incremental", is used most effectively when there is a high degree of uncertainty and conflict in the circumstances in which the decision is to be made. In this case the decision maker makes a decision in which the situation varies only slightly from the status quo. No major changes are

She then recommends that at each of five points along the continuum a decision maker should use a specific strategy for greatest effectiveness.

These strategies are hierarchical with "optimizing" the most comprehensive and "random" the least comprehensive strategy. That is, the strategy which includes the most complete use of the steps in the decision process, for example "optimizing" is most comprehensive as it has a clear goal and all alternatives and consequences are considered. A "random" (trial and error) strategy can always be used, or one can use a "cybernetic" strategy, using past experience of success, and so on. However, she recommends that a decision maker use the most comprehensive strategy possible given the degree of uncertainty and conflict in the decision situation.

Statement of Significance

If decision models will improve the decision making process in organizations it would make the manager's job easier and facilitate improvement in the outcomes experienced. It would also seem to be important to determine whether or not there is congruence between the theories of decision models and what managers actually experience. The models purport to produce the best possible decision given that the decision maker considers

those aspects of the decision strategy which indicate that one decision strategy will be more 'rational' than another in a given decision situation.

If better decisions are the result, and different strategies are in fact used, this could influence the teaching of decision making. It would also influence the decision system which is designed by the administrator in large organizations.

All theories, but especially those which propose to be prescriptive, should be evaluated to see if the decision makers perceive them as useful and practical to work as they were designed to work.

The results would be interesting to theorists and educators, but especially to practitioners who must make the really difficult decisions on a daily basis.

Definition of Terms

Strategy - Strategy refers to the process followed to make a decision.

Uncertainty - Uncertainty will be taken to mean a decision situation in which (a) too little information is available about the decision problem, or (b) there is no clearly defined goal, or (c) the consequences of the generated alternatives cannot be assessed with confidence, or (d) the decision maker is unaware of the values of the

superior whom he/she must please, or (e) the decision maker is unaware of the values of the people who will be affected by the decision; that is, the audience and/or the person requesting the program.

Conflict - Conflict will be taken to mean a decision situation in which (a) the decision maker has more than one goal to be achieved, and these goals are not compatible, or (b) the decision maker has two or more alternatives with equally negative or equally positive values assigned to each consequence probability and only one alternative must be chosen, or (c) the alternative which looks most satisfactory to the immediate superior, will not be acceptable to the people who must bear the consequences of the decision, or (d) there is lack of knowledge about the values of the different factions that one must satisfy.

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Literature

In this chapter I will discuss the decision making literature in general terms indicating those aspects which Grandori (1984) has manipulated to form her contingency model. Reference will be made especially to the theories of the decision process since Grandori (1984) prescribes that the process vary with the different problem spaces a manager faces. To understand Grandori's (1984) model it is important to understand the role of uncertainty and conflict in the decision situation and the steps that can vary in the decision process.

Other decision models will be discussed briefly and their similarities and differences indicated.

The one area included in other models but excluded from Grandori's (1984) reflect the implications of various strategies being used at various levels of the organization. I will briefly discuss the implications of this oversight.

Some mention will be made of the critical nature of decisions in large organizations as this study is devoted to a better understanding of that function with a view to improving the decision process, the way it is taught and the way it is implemented.

Overview of Decision Making

Hodgkinson (1978) calls decision making a universal action in which all men are engaged at times or constantly. We all make decisions every day, not only in our work but in our private lives. We even make some critical decisions in our private lives which profoundly affect our futures, for example, the decision to have children, the decision to take a new job, or minor everyday decisions from the time to get up to the time to go to bed - our days are full of decisions.

What is a decision? Hodgkinson (1978) says "the act of decision making is that of deciding to choose among alternatives" (p.49). Any time we are faced with a choice among two or more possible actions we are facing a decision situation. The amount of time and resources we will use in making a decision depends upon the value we place on that decision.

The literature is largely prescriptive and descriptive in that it outlines how decisions should be made or how some authors believe they are made. The earliest writings dealt with mathematical probabilities but in the literature on decisions in organizational administration little is seen of the mathematical computations. As I have limited my study to organizational decision making I will not discuss the mathematical computations.

For some authors a maximizing decision (called "optimizing" strategy by Grandori 1984) is the only rational approach. By this they mean that all possible alternatives are generated and all consequences assigned a value and considered, prior to the decision itself. This is not always possible so some writers have designed strategies to deal with the problems. At first, alternative strategies were devised individually. Each person advocating that theirs was the one best method given the circumstances in which decisions must be made.

Finally, as with other aspects of organizational administration, various writers began to propose contingency models by combining the existing strategies and analysing the situations in which each strategy would be most useful. Stufflebeam, Foley, Gephart, Guba, Hammond, Merriman, and Provus (1971) wrote an early form of a model based on the criteria of information grasp and degree of change. Their model was geared to the administration of educational organizations.

More recently Nutt (1977) reviewed the literature and devised a very complicated system of models by which administrators could conceivably assess the decision situation and choose one of six decision models to employ. There are so many factors impinging on the choice that it would be difficult to be sure the most appropriate model was being used.

Beach and Mitchell (1978) grouped available decision strategies into three categories and analysed the decision situation and the decision makers' characteristics and recommended a match in which the decision maker chooses the strategy which requires the least investment for a satisfactory solution.

Grandori (1984) proposed a model which is based on the degree of uncertainty and conflict in the decision problem space and outlined choice rules, search rules and learning rules for each of five decision strategies. Her outline is quite clear and she proposes that it be prescriptive. Her levels are hierarchical with each strategy being more comprehensive than the next one.

Most contingency theories are based on the fact that different decision problems present with varying degrees of confidence in the probabilities with which one can assess alternatives/states of nature (consequences) relationships and the availability of information regarding the various stages of the decision process. It is generally agreed that 'open' decisions, that is, those decisions about which very little can be known with any degree of confidence, are the prerogative of the administrator while 'closed' decisions, which are well structured, are primarily decisions of technical or staff level operatives in an organization. Managers fluctuate between the two extremes and deal primarily with

moderately 'open' to moderately 'closed' decision problems. Open decisions contain a high degree of uncertainty while closed decisions have none. While Grandori (1984) ignores the levels at which various types of decisions are made, she based her model on the degree of uncertainty as well as conflict. It is simply another way of looking at decisions.

The characteristics in the decision process which are manipulated in Grandori's (1984) model to distinguish one strategy from the other are:

1. Gathering information.
2. Developing objectives (goals).
3. Developing alternatives.
4. Analysis of alternatives/consequences.
5. Choice.

What follows is a review of the literature regarding each of these factors.

Information Seeking

Here the literature breaks into two camps. On the one hand Shortell and Kaluzny Ed. (1983) Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) would obtain limited information. They feel one cannot use all the information one receives even if it is possible to get all available information. They further believe that the cost of obtaining information can sometimes be higher than the information is worth. Others

describe a "rational" or "optimizing" approach to decision making (Warner & Holloway, 1978). In fact Warner and Holloway (1978) would have the decision maker look at all systems and subsystems in the organization which could be affected by the problem. In some organizations there is considerable time wasted around decision making. More information than is warranted by the importance of the decision is obtained by some people. But the reverse is probably more often the case. Decisions are made with too little information and then poor decisions are made and the decision maker finds himself faced with the need to make another decision to clear up the problems created by not having spent enough time investigating the first one or in some cases the wrong problem is solved (Grandori, 1984).

The most prevalent argument centres on the decision makers ability to attend to information and the decision environment. Shortell and Kaluzny (1983) refer to "bounded rationality". Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) based their design of "incrementalism" largely on the premise that people are limited in the amount of information they can process and Lindblom (1960) developed the method he calls "successive limited comparison" for the same reasons. March and Simon (1958) suggest that the decision maker factor the problem into subunits with each subunit being handled by an individual or group. This

spreads the handling of information into manageable sections.

The problem of one person trying to cope with too much information is basic to the more recent development of various strategies to cope with problems of varying degrees of complexity.

The importance of the decision to the decision maker as well as to the organization is reflected in the amount of resources (time, money, and personnel) assigned. This is the first value judgment made.

In Munson and Zuckerman (1983) Henry Mintzberg's Nature of Managerial Work is discussed and it is indicated that Mintzberg delineated ten managerial roles, three of which are transfer of information roles and four deal with decision making. Munson and Zuckerman (1983) indicate that the three information roles provide a knowledge base for the decision making roles.

In decision making, the gathering and processing of information is key to many models from Braybrooke and Lindblom's (1963) incrementalism to Grandori's (1984) contingency model. Some advocate that the decision maker do all that is possible. Others would limit their efforts. It is a very significant aspect of the difference in Grandori's (1984) "heuristic" strategy, in that she would manipulate the information and the information system to achieve the objectives. In her

"optimizing" strategy the decision maker has all the information one needs to make a decision.

Developing Objectives

Once the decision maker has assured himself that he is solving the 'right problem' and he has searched for enough information to know what his objective must be, he can clearly state his aim, objective or goal. Some problems are ill defined and the goals are unclear. This situation lends itself to Braybrooke and Lindblom's (1963) strategy of disjointed incrementalism where the move is away from an unwanted situation rather than towards a goal. Simon (1976), Hodgkinson (1978), and Warner and Holloway (1978) all talk of decision making as moving toward a goal.

Stufflebeam et al. (1971) proposed a classification of decision making of which only one is goal or ends oriented. He lists decisions as being related to means, agents, functions, norms, allocations, order, locale, and affirmation, and so forth.

It is better to view these decisions as levels of decisions rather than classifications of decisions. Even though each of Stufflebeam's (1971) classifications of decisions is related to a specific, each would have a goal, for example, a locale decision of where to situate a building might have the goal or objective of easy access

to the user. Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) state that means and ends are decided together in "disjointed incrementalism", that is, objectives and alternatives are agreed on simultaneously.

Complexity can refer to the multiple goal or even the multiple decision situation. Very often one decision causes a series of decisions not only by levels, where the decision of the administrator leads to implementation decisions by the manager which, in turn, leads to technical decisions by the staff worker, but there is also the situation in which one decision will not resolve a problem so a series of decisions are required. For example, if a department is \$100,000.00 over budget, they may need to reduce staff, reduce absenteeism, put in tighter stock controls, increase sales and so on. Objectives are developed for each decision in the series.

There is also the situation where one decision causes another, for example, if one person is given a leave of absence, another decision is made regarding whether or not to replace him, and if the decision is made to replace him, then another decision is made as to whom to have fill the spot. This differs from the chain of events which occur down the hierarchy in that all these decisions would be made by the same person.

The number of objectives and, in fact, whether one is even developed, varies according to the strategy/model one

uses and is significant in differentiating between them. When incrementalism is the strategy advocated, the only objective generated is to move away from the problem. Grandori (1984) and Stufflebeam et al. (1971) use this category in their models. In fact Grandori (1984) would have the decision maker alter the objectives in any of four ways in the process of using a "heuristic" strategy.

Developing Alternatives

Michalos (1978) and Hodgkinson (1978) indicate that the generation of alternatives is a necessary condition of choosing. Hodgkinson (1978) contends that, in fact, by the time of choosing the situation is binary - there are only two alternatives left, the others having been previously discarded.

Much of the success of the decision process rests with the decision makers' ability to generate alternatives. Creativity in finding innovative solutions to problems depends to a great extent on the degree to which the decision maker is open to new ideas and novel alternatives. Simon (1976) indicates that education (how people are taught to handle problems) and environment (the expectations of superiors) as well as the "degrees of freedom" (what people will accept) influence the types of alternatives generated, as much as experience does.

Michalos (1978) says that alternatives need not really exist - belief in their existence is sufficient. This could create serious problems for the decision maker if he dwelt too long on alternatives which do not really exist.

Part of Simon's (1976) satisficing model incorporates the idea of looking at alternatives only until one is found which is satisfactory, then looking no further. This is a very influential model and appears in some form in most contingency models including Grandori's (1984).

Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) would only entertain those alternatives which marginally varied from the original condition. They believe that one cannot conceive of all alternatives and to create too drastic a change would result in unforeseen consequences and run the danger of not being accepted by the people involved in the consequences of the decision. Their "incremental" decision strategy was designed with politicians in mind but is used as one of the strategies in Grandori's (1984) model. She contends that there are decision situations for which an "incremental" decision is the most "rational" choice open to the decision maker. Nutt (1977) does not use incrementalism in his paradigm. For Beach and Mitchell (1978) it would fall into the "unaided analytic strategies" category and Stufflebeam et al. (1971) include "incrementalism" as one of their preferred strategies

wherever there is small change required and little information grasp.

Shortell and Kaluzny (1983) refer to "bounded rationality" in indicating man's limitations in generating alternatives. Lindblom's (1960) "successive limited comparison" deals with this problem also. March and Simon's (1958) suggestion that the decision maker factor the problem into subunits with each subunit being handled by an individual or a group spreads the generation of alternatives among various people. With more people involved, more creative alternatives are likely to be generated. Michalos (1978) suggests that the decision maker let the restrictions (time, money, personnel) generate a preferred set of alternatives which can then be handled.

There is therefore, general agreement that the generation of alternatives is an important aspect of the decision process.

The question of how many alternatives to develop also differentiates the alternate decision strategies. In "optimizing" decisions all alternatives must be considered, in a "satisficing" strategy (Simon, 1976) one develops alternatives until a satisfactory one is uncovered and in "incrementalism" very few are considered.

In testing some aspect of Grandori's (1984) contingency model one would evaluate the development of alternatives to identify the strategy used.

Analysis of Alternatives/Consequences

Basic to the decision process is the generation of alternatives and the analysis of the likelihood of their consequences occurring. As noted above, the numbers and kinds of alternatives generated will depend on the available information, the uniqueness of the situation, the creativity of the decision maker, the time and past experience. Some people contend that one must limit the number of alternatives/consequences considered (Braybrooke & Lindblom, 1963; Lindblom, 1960; Michalos, 1978; Simon, 1976; Stufflebeam et al., 1971). Others would use a different decision strategy based on the number of alternatives which can be generated and the number of states of nature (consequences) which can be predicted with a fairly high probability of accuracy (Beach & Mitchell, 1978; Grandori, 1984; Nutt, 1977; Weist, 1966).

However limited man is in trying to identify the consequences of proposed alternatives he must ascribe a value to each one he accepts for deliberation. Values are an integral part of the decision process beginning with a value placed on the goal, as above, to a value being placed on each alternative/consequence relationship.

Values dictate the number and kinds of alternatives considered as well as the final selection or choice. The decision maker places a value either explicitly or implicitly by the choice he makes (Simon, 1976). If the decision maker is aware of his value structure he will be less likely to make conflicting decisions or set conflicting goals and his alternatives and choice will be congruent with his values. Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) contend that we can only know our values when they are put to the test.

One's values change over time. Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) believe that the value system in an organization is unstable and fluid. Some complement and some conflict but they are constantly changing. One only has to look at the changes in moral values in the community over the last ten years. Values vary greatly from one person to another and from one group to another. If the decision is going to affect many people and groups the decision maker needs to be aware not only of his values but of the values of all who are affected.

A decision maker must be aware of his and others values at the present moment and reassess them periodically to ensure effective, nonconflicting decisions. Because values are a large part of decision making the decision makers, especially in large organizations, must be aware of their values (Hodgkinson,

1978). It has become one of the 'hot' topics in organizational literature in the eighties. Our hospital administration recently had a retreat weekend in which the sole purpose was to establish in writing the values of the organization.

One problem in large organizations is the multiplicity of values among top administrative personnel, which is multiplied dramatically as one includes lower levels of management. Sometimes values are in conflict. Once the decision maker has identified the consequences of the alternatives, he may readily discard some whose values are obviously negative. He may then have the problem of two or more with a relatively equal value status. As noted, Hodgkinson (1978) indicates that the final decision always comes down to a choice between two alternatives. So if both alternatives have equal value, which if we choose one, this causes a negative occurrence - for example, if the two choices are **a** or **b** and both of these are undesirable and the decision maker places equal value on both, then he would have to go back to the previous stage and develop more alternatives.

Values permeate this stage of the process. Hodgkinson (1978) states that "the decision maker inhabits a world of uncertainty and value within which he struggles to analyse and impute" (p. 54).

The other aspect of analysing consequences is to assign a probability factor to each. How likely is **a** or **b** to happen given that we do **x**. To save time (and time is a resource) the decision maker can assign probabilities to only those alternatives/consequences which are seriously being considered.

There are many mathematical decision models which advocate that a numerical figure be assigned to the probability that a certain consequence will occur. Warner and Holloway (1978) indicate that it is a very inexact science. It is most useful when dealing with budgets or other monetary systems. Calculators and computers have simplified the process and allow much faster, more accurate computations about more complex problems. Hodgkinson (1978) suggests that a numerical figure can be assigned all possible consequences based on the value one attaches to each.

Once you have assigned a numerical value to each outcome, you can assign the numerical probability to each outcome occurring. Decisions are then made by consideration of the results. Warner and Holloway (1978) divide decisions into Simple or Complex Determinate in which almost all variables are known and Simple or Complex Stochastic with many more unknowns. For each category they suggest a different method of calculation. It is not the intent of this paper to discuss various mathematical

models. The main interest is in delineating the decision process and outlining how they differ in the various strategies recommended by Grandori (1984).

In "incrementalism" Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) recommend that most alternatives/consequences be ignored on the basis that if untoward consequences occur as a result of an incremental decision they can be remedied by another immediate decision.

Value analysis is one aspect of the decision process which leads to conflict, (intrapersonal, interpersonal, group) and assigning probabilities is a source of uncertainty. The combination makes this aspect of decision making crucial to the selection and implementation of a decision strategy according to Grandori's (1984) model.

All of the contingency models highlight the analysis of alternative/consequence or states of nature step in the process of decision making. How many must be analysed? Should decision makers consider all alternatives / consequences as in the "optimizing" strategy or limit themselves to finding one satisfactory solution (Simon, 1976) or ignore most, as in "incrementalism" (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1963)? This is the challenge which the proponents of contingency models hope to meet. Starting with Stufflebeam et al. (1971) through Nutt (1977) and Grandori (1984) they would select the numbers of

alternatives/consequences to consider (given that consequences can be assessed with a reasonable degree of confidence).

Choice

Michalos (1978) claims that a decision is an act. When the decision maker has spent his resources on the previous steps the choice is made. Grandori (1984) has identified choice rules for each model. For "heuristics" Grandori (1984) would use acceptability as the choice rule much like Simon's "satisficing".

Influences on Decision Making

Many aspects of the individual's frame of reference affect decisions. Hodkinson (1978) lists self interest, ideology, ambition, imagination, attitude, prejudice, intention, commitment, control of information and advising parties as influencing a decision. March and Simon (1958) add identification with the group, the task, the organization and extraorganization identification. Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) include habit and Simon (1976) introduces training which he argues teaches the employee approved solutions and indoctrinates him with values.

Other influences inherent in the decision problem are the importance of the decision (March & Simon, 1958;

Michalos, 1978; Stufflebeam et al., 1971; Warner & Holloway, 1978), values (Braybrooke & Lindblom, 1963; Burns & Becker, 1983; Hodgkinson, 1978; Michalos, 1978; Simon, 1976; Steinbruner, 1974; Stufflebeam et al., 1971; Timmell & Brozovich, 1983), complexity (Lindblom, 1960; Munson & Zuckerman, 1983), degree of conflict (March & Simon, 1958; McClure, 1985; Warner & Holloway, 1978), uncertainty (Conrath, 1967; Hodgkinson, 1978; March & Simon, 1958; Michalos 1978), and the ability to generate alternatives, to forecast states of nature (consequences) and the decision climate (Burns & Becker, 1983; Conrath, 1967; Kilman, 1985; Munson & Zuckerman, 1983; Shortell & Kaluzny, 1983).

In more recent writings the ideas of "arationality" of systems and individuals in those systems has been described.

Egan (1985) describes "arationality" as follows:

The rational is what might be expected in the world if everyone were to follow reason all the time; the arational refers to such categories as the following:

- Phenomena such as emotions and intuition which, by definition, fall outside the rational.
- Phenomena that, because of their complexity, are presently beyond the scope of reason; for instance, assembling and fully understanding all the data relating to a complex decision.
- Phenomena that are presently unpredictable, including many of the actions of individuals and many of the events in the environment.
- The deviations from reason that are so common

among human beings that they do not merit being called irrational; for instance, failure to live up to some of the provisions of a complex contract. (p. 261)

He does not indicate that "arationality" is bad for a system or individual (it may be good or bad) just that it exists. It also would have a strong influence on decision making in organizations. For instance, he includes under an organization's cultural "arationality", traditions, values, beliefs, standards and patterns of behaviour and under individual "arationality", excuse making and face saving, intuition, and emotions. Many of these factors as indicated elsewhere in this paper have a bearing on and influence the decision making process.

The result is that experience (the influences from within and without, including individual and system "arationality") and education have the greatest effect on the decision process we use every day.

The two aspects of the decision problem most frequently found in the literature are uncertainty and conflict (values are a source of conflict). Grandori (1984) has taken these two factors and based her contingency model on them. She places each on a continuum, and given an increase in one or both factors she would move to a less comprehensive strategy.

are honest with themselves and are aware of their values and the values of those affected by the decision.

The other influences explain why two decision makers in the same situation (such as staff education managers in hospitals) will make different decisions on the same problem.

Conflict

March and Simon (1958) state that conflict occurs when an individual or group experience a decision problem and it is a function of subjective perceived uncertainty of alternatives. This may be experienced individually, organizationally or intraorganizationally and may be the result of the outcome being unacceptable, incompatible or uncertain.

Other authors indicate goals may conflict (McClure, 1985; Warner & Holloway, 1978) and some talk about conflicting values, which has already been discussed.

Group conflict occurs because of differences in goals or differences in perceptions of reality (March & Simon, 1958).

The organization deals with conflict analytically by problem solving and persuasion in the case of individual conflict and by bargaining and politics in the case of group conflict (March & Simon, 1958).

Whatever the source of conflict-values, goals, alternative/consequence junction or outcomes and whether it is interindividual, intraindividual or group it complicates and extends the decision process.

Uncertainty

Like conflict, uncertainty permeates the decision process and can be about anything from values to outcomes. Hodgkinson (1978) states that in administrative decisions factual uncertainty is inevitable.

At the lowest levels in the organization all aspects of the decision can be known, that is, the goals, the available alternatives with each consequence calculated and the value system on which the decision is based. This is due to training and the decision system in which expectations are clearly defined. But at the higher levels, the degrees of uncertainty multiply. At the managerial level the goals are usually known, having been handed down from an administrative decision, but managers may have to 'break new ground' in the means used to achieve the goal. As Conrath (1967) indicates, there may be an unbounded set of actions possible. If the manager is very creative some of these alternatives will not have been tried before and therefore any probabilities assigned to consequences will be arbitrary - an educated guess at best.

March and Simon (1958) and Michalos (1978) believe that uncertainty leads to search for new alternatives and the areas of search explored will depend on experience and the similarity of previous situations.

Uncertainty becomes the second basic factor which is handled by choosing the most 'rational' decision strategy of the five proposed by Grandori (1984).

MODELS OF DECISION MAKING

For many years the literature on decision making assumed one best way. It was largely prescriptive and implied a "maximizing" or "optimal" model. Simon (1976), Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963), and Lindblom (1960) broke with tradition and proposed various models as being more rational and more realistic because they supplied the decision maker with strategies that enabled him to deal with the limitations of man, process, and the environment.

More recently there occasionally appears in the literature a contingency model of decision. Other aspects of administration have proposed that given a particular situation there was a preferred method of dealing with it. Now we have few such theories about decisions. The problem remains that no two contingency theories incorporate the same models as I will outline them below.

"Satisficing"

Simon (1976) believes that the administrator, in fact, looks at the decision problem and, based on the value he attaches to it's solution, chooses to invest only that amount of resources which will produce a 'good enough' solution. Based on the ease with which the decision maker discovers alternatives, he would raise or lower his aspiration level; that is, if alternatives are easily generated he can raise his aspiration level and conversely, if alternatives are difficult to generate he lowers his aspiration level.

Hodgkinson (1978) calls "satisficing" pragmatically safe. Michalos (1978) claims that "satisficing" is not rational because anything one is satisfied with would then be rational even if it is irrational. He believes that a decision must be subjectively (in your own eyes) rational as well as objectively (in the eyes of the world).

"Satisficing" has caught on as a reasonable answer to many of the problems inherent in trying to make an optimal decision in all situations. It does not rule out optimal if, in fact, the alternatives are easy to generate and the goal and consequences are known, then a "satisficing" decision would equate with an optimal decision for that set of circumstances. However, most of the literature on contingency models include "satisficing" as an alternative. March and Simon (1958) distinguish between

optimal and "satisficing" but indicate that "satisficing" is optimal given the cost of search. In March and Simon (1958) they define "satisficing" as a decision which is minimally satisfactory according to specific criteria, that is, the chosen alternative meets or exceeds these criteria.

"Incrementalism"

Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) developed a strategy they call "incrementalism". The decision maker makes a small change decision, which is only marginally different from the status quo to which it is always compared. For example, a decision on investment may be to do the same as last year plus 10 percent.

"Incrementalism" was designed because of the perceived limitations of:

- a) people - limited problem solving capacity
 - limited ability to process and understand information
- b) process - cannot obtain all information
 - cannot define all alternatives/consequences
- c) constraints - cost of obtaining and processing all information
 - time to look at all aspects of problem and design optimal decision.

A change is considered small if it changes an important variable to a small degree or creates a larger change in an unimportant variable.

It is unnecessary to identify a goal. The decision is aimed at moving away from what is not wanted rather than toward a particular objective.

A limited amount of information is processed and most consequences are disregarded entirely. Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) claim that this is the neglect of the irrelevant. They believe that another decision can quickly be made to remedy any unforeseen negative consequences of the decision.

The advantages to "incrementalism" are purported to be:

1. It limits debate.
2. It observes the limits of change with which society will acquiesce.
3. It limits the experience of unpleasant consequences.
4. Negative consequences can be remedied.
5. It deals with immediate situations in which the values and decision environment is known and stable.
6. Values are not as much of an issue as the decision will impinge only slightly on one or another.

Michalos (1978) states that if the cost of failure in a given decision situation is too high one should consider "incrementalism". It "makes sense".

"Successive Limited Comparisons"

Lindblom's (1960) strategy relates closely with "incrementalism" on all important aspects and seems to be a different way of describing a decision based on marginality.

"Heuristic Model"

Weist (1966) designed this strategy for special use on well structured but complex problems, such as, scheduling jobs or people, assembly line balancing, and similar problems. In this situation all is known but there is too much information to be processed, so one minimizes the alternatives investigated and eliminates them once one alternative path begins to look less than promising. The use of a computer is frequently employed to speed the process. Grandori (1984) enlarges on this process in her contingency model. In fact the degree of uncertainty is very different in the two models labelled "heuristic". Weist's is a method of using an optimizing model on a well defined but complex problem. Grandori's (1984) changes make her "heuristic" strategy effective in the face of uncertainty.

Contingency Models

Stufflebeam et al.

Stufflebeam et al. (1971) used Braybrooke and Lindblom's (1963) "incrementalism" and designed a model of decision settings based on the same criteria of degree of change and information grasp. Stufflebeam et al. (1971) believe that there is never a situation in which there is a large change combined with a high grasp of the information surrounding the decisions.

In the case where all things can be known about the decision situation and the change is small, they would recommend a decision strategy called "synoptic ideal". In this situation it is possible to select the best alternative from among all possible alternatives - very similar to the "optimizing" strategy advocated by Grandori (1984). It is a useful strategy to maintain homeostasis by providing a restorative activity.

In the case where the change is small but so is the grasp of information - either because it is not available or the cost of obtaining and assessing all possible alternatives is too high - Stufflebeam et al. (1971) would use "incrementalism" as described by Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963). They call this decision setting "incremental".

Their third model is called the "Planned Change Model" designed for long range planning in which there is large change and who can anticipate all consequence during a major change situation?

This model does not take into account the degrees of information that may be available between all and very little. There are other contingency models which take these into consideration (Grandori, 1984; Nutt, 1977). It also does not provide for the special situation for which Weist's (1966) "heuristics" were designed; that is, a high information processing model that could be associated with large change.

Beach and Mitchell (1978)

They simply divide the known strategies into three categories.

1. "Aided analytic strategies" - any strategy which uses paper and pencil, calculator, or computer, etcetera.

2. "Unaided analytic strategies" in which the decision process takes place in the mind of the decision maker.

3. "Nonanalytic strategies" which are based on rules, such as, rule of thumb, flip of a coin, compliance with convention, habit, and so forth.

They next analysed the task according to the problem and the environment. The problem characteristics are

unfamiliarity, ambiguity, complexity and instability. The environmental characteristics are irreversibility, significance, accountability, time/money constraints.

Finally the decision maker's characteristics are analysed according to knowledge of the decision strategy, ability, and motivation.

Depending on the characteristics of the decision maker, Beach and Mitchell (1978) would choose the strategy that requires the least investment for a satisfactory solution.

Nutt(1977)

Nutt identifies six organizational decision models on a continuum from "closed" to "open". In the closed models, for use by operatives in the organization, all variables are known and criteria are available to judge alternatives so the decision is fairly structured and controlled or 'deterministic' (similar to "optimizing" described by Grandori (1984), or "synoptic ideal" described by Stufflebeam et al. (1971)). At the other end of the continuum is the open model in which little is known, and there is no higher power within the organization to produce guidelines for the decision. These open decisions are pertinent to "spanning the boundaries" and are the prerogative of the administrator.

His six models are "Bureaucratic", "Normative Decision Theory", "Behavioral Decision Theory" ("satisficing"), "Group Decision Making", "Conflict Equilibrium", and "Open System". Each model would be used considering "the dependencies among organizational units and layers, key tasks of each unit, performance assessment between adjacent layers and environmental characteristics" (p. 84).

This is a very complex model and would be difficult to test as it is dependent on so many aspects of the decision environment it may be difficult to design a problem which would not overlap in some respects with one of the other models. Furthermore, his model is designed for use with groups and the focus of this study is individual decision making strategies.

Grandori's Contingency Theory of Organizational Decision Making

Grandori (1984) delineates five strategies of decision making in organizations which she proposes be used by an individual alone or in a group setting. She specifies the domain of applicability of each strategy according to the dimensions of uncertainty and conflict in each decision problem. No mention is made of whether one strategy would be used more than another at any given level of the organization as is found in Nutt (1976) and

Stufflebeam et al. (1971), for example, by administrators versus managers versus operatives.

Her theory is prescriptive and describes the choice, search and learning rules for each strategy. Choice rules indicate the level of aspiration of the decision maker and the method of choosing among alternatives. These strategies range from "optimal", in which the most nearly perfect decision is made, to "random" in which blind trial and error is explored.

Search rules dictate the amount of time, money and energy which will be expended in pursuit of the problem and is dependent on the presenting problem space. These search rules vary from assessing the full range of probabilities and exploring all possible alternatives to pure guess work with totally unstructured problems. Learning behavior is a "form of a posteriori rationality that links outcomes and objectives in a way that is an alternative to a priori or 'calculated rationality'" (p.193).

Each decision strategy, she contends, conforms to Simon's (1976) "form of rationality" in so far as each is a way to achieve the organization's goals, and according to Grandori (1984), each represents the 'best' way, given the problem situation. She postulates that "more comprehensive strategies are inapplicable and less comprehensive strategies lead to inferior outcomes"

(p. 194).

Following is an outline of Grandori's (1984) five decision strategies which are graphically displayed at the end of this section.

I "Optimizing" Strategy

Problem Situation - all variables are known or knowable. A reliable model of the decision parameters can be constructed. There is no uncertainty and conflict does not exist.

Choice Rule - value maximizing. Choose the alternative which has the fewest or no negative consequences and which will achieve the defined goal.

Search Rules - computation. Continue to expose alternatives/consequences and research information until all aspects of the problem are uncovered and an optimum decision can be made or until the cost of search is such that the benefits anticipated do not warrant further search.

Learning Rules - modification of probability assessments. A posteriori the decision maker would reevaluate his assumptions about consequences and learn from his successes and failures.

This is the decision theory to which most authors refer and which is widely espoused with notable exceptions

(Braybrooke & Lindblom, 1963; March & Simon, 1958; Simon, 1976; Steinbruner, 1974; Stufflebeam et al., 1971). Each of these authors recommend an alternative theory but as Grandori (1984) points out very few recommend a contingency theory.

II "Heuristic" Strategy (includes "Satisficing")

"Heuristics" is a strategy borrowed from the scientific community in which many avenues are explored and each is cut off when it begins to look questionable and various sections of the decision process are modified until a satisfactory decision is reached.

Problem Situation - The problem space is not well defined, that is, all alternatives and consequences are not known or knowable within a reasonable cost. Objectives are stated as a set of parameters rather than a well defined goal. Conflict is also present. Typically there is a moderate degree of uncertainty and conflict.

Choice Rule - acceptability. Which is very similar to Simon's "satisficing" (1976) in that the decision maker compares alternatives to aspiration level until one emerges which is good enough.

Search Rule - hypothesis testing - in which parts of the problem space are explored independently until an acceptable solution is found.

In Simon's "satisficing" (1976) the aspiration level is lowered if alternatives are difficult to find and raised if alternatives are easy to find.

Grandori (1984) has enlarged on Simon's (1976) "satisficing" and developed the "heuristics" model in which more than the aspiration level is altered. In this model the objectives can be modified, that is, goals may be changed so an alternative is seen to have a positive effect in reference to the goal; or the number of goals can be increased or decreased or as with Simon's (1976) "satisficing", just lower or raise the aspiration level. If that doesn't work then the alternatives can be modified by increasing or changing the alternatives. The third area to be modified is the interpretation of data by looking beyond the obvious - change from qualitative data to quantitative or visa versa - or look for other sources of data. In other words, assess consequences from different points of view. The final step is to modify the information system by increasing or decreasing the people involved or changing the methods of delivering information.

All of these processes can be used until an alternative is found with more positive than negative consequences.

Learning Rules - modification of considered objectives, alternatives, assessment of

consequences, and information systems.

This strategy is designed to deal with moderate degrees of uncertainty and conflict by changing the parameters of the problem space and allowing the decision maker to arrive at the best decision under the circumstances.

III "Incremental" Strategy

Problem Situation - High uncertainty is evident in that relative alternatives are undefinable and consequences are unpredictable relevant to some aspiration level. (It may move away from a problem rather than to a goal). Examples of such problems may be how a department of the hospital might open a new service to the public.

Occasionally an "incremental" decision makes sense even when all variables are known, such as, increasing investments by 10 percent.

Choice Rules - linear choice rules - in that minor decisions become cumulative along a continuum only eventually causing major changes.

Search Rules - similarity judgments. Only those alternatives are considered that vary marginally with the status quo. According to Grandori (1984), it is not necessary to specify goal or outcome desired.

Learning Rules - A posteriori modification of

incremental parameters. The decision maker learns from each small change decision and can know if the direction is right or wrong.

This strategy deals with high uncertainty and conflict by reducing the risk involved in making incremental decisions - no big effects are found and any negative effect can quickly be remedied by another decision. In the case of conflict, time can be saved because there is no need to have a priori negotiation.

IV "Cybernetic" Strategies

Problem Situation - nothing is known of the problem space except that something is not working. No goal is known or knowable and alternatives and consequences cannot be generated because the cause and effect relationship is unknown. They cannot even make incremental comparisons. The example given is when an actor has a nonfunctioning machine with no knowledge of how the machine works. Uncertainty is complete and conflict may be overt or covert and the causes unknown.

Choice Rule - imitation of choices - in which the decision maker chooses an action which worked in a similar situation in the past and applies it to the present in a trial and error mode.

Search Rule - repertoires - look for similarities

with previous situations and define what worked in the previous situation.

Learning Rules - Reinforcement. This is a blind trial and error procedure so the decision maker gets learning reinforcement as a trial succeeds.

Grandori (1984) asserts that this strategy allows an organization to be restored to equilibrium in the face of total uncertainty and conflict about which the cause is unknown.

V "Random" Strategy

Problem Situation - It is the same as for "cybernetic" strategies except that the decision maker has no repertoire of similar situations on which to base a decision. So we have a totally uncertain situation in which there may be conflict of unknown cause.

Choice Rules - Random. The decision maker will choose whatever comes to mind and success will be a product of chance, depending on the order in which ideas occur.

Search Rules - Random. As the decision maker has no history of like problems anything can be tried.

Learning Rules - None according to Grandori (1984).

She challenges those who would say this is no decision strategy by arguing that if the activity leading

to the decision is purposive then it is a rational decision process. Once the decision maker has tried one option he should observe the results and if a pattern is emerging he can move up the hierarchy to a more comprehensive decision strategy.

In summary then, the contingency model postulated by Grandori (1984) is hierarchical and each level subsumes the previous strategy, for instance, she notes that:

A random strategy is always feasible; a cybernetic strategy requires that there be observable relations between action and outcomes; an incremental strategy requires that the decision makers define at least one attribute for comparing an alternative course of action with the existing one; an heuristic (or satisficing) strategy requires that the decision makers define aspiration levels that an alternative must satisfy; and an optimizing strategy requires that the decision makers be able to compare all relevant alternatives, considering all relevant attributes (p. 205)

Grandori (1984) has developed an interesting contingency model to be used in decision making by individuals or groups. Having based her model on the degree of uncertainty and the degree of conflict in a decision situation she espouses that the decision maker use one of five decision making strategies which she claims will produce a more "rational" decision providing the decision maker chooses the most appropriate strategy.

The main problem with this theory is that uncertainty and conflict do not always occur in the same degree in all

situations. In recognition of this, she then states that uncertainty is really the condition you consider and conflict may or may not be present or it may be overt or covert. However, she does not deal anywhere with the situation in which there is conflict and no uncertainty.

A second point that is not recognized in the model is the many extraneous influences on decisions. These include values, complexity, the ability to generate alternatives, the decision climate, and the "arationality" of individuals and systems as well as self interest, ideology, ambition, imagination, attitude, prejudice, intention, commitment, control of information and advising parties. "Arationality" includes such as emotions, intuition, belief, values, ways of behaving and history. Any or all of these factors may be as important if not more important than the degree of uncertainty and conflict in influencing the decision strategy that should be used in a given situation.

Thirdly, the term "heuristic" has been modified and does not conform either to its historical use or to the definition used by Weist (1966) when he developed his model. The "satisficing" model developed by Simon (1976) is incorporated into Grandori's (1984) "heuristic" model emphasizing that part which varies the goal to a more difficult one if the original goal is too easy to attain,

and to a more easily attained goal if the original goal is too difficult to attain.

The fourth problem deals with the outline of the "heuristic" strategy. If the decision maker changes the goal, does this constitute use of the "heuristic" strategy? If the decision maker opts to obtain more information and to obtain it from a different source, does this mean they are using the "heuristic" strategy? Do they have to use three, two, or all of those steps? It is not clear just how many of those steps a person would use to be able to say that he is using a "heuristic" strategy.

Suppose he changes his goal and obtains more information and limits his alternatives and then makes a decision which creates a small change from the status quo. Is he using the "heuristic" or the "incremental" strategy or parts of both. The "heuristic" strategy can be encompassed in each of the other strategies and does not present a pure, well delineated, strategy.

Next, a contingency model purports to produce more effective decisions. Grandori (1984) fails to define what would be a "more effective" decision. She compares effective with Simon's (1976) definition of "rational"; that is, moving toward the organization's goals. This means that to evaluate the decision process to see if a decision maker has produced a more effective decision the

researcher would have to develop criteria that would measure the degree to which a decision moved the unit, which is affected by the decision, toward the organization's goals.

Lastly a contingency model should be useful in a practical situation. Grandori's (1984) model is very theoretical. Even the questions asked to select the strategy to be used is couched in language which is not easy to interpret and apply.

The model is interesting and would form a good basis from which to distinguish between the strategies of the decision process to be used in various circumstances, however, it requires a much tighter framework, and more solid criteria of effectiveness to be tested.

Empirical Literature

Various aspects of the decision process have been studied as well as group decision making. There have been many studies of the group process (two are listed below), and there was one study in which Benjamin and Kerchner (1982) tried to identify a decision model that was being used by members of the group being interviewed. However, to date, I have been unable to find one study which analyses the individual's decision making process according to a contingency model.

Also bearing on Grandori's (1984) contingency model is the literature dealing with studies of conflict and uncertainty. I will include these in my review.

Information Seeking

O'Reilly (1982) studied a group of clerks in welfare agencies who screened and processed the applicants. He wanted to find out what information sources they used and why. He found that accessibility was more important than quality of information.

Gifford, Bobbitt and Slocum (1979) studied the effect of the message quality on the perceived uncertainty of the subjects. They separate data and information. Where there is adequate information the uncertainty is low. Where there is data, uncertainty is based on the amount of 'noise' or extraneous inputs. They indicate that the quality of the message is an important factor in uncertainty.

Conflict

Dealing with organizational conflict is one parameter of the decision process in organizations which has been studied (Cochran & White, 1981). Many authors commented on it (see previous reference to conflict) but Cochran and White (1981) studied the conflict between purchasing agents and administrators in the purchasing decision

making process in hospitals. They found a significant difference in the perception of conflict between the two groups. They did not indicate how this was resolved or study the effects of this conflict on either party or on the effectiveness of the decisions made.

This falls into the category of confirming what has been said by March and Simon (1958), and Warner and Holloway (1978), that conflict is prevalent between departments in an organization, and that includes hospitals.

Uncertainty

Gifford, Bobbitt and Slocum (1979) studied the perceived level of uncertainty based on the processing of information.

They indicate that uncertainty is a central problem and has become the major variable in contingency theories of organizational structure. They point out, however, that there is no agreement in the literature on a definition.

The table of definitions of uncertainty taken from their study is attached in Appendix A.

These authors tested Conrath's classifications of decision situations which include the areas covered in Grandori's (1984) model, that is, states of nature

(information about what is), alternatives, and what they call pay-offs or consequences of the decision.

Gifford, Bobbitt and Slocum (1979) tested Conrath's twenty feasible decision situations to analyse the degree of uncertainty in each and found that the perceptions depended more on the information the subjects received than on their tolerance for ambiguity. The more structured the decision situation was, the less uncertain the subjects perceived it.

This agrees with Grandori's (1984) model in that she proceeds one step further and says that given this degree of unstructured problem the uncertainty will be perceived and there is a decision strategy which differs from others, also in degree, to handle the situation.

Group Decision Making

Several, in fact most, studies have focused on group decision making. Gifford, Bobbitt and Slocum (1979) had their subjects resolve the problems in groups even though they then questioned and evaluated individual responses. Miner (1979), and Van de Ven and Delberg (1974) tested groups to discover if the types of leadership in the group decision process resulted in more effective or more satisfactory (respectively) decisions.

Models of Decision Making

Based on the literature Benjamin and Kerchner (1982) outlined, from the literature, four models of group decision processes and studied the responses of the individuals from two groups who made decisions in the field. Benjamin and Kerchner (1982) wanted to discover if the individuals were using one or another of the pure models as outlined.

They studied 22 subjects who had been involved in one of two work related group decisions and with the use of Q cards had the subjects identify those statements which most influenced them in the process of their decision making.

They found that the answers, even from members of the same group, varied greatly. Not only did they not fit one of the models but there was no congruence within a group as to what the process had been. The results could be related to the type of work done by the decision maker rather than to the process in which they engaged during decision making.

The conclusion was that models are good theoretical bases but in real life situations, people do not use pure models but freely interchange aspects of each model.

It seems that no one has tested individuals, making individual decisions, about the strategy they use. Yet the organizational literature abounds with theories about

how important the decision making competence is to managers and administrators in large organizations. In fact Hodgkinson (1978) calls it the "crucial competence".

Are these strategies only differences in perceptions of what is happening in organizations or are these in fact different decision strategies that are or should be used, given different decision situations?

In summary, decision theory began with mathematical computations of probabilities and as the literature on organization administration grew, decision making became a prime concern due to the fact that it permeates the organization's structures and functions. From one prescriptive model of what should happen, the literature variously describes and prescribes different decision strategies and finally develops contingency models which indicate circumstances under which a specific strategy should be employed.

The major difficulty is the lack of agreement on language and criteria which makes comparison of models nebulous at best. Some models present a very complicated system of criteria on which to choose a strategy but Grandori's (1984) is less so and therefore is available to be tested.

The Research Questions

There is a great deal written on decision making and much of it deals with the problems encountered in the process. To facilitate a 'rational' decision in the face of these many problems, various strategies and models were designed and eventually contingency models were produced to suggest to administrators, managers and workers that there is one best strategy to suit any decision situation. Many of the strategies, such as Simon's (1976) "satisficing", were developed as a result of observing managers in the field. Simon (1976) also points out that there are two main influences used by administrators, managers and workers on the decision strategy. The first is education/training. Whether this information is direct or indirect, those who make decisions are taught what is expected of them. Most management education courses give problem solving/decision making guidelines which invariably follow the decree that all decisions be treated the same. Furthermore, this means that all decisions should be treated as optimizing decisions, in which all alternatives and consequences are considered. This is so, in spite of the fact that the literature is full of the impossibility of such a process in all situations.

The second strong influence on the managers' decision making process is experience. What has worked in the past, what decisions brought rewards and the types of

decisions that were accepted by administration (Hodgkinson, 1978; Simon, 1976) as well as the rational and the "arational" aspects of the organization and the individual (Egan, 1985). These influence the decision makers' strategies as they struggle to meet the demands of the organization.

If education and experience influence decision making, then one would expect to find new managers trying to use optimizing strategies as taught, while experienced managers have learned to modify this strategy. Whether a manager is new or has been in the situation for an extended time they must make decisions daily. One would expect the new manager to be open to new ways of making these decisions and because of the pervasive nature of decision making to their jobs, it will probably be of interest to all managers to learn a new way to handle difficult decisions which have a moderate amount of conflict and uncertainty. Therefore, one would expect all managers to be willing to try to alter their decision making process when they learn of a model which purports to be more effective.

The various strategies and models were influenced by two trends. The first, as noted above, was observing people in large organizations making decisions. Simon (1976) observed decision makers in large organizations, especially administrators, in the process of making

decisions. The second influence is the recognition that we cannot always have a situation in which all goals, alternatives and consequences are known, so theories were developed regarding the best way to handle the situation when some or all of these factors are unknown. That is, when there is uncertainty and conflict. Hence, there are two strong influences on the development of strategies, one practical and one theoretical.

Grandori's (1984) model is a theoretical prescription for decision making. She has attempted to take this very complicated decision making process, identify the variables which should influence our choice of strategy (uncertainty and conflict) and delineate a strategy which she believes will work in that situation to produce a "rational" decision which will, in turn, achieve the organizations goals.

She chose the common recurring problems of uncertainty and conflict on which to base her model. Specifically, based on the degree of uncertainty and conflict she would have the decision maker choose a strategy which will lead to a more effective decision.

Based on the foregoing, the research questions to be investigated in this study are:

1. Do staff development managers use an identifiable decision making strategy when making decisions about programs?

2. What factors are most influential in the decision making process of staff development managers?

3. How do staff development managers deal with uncertainty in the decision situation?

4. How do staff development managers deal with conflict in the decision situation?

5. Do staff development managers view Grandori's (1984) model as practical (as opposed to theoretical); enlightening; that is, does it deepen their understanding about the decision process and optional decision strategies; and useful?

Chapter III

Methodology and Procedure

For the study of decision making by staff development managers the subjects were chosen from the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island to enable the researcher to obtain the information being sought by means of interviews. An interview schedule and an interview guide were drawn up and to test the reliability of the researchers analysis of the data, a reliability test was done. The methodology and procedure are detailed under the following headings: Sample, Method, Instrumentation, Pretests, Data Processing, Data Analysis, Consistency.

Sample

A list of all those responsible for making decisions about staff development programs was obtained from the British Columbia Health Association, the Canadian Hospital Directory and telephone calls to various Hospitals in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island. This indicated that there were at least thirty five potential subjects, excluding the two used in the pretest. However, on contacting these potential participants it was discovered that many of them had limited responsibility for staff development in the nursing departments only, in their respective hospitals. As noted in Chapter II Simon (1976) believes that education teaches a person what is

expected of them in making decisions. Nurses are almost universally taught what is called "The Nursing Process" which is a problem solving approach to decision making. Sorensen and Luckman (1979) state that the nursing process "must be mastered by students of nursing" (p. 255). The second strong influence on decision making is experience (Simon, 1976). Both Simon (1976) and Hodgkinson (1978) indicate that the types of decisions which are accepted by administration influence the decision makers' decision making strategies. Therefore, those people who were nurses working within the nursing department were excluded from the study. It was reasoned that their education and experience would influence their decision making.

As a result of this curtailing there was only a total of fourteen people working in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island with responsibility for the development of staff in all areas of their respective hospitals. Of these, eleven were department managers and three were coordinators. In the organization chart coordinators are the subordinates of department managers. It was decided, nevertheless, to interview the coordinators as well as the department managers because of the similarity in their functions; that is, meeting with other department managers and staff in the hospital and providing educational programs to meet the educational

needs. The data, however, were analysed separately in recognition of the difference.

All participants were contacted by telephone and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. One department manager was on holidays and was not therefore contacted. All other participants agreed to be interviewed.

It was later learned that one department head had a dual role. He is responsible for personnel as well as staff development. It was reasoned that this made him privy to information and experience which other staff development managers were not, and therefore, this had the potential to influence his decision making. He was, then, dropped from the study.

Furthermore, one of the coordinators cancelled her appointment at the last minute because of other pressing business. The study, therefore, was carried out among nine staff development managers and two staff development coordinators.

The participants were guaranteed confidentiality. Transcripts of the interviews are included in Appendix G, in which, J stands for the researcher and R stands for the respondent. Furthermore, in the body of the interviews any reference to names and places has been replaced by numbers and letters respectively.

Of the nine managers who participated in the study 4 had diplomas as the highest level of academic achievement, and 3 of these were nursing diplomas. Two had bachelor's degrees, 2 had master's degrees, and 1 had a Ph.D. Of the 2 coordinators, 1 had a master's degree and the other had a bachelor's degree and was working toward a master's degree. There was 1 male and 1 female coordinator, whereas 2 of the managers were men, the other 7 were women. Three managers and 1 coordinator were in their thirties, and 1 coordinator and 4 managers were in their forties. Two managers were in their fifties. Both coordinators worked in large hospitals with more than five hundred beds. The managers divided only slightly with 7 working in hospitals with more than five hundred beds, 1 in a hospital with between 201 and 500 beds and 1 worked in a hospital with less than 200 beds. The department sizes broke down as follows:

	Managers	Coordinators
1 - 3 in department:	5	1
4 - 6 in department:	2	0
More than 6:	2	1

The coordinators had longevity in their jobs having worked in their positions more than five years. The managers divided into an almost even pattern with 5 being in their positions more than five years and four being

relatively new to their positions which they had held for less than five years.

The titles of the managers varied greatly. Only two had an identical title. However, whether they were called "Director of Education" or "Manager of Central Training Services", their function was to manage the staff development department which fits in with Tobin, Yoden, Hull and Scott's description:

Staff development encompasses two major components - orientation and continuing education....
Continuing education within staff development
(emphasis the authors) should provide personnel with the opportunity to learn new knowledge and skills, review and add to knowledge already gained....encompasses all efforts ... to maintain and improve abilities of employees. (pp. 3-4)

Method

The study was carried out by interviewing each subject for approximately one hour. Kerlinger (1973) recommends the interview in situations where it is difficult to obtain information. Borg and Gall (1979) indicate that:

The well-trained interviewer can make full use of the responses of the subject to alter the interview situation ... to follow-up leads ... obtain more data and greater clarity ... permits much greater depth ... to provide a true picture of options and feelings. (p. 310)

Open-ended questions were used to "enable the researcher to understand and capture the points of view of

other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories" (Patton, 1980, p. 28).

The interview was semi-structured as recommended by Borg and Gall (1979). That is, a standard set of questions was used in each case, and follow up questions, designed to "probe deeper for additional insights" depended upon the subjects answers (Borg & Gall, p.313).

Patton (1980) describes the list of questions to be followed as an "interview guide". He declares that these questions may be worded "spontaneously" (p. 200). "A guide keeps the interaction focused, but allows individual perspectives and experiences to emerge" (Patton, 1980, p. 201). Patton (1980) concurs with Borg and Gall (1979) that this "semi-structured" or "guided" interview allows the researcher to develop new questions to probe deeper as the situation warrants in the interview.

An attempt was made to reduce response bias by presenting the material in a matter of fact way and reserving comments to the end of the interview during the debriefing period.

Each subject was given the same problem to solve. Focus will be on an interpretation of the decision process employed, rather than on the decision that was made.

Instrumentation

The problem, which required a decision from the subjects, was designed with a moderate degree of uncertainty and a moderate degree of conflict in an effort to produce a decision situation which would approximate the "heuristic" decision situation in Grandori's (1984) model.

The problem reflected a request for a program which typically falls into the role of the staff development department to provide. In brief, the manager of housekeeping is asking the staff development manager to provide a specific series of programs for his supervisory staff. These supervisors are reluctant, in that they do not recognize that they need to learn any new supervisory skills. The staff development manager's boss is expecting an unreasonable time frame in which to see results of the learning experience. While the resources are available, other areas of uncertainty and conflict exist.

Uncertainty in the problem arises from the fact that the housekeeping supervisory staff do not want to attend a program. The housekeeping supervisory staff do not feel that they need to learn anything. Furthermore, there is uncertainty about the factors that could be built into the program which would entice the housekeeping supervisors to attend a program. Another facet of the uncertainty is the need to have the housekeeping supervisors display their

new skills in too short a time. Therefore, the question arises as to what skills can be taught which the housekeeping supervisors will want to use immediately.

On the other hand, conflict is built into the situation by the discrepancy between the requesting manager's expectations of results, the expectations of the staff development manager's boss regarding results within a month and the staff development manager's realization that results will not be achieved for at least a year. Conflict also exists between the housekeeping supervisors' felt needs and the housekeeping manager's needs.

Each subject was given the option of writing their decision about the problem on a sheet of paper on which was written "What is your decision?" and "What steps would you take?" or they could record their answers to these questions on the tape recorder. Nine opted to write their responses and two to record them on audio. The problem and answer sheet appear in Appendix C.

The interview schedule consisted of five steps.

Step 1. Introduction and obtaining of background information.

Step 2. Presentation of Problem with subject's response.

Step 3. Probe I.

Step 4. Presentation of Grandori's (1984) Model.

Step 5. Probe II.

Step 6. Debriefing.

Design of the Study

INTRODUCTION > PROBLEM > PROBE I >
MODEL > PROBE II > DEBRIEFING

Step 1.

After introductions and an explanation of the process and expectations for the session, the subject was asked to fill out the sheet with some background information (See Appendix B). They were told that in the final document they would remain anonymous. Their permission was obtained to tape record the probe sections of the interviews.

Step 2.

Presentation of the problem. The problem was written on a sheet of paper (See Appendix C). This was handed to the respondent with a piece of paper on which was written "What is your decision? What steps would you take?" (See also Appendix C) At this point the subject read the problem through, was free to ask questions which very few did, and they described their decision either on paper or on the tape recorder. Nine of the eleven opted to write their answer on the sheet provided.

Step 3.

Probe I. A set of questions was used as a guide to discover the process they went through to make their decision, to discover how they deal with uncertainty and conflict and to elicit their opinions about the rationality of their decision. Depending upon their answers to these questions further probing questions were sometimes asked to clarify and elucidate aspects of their answers. The questions are outlined in Appendix D.

Step 4.

Presentation of Grandori's (1984) contingency model of decision making. Each subject was given an outline of the model so they could follow along as it was explained in detail. At the end they could review the outline and ask questions which would assist a decision maker in deciding which strategy to use. A two page outline of Grandori's (1984) Model with a copy from her article of questions one asks to differentiate the use of a select strategy appear in Appendix E.

The subjects were given the chance to ask questions and any points were clarified on request. Very few questions were asked.

Step 5.

Probe II. During this period they were asked questions from the guide, also included in Appendix D,

about the model and follow up questions again to clarify answers.

Step 6.

Debriefing. Some time was spent discussing the experience and a promise was made to those who requested it that they would receive a two page resume of this study.

Pretests

The procedure described above was pretested with two staff development managers from the Victoria area. The same six steps were eventually used in the study. Two changes were made as a result of the pretests. During the pretests the subjects were allowed to place their answers to the problems on the tape recorder. They tended to ramble considerably, so during the study subjects were encouraged to write their answers on the paper provided. Secondly, the page from Grandori's (1984) model which describes questions to answer which differentiates the choice of a decision strategy was not used in the pretests. One of the pretest participants suggested that a set of questions would be helpful in deciding which strategy to use. Therefore, the section from Grandori's (1984) model entitled "Domains of Applicability of Different Strategies" was used in the study.

Data Processing

The verbal responses were typed and placed with the written information for each subject. This researcher had prepared a list of items according to which the subjects answers could be categorized. Each written and verbal response was reviewed according to the list and trends were identified. Answers were also checked against the background data to see if background could account for any differences. In no case was it found to be significant.

Data Analysis

The research questions formed the basis for categorizing the data collected. Doby (1967) recommends that the researcher categorize the material into meaningful groups. Hence these categories are unidimensional and mutually exclusive. However, he points out that the same data may be classified in more than one way. This has been done, for instance, with the use of information in the decision strategy used.

According to Miles and Huberman (1984), "one 'sees' the general drift of the data more easily and rapidly by looking at distribution" (p. 215). They caution against reacting to what "seems" to be in the data. In order to demonstrate the importance of an item to the overall group rather than to an individual within the group, each

respondent's answer was taken as one unit rather than counting the number of times an idea was presented.

The frequency distribution for each question has been arranged in tables with the managers and coordinators separated for comparison. Presentation of the data in this manner allows the researcher to see which categories emerged in greater or less frequency. This prevented the researcher from incorrectly assuming a trend in data based on preconceived notions.

Consistency

The question of reproducibility of the findings in evaluating answers to open ended questions is critical. Guba and Lincoln (1982) state that "one criterion for the necessity and sufficiency of a categorical set is its reproducibility by another competent judge" (p. 122). They argued that no two independent judges can be expected to categorize the material in exactly the same way. They believe that:

A second judge should be able to verify that the categories derived by the first judge make sense in view of the data pool from which the first judge worked and that the data have been appropriately arranged into the developed category system. The second judge audits the work of the first much as an examiner audits the work of an accountant in the business world. (Guba and Lincoln, 1982, p. 122)

Based on this statement the researcher selected five judges who were not in any way involved with the previous

stages of the study. One judge was doing similar research and was, therefore, familiar with the methodology. Three judges were managers of other than staff development departments, and one was an education coordinator in the Nursing department.

Data were chosen that were representative of the most frequently cited categories. The respondent comments which were deemed more vulnerable to researcher bias were used as well as statements which were most typical of the data.

The judges were asked to test the researcher's categorization for four items with this type of data. An explanation of the meaning for each category was given so that the judges were equipped with essential information on which to base their audit (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). The categorization was carried out by each judge in private. The names of the categories, each with an explanation, were printed on a separate piece of paper. The judges were provided with the uncoded data, in no particular order on two other pages. There was space beside each statement to indicate to which category the judges believed that statement belonged. This outline is shown in Appendix F.

The researcher checked the consistency of analysis by dividing the number of agreements by the total number of agreements plus disagreements between researcher and judge

(Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 63). The agreement between the five judges and the researcher was 86.25 percent. The consistency of analysis is displayed in Appendix F.

The audit team of judges did not replicate the study nor did they categorize all the data. However, according to Guba and Lincoln (1982) this categorization is a fair means of attesting to the fact that the study was carried out in a competent manner. They further point out that it is unlikely that two people reviewing the data would come up with exactly the same categories although there would likely be overlap.

Chapter IV

Findings

In this section the findings from the interviews will be described bearing in mind the main questions of the study. The information we sought included (a) decision making strategies of staff development managers, (b) factors affecting the decision making process, (c) methods of dealing with uncertainty in decision making situations, (d) methods of dealing with conflict in decision making situations, and (e) a view of Grandori's model.

These findings will be presented below under the respective headings of Strategies, Influences, Uncertainty, Conflict, and Model.

The frequencies indicate the number of subjects who made a statement and does not reflect the number of times one subject may have reiterated a point. In this way the trend toward an item with the group can be measured and reported.

Strategies

The strategies in Grandori's (1984) model are differentiated by the manipulation of information, goals, alternatives, and consequences. While staff development managers and coordinators were unanimous in their decision to put on a program as requested in the given problem,

they differed in their use of information, goals, alternatives and consequences.

The data relating to the decision making process of staff development managers is contained in Table 1. As can be seen from that table, 78 percent of the managers said that they would obtain more information and most would obtain it from a different source; that is, they would meet with the supervisors as well as the department head to find out what the intended learners, in this case the housekeeping supervisors, believed their problems and needs were. Obtaining more information, and obtaining it from a different source, is consistent with Grandori's (1984) "heuristic" strategy. Table 2 shows that both coordinators would obtain more information. Hence, in this matter there is little difference between the managers and the coordinators.

Also shown in Table 1 is the fact that 55 percent of the managers said they would set goals. They did not indicate that these goals would be manipulated according to Grandori's (1984) "heuristic" strategy. To set a clear goal aligns more closely with her "optimizing" strategy. One of the coordinators would set goals as indicated in Table 2. In this way they align with the managers.

Table 1

Respondent Profile of Decision Strategy

<u>PROCESS</u>	<u>MANAGERS</u>										TOTAL N=9	%
	SUBJECT NUMBER											
	1	2	3	5	7	8	9	10	12			
+ Information	*		*	*	*	*	*			*	7	78
++ Goals	*			*	*	*	*				5	55
+++ Alternatives	*	*	*	*	*	*				*	7	78
++++ Consequences											0	0
<u>TOTAL</u>	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	0	2			
%	75	25	50	75	75	75	50	0	50			

Areas of the decision process which conformed to Grandori's strategies.

+ Information - indications that they would obtain more information.

++ Goals - indications that they had, or would set goals, objectives or decide desired outcomes.

+++ Alternatives - indications that they would review alternate ways for solving the problem or were open to a variety of education presentations.

++++ Consequences - indications that they viewed the consequences from a different perspective.

Table 2

Respondent Profile of Decision Strategy

<u>PROCESS</u>	<u>COORDINATORS</u>		TOTAL N=2	%
	SUBJECT NUMBER			
	4	6		
+ Information	*	*	2	100
++ Goals	*		1	50
+++ Alternatives	*	*	2	100
++++ Consequences			0	0
<u>TOTAL</u>	3	2		
%	75	50		

Areas of the decision process which conformed to Grandori's strategies.

- + Information - indications that they would obtain more information.
- ++ Goals - indications that they had, or would set goals, objectives or decide desired outcomes.
- +++ Alternatives - indications that they would review alternate ways for solving the problem or were open to a variety of education presentations.
- ++++ Consequences - indications that they viewed the consequences from a different perspective.

Table 1 also shows that the consideration of alternatives was mentioned by 78 percent of the managers while both of the coordinators considered alternatives as seen in Table 2. In some cases both groups looked at management intervention rather than, or in conjunction with, the education program.

None of the staff development managers or coordinators seemed to manipulate consequences. That is, no one mentioned, directly or indirectly, that they were concerned with looking at consequences from a different perspective.

None of the subjects seemed to fit clearly into a decision strategy outlined by Grandori (1984) although four of the department managers used 75 percent of her "heuristic" strategy. One explanation could be that the right questions were not asked to elicit this information or it could be that the model is not explicit enough as to what percentage of the strategy must be used to say that is the strategy one is using. The latter seems most likely to be the case.

Influences

As evidenced in Table 3 there was variation in the factors identified as most influential in the decision making of staff development managers and coordinators.

Validity of request which appeared most frequently -

Table 3

Most Influential Factors in Decision Making
as Reported by Respondents

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>MANAGERS</u>		<u>COORDINATORS</u>	
	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
	N=9		N=2	
Validity of Request	6	67	1	50
Resources (budget)	5	56	1	50
Staff Development's Role	4	44	1	50
Learner's Needs	3	33	1	50
Priorities/Goals of Organization	3	33		
Requester	3	33		
Time	2	22		
Issues	1	11		
Options	1	11		
Commitment to Program	1	11		
Effectiveness	1	11		
Efficiency	1	11		
Minimal Negative Side Effects	1	11		
Staff Involvement	1	11		

From Probe I Question # 3.

67 percent of the time by managers and by one coordinator - indicated a desire on the part of the staff development managers and coordinators to be sure the problems in the housekeeping department could be solved by offering an education program rather than by a reorganization and improvement in the management of the housekeeping department itself. This was a very important finding as it shows concern for the consequences of their decision. That is, if they offer an education program which should result in the participants having certain skills, the staff development managers want to be sure the housekeeping supervisors can use those skills and that those skills will be such that the housekeeping manager and the housekeeping supervisors as well as the staff development boss's reactions will all be positive toward the education program and thus toward the education department.

Resources were deemed to be of second importance in influencing decision making (56 percent of the managers and one coordinator). This means that more than half of the participants were concerned with budgetary constraints which is understandable in this period of fiscal restraint.

Just under half or 44 percent of the managers and one coordinator indicated a concern for the role of the staff development department. When this is viewed in

conjunction with the concern for validity of request, it indicates a high level of concern for the image of the department.

One might have expected the needs of the learners to be a high priority item. However, this was not the case. Only 33 percent of the managers and one coordinator considered the needs of the learner as most influential in their decision.

Uncertainty

As is evident in Table 4, of all the measures noted for dealing with uncertainty, the most frequent solution suggested was clarification of the problem by obtaining more information. This answer appeared 56 percent of the time with managers as well as with both coordinators. This means that they would consult with the clients to be sure that they understood what the needs really were and to clear up any areas which may not be known or identified in the original request.

Some 56 percent of the managers would wait, during which time they would think about it and hope for a propitious moment when the uncertainty would pass. It was not clear how they hoped to clear up uncertainty by waiting. One manager stated he would do both; that is, he would wait and while waiting he would obtain more information.

Table 4

Reported Methods of Dealing with Uncertainty
In the Decision Situation

<u>METHOD</u>	<u>MANAGERS</u>		<u>COORDINATORS</u>	
	FREQUENCY N=9	%	FREQUENCY N=2	%
Clarification, by obtaining more information	5	56	2	100
Wait/Think about it/ Timing	5	56		
Discussion/ Collaboration	3	33		
Relate to criteria/ Philosophy/ Role/Purpose	2	22		
Look at options	1	11	1	50
Define a goal	1	11		
Be aware of institutional climate	1	11		
Set priorities			1	50
Make assumptions				
Resolve it	1	11		
Let the manager make the decision	1	11		
Do not overreact	1	11		
Discuss with coworkers	1	11		

From Probe I Question # 4.

Only one manager stated that she would make assumptions and act accordingly given an uncertain situation.

The way participants dealt with uncertainty in the problem and the way they said they would deal with it differed significantly as shown in Table 5.

In solving the problem 56 percent of the staff development managers said they would gather more information. However, 78 percent of these subjects identified gathering more information as a way to resolve uncertainty in a problem situation when asked the question directly - How do you handle uncertainty in a decision situation? Furthermore, these were not necessarily the same managers. Forty four percent of the subjects whose immediate reaction to the problem was to seek more information did not suggest seeking more information when asked how they would reduce uncertainty in a problem situation. Another 22 percent who did not suggest that they would seek more information in solving the problem indicated that they would resolve uncertainty by seeking more information when asked directly how they would resolve uncertainty in a problem situation.

Only 33 percent of the managers were consistent, that is, they said the same thing when faced with a problem in which there was uncertainty as when asked what they would do in a decision situation with uncertainty. Both

Table 5

Consistency Check on Questions Measuring
Use of Information to Resolve Uncertainty

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>THEORETICAL RESPONSE</u>	<u>PROBLEM RESPONSE</u>	<u>CONSISTENCY</u>
<u>MANAGERS</u>			
1	*	*	+
2	*		-
3	*	*	+
5		*	-
7	*	*	+
8		*	-
9		*	-
10	*		-
12		*	-
Total			
11	7	5	3
%	78	56	33
<u>COORDINATORS</u>			
4	*	*	+
6	*	*	+
Total			
2	2	2	2
%	100	100	100

From Problem Solving Decision and Probe I Question #4.

coordinators were consistent.

There is no correlation between use of information to resolve uncertainty and age, education, experience, size of hospital, or numbers in the department.

Conflict

Table 6 shows that the largest single number of participants, 89 percent of managers and both coordinators indicated that in situations involving interpersonal conflict they would consult with the parties involved and would hope to resolve the conflict through open discussion. This is a problem solving technique. The other two would try to enforce their point of view through persuasion.

If consultation with the involved parties failed to result in a resolution of the conflict 33 percent of the staff development managers would resort to nonassertive behaviour; that is, they would accede to the request. Another 22 percent would time their consultation. They would wait and hope that the situation would clarify itself or the propitious moment for discussion would arise. Only one coordinator indicated waiting until hostilities cooled down as a means of dealing with conflict.

Table 6

Reported Method of Dealing with Conflict
In the Decision Situation

<u>METHOD</u>	<u>MANAGERS</u>		<u>COORDINATORS</u>	
	FREQUENCY N=9	%	FREQUENCY N=2	%
Consultation/ Discussion	8	89	2	100
Mediation if between two other D.H.'s.	3	33	2	100
According to Department Role	3	33		
Non Assertively	3	33		
Waiting until an appropriate time	2	22	1	50
Assertively	2	22		
Sort out personal boundaries	1	11		
Be sure other person is seen as responsible	1	11		
Use reasonable logic	1	11		
Acknowledge conflict	1	11		

From Probe I Question #5.

Model

In reacting to the Grandori's Contingency Decision Making Model (1984) as shown in Table 7 the coordinators responses were more favorable than the managers. While 78 percent of the managers had some favorable comments, both coordinators reacted positively. However, in all cases these were tempered by a need to become more familiar with the model before deciding conclusively whether or not it would be useful.

The group was divided in its comments about the academic nature of Grandori's (1984) model. When asked, academic was taken to mean theoretical rather than practical. Thirty three percent of the managers found it academic and one of the coordinators did also. Another 56 percent of the managers and one coordinator found that their first reaction to the model was that it might be practical, at least in specific situations. Education level of the participants was not a factor in their comments about the academic nature of the model, nor was experience.

When asked if Grandori's (1984) model threw light on the subject of decision making; that is did it deepen their understanding about the decision process and/or optional decision strategies. Fifty six percent of the managers as well as both coordinators agreed that it did. They were largely concerned with the theoretical aspects

Table 7
Respondents View of
Grandori's Contingency Model of Decision Making

	Percentage Positive	Percentage Negative	Percentage Neutral
MANAGERS N = 9			
Reactions	*(7) 78	(1) 11	(1) 11
** Was it academic?	(3) 33	(5) 56	(1) 11
*** Was it enlightening?	(5) 56	(1) 11	(3) 33
Was it useful?	(6) 67	(2) 22	(1) 11
COORDINATORS N = 2			
Reactions	(2) 100	0	0
** Was it academic?	(1) 50	(1) 50	0
*** Was it enlightening?	(2) 100	0	0
Was it useful?	(2) 100 (one for teaching only)	0	0

- * () numbers in brackets indicate frequency of response.
 ** academic was taken to mean theoretical rather than practical.
 *** enlightening was taken to mean a deepening of one's understanding of the decision process and/or the availability of alternative decision strategies.

From Answers to Questions in Probe II.

of decision making, indicating an interest in the way the model outlined the steps of a decision and provided options for using different strategies in different decision situations. While only one manager said it was not enlightening, 33 percent wanted to study the model further before committing themselves to an assessment of it.

Both coordinators would use the model, one for teaching only; however, 67 percent of the managers believed they could use it either for reflection or to help in situations with uncertainty and conflict while others would use it on major decisions only. The two managers who said they would not use the model plus the undecided manager and the coordinator who would use the model for teaching only had all been in their positions for more than five years. There were, however, three subjects who stated they would use the model who also had been in their positions more than five years. All subjects who had been in their positions less than five years said they would use the model.

All items, regarding the model, taken together, there was slightly more positive reaction than negative. The time limitations prevented allowing more reflection and explanation of the model and left the participants without the opportunity for informed, reflective judgements on the model.

For perusal of some of the comments on Grandori's (1984) model see Table 8.

Other Findings

1. All staff development managers viewed their decision on the given problem as rational as did the coordinators. A few of the reasons given include that it was based on the decision maker's value system, a gut feeling, an identified need, the role of the staff development manager, or that it was ethical, reasonable, unemotional or hypothetical. However, no one based 'rational' on Grandori's (1984) use of Simon's definition of 'rational'; that is, according to Simon, as quoted in Grandori (1984) - a decision is 'rational' if it moves one closer to the goals of the organization.

2. Consultation with the intended recipients of this educational program was planned by all of the participants, both managers and coordinators. Involving learners in the plans for their own educational programs is a primary rule in adult education according to Malclom Knowles. (1977) This is in keeping with Simon's (1976) contention that education/training of the decision maker is a strong influence on the way decisions are made as all of the participants in the study had taken some courses in adult education.

Table 8

Comments on Grandori's Model

<u>POSITIVE</u>	<u>NEGATIVE</u>
<hr/>	
<u>Theoretical</u>	
- good theory base	- too complicated
- a certain amount of logic to it	- ambiguous
- a good academic's way of looking at what happens	- needs concrete examples
- makes sense	- rooted in concepts
- seems to flow	- I don't understand it
<hr/>	
<u>Useful</u>	
- an aid to decision making	- may lead to inflexible behavior
- useful reminder	- labels vague
- easy to adapt	- not complete
- gives direction to decision making	- not practical
- gives options	- too cumbersome
- defines steps	
- use when in doubt	
- to reflect on	
- in important decisions	
- instructional value	
- teaching tool	

Chapter V

Summary and Conclusions

Summary

Decision making is one of the many daily functions of staff development managers and coordinators in hospitals. In the light of an unavailability of relevant literature it seemed appropriate in the current study to determine how these decisions are made and what factors influence them. Further, as these decisions are fraught with uncertainty and conflict it seemed prudent to determine the ways in which staff development managers and coordinators deal with uncertainty and conflict in the decision situation. Grandori's (1984) contingency model deals with decision making situations of both uncertainty and conflict. The specific focus of the current study, therefore, was on the reaction of staff development managers and coordinators to her model, its' ability to bring new insights to them regarding the decision making process, and its usefulness in making decisions.

Nine staff development managers and two staff development coordinators, all in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island, were interviewed with a semi-structured or guided format. It was reasoned that, based on the literature, more fruitful information could be obtained in this way than would have been possible by other means, such as, by questionnaire.

It was not possible to identify a specific decision making strategy used by the participants, however, parts of strategies were used. When asked about those factors which were most influential in their decision making one answer was as expected; that is, one could anticipate that in these times of restraint, resources, especially financial resources, would rate high in order of importance. There were two unexpected findings. First, the participants' concern for their role and the legitimacy of requests indicated a real concern that the department be identified as producing programs which were within their mandate to carry out. Secondly, they wanted to be sure that they were seen by other department managers to produce results - that on-the-job behaviors changed as a result of the programs they produced. Interestingly, the learner's needs placed fourth in order of importance. The participants mentioned clarifying the situation and obtaining more information as their principal means of dealing with uncertainty while conflict resolution, they stated, would be handled through consultation and discussion. The largest single reaction by participants to Grandori's (1984) model was that they needed more time and a better understanding of the model to be able to decide on its merits/flaws. Their first reactions were mixed in that well over half of them believed it could help in decision making either generally

or in major decision situations; the others were more skeptical. As a group the participants were more interested in the model as a theory explaining the steps and giving them options in the use of strategies in decision making given different decision situations which could arise.

Conclusions and Discussion

In this section I will describe the conclusions of the study and discuss the ways in which these relate to the literature under the following headings: Strategies; Influences; Uncertainty; Conflict; Model; and Other Findings. Finally the limitations of the study will be discussed.

Strategies

It was difficult to decide what, if any, decision making strategy was used by staff development managers participating in the study. That is, no one strategy was used consistently, but, parts of several strategies especially parts of the "heuristic" strategy. There are at least three possible reasons for this. First, it may be a problem with the model. In Grandori's (1984) model she differentiates the strategies by the way she would have the decision maker manipulate the goals, information, alternatives, and consequences. However, she does not

delineate the number of items which must conform to one strategy outline to say that that is the strategy being used. For instance, the first participant stated she would gather more information and she would set objectives (goals). Gathering more information falls into Grandori's (1984) "heuristic" strategy however, Grandori (1984) would have them alter the goal which this participant may do in consultation with the learners. She has also expressed a willingness to develop alternatives in consultation with the staff. Now, the first participant has fulfilled 75 percent of the criteria for the "heuristic" strategy, that is, she has not manipulate the consequences. Is that enough? Is this participant using an "heuristic" strategy?

The second possibility is the limitations of the interview guide in that this researcher is inexperienced in interviewing. Perhaps a more in depth interview might have elicited the information. As one of the participants noted, the decision process that one uses is not well defined in our own minds. We go through the process with a focus on the problem and its' solution rather than concentrating on how we are doing it. This makes it difficult to obtain information on the process. The researcher is left making deductions and assumptions about the process used, based on the process as described by the participant.

The third possibility is the nature of resolving a hypothetical problem. If the researcher had been able to observe the real actions of the participants in the real situation, then one might conceivably be able to distinguish the strategy used. This was beyond the capacity of the present study.

Influences

It seems that the staff development managers who participated in the study were concerned with their image as the first and third most frequently cited factors affecting their decision dealt with their image. First they wanted to be sure that the problem could be solved by an education program. They wanted to be sure they could show results. Secondly, they wanted to be sure it was within their mandate to put on the program. They seemed to be very conscious of the fact that they are in a staff rather than a line position in the organization of the hospital hierarchy. As a service department they did not want to intrude on areas which were the prerogative of other influential members of the hospital organization. Showing good results, they felt, would reflect favorably on the department, provided the participants were justified by virtue of their role to produce the requested program. This concern for their image coincides with Hodgkinson's contention that self interest influences

decisions and it was a factor to both managers and coordinators.

Another factor which seemed to influence the decision of managers and coordinators alike which was not mentioned by any of them was their education - not the level of education but the specialty of adult education. It was obvious in evaluating their answers to the given problem that they would almost unanimously consult with the learners and in a discussions with them, decide on the details of the program. Malcolm Knowles (1977), the father of adult education, gives, as one of his primary rules for adult education, that the learner be involved in planning his own learning experiences. All of the participants in the study had taken some adult education courses and it was plain to see that they, at least in theory, endorse his cardinal rule. Simon (1976) has stated that education is a prime influence on the way we make decisions and the kinds of decision we make. This finding would seem to support Simon's (1976) statement regarding the influence of education, at least for managers and coordinators in staff development departments in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island.

Uncertainty

There was a discrepancy between the way the participants said they would handle uncertainty in a

decision situation and the way they said they would handle it in the given problem they solved. More than half of the participants were inconsistent. For example, in solving the given problem, respondent number one said she would obtain more information, however, when asked "How do you deal with uncertainty in a problem situation", she did not say that she would obtain information. This is probably an example of the frequency with which we all are inconsistent in applying theory to practice. It would be an example of what Egan (1985) calls 'arational' behavior when he states that 'arationality' is "phenomena that are presently unpredictable" (p. 261). That is, it would be rational to expect the participants in the study to reduce the uncertainty in the problem by whatever means they say they will use when asked a direct question about methods they use to reduce uncertainty. However, a large number of the subjects were not consistent. Another form of "arational" behavior was noted. One respondent stated that she would make assumptions about any area in which she found uncertainty. This surely falls into the category of "phenomena that are unpredicable" (Egan, 1985, p. 261). This respondent had been in her position for more than five years so she must be fairly successful in her assumptions. It would have been interesting to reverse the order, that is, if the question about dealing with uncertainty had been asked before the problem was

solved, the respondents may have been more consistent because the theory would have been first in their minds. In fact, respondent number two realized her discrepancy when discussing the theory.

Conflict

March and Simon (1958) indicate that interpersonal conflict is dealt with in organizations through problem solving and persuasion. In this study ten of the respondents; that is, eight managers and both coordinators would consult with the parties involved in conflict to use the problem solving method of resolution. Two staff department managers would use persuasion; that is, through assertive behavior they would try to influence the parties concerned to agree with the decision most preferred by the managers themselves. One explanation for this preference for problem solving could be linked to the staff development manager's staff role in the organization. They seemed to be keenly aware that they had no line authority over the people with whom they worked on a day to day basis. This is even more true for the coordinators which is to be expected as they are not department managers.

Model

In spite of the positive reactions expressed by some participants to Grandori's (1984) model there was great hesitation to use it. This was partly due to the lack of time to assimilate properly the model and may, in part, be due to a natural hesitation to try new ways of performing daily tasks. However, the comments seemed legitimate and showed some degree of critical thinking. The question arises whether those who wanted to use the model were more aware of having problems with uncertainty and conflict and would see it as a help in difficult circumstances.

For a few the reaction was that it could be used to identify the steps involved in decision making, to reflect on ways of handling various types of decisions, or to teach decision making.

All of the staff development managers who were relatively new (less than five years) in their positions felt that they could or would use the model.

If there had been time to assimilate the model the reactions and comments would have been more valid and may have been quite different.

Suggestions for Further Research

1. It would be interesting to discover whether those staff development managers with more education made more

effective decisions than educators with less education as Simon (1976) indicates education teaches us how to make decisions.

2. Also based on Simon's (1976) idea that education teaches us how to make decisions, it would be interesting to compare two groups, such as those managing teaching in nursing and those managing staff development departments.

3. If another decision making contingency model were tested to see if it is more useful or more acceptable to the group one could compare results.

4. Further in depth investigation into the factors which influence decision making in staff development departments in hospitals may throw more light on the subject if that is the main focus of the enquiry.

5. Observation of decision makers in the process of making decisions on the job with the opportunity to follow up on the effects of these decisions would be an interesting study.

6. Another interesting study would define the differences in hospital administration of those hospitals with staff development departments and compare that, with those hospitals which do not have these departments.

Limitations of the Study

Three significant limitations to the study must be mentioned.

1. There are very few staff development departments in hospitals from which to draw a sample, therefore the study was very limited and the results cannot be considered except in reference to staff development departments in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island. However, because the population was so small in relation to the sample the findings are representative of staff development departments in the Greater Vancouver area and Vancouver Island.

2. In retrospect, the analysis of the data shows areas where a more experienced researcher may have probed deeper to obtain more data.

3. The analysis of data from open ended questions lend themselves to subjective interpretations. This researcher tried to minimize bias by outlining the categories, where pertinent, and through a reliability test.

References

- Argyris, C. (1966, March/April). Interpersonal barriers to decision making. Harvard Business Review, 84-97.
- American Psychological Association. (1983). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Beach, L. R., & Mitchell, T. R. (1978). A contingency model for the selection of decision strategies. Academy of Management Review, 3, (3), 439-449.
- Benjamin, B. & Kerchner, C. T. (1982, March). Variable perceptions of decision: An operationalization of four models. Paper presented to the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, New York, NY.
- Borg, W. R., & Gall, M. D. (1979). Educational research, an introduction. New York: Longman Inc.
- Braybrooke, D., & Lindblom, C. E. (1963). A strategy of decision: Policy evaluation as a social process. Glencoe, New York: Free Press.
- Burns, L. R., & Becker, S. W. (1983). Leadership and decision making in Shortell, S. M., & Kaluzny, A. D. (Eds.). Health Care Management. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cochran, D. S., & White, D. D. (1981). Intraorganizational conflict in hospital purchasing decision making process, Academy of Management Journal, 24, (2), 324-332.
- Conrath, D. W. (1967). Organizational decision making behavior under varying degrees of uncertainty, Management Science, 13, (8), B487-500.
- Cravens, D. W. (1976). An exploratory analysis of individual information processing, Management Science, 16, (10), B656-670.
- Doby, J. T. (1967). An introduction to social research (2nd ed.). New York: Meredith Publishing Company.
- Downey, H. K., & Slocum, J. W. (1975). Uncertainty:

- measures, research and sources of variations, Academy of Management Journal, 18, (3), 526-578.
- Egan, G. (1985). Change agent skills in helping and human service settings. Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Garrett, A. (1942). Interviewing, its principles and methods. New York: Family Service Association Of America.
- Gifford, W. E., Bobbitt, H. R., & Slocum Jr., J. W. (1979). Message characteristics and perceptions of uncertainty by organizational decision makers, Academy of Management Journal, 22, (3), 458-481.
- Grandori, A. (1984). A prescriptive contingency view of organizational decision making, Administrative Science Quarterly, 29, 192-209.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1982). Effective evaluation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Guthrie, J. A. (1976). An experimental study of information seeking in the decision process. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Victoria, Victoria.
- Hodgkinson, C. (1983). Towards a philosophy of administration. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell.
- Hodgkinson, C. (1983). The philosophy of leadership. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell.
- Huber, G. P. (1974). Multi-attribute utility models: A review of field and field-like studies, Management Science, 20, (10), 1393-1402.
- Kerlinger, F. N. (1974). Foundations of behavioral research (2nd ed.). Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Kilman, R. (1985, April). Corporate culture, Psychology Today, 62-68.
- Knowles, M. S. (1970). The modern practice of adult education, andragogy versus pedagogy. New York: Association Press.
- Lindblom, C. E. (1960). The science of muddling through, Public Administration Review, 58-88.

- Lindblom, C. E. (1963). A strategy of decision. Policy evaluation as a social process. Glencoe, New York: Free Press.
- March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1958). Organizations. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Margerison, C., & Glube, R. (1979). Leadership decision making: An empirical test of the Vroom and Yetton model, Journal of Management Studies, 16, (1), 45-55.
- Matarazzo, J. D., & Wiens, A. N. (1972). The interview, research on its anatomy and structure. Chicago: Aldine Atherton, Inc.
- McClure, L. (1985, July/August). Organization development in the health care setting, Hospital and Health Services Administration, 55-64.
- Michalos, A. C. (1978). Foundations of decision-making. Ottawa: Canadian Library of Philosophy.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). Qualitative data analysis, a sourcebook of new methods. Beverly Hills, California: SAGE Publications.
- Miner, F. C. Jr. (1979). A comparative analysis of three diverse group decision making approaches, Academy of Management Journal, 22, (1), 81-93.
- Munson, F. C., & Zuckerman, H. S. (1983). The managerial role in Shortell, S. M., & Kaluzny, A. D. (Eds.). Health Care Management. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.
- O'Reilly, C. A. III. (1982). Variations in decision maker's use of information sources: The impact of quality and accessibility of information, Academy of Management Journal, 25, (4), 756-771.
- Patton, M. Q. (1980). Qualitative evaluation methods. Beverly Hills, California: SAGE Publications.
- Richardson, S. A., Dohronwend, B. S., & Klein, D. Interviewing, its forms and functions. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Sawyer, E. (Ed.). (1981, August). Canadian hospital directory, 29.
- Selltiz, Wrightsman, and Cook. (1981). Research methods in social relations. New York: Holt, Rinehart and

- Winston.
- Shortell, S. M., & Kaluzny, A. D. (Eds.). (1983). Health care management, a text in organization theory and behavior. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.
- Shortell, S. M., & Richardson, W. C. (1978). Health program evaluation. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby.
- Simon, H. A. (1976). Administrative behavior. New York: Free Press.
- Sorensen, K., & Luckmann, J. (1979). Basic nursing - a psychophysiologic approach. Toronto: W. B. Saunders.
- Steinbruner, J. D. (1974). The cybernetic theory of decisions. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Press.
- Stufflebeam, D. L., Foley, W. J., Gephart, W. J., Guba, E. G., Hammond, R. L., Merriman, H. O., & Provus, M. M. Educational evaluation and decision making. Itasca, Ill.: Peacock, 1971.
- Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research. (1976). Interviewer's manual (Revised Edition). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan.
- Timmell, N., & Brozovick, J. (1983, May/June). Managing through values, Hospital Forum, 31-38.
- Tobin, H. M., Yoder, P. S., Hull, P. K., & Scott, B. C. (1974). The process of staff development, components for change. Saint Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company.
- Tuckman, B. W. (1978). Conducting educational research. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc.
- Van de Ven, A. H., & Delbecq, A. L. (1974). A task contingent model of work - unit structure, Administrative Science Quarterly, 19, (2), 183-197.
- Van de Ven, A. H., & Delbecq, A. L. (1974). The effectiveness of nominal, delphi and interacting group decision making processes, Academy of Management Journal, 17, (4), 605-621.
- Warner, D. M., & Holloway, D. C. (1978). Decision making and control for health administration, University of Michigan: Ann Arbor Health Administration Press.
- Weber, C. E. (1965). Inter-organizational decision

processes influencing the EDP budget, Management Science, 12, (4), B69-93.

Weist J. D. (1966, September/October). Heuristic programs for decision making, Harvard Business Review, 44, 129-143.

Wilson, D. C., & Kenny, G. K. (1985, March). Managerially perceived influence over intradepartmental decisions, Journal of Management Studies 22, (2), 155-174.

Appendix A

Some Definitions and Measure of Uncertainty from Psychological Decision Making Research and Survey Research in Organizations*

<u>Definition or Measure of Uncertainty</u>		<u>Authors</u>
1. <u>Evaluations of Information Load</u>		
<u>Low Uncertainty</u>	<u>High Uncertainty</u>	
a. Enough information	Lack of information	Lawrence & Lorsch(1967)
b. Optimal information	Too little information	Driver & Streufert (1965)
Optimal information	Too much information	
c. Lack of knowledge of outcomes	Sufficient knowledge of outcomes	Duncan(1972)
d. Few relevant cues or sources of information	Many relevant cues or sources of information	Duncan(1972)
e. Few alternatives considered	Many alternatives considered	Garner(1962)
f. Timely feedback	Delayed feedback	Lawrence & Lorsch(1967)
2. <u>Patterns versus Randomness</u>		<u>Authors</u>
<u>Low Uncertainty</u>	<u>High Uncertainty</u>	
a. Low rates of change	High rates of change;turbulence	Emery & Trist(1965) Duncan(1972)
b. Low variance or volatility in the events considered	High variance or volatility in the events considered	Miller(1956) Aldag & Storey(1975)
c. Similar cues from the environment;	Dissimilar cues from the environ-	Emery & Trist(1965)

elements patterned	ment; random elements	Duncan(1972)
d. Patterned arrival of cues	Random arrival of cues	Crocker, Mitchell & Beach(1977)
e. Clarity of information (patterns recognized)	Lack of clarity of information	Lawrence & Lorsch(1967)
f. Low relative frequency of occurrence	High relative frequency of occurrence	Von Mises (1964)
g. Given some evidence, the event considered is one of a small number of possibilities	Given some evidence, the event considered is one of a large number of possibilities	"Logical probability" (Carnap, 1962)
h. Outcomes known with certainty		
Probabilities can be assigned to events	Probabilities can not be assigned to events	Luce & Raiffa(1957)
i. High confidence in probability assessment	Low confidence in probability assessment	Duncan(1972)
j. Large difference in the "potential surprise" for rival outcomes	Nearly equal "potential surprise" for rival outcomes	Shackle (1961)
k. Low freedom of choice, low information, few cases, low entropy	Equally probable messages, high information, many cases, high entropy	From Information Theory (Shannon & Weaver, 1949)
l. High understanding of causal relationships	Low understanding of causal relationships	Lawrence & Lorsch(1967)

*Dimensions of uncertainty are shown in two categories. The first category, Evaluations of Information Load, refers to estimates of the amount and timeliness of information available to decision makers. The second category contains concepts or definitions of uncertainty that express the difference between Patterns and Randomness that are recognized by decision makers.

Taken from the article by Gifford, W. E., Bobbitt, H. R., & Slocum, J. W. Jr. (1979). Message characteristics and perceptions of uncertainty by organizational decision makers, Academy of Management Journal, 22, (3), p. 979, p.460.

Appendix B Managers

Position Title

Director of Staff Development
 Director Education and Training Services
 Director Hospital Education
 Director of Education
 Director of Education Services (2)
 Director Staff Education
 Education Director
 Manager Central Training Services

Age	21 - 30	<u> - </u>	Education beyond Grade XII
	31 - 40	<u> 3 </u>	<u>4- Diplomas</u>
	41 - 50	<u> 4 </u>	<u>2- Batchelor's Degrees</u>
	51 +	<u> 2 </u>	<u>2- Master's Degrees</u>
Male	<u> 2 </u>	Female	<u> 7 </u> <u>1- PhD.</u>

Presently engaged in an educational pursuit yes 6 no 3

If yes explain Adult Ed. and Master's Adult Ed. Courses

Country of education Canada 9

Other, specify 1 , U.S.A.

Size of Hospital Under 200 beds 1

201-500 beds 1

Over 500 beds 7

Number of Educators in Department 1-3 5

4-6 2

over 6 2

Number of years in present position

Under 5 years 4

5 years or more 5

**Appendix B
Coordinators**

Position Title

Clinical Program Coordinator
Education Coordinator General Program

Age	21 - 30	<u> - </u>	Education beyond Grade XII
	31 - 40	<u> 1 </u>	<u> - Diplomas </u>
	41 - 50	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1- Bachelor's Degrees </u>
	51 +	<u> - </u>	<u> 1- Master's Degrees </u>
Male	<u> 1 </u>	Female	<u> 1 </u> <u> - PhD. </u>

Presently engaged in an educational pursuit yes 2 no -

If yes explain Master's Adult Ed. Courses

Country of education Canada 2

Other, specify _____

Size of Hospital	Under 200 beds	<u> - </u>
	201-500 beds	<u> - </u>
	Over 500 beds	<u> 2 </u>

Number of Educators in Department	1-3	<u> 1 </u>
	4-6	<u> - </u>
	over 6	<u> 1 </u>

Number of years in present position

	Under 5 years	<u> - </u>
	5 years or more	<u> 2 </u>

Appendix C

Problem

You are the Staff Development coordinator for your acute care hospital. The Housekeeping Manager has asked you to set up a series of courses for his first line supervisors. These people have come up through the ranks and identify closely with the staff they are supervising. Furthermore, they have been in their supervisory roles for five or more years and your needs assessment indicates that they feel they do not really need to learn anything new about management, although it is obvious to you from your meeting with them that they could benefit from just such a program including: leadership skills, communication, dealing with the problem employee, time management, performance appraisal, managing change, as well as assertion versus aggression. The Housekeeping Manager will make it mandatory for his staff to attend, if you think this will help. He is depending on you to set up a course which they will not want to miss. You know that unless the course is well designed, no learning will take place. Your department head believes that all courses of this type should show results on the job within a month or six weeks. You know that to achieve the Housekeeping Department Manager's goals will take at least a year of well planned programs.

The housekeeping department manager has money in his budget to pay for high quality speakers and he has no restrictions on the time he will allow his supervisors for this education as long as it is within reason.

What is your decision ?

What steps would you take ?

Appendix D

Interview Guide

Questions on Probe I -

1. How did you arrive at that decision?
 - (a) * Do you always use the same process?
 - (b) * What would make you vary the process?
 2. What factors did you consider when making this decision?
 3. What factors in general are most influential on your decisions?
 4. How do you deal with uncertainty in a problem situation?
 5. How do you deal with conflict in a problem situation?
 6. To what extent do you feel yours was a rational decision? Why?
- * These two question were asked sometimes to clarify answers to #1.

Questions on Probe II -

7. What is your reaction to the model?
8. Is the model academic; that is, is it theoretical rather than practical? Why?
9. What further light does it throw on decision making; that is, does it help you understand the decision process and/or optional decision strategies?
10. Would or could you use such a model? Why? / Why not?

Appendix E

Contingency Model of Decision Making

Anna Grandori (1984) developed a model for decision making

- based on uncertainty and conflict in decision situation
- 5 categories of decision problems
- for each - a different decision strategy

Uncertainty - goal unclear, multiple

- insufficient information
- not all alternatives known/cost
- not all consequences are known

Conflict - mixed values - personal

- conflicting values - staff/requester/boss
- conflicting goals

On a continuum she advocates use of a particular strategy

total certainty; /-----/-----/-----/-----/ no conflict	total uncertainty; high conflict
--	---

- | | |
|--|---|
| Optimizing - no conflict

- no uncertainty

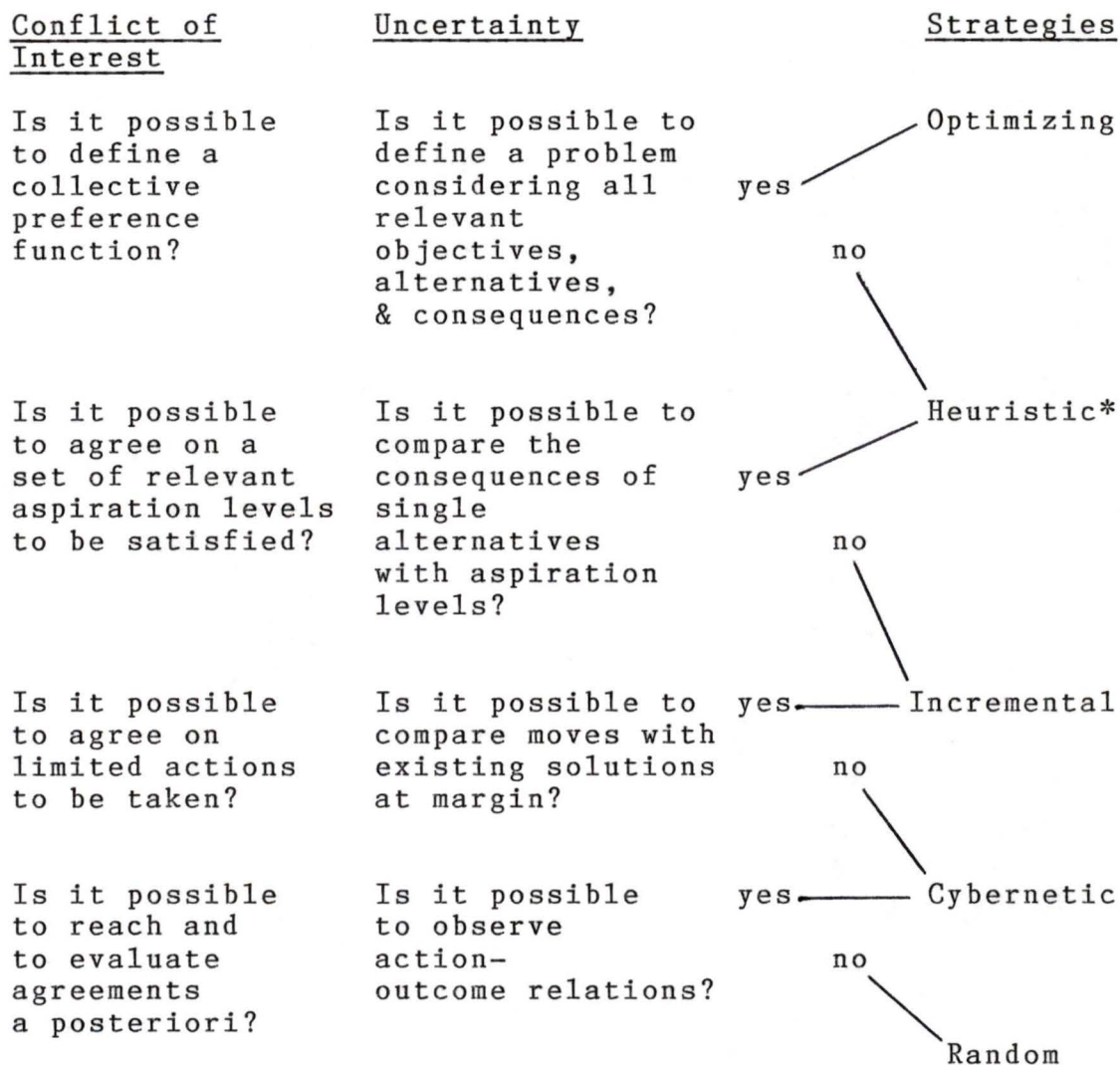
- all is known/clear | - identify goal

- evaluate all
alternatives/
consequences

- choose/criteria |
|--|---|

- Heuristic - goal unclear/
multiple/conflict
- adjust goal up or down
 - change the goal
 - alternatives, know some but not all
 - look at alternatives from different point of view
 - consequences, know some but not all
 - develop more alternatives
 - insufficient information
 - obtain more information
 - change from qualitative to quantitative information
- Incremental - more uncertainty
- more conflict
 - make a decision which will create a small change from the status quo
- Cybernetic - goal-to fix the problem
- based on experience you try something that worked in the past
 - no known alternatives/consequences
 - only know you have been in situation before and what worked
- Random - know nothing
- no like history
 - try anything that might work

Domains of Applicability of Different Strategies



*Satisficing can be defined as a particular case of heuristic decision making in which the classes of objects assumed as objectives are fixed and information cannot be reinterpreted within new schemes.

Adapted from:
Grandori, A. (1984). A prescriptive contingency view of organizational decision making, Administrative Science Quarterly, 29, 192-209.

Appendix F
Consistency of Analysis

Instructions

Below are four categories, each with an explanation of its meaning.

On the next two pages are statements. Please read each statement and place a letter next to it which corresponds to one of the categories listed below.

Thank-you.

A Consultation / Discussion

To meet with and work with the people involved (managers and staff) to discuss problems / disagreements / programs.

B Clarification by Obtaining More Information

To obtain more information for purposes of being sure what is meant or what is needed.

C Validity of Request

To be sure there is a need for an educational program rather than a management intervention.

D Staff Development's Role

To be sure that it is within the role of the department to offer the program.

sit down (with them) and come to
some resolution.

that does not necessarily mean that
a course is going to give the answer...
the management system i.e. job
analysis, job descriptions...etc. are
assumed to be in place. If not, then
work with the manager must be done.

it usually works itself out
through discussion

sit down and discuss what it is
that is perceived as creating
the conflict and come to some
type of mutual understanding

it's within our mandate to
provide various departmentns with
the programs that they want.

I try to find out what is really
the problem.

It may not be an education problem
...lots of things are not...they
are organizational.

I try to discuss it with the
department head.

discuss problem areas.

What is it you hope to achieve?

I was looking at a situation in
this case I felt my role was to
provide programs.

Set up a meeting with manager
and staff ...with them agree
on best approach.

review what evidence there is
that changed behaviour is
necessary/important

And work with them in
(developing) content.

I sometimes have to sit down and
get one group together and talk

validate managers perceptions
with perceptions of staff
development staff.

I'd get them involved in ...
coming up with a solution.

Maybe it's not training
(that is needed)

try to make things less
ambiguous by finding out more
about the problem

I have a role statement for hospital
education...those are all the things
that I use to help me make the decisions.

let's see if we can resolve this
issue by talking it out in terms
of laying all the cards on the table.

discuss with the manager what
people are doing now - what he wants
done differently in each topic area.

determine what is actually an
education problem or one that could be
solved by administrative changes.

See if it is really an
education problem

You have to really look at why a
situation is occurring, what would
be the best approach.

Table 9

Percentage Agreement Between Judges' Assignment
Of Statements to Categories for Four Items
With the Researcher's Assignment

Judge	Item			
	A	B	C	D
1	90	57	60	100
2	90	100	100	100
3	60	57	100	100
4	100	86	80	100
5	80	100	100	67
Average % Agreement	84	80	88	93
Overall Agreement	-	86.25 %		

Appendix G

Transcriptions of Interviews

Following are transcripts of the interviews. The participants were promised confidentiality. To ensure this, the names of people have been replaced by numbers and the names of places have been replaced by letters.

In the interviews J stands for the researcher and R represents the respondent.

INTERVIEW # 1

What is your decision?

What steps would you take?

1. Discuss with Housekeeping Manager the need for further input from his/her staff.
2. Set up a meeting with Manager and staff:
 - discuss problem areas
 - ask for their input
 - With them, agree on best approach for upgrading and the benefits of such training sessions; i.e. their input in writing objectives for such a program

J. How did you arrive at that decision?

R. From past experience, number one. I found that in a lot of cases when department heads approach me for training sessions, everything that didn't go right, it bears a need for further training and I feel that the needs analysis that is done probably is not adequate and a little bit more detail and maybe a different approach will arrive at sometimes a totally different decision. Maybe it's not training...maybe it's just a clarification, or whatever and I find that the

decision also for training is made by the department head without a whole lot of input from those that are involved, like the employees.

J. Do you always use the same process when you are making a decision?

R. Not necessarily. It depends on what the situation is. You may have to dictate if it's an emergency situation whereas I might think that ... my philosophy is that if you can get input from the people that are directly involved, it does work out better that way.

J. What factors do you consider when making a decision?

R. Well, first of all, you have to really look at the issue, the reasons why a situation is occurring, what would be the best approach, what end result you're looking for and how you can arrive at the end result while keeping in mind personnel and cost factors.

J. Did you have a goal when you were identifying what you were going to do with this problem? What were you trying to achieve?

R. My goal was to have the employees who apparently are

lacking leadership and several other skills to be able to identify their needs themselves, or at least maybe not in that terminology, but be able to identify that, yes, there is a new area that I can improve on. Maybe I could do a little better in this area and maybe also peer review.

- J. When you are making a decision, do you consciously check off alternatives, or do you sort of automatically go..that what you mentioned that experience was basically what you were operating on in this. Did you have a lot of other alternatives you thought about when you started or did you know that this one's going to work?
- R. No, not necessarily. I think there has to be alternatives because I don't feel that any one process is carved in stone and you have to be open to other alternatives and other options so I don't really feel that there is any one particular method. Probably because I've been in this situation before, that's why I chose this particular method.
- J. There is a certain degree of uncertainty in the problem. How do you deal with uncertainty usually when you find it in your every day decision making?

- R. If I am given a problem or a request for a program that I feel the person requesting is unsure - like, probably we need this, or probably we need that, I try and discuss it with the department head to find out what really is the problem and what they are hoping to achieve...what their goal is for the training program. If you are suggesting a training session, then you obviously have some goal in mind. What is it that you hope to achieve?
- J. There was some conflict in the problem as well and how do you generally deal with conflict when you find it in a problem?
- R. I tend to be a sort of stabilizing effect in conflict situations that I have been in because department heads don't report to me and I am not responsible to them so it's easier in my particular role that if there is a conflict with regard to either time or type of program, I try and feel what each area/department has to say and if they can't agree then I tell them we have two alternatives...we can do it this way or we can do it the other way and if still that doesn't work out, then I decide when the program will be.
- J. So you are talking primarily of compromise.

R. Yes, we try to compromise. If that doesn't work out, then we have to dictate.

J. To what extent do you feel that yours is a rational decision?

R. That's a good question, isn't it? I suppose I feel it is rational otherwise I wouldn't have made the decision from that point of view. It is one way of making a decision as far as I'm concerned, yes, it was rational.

J. Can you tell me why you feel that?

R. Well, I feel it was rational because I have given thought to - the request from the manager...is it a legitimate request and even though it does go on to say I have observed the situations, that, again, I think that maybe there are alternate ways of doing this. Maybe these traits need to be pointed out to the supervisory people. Maybe, they are not aware of some of their problems. So, with these things in mind, I feel that it was rational, logical.

J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

R. I think it's a very interesting model. I would have to look at it and probably go through it in a little more detail to make a decision as to whether or not each of the stages that she has outlined are achievable.

J. Is the model academic?

R. I don't think it's that academic.

J. Why?

R. Well, in looking at the outline, I feel that it's probably more, shall we say, personnel related than academic and I'm not arguing that it should, or should not be.

J. Does it throw any further light on decision making for you? Does it help you understand decision making any better?

R. I think it has some really good points. I think that especially where she has outlined the conflict of interest and the uncertainty areas and that way of looking at it.

J. Could you, or would you, ever use this model?

R. Yes.

J. How, or why?

R. Again, if I were looking at a decision making process and am trying to decide which approach, then I think the steps are outlined to give one some direction in arriving at a decision.

J. Are there any other comments you want to make of it?

R. I don't think there are any definite comments. It might have been interesting to compare two totally different models.

INTERVIEW # 2

What is your decision?

Develop a participatory program that can be generalized.

What steps would you take?

1. Identify what the issues/problems are:
 - supervisors who currently do not identify need
 - Manager who does identify a need
 - Manager who is prepared to put a fair amount into such a program
 - Supervisors who would in fact benefit
 - discrepancy between Manager (Housekeeping) and own managers' perception of how soon goals can be met.
2. Involve parties in development of program so as to bring diverse expectations closer together.

J. How did you arrive at that decision?

R. Just looking through the information, there seemed to be a lot of different expectations and thoughts about what this program is all about, what it is meant to

achieve, how quickly it can be achieved, and what is needed so that the first issue is to deal with these differing expectations. What I did in the problem-solving process was to just try to identify what I thought were the issues. Just jotting down some issues and that's probably what I would do if I was dealing with a problem like this. The next step is, I would think, once I'd identified that there is such a diverse difference in terms of needs and perhaps how quickly the outcome can be achieved, then I don't think you can spend a lot more time trying to convince people...no, it takes more..no, it takes less. I think you try to get on with a target date that's relatively realistic and involve people actually in the process, and once they're involved, they themselves would come to see that this is a little more complex than they thought it was. For example, the supervisory training program that we're identifying with in the organization a while back, it was identified that we need some supervisory training management development. I see the two as being different and I spent time just working people through a process so that at this point, just today I met with my boss, and gave her, actually I had already circulated some objectives that went with the specific objectives for the supervisory training program, she

just looked at it and said, "Wow, this is an awful lot of work" and even if she would have said, three months ago, we should be able to do this in six months (which she didn't), then once she sees what it means, she would be able to have a more informed idea.. a better idea of what is involved. So, involving people in the process, basically, if there are a lot of discrepancies. Both the employees and the supervisors that are not really seeing that they need something. Once they get involved in giving them some material to look at, doing some discussing, giving them some pre-reading, they may become aware that this is something that they want plus they get a sense of ownership because they are involved; therefore, in the long run, you may not need to coerce them into going. Obviously, this has to be a meaningful program.

- J. What would be the goal of your decision? Of what you're trying to achieve?
- R. I would have difficulty developing a program like this given the resources that probably exist. So, I would either make a generic program that can be generalized readily, may be specific to this group as I am using them as a pilot, or I would want to say, you may have the dollars, I don't have my dollar time, if I'm going

to be involved a lot, I want to make this more generic to begin with and the supervisory group would be just one of the participants. I think I'd probably go the former route with the view in mind that this can easily be adapted for other areas so that in a sense I am using them as a pilot.

- J. What factors do you consider when you are making a decision?
- R. Probably the most important one, is the standard/criteria that I'm using. When I say standard, some of the things I thought about here are ...what are the pros and cons of having this group doing it on their own versus doing it with other people in the organization? There are pros and cons of both. Philosophical types of standards...some beliefs about I guess what each of us thinks is good for people and that comes from your own standards plus the standards, goals, and mission of the organization. Probably, the goals and mission of the organization and the management philosophy of the organization are things that would come up right at the beginning. That's the legitimacy types of arguments that I would use some of the feasibility type considerations. What are the costs? And the costs, not just in terms of money, but

also in terms of people costs? Yes, you can do it. Yes, it can be done within the budget, but does this mean that people are going to knock themselves out and not be happy in the end? Is it something that they had to do, so I think about all the costs that are involved. Some of the spinoffs, for example spinoff of this, fine, do it for the area, and I'm not saying not tell the people, but do it quite overtly and say that this is quite a good idea and let's develop a good program using your staff and let's use them as a pilot to test it and then I may want to use it in other areas. So that's a spinoff that's indirect from that. Always trying to maximize... existing resources and inhouse people whenever possible. Having the money for outside speakers... using the money to develop educational training program, but the process of developing it may become a staff development in itself, so you may want to put some of your money into training some inhouse supervisors who don't think they have anything to learn, and I think one of the phrases I come across is "To Teach Is To Learn". It's when you have to teach something that you learn what it is you don't know. That's one way of bringing some of the people involved. Putting the dollars into developing them so that they can develop some of the materials as opposed to bringing somebody in from the

outside. And those are both a dollar saving plus developing resources at the same time.

J. What's the most influential factors in your decision-making? You've covered a lot of things...which would be the most critical factors?

R. Probably, how it fits in with the long range goals of the organization is really important to me, and that's already assuming that I'm not in the organization unless I can believe in where it's going.

J. Now, as you notice, there's some uncertainty in this problem. How do you deal with uncertainty when you run into it in other problems?

R. Get more information. I guess I'm not sure if these aren't standard things that getting more information would give you a lot of assistance with. The supervisors that don't necessarily see that this is something that they need...you're not going to convince them. Going out and chatting with them is not going to help. Chatting with them gets them to accept things a little more and gives them a chance to talk, but I'm not sure that if you went out and surveyed them to find out why it is they think they

don't need this when you obviously do, and their department heads obviously think they do, is not going to help in this particular case, but normally reduce uncertainty by getting more information. By thinking about it. Again, you relate it back to where the organization is going..back to certain criteria that are important... how consistent is something like this, or achieving our goals in terms of standards.

J. Are these written criteria and standards?

R. Well, the written criteria and standards that I have are a philosophy of education that I developed when I came. I have a role statement for hospital education. .. those are all things that I use that help me make the decisions. There is the philosophy and the goals and the purposes of the organization as a whole. Those are all written. Most of those are general and you have to take it a step further. You have to think it through, you can't just look at it and expect the answer to be there specifically with a number or something that is very quantitative.

J. How do you deal with conflict in a problem situation?

R. Convince them that I'm right. Varies... in some ways,

I am a situational type of person. There are some people to whom I can just say, I don't agree, or that's crazy.

J. What kind of people would that be?

R. Well, people that are very open and probably have definite ideas of their own. This wouldn't necessarily be people in certain positions.. it would be based on people's own abilities and traits. So that certain people, I would just talk to that way regardless whether they are the president of the organization, and other people you just know that it doesn't matter what you say right now, but if you wait a day or if you send them off to think of something that will be better in that situation. So it varies depending upon the way people deal with situations/ conflict themselves and how receptive they are for feedback as opposed to levels of status within the organization.

J. How do you deal with intrapersonal conflict when it's something within yourself... you have two goals to achieve? Capture them both?

R. I am a very goal-oriented sort of person. Again, it's

going back to..doing a lot of thinking at the beginning... where your boundaries are...like my model and trying to sort out... like when I first came into the department and tried to sort out what I could and couldn't do. Because when I first came, I was a little overwhelmed. You tend to think of education... some people think of education that there's lots of time and things seem relatively simple. I came in and someone from the Physical Plant says "great, now we've got somebody in education, I've got three electricians who need courses and maybe we can do something like that". Somebody from the Lab that said "Great, let's have something that will teach nurses how to fill out forms properly" and a whole variety of things, and I thought, how do you make a decision when someone comes to you? You make a decision by determining where your boundaries are... that's why I came up with the model for the department and said the priorities are hospital-wide. Services are more than hospital-wide and they can be departmental in the sense that nursing can use the A/V Technician's time for a nursing project or the instructional designers time, but if there's conflict, a hospital-wide area takes precedence. If there's conflict between the hospital-wide activities...if I can't solve it by criteria/standards that I set out to begin with, I'll throw it

back to the group as a whole and usually a group of directors with a V.P. I don't usually go to the CMC (the highest authority) to solve those types of problems...not the operational ones.

J. To what extent do you feel yours is a rational decision?

R. Rational in the sense that there is a process that you go through...you identify what the problems are, develop a plan for resolving them. Rational planning/problem-solving approach is you identify...whether you call it the nursing process or problem-solving, it's all the same types of stuff. I guess it is.

J. Why do you feel it's rational?

R. Because I use a rational model to go through it. I used a model that was a legitimate rational model identifying the problems. Analyze, get data, and I didn't get more data. You introduced that concept, I didn't.

J. Introduced what concept?

R. Of what you would do. I guess my response was that I

would get more data so I haven't even thought about the response that said I would need more data. I was working within the constraints of the exercise having done this type of activity in the past, you usually say this is totally restrictive. Anyway, that's a good point...I didn't think about need more information, but looking back at it...it should be one of the things that you normally say, but in this case, I'm not sure the information is going to tell you anything. I really don't. I think you start the process in a way that's not restrictive so that it does a lot of things for you at the same time.

J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. What is your reaction to the model?

R. I think it sounds interesting. It looks potentially good. I think the one thing...I couldn't see where optimizing...we're doing something that's going to not close any doors and is likely to open other doors fits her model. For example, my suggestion that using it as a pilot meets my needs and might meet their needs and I'm not sure where that would have come out with this model...where that model would have encouraged me to do that.

- J. Somebody called that an incremental decision. I wonder if it would fit in there? It could still change.
- R. No, I wouldn't see that at all. My suggestion is you do something. No, it's not in there and that's probably a problem...taking the situation and saying how are we going to get the most for it and look at it more broadly...it's broadening the problem as opposed to...this is narrowing the problem and that's it's flaw.
- J. Do you think it is academic?
- R. Define academic.
- J. Do you think it's theoretical rather than practical?
- R. No, I think it can be practical. I think it's relatively easy to adapt. I think it's a little... needs to be translated a little more into English to be practical. Just comments like "satisficing" and some of the words. There are probably really simple words that you could put in there that would mean the same thing and would make it easier for people to grasp the concepts/thoughts. I would like to see it

translated a little more...it's a little wordy...uses a few big words and if refined a bit could be more practical.

J. Do you think that it throws a little more light on your decision making process?

R. That's hard to answer. I would have to look at it. I would think that in all situations, the aims of decision making, in order to help you make a decision, you'd want to reduce uncertainty and deal with conflict, or potential conflict. I don't think this is anything new. I think a lot of these things are just written differently. Looking at it from a continuum... I don't know enough about the decision making process-type theories to know whether/if there's enough new in it. I don't know enough about it to answer that. There's nothing...the processes aren't new. The arrangement is, perhaps, and the words are.

J. Would you, or could you, use such a model?

R. I could.

J. Would you?

R. First of all, I would have to translate it into my own way of thinking. I have to look at what these things mean. I'd have to get some new ways of thinking about that. No conflict, no uncertainty. All is known. So that's just straight forward...and I think that's what we tend to do normally is just assume this. Often, we don't look for/or don't find out until we've started the other areas. See, I'm not sure how much one does intuitively and I'd even have to define intuition as being based on experience that you don't necessarily consciously reflect at the time you make the decision. You just do it because you've always done it that way and that doesn't make it wrong, and that doesn't make it intuitive in the sense that it's not scientific... it just means that you don't go through the steps of the process on a conscious level all the time. So, I'm not sure if a lot of this we don't do, but you're asking, would I use it consciously? I don't know if I would. I'd have to do some more reading.

INTERVIEW # 3

What is your decision?

Mount program provided Manager is willing to examine those factors in the work environment that impact behaviour and make appropriate changes.

What steps would you take?

1. Discuss with Manager what people are doing now- what he wants done differently in each topic area.
2. Validate Manager's perceptions with perceptions of S/V (supervising) staff.
3. Determine what is actually an education problem or one that could be solved by administrative changes (that is change in procedures). Examine 'reward' structure both peer and organization to ensure that the intended behaviour is the one that is being rewarded.
4. Result of this is a fairly accurate assessment of needs, complete with an analysis of the impact made by the environment.
5. Review with Manager for approval and commitment to make the organizational changes necessary to produce the desired change in supervisory

behaviour.

6. Design program, matching appropriate resources to each individual topic. Length of time dependent on what type of behaviour change is desired. Process also determined by desired outcome.
7. Involve hospital management in the design/delivery to reinforce material being taught.
8. Prepare evaluation methodology to assess whether or not there was a change in supervisory behaviour.

J. How did you arrive at that decision?

R. I arrived at that decision, first of all, it's within our mandate to provide various departments with the programs that they want so that's legitimate. The request is legitimate. The manager was willing to support it with time and money so we have a very strong support of manager in this case so that overall for the decision to go for that program, it was conditional upon the manager examining his entire organization knowing especially the topic areas that have been listed there, that training likely isn't going to solve the entire problem. In fact, it's probably a very small part of the problem so normally, the minimal effect training program has had in these

areas, from past experience without any good, honest, look at the organization, I had to make my decision conditionally. Now, if I've got a manager that's willing to do that environmental scan and pinpoint the areas where the organization itself is failing to support employees to perform in a desired manner, then I really have an exciting opportunity to use a training program or vehicle for some fairly effective change.

J. Would you always use the process when making a decision?

R. About a training program? The criteria being whether or not people are willing to look at the environment and other factors? Ideally, yes. One of my pet peeves about training programs is that training is often thought about as a panacea that if we train them, the problem will go away. We know that's not true. Often, it's because of lack of feedback, lack of opportunity to practice and the fact that the behaviour they're currently producing is being supported or rewarded in some way. I can think of an example...when I worked in A for the #1, an individual had come through an organizational change and new management. This individual was not highly thought of

so he was shoved into an office. As long as he didn't make a noise, and didn't rock the boat, he was okay. So he spent a great deal of time reading the newspaper and I often envied him because he was so well read and I never had the time because I was so busy. And that's a case where he was being rewarded for inappropriate behaviour, but it was a lot safer. Now, you could have taken that man to any one of a thousand top-notch motivational seminars. It might have affected his personal life, it was not going to affect his life on the job because he wasn't being rewarded for appropriate behaviour. He was, in fact, being rewarded to read. Because as long as he didn't rock the boat, nobody minded. But I think we see a lot of it goes like that.

- J. What would make you vary your process of decision making? You said you had criteria and mentioned the main criteria is whether or not they will look at the broader picture and make sure they put education into its proper perspective and not expect it to be everything. What other kinds of things do you look for?
- R. Your last question...I'm a little confused. It was, what would make me vary my process, and what would

make me vary my process is if it was skill training. That's fairly cut and dry. If you've got to teach somebody how to start up a I.V., insert a nasal gastric tube, I don't have to look at the environmental factors that are going to support this person being able to do that. Fairly specific. So, when we're talking about skill training, that's a little bit different than if we're talking about changing somebody's behaviour on the job.

J. Okay, maybe this is going to sound like the same question, but it's not intended to be. What factors do you consider when making a decision?

R. A lot of factors. I'll be very blunt and honest...there isn't in any sort of priority order. Who's making the request is a factor that is going to impact on the decision. I would consider that in making a decision.

J. In what way?

R. The request comes from a nurse or the Executive Director. Both can be equally as valid, but say the nurse wants a program to deal with coaching on one thing. Well that isn't going to be a good use of our

resources. Perhaps, we can coordinate a buddy to work with her or refer it back to the department head to do something on the job. If something is coming from the Executive Director that is hospital-wide, so I guess scope of the assignment is probably a factor and organizationally, you have to consider who is making the request. That's a factor of survival. But scope of the request. Some things are appropriate for our involvement, if it's hospital-wide. Sometimes it's not appropriate to get the department heads to do the type of training that they would rather a Staff Development department did and actually with the proper coaching and support, you can then develop them to be some on-the-job trainers, which I think is really more effective and is a much more effective model if you can get your department heads doing the training. You'll have a lot more training happening. So scope would definitely affect my decision... budgetary constraints would affect my decision. Dollars and cents, resources - do I have the resources to meet the need, or am I going to have to purchase those resources? How readily available are those resources? Are those resources ready, willing, and able? We also have to consider what sort of priority the request has...in the overall scheme of things. So we have to consider those things, but functioning as I

do in this department, it's very much a consultative approach because I can get a sense of priorities, but I can't set them. I'm not a nurse, I'm not a doctor, and I'm not a hospital administrator. So, very clearly our position is outlined and we have to use a consultative process, constantly feeling what's out there...bringing it back for discussion.

J. Which factors most influence your decision?

R. Now, are we talking in terms of that assignment or my day-to-day work?

J. Your day-to-day work.

R. Priorities and then ability of resources.

J. As you noticed, there was some uncertainty in this problem and now in your day-to-day work, how do you deal with uncertainty in decision making?

R. You are talking to a person in a hospital that is going through a lot of uncertainty in day-to-day work caused by reorganization. We've merged two hospitals, we've got two executive structures that are now going into one, two sets of policies that are going into

one, so uncertainty is the name of the game. I can't make the decision. I can't say we are going to go with this policy and therefore are going to have this program and not go with that policy. A lot of the time, I handle uncertainty by asking questions and trying to get some clarification and at least presenting the situation from how I see it which is often totally different than how people who are embroiled in the problems see it. Other ways that I handle uncertainty are timing...being aware that often things that are urgent for me are not necessarily urgent for the hospital and so often I think for a Staff Development department to be successful, you've got to have your pulse on what's happening out there... not so much what's happening in here, because we can get embroiled in our own mesh and charge off on our own white horses. On any given topic, we want to educate the masses, but that's not necessarily so and that's not necessarily wanted at the time so that's another way that I have been handling uncertainty. And, in a classroom, there's always a 'teachable moment'. Same with the Executive, there's always a moment when you can present something, your timing is right and you don't pop things on them at the wrong time. So, that's how I've been handling uncertainty over the last little while. Trying to understand the

problem from their side.

J. How do you deal with conflict in a problem situation?

R. There again, because we use a consultative process, because I'm not a decision maker, I am a producer of a service and often I have to facilitate getting the answer, but the idea is to determine where the conflict is. Now, if the conflict is between two department heads and not being able to agree, then I've got to facilitate that. If the conflict is between myself and somebody, say in terms of methodology, because I'm a strong supporter of experiential form of teaching as having an effect on learners being able to produce something when they go back on the job...say, if I've got a conflict there, then my tack is usually to talk about it, present, and do a lot of listening and find what it is. If the person is willing to go through that...often people you have conflict with aren't big on listening to you either and sometimes you just give them what they want because it's the quickest way to end the conflict and then the results will come out as they may. I could learn something. I could be proven wrong. That's the worst thing that could happen in which case I've learned something. I'm not a confrontative person so

I stay away from conflicts. So I handle things differently. I'm not horribly outspoken, or so set in my ways that I will confront and end up in a lot of conflict.

J. To what extent do you feel your's was a rational decision?

R. I think it was very rational. Again, it's not up to me to say to somebody, well no I don't really think you need that program. If there's a felt need, then it's my job to analyze that and research that by discussing the hoped-for outcomes, what changes do we want? Getting that validated by the actual supervisors themselves and then discussing how the environment is affecting any sort of change, that strikes me as being very rational.

J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. What is your reaction to the model?

R. I suspect that it probably has some use. I find it very difficult to give a reaction because I've had about ten minutes with a new model and I certainly haven't had a chance to assimilate it in terms of some

personal examples, so it's really difficult for me to answer that question. As far as the model is concerned, I'm sure it's not better or worse than any others. It certainly has some advantages moving from clarity, certainty and no conflict to a great deal of conflict and what your options are. I like that. I like seeing that there's some options that can help you.

J. Do you find it academic?

R. Horribly, especially the third page. I had a lot of trouble with that. If I was teaching it, I probably wouldn't even go near the third page because that is just horribly academic. I think you would lose people.

J. Does it throw further light on decision making for you?

R. It does because I like what it does in terms of uncertainty and conflict in decision making. Because, although those are two factors that can impact your decision making, it probably, well for me anyhow, wouldn't be the thing that comes to mind when I think about decision making...how am I going to deal with

uncertainty or conflict. I go with that, but I don't label it as such and I think labelling those two and recognizing them and realizing that you've got some options around that are caused by the fact that there is some uncertainty and conflict, I think it's really useful. Actually, I'm beginning to get a little more excited about that.

J. Would you, or could you, use the model?

R. In teaching decision making, or in decision making for myself?

J. Let's say for decision making yourself.

R. Yes, I think I could.

J. Why?

R. Because I'm beginning to see the value of the way they're dealing with uncertainty and conflict. And being a person who doesn't handle conflict well, anyhow, the more I think about that, the more I think, yes. I get to keep these two pages?

J. Would you like to? Sure. It has the reference on the

bottom.

- R. And if I spent a little bit more time on the domains, I might get to like that, too. It's presentation is very academic and not immediately as workable as the first two pages.
- J. Well, I'll tell you why. The third page came as a request from one of my pre-testers. He asked for the questions so I decided to include them. Originally, I hadn't included them. So, you think you could use the model.

INTERVIEW # 4

What is your decision?

Go.

What steps would you take?

1. Investigate the possible (available) programs.
2. Reassess the involved group to get their input.
See if it is really an education problem.
3. Market a program. Get involved group to buy
the program.
4. Present program in segments.
5. Provide follow-up or practical sessions to each
session.
6. Evaluate each segment before proceeding to next
session to see if it is meeting the needs.
7. Do a summative evaluation of program.

J. Okay, how did you arrive at that decision?

R. To go? Well, I think the position that the individual is in requires a good provider service so that if you get a request you make the steps to fill that request...whether the end result will be that you

provide a program, but you make the initial effort.

J. Okay, do you always use the same process when you get a problem to solve?

R. Probably not, but I think it's fairly consistent.

J. Okay, why would you vary the process? What would make you vary the process?

R. Probably the situation.

J. What factors?

R. I was looking at a situation in this case where I felt my role is to provide programs; therefore, I should make the initial step to at least investigate or have a look at the program. If I had the option of doing it, or not doing it, then I would probably do some evaluation before.

J. Evaluate what?

R. Evaluate the situation before saying I would or I wouldn't. In this case, I figured I had a request therefore, I would say yes I would provide something

and then evaluate to see what I would provide.

J. What factors, in general, are the most influential in your decisions when you're making your decisions?

R. Probably looking at it from an academic point of view. I would probably do some research before I went into something...from the literature and also from...what was the question again?

J. What factors are the most influential when you make a decision?

R. I guess based on somebody else's research.

J. You mentioned something about your role - basing it on your role, because your role is such that it is an expectation that you will comply, so your role would be one factor when you make your decision. What other kinds of things would you look at when you are making your decision?

R. You mean the group? I would have to probably have a look at the group or the situation and then I would probably look at the options and investigate all angles.

J. Is it ever a factor that you would look at who made the request?

R. Oh yes.

J. And some people you may find you are more apt to respond to than others?

R. Of course. Yes.

J. Okay, what about the person would make you respond as opposed to not responding? When you are evaluating who's asking, what kinds of evaluation would you do?

R. Unfortunately, I would like to say it is objective, but it isn't always. Probably the person's previous requests, their position within the organization... that may have a bearing. Maybe a minor one. The validity of the request from that individual because sometimes you get the type of individual who is always making requests yet those requests are not evaluated very well. So I think those would have a bearing. Repeat your questions.

J. What factors in general are most influential in your decision?

R. Well, if it is feasible.

J. Okay, in what way would it be feasible or not feasible? What would make it feasible as opposed to not feasible?

R. Oh. Okay. Resources available, monies available. In this case there is money available. Whether it is an educational problem.

J. As you mentioned, there was uncertainty in the problem and what I'm after is how you deal with uncertainty when you have uncertainty in a decision problem that you face.

R. Looking at this problem?

J. Or any other problem.

R. How would I deal with uncertainty? I think I would -- I'm not exactly sure I know what you are looking for. I would examine the situation, examine the individuals involved, look at it from all angles, gather more information, get group involved, etc. In all situations, involve the person making the request and how that request can be filled and whether there is

another option other than a training program in that situation.

J. And if you ran into another problem, not this one, but another problem, where there is uncertainty in it? And uncertainty can be because the goals aren't clear, because there isn't enough information, because the alternatives aren't obvious or the consequences aren't known...you have uncertainty from all those kinds of things.

R. Then you have to clarify before progressing.

J. Okay. So gather more information would be...

R. Gather more information, clarify and sort out what actually is happening.

J. So you are talking about setting priorities and maybe, according to some criteria, making some judgements?

R. Yes.

J. Okay, How do you deal with conflict in a situation?
In a problem?

- R. Smoothly, hopefully. I do have some charges head on.
I like to sit down and come to some resolution.
- J. Sit down with the person that has a conflict?
- R. That's right. I don't avoid it.
- J. Oh good. Suppose it is a conflict between two
department heads but you're involved?
- R. I'm the mediator? Is that where you're putting me?
Okay. I guess you have to sit down with both of them
together and sort out how they feel about the
situation, what is the situation for each of them, and
have them decide what resolution can occur. Agree on
some resolution, they may have to compromise. To
leave me to sit in the middle and try to sort it out.
- J. Okay, to what extent do you feel yours was a rational
decision?
- R. Of course it was rational! Why was it rational?
Well, first of all I figured I had to make an effort
because that's my role. So I went on to make an
effort and I think I evaluated the situation and
assessed the individuals involved and at that point

determined that there was something that could be done. Also, I investigated the possibilities of the program. And then I marketed it, so if they aren't going to buy it, it doesn't really work. And hopefully, I evaluate it as I move along. And total evaluation at the end. Is that it?

J. Well, that's the first part.

J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. What is your reaction to the model?

R. First impression, it seems to flow. It seems logical.

J. Okay, do you consider it an academic model?

R. Probably. I haven't got any...it just has a look. It all depends on how you define academic. I mean it isn't applicable or it's only in theory and does not apply. Is that what you mean by academic?

J. Yes.

R. Oh. Well, I don't really think it's academic. It seems to be from the easy situation to the most difficult. It has a scale or a ladder along the way,

so I think it's a very usable model.

J. Does it throw any further light on decision making for you?

R. From a very superficial point of view? Yes. I think it probably does. I don't know very much about the decision making process or the models of decision making so it has some instructional value.

J. In what way?

R. It clearly defines the steps.

J. Could you or would you use the model?

R. I might if I studied it a bit more. I would have to look at it a little bit longer than a couple of minutes.

J. Why would you use the model?

R. Well, it's probably an aid to decision making. And it would be just another aid in reaching some sort of conclusion that is based on fact.

J. Okay. I think we're finished.

R. Is that it?

INTERVIEW # 5

What is your decision?

What steps would you take?

1. Meeting # 1 - with Housekeeping Manager to discuss budget allocation and time allocation.
2. Meeting # 2 - with Housekeeping Manager and all Housekeeping Supervisors to discuss problem areas related to supervisory tasks and perceived needs for training sessions.
3. Meeting # 3 - with all of the above with Staff Development Coordinator proposing a tentative schedule and a list of topics related to supervisors skills. Feedback from group, consensus on one choice of topic and a time commitment from the group for a first session. First training session with prior agenda sent out to participants three weeks ahead and selected pre-reading to raise awareness on topic. Choice of highly recommended outside trainer.
4. Meeting # 4 - with all participants to the first session for their verbal evaluation one week later and for input into the planning of an extended program for the coming year.
5. Proposal and acceptance of the program for the

coming year by all concerned.

J. Now, how did you arrive at that decision?

R. Based on the concept that the people who will be involved have to be in on the planning at the initial stages otherwise they will not be committed. They will be very leary of how the choice was made and not find that it is theirs. So they have to be in at the very beginning.

J. What are you trying to accomplish with your planning?

R. To have the involvement and commitment of all the parties concerned.

J. Okay, do you always use the same process?

R. As the one that is being explained here? I'm not too sure the process would be the same depending on the groups, but I think players always have to be in on the initial stages so based on that theory, I would still do it that way, yes.

J. Okay, what factors do you, or did you consider when making this decision?

- R. Factors. Well, according to the scenario, the Housekeeping Manager was already committed and convinced and had a budget, so that usually takes a lot of time to sort out. So from then on, you just make sure that the people who need the training are in the picture. So it was quick to jump with, like the initial stage to me would have been to find the budget and the time...that usually is the biggest drawback.
- J. So resources are one of the factors that you consider in terms of budget and time and staff? And the other one that you mentioned had to do with the persons involved. What kinds of things are you looking at when you are looking at the person involved?
- R. The Manager that I'm dealing with? I like to believe that I am a consultant in that the Manager will come to me and request something. Sometimes, you have to spoon feed them that your services are there. But if the Manager is already coming to you with a request, that trust and credibility has already been established so it is much easier to work with the Manager.
- J. If you had two or three requests from two or three different Managers, how would you decide which one you

would grant and which ones you might put off a little longer or which ones you would do?

- R. If the resources are available in the Education Department, they could all be done simultaneously if there is no budget and time restriction. Usually, we are quite accommodating and can do several things so there are seldom occasions where we have to wait for somebody's request to be delayed.
- J. What factors in general are most influential when you are making a decision?
- R. Well, in hostile settings, the main factors are the reluctance of the Managers to allow time during working hours for the staff to attend sessions. So we have tried to do evening sessions -- they are not popular. Mini sessions have to vary all the time. So the allocation of time is the biggest barrier in the Managers' minds because of their scheduling and the restricted number of staff and resources that they have.
- J. What other items would you consider have an influence on your decision?

- R. Quite vague to deal with. I'm not too clear what theory you are reading. I'm more in a practical setting so I'm not too clear on the concept that you are using as factors.
- J. Very practically, let us say that the Assistant Administrator came to you and asked you for a program and she wanted to use the same resources as the Housekeeping staff member. How would you make the decision between the two?
- R. If it was the same money?
- J. Yes, and you have to decide which one.
- R. Who gets the pot? This is very unlikely. The budget comes from my budget, not from Housekeeping. They just give their staff time. Then I pay for the speakers and I control the budget. We have a purchased services budget so I can hire people from the outside out of my budget. So that is why it is hard to adapt to this. We have just so much.
- J. Yes. You only have so many dollars left and you had a request from the Assistant Administrator and the...

R. To do something else?

J. Yes.

R. I would have to decide between two requests who gets it. We try to make sure that everybody in the organization gets a piece of the cake...So if somebody's request was too big, you know that it would take the whole budget... I would say that they probably can't expect to get that much. But I would give them a small slice of whatever they were asking for so that they would get something because the others are requesting as well. So, they would probably get Phase 1 from this year's budget and then we would work at improving the quantity for the next time around. That happens sometimes. If they are requesting for a specialty training program and they want it now and there is no money left, sometimes it is delayed until resources and funding are available.

J. How do you deal with uncertainty in a problem situation? I noticed that there was uncertainty in here. You weren't sure.

R. On my part?

- J. Well, it is in the problem situation. There were things that you weren't sure of. Like, uncertainty can be not having enough information, or that you're not sure what the alternatives are, what the consequences are, what they are likely to be...
- R. It is not a big factor in my decision making. I make assumptions if I'm not too sure what the real source of the information is and I can usually read between the lines. You get to know the people quite well. So I observe and I make deductions and based on my assumptions I'll move on.
- J. Okay, how do you deal with conflict when you have two department heads who disagree on what you are doing or maybe conflict within yourself? You believe in two things and you can't make them both happen. So there are two kinds of problems.
- R. Sometimes I have to take time, the weighing out takes time. And I seldom make rash decisions and I try not to get too emotional in making an instant decision. Sometimes I'll sleep on it for a few days or even a few months. And let the circumstances kind of, get... sometimes there are other factors that get into the picture that changes the solution as well. So

sometimes you have to wait until the dust settles and then you find a more appropriate solution to the problem if you are not too quick to move into something that is not sure. Sometimes I do procrastinate, I'll just have to wait and see. If I don't think I have a good solution I won't jump in with training. Sometimes training won't fix the problem, if that's what you mean, in a setting like here. If there is a morale problem or a problem amongst a group of people and they come to me for a request for training and I know enough of the problem to know that training is not going to solve it, I am not going to waste money on that. I'll just wait and delay.

- J. What about direct conflict if you are in conflict with one of the department heads? If he wants you to do it one way and you think it should be done a different way?
- R. It usually works itself out through discussion. I can be quite flexible if I see the other person's point of view. I can be obstinate too, and manipulate until I get it my way, but I seldom get annoyed or show frustration because I think I lose if I do that. So I just kind of hear it out and influence my way.

Slowly. I never thought of it really.

J. Okay, to what extent - I only have one more question before we go onto something else - to what extent do you feel yours was a rational decision and why?

R. Usually it is not my decision alone.

J. I mean this decision.

R. Oh here. Well, there too. In planning of something I find it very difficult or how would I say - I find it ethical to do something like this and make a decision that I would call mine. I work much better with group decisions and then if I can influence the group so that the decision becomes our decision, it could be mine initially, and I influence others to make it a group decision, but I feel more comfortable if there is a consensus with the players and we are making the decision together.

J. Okay, I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. What is your reaction to the model?

R. At first I wasn't sure if it was an individual

decision making process, but then I saw at the end there it was meant for an organizational decision making process.

J. It can be individual or it can be group.

R. I guess it's new to me, but it could be a valuable tool to use when you are in doubt.

J. Okay, Do you think the model is academic?

R. Who am I to judge? I'm not that impressed, but it is because I don't understand it enough.

J. Did it throw any further light on decision making for you?

R. Not that much.

J. Okay, so you're saying that - would you or could you use the model?

R. I could try and experiment with it. Then I might see the value of it.

J. Okay. Why would you think of using the model?

R. To improve my decision making skills. If I thought I could benefit from it. You know, I'm willing to give it a try. I'll probably read it again in my own quiet time and see if I could apply it to situations which I am living here, right now, and it might be very beneficial to help me make important decisions which are hovering over my head. Yes, I am thankful that I get the copy.

J. Your first reaction, though, was that maybe it might not be useful? Like, it is too soon to tell?

R. I can't really judge because it is sort of abstract right now. I would have to apply it to real life situations in the here and now.

J. Thank you very much.

INTERVIEW # 6

What is your decision?

What steps would you take?

1. Design a draft program based on discussions with potential attendees, Housekeeping Manager, and my own department head.
2. Seek approval and support from own department head first, particularly in the matter of time constraints and early expectation of success.
3. Obtain approval next from Housekeeping Manager.
4. Negotiate some reward for attendance with him - i.e. supervisors to attend on "company" time, or at a desirable location, with refreshments, outside the hospital.
5. Invite the attendance of the supervisors in a memo which clearly describes the purposes and potential benefits of the course.
6. As part of the program, build in assignments which are likely to be helpful to the supervisors - which fit in with their regular job responsibilities.
7. Ensure that the program design allowed for plenty of participation and practice, not just lecture format.
8. Use guest instructors only if they are known to use

an appropriate adult education style and their contribution will be valuable.

J. Getting back to your decision, do you want to look at it while we...

R. Sure.

J. How did you arrive at that decision?

R. Well, I tried to look at this particular situation, who the various parties were, where potential conflicts lay, what support would be needed to make the program a success, what important principles of education would be important to apply here and tried to decide on that basis how it should be approached.

J. Do you always use the same process when you make decisions?

R. Well, I'm not sure, I guess we try to think things through in a fairly logical fashion each time but we don't have any sort of systematic step-by-step thing which we apply to each decision which we look at. I would imagine if we sat down and thought about it we could probably come up with a list of the kinds of

things we normally consider with regard to deciding on a program but we don't do that on a routine basis.

J. What would be the aim of the decision which you made? When you were making your decision, what would be the aim?

R. Well, to provide a program that would meet the needs, both of the supervisors and the Housekeeping Manager, and that would be perceived as meeting those needs by both those parties. I guess my particular concern here would be that supervisors would like to see something in the program for them and it is important, I think, to try and emphasize that and make sure that it is a program which is designed to help them as well as help anyone else in the hospital.

J. What factors did you consider when making this decision?

R. Well, as I mentioned, the time period is important... the support from the various parties involved. Potential conflicts that might develop amongst the parties. The educational needs of the people who are to be involved in the program. I guess those are the main things.

- J. What are the most influential factors in your decision planning, generally, not just in this particular one, but generally when you are making a decision?
- R. Well, I think that our function is very much a service function for the hospital and as such it needs to -- so we have to -- in other words, provide programs which people will want, and will find useful. So I think one of our major concerns is making sure that we do the analysis of what people's desires and needs are and that we try as much as possible to match our programs to those needs. It involves a lot of negotiation back and forth amongst a variety of parties and I guess one of the things I find a little bit difficult about responding to this particular case, is that it is difficult to predict what might happen, for example, when you take your draft plan to the department head that you are working with and what kind of negotiation would have to go on there because subsequent decisions will obviously depend on that. So, I take a very eclectic approach of trying to design programs which match appropriate adult education principles and at the same time are likely to gain the support of the participants and the other people concerned.

- J. How do you deal with uncertainty in the problem situation?
- R. Personally, do you mean? Well, I generally try to resolve it. I try to make things less ambiguous by finding out more about the problem or talking to the parties who are involved or sitting down and working through in a planning process how things might be different.
- J. And how do you deal with conflict in a problem situation? Decision making?
- R. Well, it depends. It depends what kind of conflict it is. If it seems to be conflict in terms of people's ideas conflicting with one another, then I am quite happy to try and work through some sort of solution. I mean, perhaps negotiate or mediate, whichever seems most appropriate. If it is a conflict involving some sort of hostility I would probably wait for things to cool down and then try to approach it from another point of view.
- J. How about intrapersonal conflict? Where you have two things you want to achieve but you can only achieve one of them.

- R. I am trying to think of an example where that occurs. I suppose I take it for granted that those kinds of conflicts are likely to come up and so I don't pay close attention to the way I manage them. Again, I think, I take a very pragmatic approach and just try to resolve it in a way which seems most reasonable at the time. I don't have any particular tool or methodology, I don't think. Nothing that's obvious to me or that I've thought clearly about anyway.
- J. I just have one more question about this section. To what extent do you feel yours was a rational decision and why?
- R. I think it is probably quite a rational decision. I suppose underlying the decision making process that we go through here in the department, is the knowledge that we are, again, as a service department, we are not really central to the function of the hospital. I think there might be an argument to be made that we are in fact central to the functioning of the hospital but I don't think we are always perceived that way, so the underlying emotional response that I suppose we have to decide about programs and so on, is whether or not it is going to affect our security within the hospital system. And I think that is always something

that we have in the back of our minds with regard to that. I don't know if that makes us any different from any other department in the hospital or not. Probably many people feel the same way, but as far as the actual thinking through of how the program should be planned and so on, I think that we do that on a fairly rational basis.

J. Thank you. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

R. Heuristic isn't meant to mean the default style, though. It isn't that if nothing else works you fall back on Heuristic, is that the idea? Or is it, depending on your answers to these questions, what you would do?

J. She considers it hierarchical in that you can always use a random strategy and given history, you can use cybernetics, next you can make a small change, etc. But, she advocates the highest possible strategy.

R. So that it works, it is a ranking then, optimizing that, for example, is the preferred strategy. And that you would use that unless it is impossible and then you would fall back on Heuristic if that wasn't possible.

Okay. I guess that's fairly clear.

J. Then, can I ask about your reaction to the model?

R. Well, it seems somewhat complex, as I - you know - I mean, I guess it is somewhat similar to my reaction to many of these kinds of models and schemes. It is probably a good academic's way of describing what works in reality and what in fact, happens. But I am always a little, I guess, I always feel a little ambiguous about trying to apply something like this in practice. That is to say, to analyze a situation - a decision situation - and determine what it is I should do according to the model. It reminds me a lot of a model of decision making which is from Vroom and Yeton. I don't know if you are familiar with that one. And determining whether decisions should be made by groups or individuals and so on. So it seems quite similar to that. But I suppose what it does, is it raises some important questions to think about when I think about the case you just gave me. I'm not sure I would have thought about these possibilities. I guess uncertainty is the one, I mean I was looking probably for areas of conflict in the case and what you would do about dealing with those. Uncertainty from the way I read it, it didn't seem that there was that much

uncertainty about what in fact should happen. Or what the likely outcome would be. And I guess, again, my reaction to this is that I think I would rather rely on a kind of rational thinking process which is more internalized than a step-by-step model for decision making. I would hate to see someone, for example, sit down and use this and go through and in answer to all these questions what I've got to do is take a Heuristic strategy with regard to this particular decision. I think that is likely to end in failure because it prevents you from thoroughly thinking through the permutations, all the possible permutations and it may lead to some inflexibility on the part of the decision maker as well. That is when they have made up their mind to follow a particular course of action and they find that it doesn't work, then they may find it difficult to switch quickly to another course of action. So I think it applies a certain rigidity that I don't like. I prefer a much more flexible approach to decision making.

J. Does it throw further light on the decision making process for you?

R. Well, I think it certainly makes clear some of the factors you should consider and is perhaps useful as a

reminder in that way.

J. Just one more question, then, and we're finished.

Would you, or could you, use such a model, barring...

R. Probably, I wouldn't use a model, whether it is this model or some other model. I don't - I think models can be useful in reminding us of important things to consider and so on, but I don't like the idea of making decisions on the basis of a model, that is following a model in a fairly rigorous way to make a decision. And I think probably most managers, at least most of the ones I've talked with, have the same sort of reaction to that. The only area where, well, there are other areas where models, I think, are useful, but I'm not sure they are useful in the decision making process.

J. In what area would you think models are useful?

R. Well, we use planning models, for example, for planning time lines, and workshops, that sort of thing...which are quite useful. I don't even know if you would call it a model. It really is just a graph of events which occur and for that sort of thing, I think it is quite useful and I guess it's an adjunct

to decision making rather than a decision making process in itself. And I would also use models in a teaching situation to illustrate certain factors that need to be taken into consideration. But I would always, I think, indicate to the people who were taking that kind of a program, that the model is really a guide to thought and is not a substitute for critical and creative thinking about the problem solving process. Examples that come to mind, have to do with choosing leadership styles and that sort of thing. Hershey and Blanshard and all those people, and that sort of thing. Those are quite useful I think in defining our thinking about decisions, but I certainly wouldn't advise anybody to, when face with a difficult decision, try and make the decision in a very rigid way based on the model.

J. Thank you very much.

INTERVIEW # 7

What is your decision?

What steps would you take?

1. Clarify the purpose or goal for this proposed training
 - a) Review with the Department Head what outcomes he/she wishes to achieve.
 - b) Review what evidence there is that changed behaviour is necessary/important
 - c) Consider whether education is likely to produce this change or whether some other methods might be required instead or as well.
2. If convinced that desired outcomes can be achieved through education continue to plan the program with the Department Head and program participants.
 - a) Anticipate some of the barriers to achieving the desired outcomes and review ways to minimize those barriers (for example reduce participant reluctance by involving them in the planning; structure the course to meet their needs; communicate the organizations reasons for wanting them to be more highly skilled than they already are, etcetera)
3. Plan for short-term and long-term outcomes.

4. Clarify with your Department Head what he/she will accept as "results".
 5. Take steps to ensure that the early sessions are friendly, supportive and appealing to those involved.
 6. If there is no clear goal/purpose, work with the Department Head and, preferably, supervisors from the area to establish one.
- J. How did you arrive at that decision?
- R. Well, I studied what information I had, I looked at what I thought were the facts of the case, I looked at what the goals were, I tried to figure out what the goals of the manager were, what the goals of the learners were, what the goals of my department head were. And what my purpose was in being there. And based on those goals, on that goal or purpose, then, work towards that. So I looked first of all for what we were trying to achieve, what we were trying to accomplish, through this whole process. So that was the first thing I did was to analyse for that purpose.
- J. Do you always use the same process in your decision making? In terms of looking at the goal of the decision and then ...

R. I probably do, I'm not sure that's the only thing I use, in this case there were a couple things that I immediately responded to. One was that I had been asked to do a program, so I immediately wondered is that what is needed, do they really need a program or do they need something else. How do we know there's a problem here. So I think I'd take a problem solving approach to presentations of need. I'd question whether or not there really is a need. Some times if I have some other data I may intuitively say ok sure there is a need here, this is an opportunity and act on that intuition of the situation even if the person bringing the problem is not articulating it as I might. In this case also the other thing that caught my eye was the concern that the department head, my department head, had for the immediate results. For me that was an important factor in the whole thing that I wanted then to clarify what would count as results for that person. So the department head was looking for results and the housekeeping manager was looking for results, perhaps of a different sort, and the learners, they didn't apparently want any particular results, but my guess is that as soon as you started talking with them that there would be lots of things they would like to see as results too. So the process of resolving that

situation was a matter of trying to get all those parties to come to common agreement about what they wanted, with the recognition that the organization has some right and responsibility to say we want people to be able to achieve these outcomes, or be able to perform at this particular level, they have a responsibility to say that, in that the employees would very likely accept that, even if they are not particularly happy personally about being involved in something. I'm not sure that is answering your question or not.

J. Yes, it is.

R. Reiterating, it,

J. Okay, what factors did you consider when making this decision?

R. Mainly the, well, the appropriateness of education as a solution to the problem. The effectiveness of it, the likely effectiveness of it, I didn't really - what I wrote down - elaborate on the efficiency or the various alternatives one might consider within an educational solution. Education may be part of the solution but different systems, better management,

better role modelling by the manager, might all have had a useful contribution to achieving better performances. So the question was what... The factors that you consider... I looked at the likely effectiveness of education as a strategy for solving the problem. That was the primary factor. I looked at cost, but you essentially said cost was no problem, so that was great, if cost had been a problem, as it often is, then the efficiency of the particular approach and the kinds of goals that could be specified would be quite important. So if there is no budget, no resources, no time, well, what outcomes you could expect are going to be very, very limited. But in this case they were not, so that was great news.

J. Not very realistic?

R. Well,

J. Occasionally.

R. Occassionally, you luck into that, I often use a number for a value of criteria in looking at different strategies for a particular problem, a good strategy has to be effective, efficient, appropriate, and there has to be minimal negative side effects to it. I

usually look at those four or five criteria .

J. So those four or five would be what you would consider the most influential in your decision making ?

R. Yes

J. Do you have a preference for one or two of those that would rate over something else?

R. Effectiveness,

J. How do you deal with uncertainty in a decision situation ?

R. I seek more information. I wait. Usually the two go together, if there is not enough information for example in this case I'm not sure from the evidence that a course is going to meet the need so a matter of discussion then with all the parties involved should clarify that uncertain situation. So I seek more information about the issue usually from the people who are party to the issue. And, in the process of getting information from them, it may be that the whole problem becomes clearer, not just for me, but for them too. So although it is seeking information,

it's also involving them, in a problem solving process. Or problem clarification process.

J. And how do you deal with conflict in a decision situation?

R. I again try to go back to establishing clear objectives or goals or outcomes, for what I am doing, and if there is conflict there, well then, some other criteria have to be brought in to determine what those goals are going to be. There is a potential conflict in that case, I suppose, between my department head's requirement that there be results in a month and the department heads' needs for something else to be established. My intuition is that, that is a conflict that is not unresolvable. That the long range goals for the housekeeping manager will yeild to analysis to short term outcomes or short term goals. Or that, possibly my department head's expectations may be unrealistic, especially in that kind of area of management development. So I would go back to that person and try to get them to come up with a solution for this problem. This is another strategy for solving the conflict. I'd get them involved in acknowledging the conflict and coming up with a solution to it.

- J. To what extent do you feel that yours was a rational decision?
- R. I think all decisions have some degree of rationality, and they also have some degree of value judgement made. I don't think there are any decisions that are value free. So within the values that were accepted by me in that decision making situation I think that I reasoned my way through the problem. Quite rational within that value system. Part of that value system is saying that I'm accepting my department head's authority to set certain expectations on me. That is, that I produce results within a month for this kind of program, now that is a particular value that, for the sake of this case I accept, whether in real life I would accept that value or not, I don't know. I might have had to say, look that's not possible, I don't believe that could be done and so I can't meet that requirement, so you would either have to change that as a requirement or else you would have to find someone else to do this job. So I would put my job on the line, I guess. But within that value structure that would be, if I accepted that (that's all)I think it's quite rational.
- J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. What is your reaction to the model?

R. I would need time to study it a bit more, to become comfortable with it. The idea of uncertainty and the idea of conflict, those are both useful factors to think about in relation to decisions. I find the labels optimizing, heuristics, and so on, kind of vague. They don't help me understand what's going on, at all. I'm not clear on the distinction between the different strategies. I would think that every situation could be looked at from the heuristic point of view, this is my impression at this point, that a goal is always relatively unclear, a goal always needs clarification. It's never completely clear. Unless it's a trivial case and the amount of conflict, I guess. Looking at the way the model is laid out here in the three columns, I'm not quite sure how they all work together. Is it possible to define a collective preference function? If the conflict column and the uncertainty column are met then, you can choose a certain strategy. I need to study it more to ...

J. Do you feel that the model is academic?

R. Yes.

J. Why?

R. It's rooted in concepts, not rooted in practical experiences, it's not rooted in, I mean, the words that are down on the page here are abstract words, they are not illustrated with concrete examples. Not to say that it can't be rooted in practical examples, but it should be, to be useful to practice with. No, I don't think so.

J. Would or could you use such a model?

R. Not in this form.

J. Why not?

R. I've spent a little bit of time here with you, looking at it, and talking about it, and I don't see an immediate application for it. So I don't think I would be, in the press of my daily work, very sympathetic to spending more time trying to understand what is going on here. When I suspect that there are other ways of looking at well, I would have to look at the practical examples; I would have to look at case studies; I would have to look at what these rules are and examples of where they are being applied. I can't

make distinctions between these different approaches to problem solving. I would need to see those illustrated. I think concrete examples might make them clear to me, and then it might be useful, but without those concrete examples it's not applicable.

INTERVIEW # 8

What is your decision?

What steps would you take?

1. To obtain commitment of staff, must involve them in program design.
2. Formal classroom methods may not be what is needed, rather problem-solving approach may be used.
3. To ensure positive on-the-job evaluation; ensure that real problems are identified and that realistic solutions are worked out and agreed to. (Quality Circle type of approach).
4. To increase knowledge, a small part of the program can be on a didactic level. However, "quality or big name speakers" may not be necessary.
5. The management systems; that is, job analysis, job descriptions, appraisal programs, type of delegation, etcetera are assumed to be in place and working. If not, then work with the manager must be done on a consultative level.

J. How did you arrive at that decision?

R. First of all, we are not given a lot of information to

begin with, and my experience has been that, when people ask for a course, that does not necessarily mean that a course is going to give the answer. And I think educators know that, so in order to determine what the problem is you do need the input of the staff because it may be that there are organizational blocks, it may be that there are just uncertainties, maybe morale problems caused by a variety of things. There could be any number of issues. When you are dealing with an in-house problem like this, the worst thing you can do is accede, start developing a wonderful looking program with beautiful objectives, a good guest speaker, all of the wonderful package things that you can get. And nothing changes. I think the credibility of the training department goes down the tube very, very quickly. Because it is a no win situation, so therefore any decision that I would make, would mean that the onus for the upgrading of the staff and for the upgrading of the performance lies with department, not with me. I'm there to help them. Because I have no control, I have no control over what they do, and neither should I have control, it's the line manager's responsibility. My responsibility is to give the best advice, and that's the background for my decision.

- J. So basically the goal of your decision would be to ensure that there is a need for an education program ?
- R. Yes, but education with a small e, because it is learning on the job, learning to deal with things. Undoubtedly, on an organizational level, some intervention would be useful. That part of it comes across to me fairly well. But what I would definitely want to see is, how is the department organized?, how is it run?, what kind of systems are in place? By systems, I'm talking about how is the work allocated to the different departments? Are the job descriptions in place? Have there been job analyses done? How do they appraise performance? Who has responsibilities? Is there some kind of a formal delegation instrument out? Do the supervisors know what the responsibilities are? What kind of regular meetings are there between the supervisor and the manager? What kind of information? What kind of style? There are many questions I would want to ask. And all of them have a tremendous effect on the decision.
- J. Would you have a meeting with the department head and the supervisors together? Or would you get the information from the manager?

R. No, my contact would initially be the manager, because he is the one who is recruiting me. So I can't bypass the manager. That's the first wrong step to take right there, but I would seek the manager's approval to get together with the supervisors, either with him or without him, it would be done completely with agreement. And if the manager of the department feels uneasy about that, I wouldn't do it. But that's probably just my mechanism, and there's a lot of them. I think the biggest single thing in this whole scenario is the interpersonal style I would bring to this whole thing. Because you can easily end up with a confrontative kind of thing when you do this kind of work. And that's where a lot of skill has to take place, on the part of the facilitator.

J. To avoid confrontation?

R. Yes, well it would be self-destructive.

J. Do you always use the same process when you are making education decisions?

R. I would say the process may be variations on a theme. Yes. What I'm saying is that, very fundamentally, I believe that my department or my services as an

educator are a resource to the line. And therefore, that is to me a fundamental concept that I don't vary from. Just how I'd approach the department depends on the scenario and the situation of the department. And depends on the kind of interaction I get also from the department, but doesn't change the philosophy .

- J. What factors did you consider when making this decision?
- R. There were not a lot of factors to consider; it's not like you gave me a lot of factors. When you are dealing with on the job performance, you are not dealing with academics. That's one factor. You are not dealing with integrating a whole bunch of facts and the latest motivation theory and so on. Because that really is not going to help in the particular situation. What we want is something that has on-the-job effect. Now, I think the formal classroom methods are fine for people who want to go for a degree or certificate or whatever. But, the transfer of learning onto the job is the difficult part. It's wonderful to listen to it in the classroom, but then you come to the job and a number of things happen; first of all, the people who did not attend the classes with you, are not on the same level, so they

are going to balk at your methods that you are going to introduce. They're going to say that is very fine for the classroom. Let's leave it there. Now we will go back to the job and do it the way we've always done it. And whether they say that or not, that's what happens. That's one reason the formal method may not be the most effective. Secondly, it takes a long time. Also, you take people away from the job. Therefore, my decision would definitely go in the route of simulating the job situation in the classroom, working out a program, feeding back the next session on how it went on the job, involving all the people that are instrumental, all of the stakeholders that are interested in what happens on the floor, involving all of them. So therefore, you're building in your network of communications. You are building in your commitments. That's the only way to go.

J. What do you do with the resources here ,do you have money yourself or do the department heads?

R. The departments have the money for this kind of thing. If it's the matter of an outside speaker, that's different, but I'm not sure I would engage an outside speaker. Neither would I spend a lot of money

on international telephones or whatever. I just wouldn't do that. Those are very nice things to have, but not necessary. I'm finding that almost the quality circle kind of approach, is much more effective for this kind of a thing. If you are talking about introducing new clinical things in a different kind of department, o.k. Maybe they need some research analysts to come in to talk about different aspects. For example, we have a lot of people here with one type of disease, so you bring in your specialists from UBC or whatever. That's fine. There is a place for that. But not when you are dealing with better methods of running a housekeeping department. I don't think so. There are also a lot of free services available in the community that one has to consider. So there is no need for a lot of outlay at all.

- J. When you are making your decision, an education decision, what are the most influential factors. Do you have a set of 4 or 5 criteria that you look at all the time ?
- R. Well, I haven't really formalized it to that point, but I suppose I could. But I definitely look at the - first of all, the target organization. That's number

one. And target group. Secondly, would be the management expectations of that target group, in terms of expenditures of funds and so on. Of course, I'm within the budget - obviously a criteria. Time is a big factor. No, I don't have that kind of a list, but a lot of factors cross my mind. But I have not prioritized them, because it would be very academic. It just doesn't occur that way. We have been very fortunate here, in that we've had probably a little bit more leeway than acute care hospitals have been having because our patients are here for a long period of time and require heavy care, which means our staffing has to compensate for that. There are a lot of activation programs going on. We've had reasonable resources to work with - not an abundance. We've operated short. My own department is really stripped to the bone, but in terms of the department we've got a good level of trust.

J. How do you deal with uncertainty in a problem situation ?

R. I'm not sure what you mean.

J. Uncertainty includes - maybe you don't have enough information or you are not certain of the alternatives

that are available to you, or you are not certain of the consequences of choosing one or another alternative?

R. What I do, is, I feel it is my responsibility to look at the alternatives and to look at the possible options open to the manager and how they want to operate an education program. But I do not feel that I am responsible to look at the consequences of all those. So what I do is I take those options and let management make a decision as to which option they go for. I do not make those decisions. That's a line decision.

J. Do you always offer them 2 or 3 options?

R. Sure, yes, there is a lot of interaction. I believe that our whole success as a education department depends on what services we offer the departments. If we offer them nothing why should they come to us? And why should they give us any trust? They expect us to operate as an advocate for them. That is exactly my philosophy.

J. How do you deal with conflict in the problem situation?

- R. Conflict between who for example?
- J. Three types of conflict, within yourself, you may have 2 or 3 goals you would like to achieve but you can't achieve them all. You may have interdepartmental conflict between what the staff and the manager want - conflict in terms of funds, goals, ..
- R. I think the conflict within myself is something that I have to deal with in the light of how I could best serve the department because I am not doing this really to please myself. If I am, then I would deal with it like that but then I have to live with the consequences. Assuming that there is nothing in it for me, specifically, no monetary gain, no staffing gain, nothing like that, there is only my opinion versus the opinion of the department of what might be better. The department wins out. Because that's the client, like in business, the client is right. If there is conflict between me and the department in terms of educational values, or in, for example they want to use a strategy that I know from past experience is not effective, I will go on record saying in writing to them (to make sure they understand without a shadow of a doubt) that what they are asking for is not going to be effective and

the chance of a good positive result is minimal at best. If they pursue it and say then say that's what they want, I may then take a backseat role and say alright, I will not get involved in a classroom. I cannot speak to anybody if I do not believe in it. But, if you want, I can facilitate you getting a speaker. I can facilitate ordering a film - whatever you want - but I will make sure you are seen as responsible for this program because I can't deal with it. And if the department then says, well you are not doing your job, because I am asking you to do it. Then my statement is - let's see if we can resolve this issue either by talking it out in terms of laying all the cards on the table; why do you feel this way; why do I feel this way; and if that doesn't bring any results, I may have no choice but to bring my superior and them theirs. But I don't see that happening. That's purely academic. I've never had it happen. I just don't see it happening because mostly the managers are open to reasonable logic. I have had no trouble like that.

- J. To what extent do you feel yours was a rational decision?
- R. To the extent I have no emotional commitment in it, I

see no emotional commitment in this at all, maybe if I know the people and if the people were doing a certain amount of lobbying - who knows. Maybe I wouldn't be so rational. But when you are talking about a hypothetical situation it is very easy to be rational. Why do I think so? Because I believe that there is an added education method that one needs to employ - that adults learn differently than children. Adults actually look at educational process as a more practical thing rather than the curiosity of the young. Now therefore, I would say that my basis of saying o.k. now is that as an adult I would want something I would be personally committed to. I would do something that I see real value in. I would like to see something that would help make my job easier. That's rational and that's the kind of stuff I see. And I believe that most of the education decisions that I make, in a way, come that way because of my staff role vis a vis the line role. Because the accountability for the decision isn't really mine. But then on the other hand, there is no need for the manager to use my recommendation either. That's a given. But it feels good when you have a good batting average, but in effect, I think I have to be more rational or else I can't play my role well.

J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. Now, what is your reaction to the model?

R. I think, (this is totally off the cuff), there is a certain amount of logic to it, but I am not 100% sure why it needs to be academized. Maybe it is necessary, I don't know. But I think there is a logic that you go from the certain to the random, I cannot disagree with that. Of course its very true. I do have a problem with catagorizing every decision that you make to begin with, into these 5 categories. I don't think I would do that. It's cumbersome. It's good academically to sort out your thinking, but when it comes to practical everyday life, there are hundreds of decisions you make everyday. I'm not going to put them into 5 categories. There's no way. So what I'm saying is, it's good to look at it in a reflective mood, but when it comes to the job I hope I've integrated and internalized this kind of thing that I don't have to do this explicitly - because I wouldn't, I couldn't. I'm looking at that chart there, I took the Cabrotigo Model of decision making. I took a course in that, and it's very similar. It's got a similar theory, but different. It talks in terms of consequences and the models of potential

problems, and analysing each one of those, etcetera. Again, it is a good model for huge decisions you make. I think that it's worth while going through the whole exercise then, but for everyday decisions you use the concept, but, you cannot go through the whole academia. To go through the Cabrotigo thing would take hours - in some cases days - gathering all the data etcetera, etcetera. You can't do that on all decisions. You would never get anything done. This is not quite so intricate in terms of the decision tree idea, but it's... I guess it's got its value but, from a practical point of view the terminology is enough to scare you away, to not even want to read it. One has to look at those things. Its got to be practical. When talking about decisions we're not talking about academics. We're talking about very practical decisions. The person comes in the door and wants a decision. You haven't got the time to pull out your table and say now this is... you're not going to do that. You either are going to prepare to make a decision right then and there and hope that your faculties are in place or else you send the person away and say I will let you know by tomorrow, next day, week... and tell them why you have to have more time.

- J. You've already answered the question, is it academic, you said yes. Why do you feel it is academic and you've answered that too, does it throw any further light on decision making for you?
- R. It just verifies that there is a logic to decision making. That it is not a purely random process. But, decision making is not unlike other managerial skills - you learn by doing. You don't learn by reading a book.
- J. You've answered the last question which is, would or could you use the model.

INTERVIEW # 9

J. What is your decision?

What steps would you take?

R. I think what I said, looking at the situation, it's an ideal situation from my perspective. It has the backing of the department head, which is critical. It has vague support from senior management and I'd run with the program. Basically, ignore senior management, except involving maybe some of the kinds of presentations that they might be involved with. So you get an implicit compliance with the program, rather than a need to clue them in to how marvelous it is in advance of running it. My first move would be to send a... seemingly as I read it, what has been identified by the housekeeping manager is what he thinks his staff need. What has not come through here is whether his staff really want it. I get the message, they are not interested. So my first move would be to set up some type of questionnaire, either on paper or a combination of interview situations, to find out from the supervisors themselves, that if a program like this was offered with the following content areas, would they be prepared to become involved. And also, ask them to indicate in the

questionnaire the kinds of additional items they are interested in, that their boss may have forgotten. Because they, after all, are the learners. They are the ones that are given the problems on a day to day situation. And, I tend not to take a department heads word on what his staff need, without asking them to verify in some way or other. So then what I would be dealing with would be two sets of data. The one from the department - the staff themselves - and the one from the department manager. And because we had until this time run similar programs for department heads, and problem solving, etcetera, were part of the content areas I would add those as well. So that the staff have some idea that they can move up through the system. It would be important to find out what the promotion routine is throughout the housekeeping department because some reward system in relation to spending all this time going to class needs to be reasonably clear. So I think we attempt to look at some sort of carrot we could use. We actually ran a program comparable to this. There was no option for promotion and there was a lot of anger in the department. That had to be dealt with before any educational program could run. The carrot became the opportunity, potentially, for advancement, maybe not here, maybe somewhere else. And we looked to BCIT for

credit for the course. And that's actually what did happen. So they got one or two units of credit under the BCIT health program. And as a result of that some of them are still getting credits there. In terms of his money available for bigger speakers, I would play that one very cool. Credibility in the health care system is based on the credibility of the listener, unless the content areas relate specifically to what the listener is dealing with, they pay no attention. Managing change - there are a thousand people available in managing change, time management, etcetera. If you could, somewhere along the line I would attempt to involve my department head and his, as an expert lecturer. So you get him involved in spite of himself. It doesn't really matter what they say or how they say it. Then I would play a guest speaker in from the community, very, very loosely. For unless they relate it to health care, or seem to be related to health care, neither the department manager or any staff development program I've found within the hospital sees them as credible. I would take a look at the kinds of skills that all of the department heads in the hospital have and see if I could con, harass, or sweet talk or whatever, them into being the presentors of the material. And provide the resource sorts of data. Somewhere along

the line obviously, we would sit down and develop objectives and content, and timing, and sequence, and all of those sorts of things which are the mechanics of the staff development department. But I wouldn't miss the chance to run with this program, but I think I would spend a couple sessions discussing their feelings about being involved with this, and kind of thread through that the problem solving approach or how to deal with your own feelings before you can deal with your staffs feelings, or hang a peg on it so it becomes relevant. Otherwise, they again, won't listen. The catch 22 you put in here in relation to the bosses views versus the housekeeping manager's views, I'd take a year and I'd run it for 2 hours a month. And at the end of it I would give a certificate, draw one out, print it, run it, put a gold star on it, and blow it up so they could frame it and put it in their offices, or something like that. Much as we did with unicare courses and several other courses we ran. Parelleling that, I would want to be working with the housekeeping manager, on how he managed to get himself in this situation with the senior supervisors in the first place. And that so many are involved needing education in a clunk kind of a situation because it is the role of the department head to provide the

orientation and the training programs, etcetera, for his supervisors. Somewhere along the line he's got a large group of people, even if its only 5 who need an awful lot of assistance in a crisis situation. Now I have a feeling it could be particularly the luck of the draw. These would become learning skills now, they were not 10 years ago. And many of our department heads don't have the skills he is asking of his first line supervisors. So, if he has communication problems or they have problems dealing with the problem employee, I think what we need to find out is whether he and his senior staff deal with them in some comparability. Otherwise, he's going to not listen to his staff and they are not going to listen to him. So we need to thread his view point into the system. But at the same time thread into the system something that provides his staff with other options. They need to be able to know that in this given situation the boss may do it this way but so and so says this works. So the kinds of learning opportunities I would try is to keep it as experiential as possible. Because unless they are writing an examination, which they are not - or we wouldn't set it up that way - what they need is the opportunity of dialogue, with a group of experts, and one may be the housekeeping manager. (I don't know if

I answered the question, but it gives you an idea of my thinking space)

- J. That answers my first question and answers the question on the paper too.
- R. Yes, because when you say what is my decision, I think of a decision tree. But to get to a decision tree sort of answer, I have to take a whole whack of steps. But the first decision is I would never lose an opportunity like that in the real world.
- J. Do you always use the same process when solving a problem?
- R. I always attempt to use all the steps in the problem solving technique, I try not to jump to conclusions, in advance of having all my data. I didn't say I succeeded admirably, but I give it a try. But if you were to ask me to identify a problem, identify the problem from there, I might have difficulty writing down exactly what it is, because there are so many variables within it. If I were strung out on my boss as an issue, a lot of the books on performance appraisals and that sort of thing, and education, say, you really must have senior staff commitment to it or

the program won't run. Now there is a chap around here who is obviously ideal. Well I've worked in many institutions where that really works. I mean we're talking the president of the organizational level. It works even less. So it depends on how far up the tree it goes. Anyway, this chap in this hospital calls it root management. He says he thinks it is his job as department head to get his act together with the staff and let the steps up above be aware of what he's doing and they have a right to challenge. But it is his job to run his department. Now, if I'm rewriting some of the education books on the issue, one thing I learned was not to spend a lot of energy being frustrated by going up the system and getting approval because what you're then involved with is educating senior management staff to a process that they don't necessarily, (a) know anything about, and (b) could care less. So you can move them in, in teaching roles, consulting roles, homily roles. I have a set of notes from a presentation and there are about 3 or 4 points and then I wrote homilies down to the end of the page and it went over beautifully. Everyone thought it was marvelous. There wasn't any content in it at all. It didn't matter. He was there. They then thought they had no more daily problems, because they finally met him. Those are the issues, in terms

of people and interacting that I think are much more critical. Obviously, I think it is up to the education people in the system to set up the objectives, and do all those sort of things. I think that's exactly the job we do well. We do well, as well, to speak with the department heads about whether they've actually talked with their staff or made their own minds up about what the staff need. Because no one else functions that way.

- J. What factors did you consider, (maybe you covered that) when you made your decision. Do you want to highlight the factors that you considered when you made your decision here?
- R. The backing of the housekeeping manager was critical, in my thinking. The fact that his department has money is not something that I'm used to. We don't do the cost kinds of things and charge back to departments here which is very much more in now. But his backing, the fact that he approached his concern and his backing is the major factor in all of this. I think you heard my views on his boss or my boss on the system. That's an issue, I would try to keep it as much of a non issue as possible. Keep your money involved. Just say we have been approached by... he's

interested in.... Provide him with the information. Let him get involved in the decision as to whether the course is going or whether it isn't. That's my decision, and the department heads decision. Now if we need additional funds for films or something like that where we need to go up the system, fine, but the housekeeping manager says he has a lot of money so we can pull in the \$50 or \$200 per day for films etcetera and keep the content relevant. One of the other issues that I thought was critical is that the department manager, as you set it up, indicated the content areas. So he's either clued into what's in and think his staff need it, and he'd better get on the band wagon and provide it. I don't care how he got there, because there probably wouldn't be a soul who would disagree with him. So he has provided some pretty general guidelines, which I would find pretty useful and we'd use exactly the terminology he'd want us to use, probably. Performance appraisal, fine and dandy. And the other ones you have here - those are the 2 things I noticed when I read that one.

- J. In general, what factors are most influential in your decision making, not referring to this particular problem, but in general?

R. The rationale and relevance, to running in house programs versus programs which are currently available through the college systems, and the non-need on our part to repeat them as in house programs. If there were a good budgeting system, my experience with education is that all nurses come into hospitals well prepared. Except nursing subs - they need the extra etcetera. The majority of our staff are coming in from an educational system except people from the housekeeping department or aides or something like that. So to make it cost effective for the hospital really, I would investigate the feasibility of us running programs in conjunction with the community college or con them into running them for me by identifying the major number of learners required in a specific area. For example, the central service department aides, need to be taught. They are now running a program. I seconded one of the staff etcetera. I have a very strong view that as a tax payer it is not my job to duplicate for stars on my back. And then in terms of priorities, identify the kinds of needs of staff that are not available rationally from the college system. Now, the college system has picked up a lot of things the hospital has started with. For example, effective head nurses, I don't know why head nurses need something more special

than management for them, because management principles are no different for first line supervisors than they are for the head nurses. But nursing has this hangup called we only learn from nursing and can only learn in a nursing program. Now as an educator, I have a major problem with that one. I also happen to be a nurse. I have a double problem with that one. Those are... it's kind of a give and take. I recognize how colleges work, they get their bucks based on the numbers of students within the system. So if I can take advantage of that and get them to expand the numbers of people coming out, etcetera. Then what I think my view is - that we should be providing within health care the additional things that are required in a large acute care hospital. For example, medical records stenographers. They have a three month allied health program apparently. This is one I just found out about the other day and I got conned into doing some work on it. And then they have a 9 month medical transcription program, is it 9 months? It turned out to be 6 months plus 3 months. It is 9 months before they are available on the market. Pull them into this large acute care hospital and they can't function without a month or 6 weeks with orientation by whomever. And nobody knows what we're into. And they definitely don't get open heart

surgery terminology or etcetera. So that's where I think we lay a priority in our system. We don't run the basic program. We attempt to avoid teaching medical terminology. We did it a long time ago. BCIT does it. VVI does it. PVI does it and whatever. There are about 5 programs on medical terminology - accredited programs in the lower mainland. We don't need to be running programs in-house that they are running in the community quite nicely, thank-you. With my thinking I run into trouble with a department head or two who have no funds to encourage staff to take courses. That is something I would like to see worked out. The staff education department from my premises has a philosophy, it states very clearly what it thinks about education, role of the learner, of the people in the system. It is not my job with adults to do the learning for them. Those sorts of premises. It has a very solid set of objectives that are revised on an annual basis. The same things that any good department head does. We use many of the motivation principles. We use all of the theories of learning we can lay our hands on. We don't get hung up on if its Groduers method or Magers, or any of those sorts of things. Because the first thing that will happen is you'll turn your department heads and senior staff off. If the president of the organization can shake

Joe Blows hand and knows him, and hands him the certificate, both J.B. and the president of the organization feel very good about it. For somewhere along the line the education department has to become high profile at a certain time or it gets lost in the shuffle. It's a soft program. It's a hard department to work in, in a hospital, any staff position.

J. How do you deal with uncertainty in a problem situation?

R. Problem solving, I've really wrestled with that. A lot of walking up and down hallways for a long period of time and learned not to react, because I would spend 3 or 4 weeks picking up pieces of my reaction, rather than dealing with the issue. There's nothing in education that is a matter of life and death, even if some critical care nurses will tell you that if they don't read the pHs on their gas and blood gasses that some patient is going to die. Fine, they can teach that in some other way. I remember.... Only deal with staff development issues. It's still not a matter of life and death. That patient could just as easily have died anyway. So there is no crisis in education. I cannot think of anything that should place me in a position where I flap - unless it's the

need to teach a surgeon not to use the wrong solution, or cautery equipment, or something like that. And no staff development department gets involved with those kinds of things. There is no need to flap. You have the time to do the thinking. If you over react then you pick up the pieces. I guess that really is my moto.

J. How do you deal with conflict ?

R. Try to avoid it. I hate conflict. Personally loathe it. Not unable apparently to handle it, but personally don't like it. Tend to withdraw. Like most nurses and most women, tend to withdraw. That's my personal reaction. So my goal for this year included, trying to learn some techniques for dealing with conflict situations - not backing away and hiding my head. Honest enough for you ?

J. That's great. You would be surprised how many people said to me they don't deal well with conflict.

R. I don't teach how to handle conflict either. I'm not an expert on it, I am an expert on how I feel in a conflict situation, and I am pretty good at verbalizing my feelings. I taught psychiatry for 10

years. I taught word processing, book keepers, and all those sorts of things. So I can quite nicely, artificially, or what ever, verbalize feelings. My communication skills, and teaching skills are pretty good. My organizational skills are excellent, so I don't have to get into a flap about those sorts of things. I've been in the game long enough so I don't have to. But dealing with conflict - there are 3 people around here who made a comment that, if they make one more crack I'd take their head off. That's really an adult way of handling the situation. However, I started to talk back. I guess there are these people who are just extroverts, who are outgoing and pushy, and verbally clunk, I just tend to back away from them. So I thought, well, I would give it a try and face the situation. I don't do well at it, but I do identify when it happens. I do try to keep yakking a little longer before I keep quiet in that kind of situation. I'm not likely to tackle it with the president of the organization. When he issues an order I'm not going to see it as a conflict situation I'm just going to do what he suggests. ...it's called recognizing power....

J. To what extent do you feel yours was a rational decision?

R. Actually superb, I think because I've learned over the years that I don't make... My guts tell me that would be a valid way to go. Which means I'm reacting positively to it. So it's a gut reaction, which is learned, there is a term in your little books I've forgotten what it is, that indicates that inexperienced department heads or supervisors or whatever, use the gut reaction, and rely on it. It generally works not too badly. It's something apparently women don't tend to use, or identify. And I tend to use it. So my sixth sense gives me whatever. And to me you gave me an ideal situation. If any department head walks in and asks for a program, you can't beat that kind of commitment. To me the issues become an identified need by the entire hospital with the housekeeping supervisors requiring a program and a department head who thinks it's the stupidest idea he's ever heard of. And that's closer to reality. And two years to talk about the sort of things that supervisors today are learning and all the kinds of consciousness raising. Teaching that you have to do what the department head said. I'd much rather cope with your situation. In fact that one was easy .

J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. And what is your first reaction to the model?

R. Unprintable, it's a good theory base.

J. Would you say it's academic?

R. No, it's not totally academic. It is academic when I read it the first time. I was able to relate recent experiences to one or two of these, so they began to have a wee bit more personal meaning as you were talking. I think it is full of a lot of buzz words. There is no question about that one. If I go around here talking about a heuristic decision making system people would think I had lost my marbles. So I would tend not to use the terminology, ever, but I might use some of the content area in here. Whatever she calls them, this happens. I was talking with computer sciences the other day about the development of their policy of information and we were talking about a system which will allow staff to pick up something and use it. I set up the hospital policy and there was an assigned task which education got. That's exactly the system in terms of decision making that was being set up for staffing all the hospital departments. We use it.

J. To make optimizing decisions ?

R. To make optimizing decisions. I don't tend to use it in any job I've had in the past 15 years.

J. You can't, because yours is a more open decision situation. You don't have policies and procedures.

R. I also kind of believe, what is necessary is a reference too, that I can refer to as a department head. I don't need to keep all that material in my head. To me a well educated person is one who knows where to find the information when they need it. It's not necessary that they walk around and tell everybody how brilliant they are. But definitely needed in the system, no question about that. Needed with new instructors setting up staff development kinds of programs. The director of the department should set up some pretty solid guidelines as they become involved with developing specific programs. Otherwise what happens is whatever's new on campus becomes something they then start talking. It's absolutely critical for head nurse development or department head development or whatever. And neurolinguistic programming for example is not one that I consider critical for learning within the health care

environment. That's the kind of learning that there's a lot of programs available in the community. That ones very hard to teach. When we are dealing with the idealistic instructor new on the job, and somebody does a good sales pitch, I find that a conflict situation that is difficult to resolve because you are dealing with their values, my values, the salesmans values, and he wants to sell a package, i cetera. So that's a situation which is in our heirarchy here. It happens. I'm not sure which one it is, mixed values, wherever, I guess it's heuristic, that's the one I ran into. What do you say to your instructor - back off. That's what you want to say. Leave it alone. We have enough problems without dealing with that. But what you end up saying is, how could you get yourself into that? It takes 20 years to get the message across. If I were more honest I'd have said leave it alone, that isn't it, but I don't tend to have staff develop that way, or wish to sound like the authoritative, cantakerous, whatever. So I've been in situations that she calls heuristic, and I would never think to call it heuristic. That is terminology that is used with the decision trees, in computer program planning... she's taken it out of computer program planning and transferred it. And she's made a few changes to the original idea of the heuristic decision

tree.

J. Does it throw any further light on decision making for you?

R. I've always taught trial and error as, it can be at times, the only thing you can do.

J. Well, she says it's rational if, - you know what you're doing - yes, and if your trials are aimed at the goals of the organization. Anything which helps you to achieve the goals of the organization is rational in her terms.

R. Right, and I'd try, I'd use trial and error if possible, on issues that are not major. I wouldn't use trial and error setting up a department head course for example. But I might use trial and error in relation to how somebody is taught to give an enema or whatever. It is way down on the skill level. Do you take the mop in square into the corner or do you go round and round, that you guys seem to be doing. That's a trial and error situation with skill that is really not going to affect the institutions' goals in one way or another. Trial and error to me is a valid situation. I don't know about her cybernetic one. I

certainly latched on that situations after the fact, and, in terms of putting on a better face for self and for goals etcetera. But whether that's an assessment, or whether that's a Chinese face saving technique, you need to be pretty objective in your own assessment of the situation. So I would have difficulty to start with this one. In terms of evaluating, if you had a group situation, yes, and in a fairly sophisticated program, like nursing school curriculum or something like that, you would be using cybernetic thinking. So that would make it rational. It wouldn't necessarily make it comfortable, but that would make it rational. I'd use that old faculty I guess, I've never thought about it. I'd certainly call it cybernetic, I'd definitely use this one. Her language is cumbersome, I wish I had written the article.

J. So you are saying you could use such a model, or parts of the model?

R. I think I could use such a model.

J. In teaching, or in practice ?

R. In practice.

J. Do you want to elaborate on that at all?

R. No, it's just, as I said I've never seen it before, I might spend some time labelling, as you were saying. You elaborated the goal everyone's happy with, that 's a marvelous way of avoiding the conflict situation. I would take it a little further than just the policy and procedure manual sort of thing. Yes, I do think you could use this in practice. Once you learn the terms.

INTERVIEW # 10

J. What is your decision?

What steps did you take?

R. I certainly would work with them, get them to set up a program, set up times, and dates and work with them in content.

J. How did you arrive at that decision?

R. Because I've had to do it many times, it's not a new problem by any means.

J. Do you have a regular process that you go through when people come with these requests? When you are making these kinds of decisions?

R. Yes, I want needs assessments from them, I have to look at the monetary end of it. I have to look at accessible time. The big problem as far as I'm concerned is budgetary. And I don't have a lot of budget to bring in speakers, so when we have to find speakers in-house and find them with the time to get people off, which, with this, you indicated they had lots of time, which I find very amusing. And then we

sit down and discuss it.

- J. What are the most important factors when you are making a decision, any decision?
- R. You have all the information, you can't really make a rational decision without all the information.
- J. How do you deal with uncertainty, when you find uncertainty in the problem situation?
- R. Go and find your information, delve a little farther, it may not be an education problem, you know. Lots of things I get are not education problems, they are organizational.
- J. When you run into conflict, how do you deal with that?
- R. What do you mean by conflict, interpersonal conflict?
- J. It could be intrapersonal or interpersonal conflict or conflict between 2 departments who want your services or...
- R. I don't run into a lot of that problem, I can actually talk to them both, and I've been here a long time and

I know these people really well, and I don't run into those problems. I sometimes have to sit down and get one group together and talk to them and discuss it, but I don't really run into a lot of those problems.

J. To what extent do you feel yours was a rational decision, and why?

R. Which decision, you mean to carry on with this, because I think the problem needed this. And it was indicated that they had done a needs assessment. I didn't read this as closely as I should have. I still think that you can feed them stuff if the people above them think they need it, and I don't think anybody has too much. If you can get enough, you have enough. If you can get a course interesting enough, even if the subject has been covered before, and enough of it will suit what they are doing, you'll get them to turn out.

J. I AM TURNING OFF THE MACHINE NOW.

J. What is your reaction to the model?

R. I think you've got the heuristic there.

J. The particular problem you think is heuristic ?

- R. I think so, I think you can adjust your goals up or down, there is no use in talking to them and changing your goals, and you can think of alternatives and get more information.
- J. Do you think the model is academic ?
- R. I don't know, whether it is academic or not.
- J. Do you think it is theoretical or do you think it is practical?
- R. That sort of thing does happen, no doubt about it.
- J. Why do you think its...
- R. Because I've run into it. In referring to this model, that Anna Grandori In senior management not only junior management, too.
- J. In this model that Anna Grandori developed, do you feel that the model throws any light on decision making?
- R. I suppose so, but I think almost anyone has to work in a situation like this. You can't read the data in

this type of job, you have to work with people and groups, and within the operation of the hospital. You can't force your opinions onto other people. You have to get them... it's not going to go unless you get them to have the same goal you think you have. You have to go to their goal, what they need. And somehow or other you have to motivate them to get around there. You don't necessarily get it right to start with but you can work around it and get there.

J. Do you think you could use a model like this?

R. I don't think I'm going to sit down and go through every case that I have and go through a model like this. No I don't have that kind of time. It is almost second nature to be using that sort of thing. You don't have time to sit down and decide what kind of model and how we're working it out.

J. So it's not very practical, it's more...

R. Well I think if you understand it, it becomes part of you. You know the real situation, you know how much time you have to do these sorts of things. I'm beating my brains every day, and trying to get through just the work, I don't have the time I had when I went

to university to do these things. But I think once you have learned them, they have become part of the way you operate. So I'm not saying I don't believe in university or think it is academic, but I think it becomes part of the way you work. I use what I learned at university everyday of my work life I'm sure.

J. But it has to be ...

R. But you don't sit down and think it through, unless you are doing some big problem. But there are two of us, and there are 1500 staff here, how realistic can you be. If I had 10 staff it might be a different story, but I don't .

J. Do you do much of the teaching yourself?

R. No, I don't do any, not any more. For one thing, I haven't nursed for 15 years, and I haven't time to work anything out. Number 2 does, my assistant. She does CPR. Actually she has split her job so she has two. I'm administrative, it is all I'm doing now - working with groups, and sending people out to courses and this sort of things. Nursing does have its own education people, and I have audio-visual

under me too. So we look after all the graphics and the films, so I'm administrative - busy all the time. In fact I'm sitting right now trying to catch up from one week's holidays.

INTERVIEW # 11

What is your decision?

What steps would you take?

Further discuss with manager re: why he feels the way he does.

1. Talk with supervisory staff to see what they feel their needs would be for an education program.
2. Helpful outcome would be an identification of a program that would meet their needs and also those of the manager.
3. Develop a program proposal for discussions concerning the principles of adult education.
4. Involve the supervisors in the discussion of program content and format.
5. Consider an incentive or motivation for participants.
6. Select credible speakers.
7. Discuss with my department head the program that is planned and consideration for the possibility of a longer time frame as discussion with staff indicate their learning needs will take considerably longer than the six weeks originally

stated to see job change to any great extent.

8. Provide opportunity for assessment/evaluation feedback so that correctional action can be taken if program not progressing to meet the needs of the supervisors and/or managers.

J. How did you arrive at your decision?

R. The first one or to discuss it further....

J. The whole thing.

R. I reviewed the problem and then I went through the problem solving process. Basically, to identify the problem which I thought was to look at the total program with the staff and to have further discussion with them since they had a negative approach to the educational program.

J. And then?

R. And then I went onto the next step of trying to involve them as far as the program was concerned because one wants to have a positive climate and one wants to have the support of the people you are speaking with. And then I felt that to involve them

to the extent of having them identify where their problems lie rather than having somebody say that these were their problems. That we might come out with the same ultimate program but with their input from their perspective. Then I felt that to involve them also in how they saw the program being offered whether it be a program that was going to be given on a weekly or a monthly basis or whether they saw themselves being involved on duty time or off duty time. All of these things that they have to have a little bit of input in, still keeping in mind that the manager did say that he had sufficient budget to allow for the program to be carried through. I then felt that it might be worth discussing with the manager if there was some way in which we could look at an incentive or motivating component. You know that they get a little certificate or there might be something that would allow them to see this as a first step to further programs within their job or a motivating factor that maybe this would mean that they would be interested in other types of leadership roles rather than just staying in the position they have for the last five years, given certainly, the fact that many people enjoy staying at that level. But there could be something that might be a motivator for all of them. Money often comes into the discussion at this

point but we know that's not a possibility so we had to look at some other way in which that could occur. Because these people are experienced people, because they had been in the job quite some time and because they didn't really recognize that they needed a lot of these programs or topics, I felt that there had to be a very credible speaker. In other words someone who had experience in a supervisory role that could indeed relate well with them and be empathetic and understanding as well as being a help and a guide to them in learning new skills and reinforce old skills which maybe they have had just need a reminder or something. Because my boss thought that it was necessary for me to achieve some goals and change in behaviour within a six week period of time I felt that this might not be achievable and felt that we need to discuss extension of that time so that there would be the opportunity to put into practice these newly learned skills with not that tight a time frame. That we would expect to see some change but a noticeable change might not occur for several weeks beyond that. So I wanted the department head of my area to be aware that although we were expected to be achieving something within six weeks that that didn't look as though it would be feasible, particularly if our program was going to be spread over a longer period of

time than two or three months. It would certainly take at least a year to complete all of the things that had been requested. There were other options of course. If we wanted to look at a program that would take people away from the workplace for several days at a time. But that didn't seem like a realistic route to go under the circumstances because these people were all fully employed and they did need, indeed, have an opportunity to continue their work and I think that their boss probably found that a little more difficult. We would have to look at a suitable option to meet his particular needs as far as releasing from the workplace is concerned. I also felt that by providing some opportunity for assessment and evaluation throughout the program as feedback to the participants, allowing them to indicate whether they felt they were getting the kinds of things that they originally thought they should be achieving and also that the manager was satisfied that things were progressing appropriately. We had to have that process in place and make alterations as we went along.

J. What was the goal of your decision? What was it that you were trying to achieve?

- R. I was trying to achieve two things I think. Satisfying the manager that I was meeting the kinds of things he had identified as problems and also involvement as far as the staff was concerned.
- J. Do you always use the same process when you are making an education decision?
- R. I think probably the problem solving approach is the one I tend to use basically. There might be occasions when I don't have an option and I am more or less told what I have to do but I think that most of the time it is a problem solving approach.
- J. Now you mentioned one step, actually in your discussion you mentioned two steps in the problem solving approach. You mentioned identifying the problem and then later on you talked about alternatives. What are the other steps in your problem solving approach that you use?
- R. Well, I usually, in terms of a problem solving approach, I assess what the problem is and I try to plan how I am going to approach that problem. Then I try to implement whatever the plan is that I have decided on and then I try and evaluate so that I see

it as a four step process and looking at it as a possibility of options in the planning section.

J. Okay. What would make you vary the process that you used? You mentioned one thing, sometimes you are told, but if you have the option, what else, what other kinds of things might make you vary the process?

R. Process would be varied I suppose in relation to time and it is not really basically the process as it is just changing the format slightly. Money I suppose is the major thing. Those are the two I think of.

J. Okay. Were you talking about the process that you would go through for this particular problem or were you talking about the decision making process itself?

R. I was talking about the process for this particular problem.

J. Okay, and I was referring to a decision making process.

R. Okay, I think one of the other things probably that might make me change the whole process would be the outcome of what I found when I talked to the

supervisory staff themselves. Maybe they didn't need what was being indicated. And therefore one would have to go back for further discussion with the manager.

J. Okay. What factors did you consider when making this decision, and I am talking about this problem decision.

R. I had to consider the request that was submitted by the manager. I had to consider the amount of time that we were looking at. I had to consider the budget that we were working with. I had to consider the types of speakers or speaker that I would be wanting. I had to consider how involved the staff themselves wanted to become and all of the other educational components in terms of adult education plus the planning process as far as space, etcetera, is concerned.

J. What factors are most influential?

R. I think the three factors that are probably most influential would be the original requestor, that's the manager's request, the involvement of the staff from my perspective. And the amount of money that I

was going to have in order to put on this program. That was very encompassing as far as personnel communication needs were concerned.

J. You said the requestor was one of the major factors that you considered. In what way? What about the requestor?

R. He was expecting a product, an end product from my department and therefore I felt that I had to be able to ensure that I was going to meet his needs by the type of program that I was proposing for him.

J. So the requestor's expectations...

R. Yes.

J. Okay. How do you deal with uncertainty when you meet it in the problem situation, and I am not talking about this one, but any problem situation?

R. I tend to do a lot of thinking and I sometimes tend to share and discuss with my co-workers how they perceive this should be approached.

J. Okay. And how do you deal with conflict in a decision

situation?

- R. With difficulty. I hope that in conflict, that one can sit down and discuss what it is that is perceived as creating the conflict, and come to some type of mutual understanding and agreement as to how we are going to approach the problem.
- J. Okay. I only have one more question in this section before we go on. To what extent do you feel your's was a rational decision?
- R. On a scale of one to ten or just a statement?
- J. Just a statement. You can use a scale if you feel you want to.
- R. I think it was reasonable.
- J. What do you mean by reasonable?
- R. That I gave the opportunity for involvement. That it wasn't something that was being imposed. Rather it was something that had some staff participant involvement and therefore I was able to give a program proposal that met, I hoped, both the needs of the

managers and supervisors.

J. So you equate rational with reasonable?

R. Yes, I suppose.

J. Okay. I AM TURNING THE MACHINE OFF NOW.

J. What is your reaction to the model?

R. I like it.

J. Good.

R. I think that we probably all go through that process and when I was looking at your problem I was probably assuming that there weren't going to be any roadblocks, shall we put it that way. So I didn't explore some of the things that might have been alternatives as you asked me because I was being positive instead of questioning the outcome of what might have happened at the meeting of the supervisors.

J. Do you find the model academic?

R. No. I don't think so. I see it as relatively

practical and easily used in a situation where you were problem solving. Academic, yes, in a sense that not everybody is going to sit down and put it into this kind of format but certainly in terms of a practical model I think it is viable.

J. Okay. What further light does it throw on decision making for you?

R. I think the way you very thoroughly explained it allowed one to look at approaching a problem somewhat differently than I have done in the past. I have tended to try to deal with the problem end and work from there and work with a lot of options. I think knowing that it is quite reasonable and rational to start with a random selection and try anything that might work is something that I haven't really taken the risk or the chance to do.

J. Would or could you use such a model?

R. I think I could use it. I think it would be fun to try it.

J. Why would you use it?

R. Well, I think that currently we are in a situation where we have started a new department and we are being exposed to a lot of requests that we are not always totally familiar with and it might be something that would be quite helpful in our day to day exposure to these requests and the people that are making those requests. I don't think that often our staff are fully aware of what it is they need anyway. They say they need a program, in say communication, but they are really not quite sure why they want that.

J. Okay. Thank you very much.

VITA

Surname: SMITH Given Names: JOAN ROSEANNE WARREN

Place of Birth: Windsor, Ontario.

Date of Birth: 30/11/1931

Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Windsor 1962 to 1967

University of Victoria 1978 to 1986

Degrees:

B.Sc.N. 1967 University of Windsor

Publications:

McGill, S. L., & Smith, J. R. W. (1983). IV therapy.
Bowie, Maryland: Robert J. Brady Company.

Partial Copyright License

I hereby grant the right to lend my thesis (the title of which is shown below) to users of the University of Victoria Library, and to make single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the Library of any other university, or similar institution, on its behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or a member of the University designated by me. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis

The Decision Making Process
Of Staff Development Managers In Hospitals

Author


JOAN R. W. SMITH

JUNE 1986